

Collaborative Learning in the Foreign Language Classroom: Assessing the Process

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Leslie

To my past, present, and future students.

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ABSTRACT

KEYWORDS: group work, pair work, foreign language, collaborative learning, interaction, secondary, formative assessment, feedback

The following report is a result of the research conducted in the context of the *practicum*, mandatory for attaining the title of Master in the teaching of English in the third cycle and secondary level. The focus of the research was the assessment of group and pair work, particularly of its process. The concept of ‘process’ for collaboration in the educational context refers to the work and interaction learners partake in to reach a final product. The aim of this study was then to answer the research questions: how can the formative assessment of the process, in group and pair work, be carried out in the secondary English as a foreign language classroom? How is learner perception of collaboration affected by its assessment? Through an action-research procedure, there was an investigation of the existing literature on the topic, a research of the eleventh-year participants’ perceptions and feelings towards the assessment of collaboration, and the application of assessment tools such as rubrics and observation grids. The participants worked collaboratively to solve tasks of different typologies and a significant part of this research consisted of the observation of those collaborations. Consequently, the grouping of participants was also a relevant aspect of this research. The results of the research point to the importance of assessing through observation as well as the role of assessing collaboration for the social, cognitive, and academic development of the participants.

APRENDIZAGEM COLABORATIVA NO ENSINO DA LÍNGUA ESTRANGEIRA: A AVALIAÇÃO DO PROCESSO

CAROLINA DO NASCIMENTO DE SOUSA

RESUMO

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: trabalho de grupo, trabalho de par, língua estrangeira, aprendizagem colaborativa, interação, secundário, avaliação formativa, feedback

O presente relatório resulta da investigação realizada no contexto do estágio, obrigatório para a obtenção do título de Mestre no curso de Ensino de Inglês no Terceiro Ciclo do Ensino Básico e no Ensino Secundário. O foco da investigação foi a avaliação do trabalho de grupo e pares, particularmente o seu processo. O conceito de ‘processo’ na colaboração no contexto educacional refere-se ao trabalho e interação na qual os alunos participam no sentido de alcançar um produto final. O objetivo da investigação foi então responder às questões condutoras do estudo: como pode ser realizada a avaliação formativa do processo no trabalho de grupo e par no contexto do ensino de língua estrangeira? De que modo são as opiniões dos alunos acerca de trabalho colaborativo afetadas pela sua avaliação? Através dos procedimentos de ação-investigação, deu-se a exploração da literatura existente acerca do tema, a investigação dos sentimentos e perceções dos participantes do décimo primeiro ano em relação à avaliação da colaboração e a utilização de ferramentas de avaliação tais como rubricas e grelhas de observação. Os participantes colaboraram na resolução de tarefas de tipologias distintas e a observação dessas interações representaram uma parte significativa da investigação. Consequentemente, a formação dos grupos e pares foi igualmente um aspeto relevante da presente investigação. Os resultados da mesma apontam para a relevância da avaliação através da observação, bem como para o papel da avaliação da colaboração no desenvolvimento social, cognitivo e académico dos participantes.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

1. Area of interest.....	1
2. Aims of the research.....	2

CHAPTER I: THEORETICAL CONTEXT

1.1. Collaborative learning.....	3
1.2 Collaboration in society.....	3
1.3 Collaboration in education.....	4
1.3.1. Collaboration in the foreign language classroom.....	5
1.3.1.1. Conducting collaboration.....	7
1.3.2. Reluctance towards collaboration.....	9
1.3.3. Assessing collaboration.....	11
1.3.3.1. Using rubrics for assessment.....	12
1.3.3.2. Assessing the process.....	13

CHAPTER II: METHODOLOGY

2.1. Classroom procedures.....	16
2.1.1. Tasks.....	16
2.1.2. Rubric for the assessment of the process.....	17
2.2. Research tools.....	22
2.2.1. Observation grid for grouping learners.....	22
2.2.2. Observation grid for the assessment of the process.....	22
2.2.3. Questionnaire.....	23

CHAPTER III: THE *PRACTICUM*

3.1 The classes.....	25
3.2. The participants.....	27
3.3. The lessons.....	27
3.4. The school.....	27
3.5. Observation for learning.....	28
3.5.1. Daily register grid.....	31
3.5.2. Oral production assessment grid.....	32
3.6. Teaching.....	33
3.7. Research and results.....	36
3.7.1. Pre-assessment: grouping learners.....	37
3.7.2. Assessing the process	39
3.7.2.1. Communication criterion.....	40
3.7.2.2. Cooperation criterion.....	42
3.7.2.3. Commitment criterion.....	43
3.7.2.4. Contribution criterion.....	43
3.7.3. Perception of collaboration: questionnaire.....	44
3.7.3.1. Questions one through five.....	45
3.7.3.2. Question six.....	46
3.7.3.3. Question seven.....	47
3.7.3.4. Question eight.....	48
3.7.3.5. Question nine.....	49

CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION

1. How can formative assessment of the process, in group and pair work, be carried out in the secondary English as a Foreign Language classroom?.....	52
1.1. Pre-assessment: grouping learners.....	52
1.2. Assessment of the process.....	53
2. How is learner perception of collaboration affected by its assessment?.....	56
REFERENCES.....	61

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1: <i>Example of tasks completed by participants</i>	17
Table 2: <i>Reduced version of the rubric for the assessment of the process</i>	20
Table 3: <i>Example of adaptation to the contribution criterion</i>	20
Table 4: <i>Initial and final levels registered for the communication criterion</i>	41
Table 5: <i>Initial and final levels registered for the cooperation criterion</i>	42
Table 6: <i>Initial and final levels registered for the commitment criterion</i>	43
Table 7: <i>Participant preferences for questions one through</i>	45
Table 8: <i>Participant responses to question six</i>	46
Table 8: <i>Distribution of answers to question 6.2. according to typology</i>	57

LIST OF APPENDICES

Appendix A: <i>Segment of first lesson plan contemplating collaboration tasks</i>	66
Appendix B: <i>Example of task for collaborative discussion and analysis</i>	67
Appendix C: <i>Example of task for collaborative discussion and analysis</i>	68
Appendix D: <i>Segment of lesson plan</i>	69
Appendix E: <i>Example of task for collaborative discussion and analysis</i>	70
Appendix F: <i>Segment of lesson plan</i>	71
Appendix G: <i>Example of task for collaborative discussion and analysis</i>	72

Appendix H: <i>Rubric for the assessment of the process</i>	73
Appendix I: <i>Observation grid for grouping learners</i>	74
Appendix J: <i>Rubric for the assessment of the process</i>	75
Appendix K: <i>Letter of consent to participants</i>	76
Appendix L: <i>Letter of consent to guardians</i>	77
Appendix M: <i>Letter of consent to the headmaster</i>	78
Appendix N: <i>Questionnaire</i>	79
Appendix O: <i>Daily register grid</i>	80
Appendix P: <i>Oral production assessment grid</i>	81
Appendix Q: <i>Guidelines for the project ‘World Day of Social Justice’</i>	82
Appendix R: <i>Segment of lesson plan</i>	83
Appendix S: <i>Student contributions to online debate concerning Human Rights violations in Qatar</i>	84

INTRODUCTION

1. Area of interest

On numerous occasions have we been confronted with the African proverb “it takes a village”¹. From the villagers’ standpoint, it may refer to the brave act of raising a child and to how, individually, all members of a community have an active role in the caring, educating, and socializing of the child. From the child’s standpoint, the concept of individuality is secondary. What matters is that the adults around them are mobilizing with a single and shared goal: to care and educate.

From early on, children witness and are encouraged to partake in interaction. Interaction starts as something simple, such as gestures, smiles, and single words. With time, the emphasis on verbal interaction becomes more relevant as toddlers start using language to interact and communicate their needs. Communication becomes, eventually, the means for almost all of our interactions and, verbal or physical, accompanies us all our lives. Communication encompasses a series of mechanisms that allow the intermediates to decode and transmit messages that are of extreme importance and dictate the effectiveness of our interactions.

In the context of communities, and even societies, communication and interaction are especially relevant as its members share culture, language, and religion. Sharing a common purpose or characteristic demands that we use communication positively to facilitate those processes of interaction. Working together to achieve a common goal is what is defined as collaboration. Collaboration entails that those involved be willing to share knowledge, resources, and skills. Nowadays, the concept of collaboration is often mentioned in the context of the workplace, as most industries depend on collaboration to function and generate wealth - similar to what the village must do to achieve the common goal of caring and educating.

Collaboration is essential in all stages of life, especially after children are placed in contexts with each other, which is usually siblings or school. The following report focuses on the development of collaborative skills in the context of education. More specifically, how educators can formatively assess it. Through pair and group work, learners are asked to solve a plurality of tasks whose results are assessed and might even

¹ The proverb refers to the collective effort associated with taking care of children (Reupert et al., 2022)

have a significant weight in the final mark of subjects. Assessing that final product is relevant to understanding the learners' knowledge of the subject. However, this report focuses not on subject knowledge, but on the collaboration that solving those tasks requires.

It is common for learners to share their hesitance for group and pair work, not due to the tasks they are assigned, but to what working collaboratively requires. Oftentimes, learners complain to educators about the fact that not all members of the group contribute equally and that assessing the final product rarely benefits learners who do the actual work. So, besides assessing the process from the formative standpoint (contribution to the development of collaboration skills) it is relevant for learners to notice that educators recognize the degree of individual effort that went into the development of the task.

2. Aims of the research

Understanding the role of the learners in the process of a collaborative task, that is their involvement in its development, is often overlooked due to the preference for assessing the final product. The following research intends to explore strategies to formatively assess the process of developing tasks which entails focusing and observing the quality of collaboration.

Years of being a student and limited experience as a teacher motivated this study. As a student, the feeling of unfairness and dislike were commonly associated with group work. Teachers would assign group and pair work and decide on a deadline. Assessing the final product was the extension of their involvement. Consequently, oftentimes, as students, we would do the work alone and avoid interaction. Working in groups outside the classroom posed some challenges students were not often willing to overcome. As a teacher, witnessing that little to no changes had been made to the way collaboration was conducted, as well as its assessment, increased the motivation to research what the literature in education had to say about the topic. As a researcher, the goal was then to investigate the assessment of collaboration and answer the questions:

1 – How can formative assessment of the process, in group and pair work, be carried out in the secondary English as a Foreign Language classroom?

2 – How is learner perception of collaboration affected by its assessment?

CHAPTER I: THEORETICAL CONTEXT

1.1. Collaborative learning

The concept of collaborative learning is widely discussed among educators, sociologists, and psychologists and is often defined and described differently even within the same fields. Taking that into consideration, the current study considers the definition of collaborative learning provided by Barkley et al. (2014) and Dillenbourg (1999) which is, in itself, the result of a plurality of considerations. Collaborative learning implies the work between two or more people to acquire knowledge or develop skills together, as a pair or a group, to achieve specific (or various) learning objectives (Barkley et al., 2014).

1.2. Collaboration in society

Every role that we play within a society requires that we be proficient in matters of teamwork. Whether this be in a professional, educational, or social context (Burke, 2011). The ability to take part in teamwork is an essential skill that employers value. Preparing learners for lifelong success includes providing a set of tools that will allow them to flourish in a variety of scenarios where collaboration is essential (Barkley et al., 2014).

As educators, we are aware of the importance of enriching students' knowledge of the curriculum through a spectrum of subjects. However, the need to adapt classrooms to the advances of recent years has demanded that, as educators, teachers go beyond knowledge transmitters and provide students with sets of tools that allow them to prosper not only in a professional context but also in the social aspect of our lives as a global society – negotiation, empathy, critical thinking, and problem-solving (Barkley et al., 2014).

To put this into practice, the curricula themselves have been adapted to include the promotion of skills deemed necessary in modern-day citizens. The Portuguese National Curriculum (Martins et al., 2017) is an example of the adaptations that are necessary to fulfill the goal of educating twenty-first-century citizens. To fulfill the wish to adapt curriculums to the currently demanded skills, it is important to view them as dynamic and adaptable documents that must be altered when necessary to include the inevitable changes the educational systems and societies, in general, face.

It is then essential that learners acquire knowledge related to the subject, skills that encompass cognition and emotion as well as attitudes that allow them to be fully integrated into the values and morals of their society (Roldão et al., 2017). With this in

mind, a mainstay document of education in Portugal (Martins et al., 2017) states that, at the end of their education, students must be proficient in skills such as interpersonal relationships, conflict resolution, critical thinking, creativity, citizenship, and curiosity (Bossche et al., 2011; Fellenz, 2006; Ministério da Educação, n.d.). Additionally, the OECD Learning Compass 2030 (2019) defines a set of tools that learners must develop to be active members of their communities – responsibility, reconciliation, creativity, and transformation. All these skills point to the importance of social adaptability and motivate educators to determine how they can be promoted successfully.

As teachers and core members of the educational system, the duty to promote these values and competencies falls into our scope of responsibility. As stated by Burke (2011) active learning has a fundamental role in promoting the change in classrooms that accompanies the waves of pedagogical change that are more prominent as teachers are encouraged to transform classrooms into becoming experimental, technological, and student-centered.

1.3. Collaboration in education

As we strive for the growth of our learners within a fast-developing society, and try to get them positively engaged with their communities and participating in their education, there are mandatory alterations of curriculum and methodologies that must be done within our classrooms, especially when they intend to promote engagement.

Collaborative learning can aid teachers in classroom management and students in active participation in their education while promoting autonomy and positive interaction with peers (Burke, 2011). As pointed out by Barkley et al. (2014), decades of research have shown that knowledge transmission is not the main key to learning, and rather students must be actively involved in the process. Collaborative learning offers an alternative to traditional approaches that allow all learners to be involved by taking on different roles (Barkley et al., 2014).

The act of learning can refer to knowledge of the subject's content as well as problem-solving skills and even cognitive development (Dillenbourg, 1999; Fellenz, 2006), especially in younger learners.

Additionally, allowing learners to discuss topics collectively might aid in the recollection of previously acquired knowledge, and therefore information, while inducing

a sense of contribution, usefulness, and self-esteem (Burke, 2011). Discussion and misunderstandings are often productive within collaborative learning, as they allow learners to negotiate and find common ground. As educators, promoting the ability to resolve a disagreement serves a purpose in the learners' lives that contributes to their education for citizenship (Martins et al., 2017; Roldão et al., 2017). The ability to accept opposite viewpoints and conduct a dialogue with open-mindedness are characteristics that preserve group dynamics and ensure rich debates (Parameswaran, 2013).

Educators can structure interactions that promote collaborative learning by applying some of the mechanisms of inducing, cognitive loading, explanation, and conflict (Dillenbourg, 1999). Inducing refers to the application of collaboration in the classroom through creating an environment and tasks that involve discussion and problem-solving, as they promote interaction. Cognitive loading is related to the mental effort involved in the resolution of problem-solving tasks and discussions, which the author (Dillenbourg, 1999) states results in effective learning through collaboration. Explanation refers to the interaction between learners that involves reasoning and understanding each other, which results in shared knowledge construction. Conflict involves similar principles. It refers to the natural disagreements that occur when learners work together, the resolution of these disagreements stimulates the creation of essential social skills. (Dillenbourg, 1999). Nevertheless, Dillenbourg (1999) points out that although these mechanisms are not exclusively activated by collaboration, they might reveal more positively significant and frequent results than in individual work.

With this in mind, the pedagogy behind incentivizing students to work together tells educators that not only is knowledge of a subject's content is acquired but, cognitively and psychologically, collaborative learning has also proven to be useful, at times in unnoticed or unobvious ways. In a study conducted by Bossche et al. (2006) with the intent of understanding how performance can improve through mutually shared cognition in collaborative learning, results show that constructive conflict is a knowledge-building interaction when teams manage their interpersonal contexts through coordination and mutual understanding.

1.3.1. Collaboration in the foreign language classroom

Oxford (1997) states the significance of cooperation, interaction, and collaboration in the foreign language classroom. Its usefulness can be witnessed even through

spontaneous communication between learners or structured activities and tasks. This social context in which language learning is promoted can be enhanced through classroom interaction between peers through knowledge sharing and negotiation (Oxford, 1997). Additionally, promoting group and pair work in the classroom allows teachers to ensure that knowledge is propagated (Fellenz, 2006) since students can clarify each other's questions comfortably, and with familiar vocabulary. It also allows teachers to provide more individualized support to students in groups.

When learners are engaged in activities that promote communication, especially in groups or pairs, this communication consists mostly of the use of spoken language. This oral communication that learners participate in when engaged in group or pair work, is of a spontaneous nature (Jacobs et al., 1997) that requires them to ask and answer in real-time, maintaining a flow of discussion in the foreign language, whereas other scripted spoken interactions fail to provide learners with a more natural use of the language. Additionally, learners are given the advantage of practicing the foreign language in a relaxed context, freed from the pressure of speaking alone for the whole class. Spoken interaction between learners promotes learning mechanisms such as negotiation, regulation, and organization.

Spratt (2011) states peer work as an essential interaction in a communicative approach classroom. Interaction is considered (Spratt, 2011) as the basis for language learning, in which collaborative learning has an important role. Classrooms that include multiple interaction patterns promote the learners' motivation and language practice (Spratt, 2011). The research conducted by McDonough (2004), to investigate the impact of pair and small group activities in the improvement of learners' target forms, concluded that participants who engaged more during the activities did improve.

Additionally, in a study conducted by Pyun (2004) to investigate the integrative principals of group work in second language acquisition, participants revealed that pair and group work allowed for the expansion of vocabulary and that through the communication it entails, improved speaking skills. As a conclusion drawn by Pyun (2004) concerning the results of the research, it is mentioned how interaction occurring in pair and group work provided learners with the possibility to practice the language through the process of discussion which, besides ultimately improving confidence, was fundamental for linguistic and cognitive development.

1.3.1.1. Conducting collaboration

The purpose of promoting interaction in the classroom is then to allow learners to share knowledge and skills that may help in solving tasks and problems that would individually pose a bigger challenge (Bossche et al., 2006). Learning may only be initiated when suggested activities anticipate productive interaction among learners. However, such interaction may not unfold as expected, particularly if the teacher fails to monitor pairs or groups, resulting in uneven distribution of work or avoidance.

To avoid this, Dillenbourg (1999) suggests strategies such as defining roles within groups or pairs, which might provoke discussion and interchange of knowledge among mixed-ability learners, especially when groups are solving problems whose solutions require more than one type of skill, allowing all learners to contribute with different knowledge, resources, information, and creativity (Burke, 2011). Additionally, it is also suggested that teachers set rules and expectations for interaction according to the activity at hand (e.g. all students must provide an opinion and must discuss and resolve disagreements). To ensure the rules are followed, teachers play the important role of monitoring and facilitating the interactions (Burke, 2011; Carroll et al., 2019; Jacobs et. al 1997; Parameswaran, 2013) to avoid uneven participation (dominant learners and avoiders) (Burke, 2011).

Assuming that learners have the necessary tools to work together productively may result in ineffective outcomes such as the inability to resolve conflicts that may arise. The learners must be taught strategies for dealing with disagreement productively. As a facilitator and a monitor, the teacher must ensure that students understand what is expected of them, the purpose of the project or task, as well as its integration into the syllabus (Burke, 2011). The teacher, although apparently nonparticipating, plays the essential roles of grouping, designing appropriate tasks, monitoring, and assessing (Parameswaran, 2013).

According to Spratt (2011), a teacher takes on multiple roles throughout a lesson, depending on how it is conducted and planned. When conducting a lesson that foresees collaborative learning, the roles of planner, monitor, and facilitator are crucial for the success of the task. As stated previously, planning is essential for several reasons such as grouping learners, defining clear and attainable learning objectives and expectations for the learners, and anticipating conflicts or challenges. During the development of the task,

the teacher must monitor groups and pairs, to check collaboration as well as provide clarifications.

Furthermore, when group and pair work are developed in a classroom context, teachers serve as a language resource and can observe interactions, not to help students reach an answer, but to redirect discussions and to assure the participation of all members. What defines an interaction as collaborative is its ability to promote the development of content and cognitive knowledge (Dillenbourg, 1999). Therefore, an interaction that requires resolution of conflict, reasoning, and discussion among learners can be categorized as collaborative. Even though students are encouraged and expected to be aware of individual roles within a group, these should be based on knowledge and skills that contribute to the discussion and consequent solving of a task, rather than isolating peers. Conflict resolution is an important cognitive process that occurs in different planes of existence within collaboration. Learners, sometimes even unconsciously, negotiate interpretation, interactions, and roles. For this process to be successful, there must be a degree of comfort and security amongst peers that overcomes challenges such as forcing roles and tasks on members without discussion or consent. Additionally, teachers must avoid tasks or activities that fail to motivate and incite discussion, or that are even too straightforward (Dillenbourg, 1999).

A crucial step for the success of collaborative learning is defining how the collaboration will take place between learners. Oftentimes, when working with peers, students are asked to form groups. However, when conducting collaborative learning, it is advised (Barkley et al., 2014) that both the groups and the tasks be constructed to achieve the selected learning objectives, which means the teacher must be responsible for grouping learners.

Ideally, the groups should be constructed within a somewhat familiar community (such as the students in a classroom) allowing them to share ideas, negotiate meaning, and discuss the topics in question (Slavin, 2014). For this to be possible, group size should be considered beforehand. Group sizing should avoid going over five students (Dillenbourg, 1999; Jacobs et. al, 1997) if learners are expected to practice communication skills, language, and organization skills. Larger groups can prevent some members of the group from participating, or demotivate shy students from contributing. Keeping groups small can also avert learners from intentionally avoiding work. As

pointed out by Burke (2011) if the roles are evenly distributed within a small group, learners are held accountable by each other to accomplish their parts in a discussion.

When learners are paired or grouped it is with the intent of promoting learning through interaction. With this in mind, taking into consideration the importance of interaction, the choice of how to group learners can impact the success of the task concerning the degree to which the learning objectives are fulfilled and, consequently, the success of the assessment. Learners can be grouped by teachers according to several characteristics related to their social circles, strengths, or weaknesses. They can also be allowed to form their groups which is ill-advised (Burke, 2011; Carroll et al., 2019) due to disadvantages stated previously.

However, as pointed out but Dillenbourg (1999) learning does not occur simply from students being paired or grouped. When learners work together, they employ a set of mechanisms (cognitive and social) especially when the activity is designed to facilitate collaboration. It is even suggested that learning through collaboration might be more frequent and successful than individual learning (Dillenbourg, 1999).

Not all tasks are suitable for group or pair work. According to Parameswaran (2013), tasks should promote curiosity, discussion, and speculation, and have multiple possible approaches. A task this complex demands that teachers be aware of the various scenarios that may surge, either the different resolutions of different groups or the different group dynamics, and prepare by anticipating these possible challenges and outcomes.

Although activities can be structured to promote theoretically successful interactions, the way educators and teachers measure and assess the degree of success of pair and group work is a largely debated topic (Parameswaran, 2013) on which this research focuses.

1.3.2. Reluctance towards collaboration

When criteria are ill-defined, assessing collaborative learning might become too general a task for teachers, as well as create more confusion for learners as to what they should achieve while completing the work. However, when learners are provided with clear instructions and criteria, feelings of resentment toward collaboration in the classroom might diminish (Burke, 2011; Vaca et al., 2011). Having learners comprehend

the learning advantages of a task (Carnegie Mellon, n.d.) may be decisive for the quality of their performance.

Student reluctance, especially in older learners, often, and on purpose, results in sabotage of the task which further discourages educators from investing their time and resources in collaboration. Understanding the origins of students' reluctance toward collaborative tasks is crucial. Equally important is identifying effective strategies to encourage participation, thereby harnessing the valuable educational benefits offered by collaboration.

In a small experience conducted by Taylor (2011), students were directly questioned about their distaste for working in groups. The participants mentioned that collaboration makes focusing difficult, that it requires a lot of work and organization, and that they were often grouped with classmates they disliked and uneven workloads. Students who are demanding of their performance may offer resistance to peer collaboration, especially when paired with students who are not motivated or who tend to expect others to do their share of a task (Carnegie Mellon, n.d.; Fellenz, 2006; Vaca et al., 2011).

Conflicts are bound to appear when different people work together to solve problems, especially considering the age group of secondary school learners. Shyer students might refrain from participation, or even conform to the majority to avoid disagreements, directly hindering the purpose of collaborative learning (Burke, 2011). Linguistically, conflict resolution aids learners in structuring sentences with the intent of expressing a convincing viewpoint, defending or refuting an argument, and applying conflict resolution strategies that allow peers to overcome conflicts that surge in purposeful interactions (Dillenbourg, 1999).

Whatever possible conflicts may arise during collaboration, if the students are aware of the teacher's expectations, can be overcome and result in collaboration as a useful learning tool. Naturally, most learners, by the time they reach secondary school, reflect on the educators' teaching practices and form their opinions, which means that, for this age group, it is particularly difficult to change minds and preexistent resentments. Taylor (2011) defends that, although learners are vocal about their preferences, and conducting collaboration is indeed hard for educators, it has too many precious advantages to be overlooked.

Additionally, educators themselves can feel discouraged from introducing collaborative learning in their classrooms. From grouping learners, defining criteria that foresee learning objectives of the syllabus and also the cognitive and civic development of students, monitoring the process, and assessing, it is only natural that already overworked teachers prefer to evaluate and assess through other means such as standardized testing. Nevertheless, for all the pedagogical advantages stated previously, collaborative learning is a helpful and effective tool, which explains why it has been applied in most classrooms for decades, particularly, after the development of the concept of the Zone of Proximal Development by Vygotsky (1978). The author (Vygotsky, 1978) researched and stated the relevancy of collaboration and interaction for the human brain, especially in children. Training learners to collaborate healthily has then been defended for decades especially since researchers have begun viewing education as a social process (Vygotsky, 1978). From a collaborative standpoint, grouping learners contributes to the development of these processes, especially for heterogeneous groupings.

1.3.3. Assessing collaboration

Assessment is a core concept in education and is oftentimes decisive for the learners' motivation, dedication, and attitude toward learning. It is often conducted through tests, essays, and tasks which are simpler to analyze due to the objectiveness of the answers and the assessment criteria. Nevertheless, an assessment method should not be chosen based on its practicality, but on principles of fairness and the promotion of learning (Spratt, 2011).

Assessment can take different formats from summative to formative assessment, the latter being the focus of this research. Formative assessment, as stated by Valente (2016) improves the process of learning, particularly when it is planned with clear learning objectives in mind. When formative assessment is carried out through collaborative learning, several topics can be the object of assessment: teamwork competencies, presentation of results, social skills, and critical thinking skills (Valente, 2016).

Consequently, formative assessment is a process that involves both the teacher and the learner. Despite the obvious objective of serving the purpose of diagnosing the learners' skills and knowledge, formative assessment serves as the base for development and improvement which is ultimately responsible for learner success. As pointed out by

Black and William (2009), the teacher has an active role in formative assessment especially by reflecting on what practices can be implemented to help learners reach the levels intended. Consequently, it involves that learners be actively involved in the process of learning and that teachers reflect on how learner performance can be improved, based on the results of that assessment.

As Dillenbourg (1999) suggests, assessing success in group work requires that the assigned project, activity or task has a specific set of learning objectives that students are expected to accomplish. So, when planning the collaboration, teachers must ensure that the proposed tasks offer learners the possibility of reaching the learning objectives. These objectives should relate to content knowledge as well as group dynamic skills (Burke, 2011).

Assigning groups and providing a task does not necessarily result in collaborative learning, since it does not develop part of the skills previously mentioned, such as conflict resolution and discussion (Burke, 2011). If groupings or tasks are inappropriate the process of assessing is hindered by failing to set students up for success.

Assessing through observation is a demanding task for educators that requires previous preparation and research of the best method to do so. Burke (2011) suggests that to evaluate both process and product, two rubrics must be developed that foresee the learning objectives defined for both, to which learners should also have access.

1.3.3.1. Using rubrics for assessment

A rubric is a tool that is especially useful for formative assessment. Although as teachers we naturally assess our students' performance, with rubrics, the goal is to match that performance to the levels described on the rubric (Brookhart, 2013). The concept of rubrics has been constructed and deconstructed by educators for many years. The famous research conducted by Popham (1997) provided a definition that sums up the purposes and constitution of this assessment tool: criteria that allow evaluation, levels of achievement, and the possibility of scoring performance. However, as pointed out by Dawson (2017) rubrics can, and do, take on a plurality of forms depending on the task conducted, the design intended, and even the subject to which they are being applied. The common ground among research is that rubrics intend to facilitate grading and feedback.

Although rubrics can facilitate assessment during observations, their complexity might pose challenges (Valente, 2016), especially since rubrics need to be adapted to the learning objectives of each task.

Although rubrics are useful in plenty of contexts, not all tasks require their use. For example, when correcting a multiple-choice test, a rubric is not necessary. However, as is the case with the activities and tasks conducted during the *practicum*, assessing any stage of collaborative learning with the aid of rubrics has many advantages, especially in assessing the process.

1.3.3.2. Assessing the process

Usually, when group work is carried out, educators assess the final product produced by the learners – a presentation, a report, or the solution to a problem. However, when educators monitor the groups' process in resolving a task, it has become commonly accepted (Burke, 2011) that the process itself be assessed in addition to the final product. It is even suggested (Carnegie Mellon, n.d.) that within group and pair work, each student be given an individual mark that considers their role during the development of the assignment (the process). When students are aware that their participation in a collaborative task will be reflected in an individual mark, either they feel the need to compete within their groups or feel motivated to cooperate and create healthy group dynamics, as all would benefit from it (Forsell et al., 2019).

One of the challenges involved in assessing the process is the fact that students' individual contributions, as well as group dynamics, might not be apparent in the final product (Carnegie Mellon, n.d.). The concept of fairness in assessing group work often comes up, either within educator circles or brought up by students concerned with their marks whenever they are grouped with classmates who have previously demonstrated free-riding² in group or pair tasks. Reserving a percentage of the assessment of a collaborative learning task to individual contribution is a strategy to ensure every student is held accountable for their own performance, which consequently will be reflected in their marks. If the learners feel every member of the group is held accountable for the quality of their involvement, they are expected to interact more freely and spontaneously as well as feel motivated by collaborative tasks and projects (Fellenz, 2006).

² Originally a concept applied to economics, adopted in education to refer to students who avoid work in collaborative contexts (Kerr & Bruun, 1983).

If the educator intends to assess the process as well as the product, the rubric should mention aspects such as quality of participation, cooperation, active listening, research, time management skills, dedication, communication, and conflict resolution (Burke, 2011; Carnegie Mellon, n.d.; Carroll et al., 2019; Forsell et al., 2019). These can, and must, be adapted according to the task and activity that learners are engaged in. For assessing the product, a more precise rubric must be developed (Burke, 2011) according to what was asked of learners: an oral presentation, a report, or an analysis. Assessing the process, as stated by Forsell et al. (2019), can be defined as the observation and grading of students' contributions through their interaction and their different approaches when solving a task collaboratively.

Burke (2011) highlights the importance of rubrics for both learners and teachers. It informs students of expectations and allows teachers to be more precise when evaluating different criteria. As suggested by Carnegie Mellon University (n.d.), a lot of the strategies used by teachers when assessing individual work can be employed in collaborative learning assessment; nevertheless, there are other considerations to take into account. With longer projects, monitoring the process might pose a challenge for teachers, particularly considering that students may also make progress outside the classroom. However, it is still recommended that groups' processes be monitored through strategies other than observation, with more complex tasks. Carroll et al. (2019) suggest checkup points with groups to verify the process and provide feedback to students, as well as strategies for peer review, and accountability within groups.

Generally, assessment can be successfully carried out when learners are aware of expectations, criteria and of how to guide their performance to reach success. Informing learners of what is being assessed allows them to step into the roles necessary to conduct the activity, as well as assess other members' contributions to the resolution of the task (Burke, 2011). Consequently pinpointing which aspects need improvement and how to conduct it, may also promote an even distribution of tasks between learners if they are aware of their strengths and weaknesses in heterogeneous grouping (Vaca et al., 2011).

In the context of formative assessment, feedback is essential for the development of learners. Although assigning groups, designing meaningful and relevant tasks, developing rubrics for both process and product, as well as monitoring and observing can be very demanding for educators, they can result in positive outcomes that benefit the learners from pedagogical, cognitive, and social perspectives. Forsell et al. (2019) give

special emphasis to the social and cognitive advantages of collaborative learning, even mentioning that the latest research shows that teachers have been conducting group work specifically to improve these aspects while using other forms of assessment to test subject knowledge.

Nevertheless, the existent literature is not extensive, especially regarding the assessment of collaborative learning (Forsell et al., 2019), possibly due to the reasons stated previously, and the reluctance to conduct assessment in the classroom considering both process and product, rather than exclusively the latter.

CHAPTER II: METHODOLOGY

When focusing research on summative assessment, analyzing tests can give the researcher clearer and more concise results. However, when research focuses on formative assessment, the data collection tools to do so tend to be more subjective. Because the present report focuses not only on formative assessment but also on collaborative learning, the data collection tools were varied and strongly dependent on observation. With this in mind, the tools used for carrying out the research were observation grids and a questionnaire. Additionally, given the importance of the tasks and given that a rubric was produced to guide the assessment, they were considered essential classroom procedures to carry out the research. The data was collected within the classroom during the third term, resulting in the adaptations of the research tools described below to answer the research questions: How is learner perception of collaboration affected by its assessment? And how can formative assessment of the process, in group and pair work, be carried out in the secondary English as a foreign language classroom?

2.1. Classroom procedures

2.1.1. Tasks

Considering the role of observation in this research, the tasks conducted by groups and pairs, weekly, throughout the *practicum*, consisted of activities developed in the context of the units and topics contemplated in yearly planning for the eleventh grade. This meant that, when possible, around once every week learners would work in pairs or groups.

To be able to conduct this observation and improve the assessment tools, tasks were developed to be completed in the classroom in a relatively short time frame, ranging from twenty to fifty minutes, according to the complexity of the task. Tasks often consisted of analysis, discussion, and research. Learners were asked to analyze several types of media from more complex texts to satirical cartoons (see Appendices A, B, C, D, E, F, and G), and reach a final product according to the topic and task.

The following table provides examples of the typology of tasks completed by participants, as well as the final product required:

Table 1.

Example of tasks completed by participants.

Task	Learning objectives	Final product
Reflecting on a quote	Critically analyze a quote; express agreement or disagreement; justify stance through collaborative discussion (see Appendices A and B)	Written text
Analyzing an infographic	Collaboratively analyze numeric data in the light of the topic of multiculturalism; identify key aspects and trends; synthesize findings (see Appendix C)	Written text
Comparing and analyzing characters of a movie	Collaboratively compare and contrast the characters of a movie through the orientations received; articulate findings through group discussion (see Appendix D).	Oral presentation
Creating a video about women's rights around the world	Demonstrate effective research, communication, creativity, and teamwork skills (see Appendix E)	Video/poster
Comparing concepts	Collaboratively compare and contrast concepts associated with the given topic (irresponsible speech and hate speech); identify common or distinct aspects (see Appendix F).	Conceptual map
Analyzing a cartoon about freedom of speech	Collaboratively identify themes and underlying messages on a piece of media (see Appendix G)	Oral presentation

As suggested by literature (Parameswaran, 2013), the tasks needed to be engaging and allow students to dive into debates which could lead to a plurality of final products. Most of the tasks completed by groups or pairs did not require or did not have exact answers, but rather, the final product would often be the result of negotiation or analysis. Tasks were built not only to motivate students to use the foreign language as the means for negotiation but also to promote the resolution of disagreement and the development of cognitive skills.

2.1.2. Rubric for the assessment of the process

Rubrics are especially useful when conducting observation as they allow educators to reflect on students' performance using pre-conceived level descriptors and criteria, rather than having to rely on attributing numbers which can be subject to inflation or bias more easily.

As pointed out by Brookhart (2013), the descriptors are fundamental, not as learning objectives themselves, but as indicators of the achievement of the learning outcomes. Since the focus of this report is the process of collaboration, it felt necessary to take the

steps to construct a rubric that would consider the aspects and the criteria that students are meant to achieve when working together. According to Stevens et al. (2013), rubrics should be helpful since they avoid extensive note-taking, inconclusive assessment, confusion from students, and bias.

As for the kind of rubric that better served the purpose of qualifying observation, taking into consideration Brookhart's (2013) advantages and disadvantages for both analytical and holistic rubrics, for the sake of formative assessment as well as the possibility to offer feedback to the learners (Stevens et al., 2013): analytical rubrics are thorough in the sense that they explore each criterion separately, therefore allowing students to understand which ones can be developed into the higher level.

After selecting analytical rubrics as a better fit for the purpose of the research, it was left to decide if a specific rubric should be constructed each time learners conducted collaboration, tailored to each task, or to construct a general rubric that allowed small adaptations although preserving the core aspects and criteria.

Taking into consideration that although all tasks are distinct, the criteria meant to be assessed in the process of collaborative learning remained somewhat similar throughout all the activities. Besides this, when trying to build a tool to assess the process, the workload of teachers cannot be overlooked. If, in similarity to the research conducted, the educator intends to adopt regular (weekly or fortnightly) collaboration in the foreign language classroom, it is not realistic to assume they would have the ability to construct a task-specific rubric (Brookhart, 2013) each time.

Nevertheless, for this research, a hybrid between general and task-specific rubrics seemed to be an appropriate possibility. It is possible to construct a rubric that can be used to assess the process each time students collaborate while making the necessary adjustments to consider the task at hand (research, discussion, analysis) (Moskal, 2000).

When constructing a rubric, Stevens et al. (2013) refer to the first step as the reflection. It was during this stage of the research that reflection seemed the natural step to decide on what criteria would be effective in the assessment of the process, before considering design and practical layout. This reflection involved analyzing group dynamics, class profiles, and individual traits of learners of this age group.

Creating a ‘universal’ rubric that could be applied when assessing collaboration of different kinds in the foreign language classroom, implies that some concepts be generalized to set students up for success and not hinder assessment based on traits the learners are unable to alter – personality, socioeconomic status, and school conditions. For example, it wouldn’t be productive to establish the use of technology as a criterion, given that not all students have access to computers and cellphones at home, or even in the classroom.

Rubrics are, by nature, dynamic tools, and, as a result of the research, it was possible to construct a document that contemplated relevant aspects that illustrated what the goal of assessing the process should be. As mentioned previously, assessing the process and investing in collaboration between peers has advantages from a plurality of standpoints: cognitive, social, academic, and professional.

With this in mind, the rubric (see Appendix H) focuses on assessing and guiding learners through four areas of development:

- Contribution: which must be adapted according to the type of tasks learners are engaged in.
- Cooperation.
- Commitment.
- Communication.

These four areas were selected according to their range as well as the fact that they reflect how learners performed during the process of solving the tasks.

Table 2

Reduced version of the rubric for the assessment of the process (see Appendix H).

Skills	A (exceeds expectations)	B (meets expectations)	C (improving)	D (needs improvement)
Contribution (adapt to task)	Always contributes to discussion and volunteers.	Usually contributes to discussions and, at times, volunteers to help.	Rarely contributes to discussions and has to be asked to help.	Avoids contributing and does not volunteer to help.
Cooperation	Consistent effort to avoid/resolve conflict. Keeps discussions productive. Always focused with high expectations for the groups.	Often avoids conflict and seldom gets distracted. Has expectations for the group.	Does not make an effort to resolve conflict, and rarely keeps discussions productive. Often distracted and performance is not a priority.	Consistently creates or contributes to conflict, is distracted, and does not care about performance.
Commitment	Attentive to detail, and careful with time management. Commits to the role assigned.	Usually careful with detail and time management. Makes an effort to commit to the role.	Does not seem concerned with detail or time management. Rarely fulfills the role.	Careless and exceeds time limits or does not fulfill the role.
Communication	Always listens and provides supportive feedback. Shares ideas and suggestions respectfully.	Tries to listen to others and provide feedback. Shares ideas and suggestions although at times not respectfully.	Rarely listens to others' contributions. Scarcely offers input or shares ideas.	Does not communicate with the group, or does so negatively. Does not suggest or offer feedback, or does so negatively.

Contribution foresaw the involvement of the learner in the process, as this particular topic offers broadness, it was designed to be adapted according to the task participants took part in. The way the learner contributed to the task depended on which role they performed, which depended on the grouping as well as the typology of the task. For example:

Table 3

Example of adaptation made to the contribution criterion based on the task.

Skills	A (exceeds expectations)	B (meets expectations)	C (improving)	D (needs improvement)
Contribution (cartoon analysis)	Always contributes to discussion and volunteers. Is able to question assumptions and consider multiple interpretations.	Usually contributes to discussions and, at times, volunteers to help. Often questions assumptions and considers other interpretations.	Rarely contributes to discussions and has to be asked to help. Does not question assumptions and rarely makes them.	Avoids contributing and does not volunteer to help. Does not make or question assumptions.

Cooperation refers to the learner's ability to resolve conflict as well as contribute to a productive environment, maintaining high expectations for the group. Setting cooperation as a goal to be achieved during the process of solving a task collaboratively, entails that the participants vouch for the principles of productive collaboration. Although each person has a set of beliefs, ensuring that individuals are able to cooperate to achieve common objectives is essential.

Commitment, on the other hand, pertains to the learner's rigor and dedication. In the context of a collaborative task, especially in the classroom where learners are actively aware of deadlines, there is a sense of responsibility that must be developed to ensure success. Responsibility, time management, and reliability are qualities that are valued in learners and professionals.

Finally, as a core concept of collaboration, communication entails clarity, availability, active listening, and feedback – all of which ensure that the act of collaborating is successful. Communication goes beyond spoken interaction and entails a series of principles that cultivate a healthy learning environment.

Improving the skills of cooperation is relevant from the cognitive and social standpoint. Commitment serves great purposes in the professional and academic worlds, as well as in social roles. Communication engages all of these standpoints and encompasses the development of a skill that is essential in all stages of life.

Therefore, the possibility of receiving feedback based on contributive performance allows learners to develop skills relevant to the professional world. With this in mind, and according to the principles of formative assessment, after presenting the results of the task, as participants received feedback on the quality of the product, it was also relevant to introduce feedback on the process based on the observations made from the perspective of the rubric and the additional observations made in the observation grid presented below. Feedback was conducted orally as introducing the assessment of the process was new to participants and therefore often resulted in discussions and clarifications.

As theory suggests, rubrics should not only mention criteria but also establish levels of achievement and their descriptors. Rubrics allow educators to decide more easily between levels but mostly motivate learners to improve by being concise and direct in their approach. This rubric (see Appendix H) contemplates four different levels, named

A through D illustrated with positive but direct language. For each criterion and each level, there is a descriptor of actions and achievements that the learner must fulfill to fall within that scope. For example, a learner of level A – ‘exceeds expectations’ – contribution is a learner that always contributes to discussions and volunteers to help. However, the same learner might be at level C – ‘improving’ – commitment and should focus on improving time management skills and detail orientation. Receiving descriptive feedback might be a turning point for students who show resistance to collaboration, as they are often unaware of how to improve.

Putting the rubric to the test involved assessing interaction, which required that observation be thorough. With this in mind, an observation grid was developed to record the levels achieved for each criterion by the participant, as well as a section for possible observations.

2.2. Research tools

2.2.1. Observation grid for grouping learners

The research tools were applied to pairs (two participants) or small groups (three to four participants). The data and results collected and presented in this report exclusively contemplate participants with written consent (twenty-one). Literature advocates (Dillenbourg, 1999; Jacobs et. al, 1997) for collaboration to be conducted keeping in mind the size of groups.

The observation grid for grouping learners (see Appendix I) was used during the observation of collaborative tasks, to draw the necessary conclusions about groups and pairs. These conclusions were applied to the following group formation to continuously improve interaction. Experimenting with group formation was intended as a pre-step to assessment as creating and improving the rationale behind grouping learners was expected to produce better interaction and, consequently, facilitate assessment.

2.2.2. Observation grid for assessing the process

Additionally, this observation grid (see Appendix J) served the purpose of aiding in the assessment of the process of the groups and pairs, concerning the criteria defined in the rubric (see Appendix H). This observation grid allowed assessment while observing, assuring that all learners’ performances are judged based on the same criteria, defined by the rubric.

Considering the purpose of the observation grid, each time the rubric was used to assess through observation, the observation grid would be used as well, as the criteria defined by the rubric was used to assess with the observation grid. The use of the observation grid was essential for the purpose of the research as for each collaborative task, the researcher would register on the grid the performance of each participant (using the levels defined by the rubric) as well as additional observations. While observing the groups' interactions, using the space designated for each criterion, it was possible to efficiently and effortlessly select levels for each, according, to the participants' performances, as well as add suggestions or notes for future reference in the observations section. In this sense, the rubric and the observation grid are complementary as one established the criteria and the other allowed for feedback to be provided to learners and, in the long run, allowed for the reflection on the usefulness of the rubric by analyzing the participants' progress data registered in the observation grids.

This observation grid was then used hand in hand with the rubric for the assessment of the process (see Appendix H) as both assessment tools are complementary.

2.2.3. Questionnaire

To understand participants' perceptions of how the assessment of group work was carried out, as well as provide a space for them to express what hesitation was felt toward collaboration, participants were asked to fill out a questionnaire. To do this, and according to Universidade Nova de Lisboa's (n.d.) Ethical Code (articles one through thirteen), consent was collected from the students (see Appendix K), from the students' guardians (see Appendix L), and from the school's headmaster (see Appendix M). Only students who communicated their consent completed the questionnaire, and consequently, the findings later discussed in this report, are from the anonymously filled questionnaires.

The questionnaire served multiple purposes for this research. It not only provided insights into students' experiences with collaborative learning but also prompted reflection on traditional assessment methods and the potential need for alterations. The importance of feedback is relevant for both students and teachers and, the results of the questionnaire, may help improve teaching practice within the scope of the application of collaborative learning and its assessment.

According to Williams et al. (2004), student feedback is essential for educators and researchers to preserve the quality of education. According to the authors (Williams et

al., 2004), collecting feedback through questionnaires has the disadvantage, amongst others stated, of at times having a low number of participants. Furthermore, no adjustments are made to reflect the impact of the study after processing the responses and data.

However, despite the possible disadvantages, questionnaires provide both quantitative and qualitative information (Williams et al., 2004), which were both collected in the questionnaires filled out by the twenty-one anonymous participants. Questioning students of this age group about their pre-conceptions of the assessment of group work was the main goal of the questionnaire, which contained both open and closed questions (See Appendix N).

The questionnaire contained five simple statements, each demanding that participants select an appropriate level of agreement according to personal beliefs, ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree, with the inclusion of a neutral option. Given that the answers were personal, depending on opinion and personal experience, a Likert scale was used, as it allowed for the analysis of answers of a subjective nature. This analysis of the results was carried out by exploring frequency distributions through the calculation of percentages as well as identifying tendencies.

For question 6.1. participants were asked to circle the criteria that educators should assess in student collaboration. The options given were interaction, leadership skills, communication skills, creativity, use of language, and participation. The results were analyzed as described above.

The open-ended questions (question 6.2, question 7, question 8, and question 9) questioned about additional criteria not mentioned in question 6.1, reason for liking or disliking collaborating in the classroom, reasoning for liking or disliking collaborating outside the classroom, and the possibility of being assessed individually for collaboration tasks. The results of the open-ended questions were qualitatively analyzed in order to identify common themes given by the participants, using a coding scheme for each and categorizing the results.

CHAPTER III: THE *PRACTICUM*

3.1. The classes

The observation of lessons to fulfill *practicum* requirements was conducted in four different classes of the eleventh-year, all of which were students of the sciences course. This meant that the ages ranged from sixteen to eighteen years old, with most students being seventeen years old.

The observation-for-learning period was relevant for gathering information about the participants that would be part of the research. However, it served more purposes besides aiding in answering the research questions. Studying learners, individually and collectively, was essential to be able to construct lesson plans and strategies to which they would react positively, as well as learn.

Each class had its particularities which greatly affected the way lessons were conducted, either by the cooperating teacher or by the student teachers. Numerous classes or classes with a large number of male students proved to be more disruptive as students would often engage in conversation unrelated to the lesson or try to avoid completing tasks altogether.

During the initial stages of the *practicum*, the student teachers observed all four classes assigned to the cooperating teacher. Due to the principle of pedagogical continuation, all four classes were already students of the cooperating teacher the year before (tenth year) which meant students were used to the presence of student teachers in the classroom, and open to collaboration, which facilitated the research.

All four classes were distinct in constitution and academic achievement. Class A had a total of 17 students, of which only 13 took English classes. Nevertheless, during the *practicum*, assisting the cooperating teacher as class director³, allowed for a familiarity with all students. Class A displayed a significant percentage (46%) of students with a strong resistance to English, some due to insecurities with the language, others due to their profile as students, avoiding participation and work in several subjects. Nevertheless, several students exhibited positive engagement not only with English classes but with school activities in general.

³ Referring to the role of managing students across all subjects and maintaining contact with guardians.

Class B had 19 students total, seven of whom were female and the additional twelve, male. This class was, among all four, the one that struggled most with behavioral issues. With more than 60% of male students, there seemed to be a direct correlation between the numbers of male students to a more agitated classroom dynamic. In general, students were reluctant to engage with the opinions of others, especially orally. One student in particular had been diagnosed with severe autism spectrum disorder which manifested as avoidance of eye contact, no collaboration with peers, no oral participation, and consequent adaptation of the assessment methods. Communication is essential for language learning, and so this student's proficiency in English was highly affected by the disorder.

Class C presented a similar demographic to class B, although a surprising amount of distinctions in class dynamics and response to the activities and tasks. It had a total of 22 students, of which all took English classes. In Class C, students shared similar academic characteristics, as the majority showed interest and concern with assessment, overall maturity when discussing controversial or sensitive topics, and empathy. One of the students, although never having been diagnosed with any sort of disorder, displayed characteristics such as avoidance of eye contact, reluctance in collaborating with peers, refusal to participate orally, discomfort when classes or tasks swayed from the normal daily routine, and a strong response to music or melody. As the year went by, and especially towards the teaching stage of the *practicum*, the student felt progressively more comfortable speaking to their classmates, rather than just the teachers. By showing empathy to this classmate, and assuring inclusion but space, Class C played an essential role in motivating this student to feel comfortable enough to participate and even to, by the end of the year, partake in an oral presentation. Therefore, applying the collaborative tasks (that were part of the research) to this class helped reveal the importance of integrating collaboration in classrooms.

The fourth and final class attributed to the cooperating teacher was Class D. This class had seventeen students enrolled in English lessons. Class D shared similarities with Class C – the class dynamic was overall healthy, and students were quieter but still participative and concerned. A small percentage of students in this class (18%) were not as comfortable with the language, but hardworking and interested.

3.2. The participants

The observation period lasted from September to December, during this stage, as the cooperating teacher taught four classes, it was decided that all the lessons of the four classes would be observed. Later on, during the second term, as the observation progressed to teaching, and considering the cooperating teacher was overseeing two student teachers, each was responsible for two classes.

Therefore, given that the teaching period coincided with the research, 39 learners were present and participating in the lessons (students of Classes C and D). However, for the purpose of the research, data was collected from 21 participants, according to the consent guidelines previously mentioned.

3.3. The lessons

For eleventh-year students, English lessons occurred three times a week, each one fifty minutes long. Once a week, each class had two lessons in a row, which proved to be far more useful than a single fifty-minute lesson. Between each fifty-minute class, students had breaks ranging from five to 15 minutes which would often result in disruptions in the longer classes, as students would often be late for the second block.

3.4. The school

The school was situated in a quiet suburb of Lisbon. However, due to the lack of teachers throughout schools in the area, a lot of students had a considerable commute to the school, either by bus or by car. The school's environment reflected the surrounding areas, with many students coming from middle or upper-class families since the area is known for its expensive housing. Nevertheless, a considerable number of students who had to commute from other areas came from lower-middle-class families. This contrast was, at times, obvious, especially in teenage students. However, the school had few to no disciplinary incidents, and most of the permanent staff members seemed content with the school's environment.

Although it was situated in a good neighborhood, the school reflected the profound lack of investment from the state in the public schooling system. The current crisis in the education sector in Portugal from the lack of investment to the lack of teachers was deeply felt at the school. Most classes lacked at least one teacher, which motivated plenty of concerned families to enroll their children in private schools, where this crisis

is not felt to the same degree. Class A, for example, lacked a Mathematics teacher for over three months. Later on, this resulted in reinforcement classes throughout the week until the class caught up with the subject's content. Consequently, students spent many hours per week at school. As a way to overcome some of the personnel constraints, many teachers were asked to work overtime, some accumulating twenty-five teaching hours.

The lack of investment was also obvious in the school's infrastructure as it has been awaiting significant renovations for over forty years. Besides the necessary aesthetic renovations, there were concerning issues with the physical wellness of those who frequented the school. The hardwood flooring in many of the classrooms had not stood the test of time, which left open gaps throughout the rooms, where students and teachers would trip or fall. The majority of the roofing throughout the school had not been subject to any maintenance, which meant it contained asbestos boards. Although not a health hazard, other signs of the lack of investment were the defective or malfunctioning computers. Concerning what twenty-first-century classrooms should incorporate technologically, teachers had to bring their own devices. Some of the most urgent small maintenance tasks were carried out by teachers or staff.

Despite the many challenges that the Portuguese educational system is facing, and the degree to which it affects schools, the teachers and staff showed immeasurable dedication to students.

3.5. Observation for learning

According to *practicum* requirements, observation was maintained for all lessons of the four classes. The cooperating teacher tasked the student teachers with the characterization and profiling of the different classes, with the purpose of improving the ability to adapt lessons, contents, and procedures to a class and a student's individual context.

The observation was essential to conduct the lessons later on. During the observation period, which lasted from September to December, planning and teaching a diagnostic lesson was required, which meant an exploration and research of the topic and unit being discussed. The diagnostic lesson was then constructed around the topic of sustainability and the environment. Subsequently, during the first term, it was also required that lessons were planned to take into account distinct learning objectives such

as improving learners writing skills through different genres of writing, as well as the preparation of extracurricular activities, from which the school community would benefit.

During this period, it was evident that the cooperating teacher prioritized the creation of the materials used for the classes, rather than focusing on the course book. Nevertheless, the course book (Reis Esteves et al., 2023) would often be useful to explore grammar items that needed extra practice as homework, in some cases. The tools used by the cooperating teacher to create materials provided ideas and inspiration for the research later on.

In each lesson, the cooperating teacher would start by introducing the topics for the day which, from the perception of a student teacher, helped students understand what was expected of them each lesson. Additionally, students were familiar with, and accepting, of the fact that the entire class was conducted in English, which naturally helped even the weaker students get progressively more comfortable understanding and using the spoken language throughout the year.

An additional method that contributed to the enrichment of vocabulary in students was the reading project implemented by all language departments at the school. For each lesson, students would have ten minutes of independent reading time, during which they would quietly pose vocabulary questions to the student teachers even preceding the teaching period of the *practicum*, which further deepened the bond with the learners.

Eventually, it was suggested by the University Supervisors that the student teachers additionally observed the English lessons of a seventh-year class. This suggestion served the purpose of enriching the observation experience by expanding the field of observation. The suggestion was fulfilled, once a week, for fifty minutes, focusing on the contrasts and similarities between the students of the different age groups, and how that impacted the way lessons were conducted. Although the research tools were not applied to seventh-year students, there were several conclusions drawn from the observation.

Firstly, it was noticed that the seventh-year teacher had to resort to the mother tongue often, as students were unable to understand most instructions clearly. Secondly, most students would avoid participating using the English language, either due to being uncomfortable with their proficiency level, or with the perception that classmates would

mock or correct their performance. The difference in maturity from secondary students to seventh-year students played an interesting role in how the lessons were conducted.

Secondly, and possibly due to the reasons stated above, the lessons were often teacher-centered. Contrary to what was the case with the lessons taught by the cooperating teacher with eleventh-year students, this class strictly used the course book, and seldom worksheets, or other materials, created by the teacher. From asking the teacher about this, it could be explained by the more unpredictable nature of this age group and their behavior, which hindered the possibility of introducing distinct procedures.

Thirdly, technology was rarely incorporated into the lessons, despite the fact that most learners had cell phones and the classroom had a functioning projector. The use of technology was strictly for displaying the course book's pages for learners who had forgotten it that day. Taking these factors into consideration, the teacher would engage students by using a more theatrical posture, frequent changes in intonation and volume, and simpler vocabulary and sentence structure. When practicing grammar items, the teacher was aware that some concepts were too abstract for students to conceive and internalize, so each time a new item was introduced, the teacher related it to its day-to-day use, which seemed to aid students in the conceptualization of the item.

Additionally, it was concluded that the eleventh-year classes taught by the cooperating teacher were, at the start of the units, more teacher-centered, especially when introducing new vocabulary. By the middle of the first term, classes were mostly student-centered. The cooperating teacher often used brainstorming activities to engage students. Besides language practice, most activities were constructed to stimulate thought and promote critical thinking skills. To involve and challenge students of this age group, the cooperating teacher would often use and introduce different online platforms to incorporate technology into the lessons. Students were familiar with most platforms used by the cooperating teacher – Kahoot (n.d.), Mentimeter (n.d.), Socrative (n.d.), and Padlet (n.d.).

Overall, observing lessons was crucial in many aspects, as put in a previous reflection written during the initial stages of the observation:

We (student teachers) have been made familiar with all things didactics, but it wasn't until observing lessons with real students and real learning rhythms that the importance of going beyond the theory was truly grasped. The concepts and

learning strategies that might be applied to eleventh-year students must (and do) significantly differ from those applied to seventh-year students. Although having been present in all seventh-year lessons by the end of the first term, it was concluded that the goal for observations had not been yet fulfilled, which is why it seemed relevant to maintain these observations until the end of the *practicum*. (Sousa, 2019, p.2)

3.5.1. Daily register grid

As an observation task, focusing on how students participated orally during lessons, proved essential to the research. Starting by taking notes of how often each student participated per lesson, and how many did, there was a clear tendency to, without being asked to, only the same five to ten students per class would participate spontaneously. Additionally, it was noted that the cooperating teacher would often take notes of the quality and quantity of participation, to reflect on which students should be asked to intervene more often. As a way to facilitate this necessary note-taking and research, an observation grid (see Appendix O) was subsequently developed to aid in the tracking of absences, homework completion, and oral participation.

The daily use grid (see Appendix O) was intended to facilitate the progress of learners as well as allow the teacher to identify individual needs and tendencies. The purpose of the grid can be fulfilled with daily and correct use. The grid foresees three aspects of student daily involvement: attendance, participation, and homework completion. Each student was assigned a row and, for each lesson (column), the teacher filled in the spaces according to the extent to which the students fulfilled expectations.

For the attendance column (“A”) the scoring system by levels is intended to be completed by the teacher as follows: A – Full attendance; B – Partial attendance or tardiness; C – Absent.

For the homework column (“H”) the scoring system by levels is intended to be completed as follows: A – Fully complete; B – Incomplete; C – Not fulfilled.

For the participation column (“P”) the scoring system by levels is intended to be completed as follows: A – Active participation and pertinence; B – Moderate or occasional participation and pertinence; C – Rare participation and pertinence.

Facilitating the necessary daily data collection not only allowed the teacher to avoid spending resources, such as time, to gather the information, but also contributed to the assessment of students as well as catering to the needs of the learners who consistently demonstrated hesitation in participation. Noticing the organized method of keeping track of progression applied by the teacher ultimately motivated learners towards spontaneous participation, rather than having to be called out. The scoring system for the participation facilitated the provision of continuous feedback, which normally would be scarce as the quality of in-class oral participation tends to be overlooked by both learners and educators.

3.5.2. Oral production assessment grid

During the first term of the *practicum*, to help the cooperating teacher with the assessment of oral presentations, which happened frequently, a need was felt to develop a tool that would aid in observation and assessment. Although a rubric had been created by the cooperating teacher to use while listening to oral presentations, and as a way to ensure students would later receive feedback on their performances, the teacher felt the need to resort to writing down notes of student performance, which often led to confusion and difficulty in organizing information.

With this in mind, it made sense to create an observation grid for group oral presentations (see Appendix P). The drafts suffered many alterations, as suggestions were written down by the cooperating teacher and the student teachers. Adjusting and adapting the observation grid for oral presentations depended on its regular use whenever collaboration tasks had, as the final product, an oral presentation.

Assessing with the same set of criteria, utilizing the same observation grid, and discussing observations made and level selections, was fundamental to perfecting the grid that now serves as a flexible assessment tool, bendable to different rubrics and contemplating levels of achievement, contributing to a more rigorous assessment of oral production.

By the end of the first term, having been experimented on and altered according to the observations of three teachers to assess the oral presentations of seventy-one students, a final version was attained, which was used during the lessons taught the following term. The observation grid for oral presentations consists of a row for the student's name, four other rows for criteria with four sub-rows that contemplate levels, which allow the teacher

to select the level achieved by the student for that component, and, finally, a row for observations, used to write down specific aspects to later on discuss with the student. This observation grid is dependent on a pre-defined rubric for the assessment of oral production, which entails that it can only be used to observe the fulfillment of the criteria set by the educator for a specific assessment.

During the second term, having already begun the teaching of lessons for the research, using the observation grid did in fact allow for organized assessment of oral production, especially for tasks such as oral presentations which, at times, would be no longer than three minutes. The briefness of some of the performances demanded the attention and organization of the assessor in order for the learner to receive the appropriate feedback besides the need to improve time management skills. It is relevant to mention that observation grids are to be used with the guidance of a rubric which is built based on the performance levels demanded for a specific task. This is to say that it must be adapted according to the selected criteria.

The continued use of the observation grid resulted in easier access to the learners' progressions or regressions. This was particularly relevant considering that the grid foresaw the number of criteria selected by the assessor, as well as the quality (level) achieved for each criterion. The cooperating teacher leveled performance using numbers, which meant that the observation grid, when applied, suffered natural alterations.

Additionally, besides being able to better analyze progression in oral skills throughout the year, the observation grid contributed the necessary data to provide detailed feedback to learners. The purpose of clarifying performance was precisely to contribute to the informed improvement of learners.

Ultimately, making use of the grid for the assessment of speaking skills through oral presentations contributed to a grounded assessment, allowed learners to improve performance through organized feedback, and allowed for the assessor to collect individualized data.

3.6. Teaching

During the second term, as scheduled, most lessons were conducted by the student teacher, which implied keeping attendance and managing the classroom. As required by

the *practicum*, while teaching the lessons, there was a profound involvement with the assessment of students while following the criteria established by the department.

During the teaching stage of the *practicum*, responsibilities extended to overseeing and teaching classes C and D – the participants of the research – while maintaining consistent observation of lessons across all four classes, in addition to the seventh year. Involvement by assisting the cooperating teacher as class director for Class A required tasks such as documenting minutes for the class councils, managing correspondence with students' guardians, overseeing the platform for evaluations, and monitoring student attendance and performance daily.

Furthermore, as the school year progressed, engagement with the community included the conducting of activities whose results were available for all to explore. For instance, in commemoration of the World Day of Social Justice, students were tasked with creating impactful posters advocating for global justice (see Appendix Q). After the necessary adjustments to the guidelines from the Department of Foreign Languages, all eleventh-year English teachers applied the same activity to their classes. The posters were exhibited in the common areas of the school.

During the first term of the *practicum*, besides completing the observation tasks, there was a gradual assigning of additional tasks to progressively introduce what was expected for the second term, when the student teachers were scheduled to start teaching.

At first, there were minimal suggestions for the cooperating teacher's lesson plans which consisted of materials and procedures that, due to their usefulness, were thought to be more engaging from the students' standpoint. Eventually, the time came to formally plan the diagnostic lesson, which would give the cooperating teacher information concerning what generally needed to be improved by the student teacher. This feedback motivated alterations to formal aspects of teaching such as lesson plan, usage, and exploration of materials, as well as to practical aspects of teaching as interaction with learners, language use, and overall posture.

The diagnostic lesson had to be inserted in the unit that was being addressed at the time, related to sustainability and environmentalism. With this in mind, and considering the previously selected materials, with approval from the cooperating teacher, the lesson plan focused on the topic of climate-friendly diets. Of all the lesson plans submitted

throughout the *practicum*, as expected, the diagnostic lesson plan suffered the most alterations resultant of the feedback provided by the cooperating teacher.

With each lesson taught, there was a noticeable increased confidence and comfort in accepting and applying feedback provided by the cooperating teacher. The diagnostic lesson was taught in Classes A, B, C, and D, during the month of October.

After conducting the diagnostic lesson, it was determined that for the second term lessons, for which the student teachers were to be responsible, the plans would focus on the unit on Multiculturalism. The topic allowed a significant amount of issues to be debated, as well as the inclusion of rich and distinct materials, focusing on current and up-to-date issues to which students were often exposed, especially through social media. Consequently, reflecting on how the learners' interest could be stimulated, incorporating innovative activities was essential.

With this in mind, a list of topics was drafted to base the lesson plans and presented to the cooperating teacher for feedback and approval. Although being a young student teacher had the disadvantage of taking longer to earn the students' trust and respect, it provided insight into the current topics being discussed on social media, different world views, controversial opinions, and online platforms that students were familiar with and unfamiliar with.

The generational gap between students and older teachers was often a topic thought about and impactful. Most of the topics presented to the cooperating teacher as possible themes for the lesson plans were either unknown to the cooperating teacher or seemed initially superficial. However, the cooperating teacher showed continuous and persistent interest in learning about new topics and, for the majority of the lessons, was excited to witness how students would react to the discussion of certain topics in the classroom.

Considering this, the lessons taught focused on the topics of immigration, human rights, racism, intersectional feminism, and freedom of speech. Knowing that students had encountered these topics in classrooms multiple times, the need to approach them creatively and sensibly was pressing. For instance, to enrich the discussion about human rights violations, taking advantage of the fact that the Football World Cup was taking place in Qatar, students were asked to reflect on the controversy surrounding human rights in countries such as Qatar (See Appendices R and S).

As mentioned previously, introducing new platforms in the classroom was essential to promote the engagement of students as well as keep heated discussions from straining from the topic. Controversial but current topics motivated even shyer students to participate in arguments and counterarguments. These discussions were spontaneous, which allowed a natural use and practice of the language, they also created a sense of intellectual safety inside the classroom that aided in collaboration tasks and, therefore, in the research process.

The topic of freedom of speech online and the concept of cancel culture thoroughly involved learners as it was requested reflection related to the online intervention of public figures. Since this particular age group has a strong online presence, they were familiar with the controversies and were able to agree, disagree, argue, and counter-argue where the line between freedom of speech and hate speech should be drawn.

Introducing distinct materials allowed for all the required vocabulary, grammar items, and writing practice to be completed without resorting to the course book. Needless to say, searching for materials and building lesson plans around them, while assuring the intended learning goals are achieved, was undoubtedly demanding.

Therewithal, the *practicum* had a salient role in more than improving lesson planning and conducting classes. With the cooperating teacher's guidance, the involvement with the school as a community from staff members to teachers and to students, was fundamental for the professional development of the student teacher.

3.7. Research and Results

The teaching stage of the *practicum* was additionally the moment to conduct the action research in order to try to answer the proposed research questions. The focus on the assessment of the process in collaboration had two perspectives: how learner perception of collaboration is affected by its assessment, as well as how formative assessment of the process, in group and pair work, can be carried out in the secondary English as a Foreign Language classroom.

To answer the first research question relating to learner perception, and considering the hesitation often felt by learners in carrying out collaboration, as mentioned in the literature review, it was fundamental to understand, in fact, what those perceptions were

and how they were possibly connected to the way educators conducted the assessment of collaboration. To gather this data, the questionnaire was chosen as the appropriate tool.

However, intending to provide an answer to the research question that refers to the application of assessment methods for collaboration, the rubric and observation grid were essential to gather data that allowed for reflection on their utility. Given that grouping learners was considered an essential pre-step to successful collaboration assessment the observation grid intended for grouping learners provided additional results discussed below.

When introducing the topic of the research to the cooperating teacher, assessing the process of collaboration, and therefore individual contribution, it was met with some inquisitions. Theory (Carnegie Mellon, n.d.; Fellenz, 2006; Vaca et al., 2011) points to the resistance that learners and educators feel toward typical collaboration, introducing the concept of observing the process for assessment naturally seemed to further motivate that resistance. Moreover, the most significant challenge when introducing the research topic in the classroom was the general difficulty in distinguishing individual performance in a collaborative task from collective performance. As in the early stages of the *practicum* the rubric for the assessment of the process (see Appendix H) was in development, this difficulty was evident.

3.7.1. Pre-assessment: grouping learners

Analyzing how the cooperating teacher conducted collaboration in the classroom during the first stages of the *practicum*, and witnessing the consequences of allowing learners to form their own groups, motivated the process described in the methodology chapter of the present report that led to the development of the observation grid for grouping learners (see Appendix I). It was noticeable that large groups were dysfunctional in different ways, and would ultimately fail to comply with the classroom rules and learning objectives. Most importantly, it would hinder the research process by complicating the necessary observation to make adjustments to groups and to assess. However, having seen the need to experiment with strategies for the grouping of learners, initially granting them the responsibility of forming groups offered valuable insight into the dynamics within the class, especially in observing participants naturally assume different roles, using the language, interacting, and working.

This freedom often meant that participants chose acquaintance over any other criteria. Joining forces with friends was preferred over reflecting on the useful skills and traits of different classmates. This often led to groups avoiding discussions in the foreign language and a laid-back approach to resolving tasks. Most groups chose one of the members – usually the most confident student – to record the findings, or final discussion, of the group, which often meant no other member contributed any information, language, or vocabulary. The classroom became excessively noisy which was worsened by the fact that collaboration was seen as an excuse to meet and talk to friends about unrelated topics. Assessing collaboration in this context proved to be challenging as participants would disregard the purpose of the task. Additionally, the environment created inside the classroom, as a consequence of these groupings, made it almost impossible to observe to assess. Consequently, the thought process behind the grouping of learners progressed throughout the research. Although the ultimate aim was to understand how educators could intervene in group formation to potentiate learner performance in collaborative tasks, the initial stages of research required learners to form their own groups. The data resulting from this autonomy was essential to study the interaction of participants while solving the task, with the groups selected by them.

By this phase of the research, to fulfill the need for reflection that paralleled observation, the observation grid for the grouping of learners (see Appendix I) allowed for organized data collection which contributed to informed decision-making each time participants were grouped. According to the dynamics observed, positive and negative, pairs and groups were adjusted to find a better formula to form groups or pairs that would potentiate mixed abilities. Recognizing the need for a structured approach for the grouping of learners, as suggested by the literature (Burke, 2011; Carroll et al., 2019), was a motivation behind the development of the observation grid (see Appendix I). This data tool was expected to guide the observation, note-taking, and decision-making. It promoted the enrichment of the research, as it allowed for multiple approaches to be experimented with to select and verify which would be the most appropriate: grouping according to the learners' preference, grouping according to communication skills, and finally, grouping according to the learners' skills and abilities.

In the first stages of grouping, participants were grouped according to their communicative capacities, as there was an attempt to group shyer students with more outgoing students. The results of these initial groupings included imbalances in

performance as groups made with outgoing and shy students often meant that learners with the same skills, or lack of, would be grouped and therefore would not benefit from working with learners of different abilities. This showed that the communicative capacity of participants was not the only criterion directly linked to the success of the assessment of the group, as plenty groups needed adjustments based on overall performance, rather than just distinct or complementary communication skills.

The results of the observation demonstrated that groups tended to be more successful when students were grouped according to their skills and abilities. The following excerpts were retrieved from the observations made on the observation grid for grouping learners, about the same participant (A) on two separate occasions.

“[Participant A] is doing all the work and research (doesn’t seem to mind), [Participant B] is talking about other topics, using the phone to check social media.”

“[Participant C] and [Participant A]: good dynamic, both working and discussing, frequently asking for teacher feedback to make sure they’re doing it correctly.”

On the first occasion, participants were allowed to choose their own pairs and naturally, most chose their friends, which were often sitting next to each other. As these participants were used to collaborating in most subjects, the pattern of uneven work and interaction seemed natural and consented. On the second occasion, pairs were selected according to their skills. Although not often seen interacting outside or inside the classroom, Participant A, with excellent results in writing assessments, and Participant B, very outspoken and argumentative, produced an interesting and balanced interaction.

Therefore, for the groupings, and considering the participants’ profiles, the use of language skills (writing, speaking, and listening), proactivity, logic, and creativity were all taken into account to create groups as heterogeneous as possible, which not only motivated shyer students to contribute but also ultimately produced better interaction.

3.7.2. Assessing the process

Applying the rubric implied discussing it, as well as discussing the concept of process assessment with the learners. Although initially a foreign concept, the reception was welcoming and, even before discussing the criteria of the rubric with the participants, there was a noted general increased effort during the process of task resolution, not before seen.

Discussing and explaining the criteria to the learners led to questions that were mostly about the process of assessment, especially regarding the levels of achievement (A, B, C and D) and how they would be reflected on the final marks. Participants displayed some hesitation towards grading with letters, rather than numbers. This initial obstacle was overcome by providing explanations, as participants became comfortable with the rubric, and understanding it allowed them to improve through guided reflection.

From the assessor's standpoint, the clear but concise level descriptors were fundamental for the application of the rubric. From observing participants engaging in collaboration to assessing it, the rubric brought clarity to an otherwise difficult task. This clarity extended from the assessor to the participants, as they reflected on the grading levels to understand what needed improvement.

The use of the observation grid for the assessment of the process showed improvements in the participants' assessment. The results of the observation grids pointed to the conclusion that assessing the process was a foreign concept to the participants as it was to the teachers. Nevertheless, analyzing the individual and collective progress of the participants throughout the tasks has displayed results worth discussing.

3.7.2.1. Communication criterion

As for the observation grids, participants displayed the most development in the criterion reflecting communication. The skill that involved active listening and providing constructive feedback was quickly understood by participants as observation revealed the effort even shyer students made to be able to share their ideas and do so in the foreign language.

Table 4

Initial and final levels registered for the communication criterion.

Participant	Initial Level (January)	Final Level (May)
#1	B	B
#2	C	B
#3	D	C
#4	C	A
#5	B	A
#6	A	A
#7	B	B
#8	C	B
#9	A	A
#10	C	B
#11	B	B
#12	A	B
#13	B	B
#14	A	A
#15	D	B
#16	B	A
#17	B	B
#18	D	C
#19	D	C
#20	B	A
#21	B	A
		57% Improvement 5% Decline

Although assessing using the rubric was initially challenging and demanding, the results displayed by the observation grid indicate noteworthy progress among participants. Overall, the trend of improvement is reflected particularly by learners who improved their initial levels (12) or maintained levels A and B (6). Additionally, some participants made significant improvements, moving two levels in some cases (4).

This progression reflects that, more often, discussions were held in the foreign language as participants were aware of the weight of the quality of the discussion held. Additionally, the classes when the collaborative tasks took place, after the introduction of the rubric, became increasingly organized as participants invested in organization and role assignment.

3.7.2.2. Cooperation criterion

Additionally, sharing the rubric with the participants and discussing the importance of cooperation was relevant for participants to adapt to the expectations of the criterion, as they worked in groups or pairs organized by the teacher, which sometimes meant working with peers with whom they shared no common interests.

Table 5

Initial and final levels registered for the cooperation criterion.

Participant	Initial Level (January)	Final Level (May)
#1	C	B
#2	B	B
#3	C	C
#4	A	A
#5	B	B
#6	B	B
#7	C	C
#8	C	B
#9	A	A
#10	B	B
#11	C	B
#12	A	A
#13	B	A
#14	B	A
#15	D	D
#16	A	A
#17	C	B
#18	D	C
#19	D	B
#20	B	B
#21	A	A
		38% Improvement 0% Decline

The data displayed on the table points to the varied levels of improvement, which although not as significant as the ones observed for the communication criterion, are equally relevant – out of the 21 participants, eight improved. The performance improved throughout the observation, despite there being conflicts in the early stages, which progressively dissipated either since learners made an active effort to improve or got used to working with different peers and learned how to manage the conflict that it necessarily entailed.

3.7.2.3. Commitment criterion

Participants who were commonly easily distracted during lessons manifested the same traits when conducting pair or group work, not displaying significant progress in their attention to detail, which can be a result of the lack of rigor of the participants.

Table 6

Initial and final levels registered for the commitment criterion.

Participant	Initial Level (January)	Final Level (May)
#1	A	A
#2	A	A
#3	A	A
#4	B	A
#5	C	B
#6	B	A
#7	B	B
#8	C	C
#9	C	B
#10	A	A
#11	B	B
#12	A	B
#13	B	A
#14	A	B
#15	C	B
#16	A	A
#17	A	A
#18	B	B
#19	A	A
#20	D	B
#21	A	A
		33% Improvement 5% Decline

3.7.2.4. Contribution criterion

It is relevant to mention that the static criteria of the rubric (communication, cooperation, and commitment) became easier to observe and assess for the teacher and to improve for the learners, through feedback and repetition. The contribution criterion, possibly due to its dynamic nature and consequent adaptation to each task, displayed more irregular results as participants experienced a plurality of tasks. Consequently, for the contribution criterion, due to its adaptability according to the task, progression was not linear as participants displayed different results according to the typology of the task. For example, participants #3, #5, #6, #9, #14, #17, and #18 were attributed both level D and level A in different moments.

In conclusion, the use of the rubric and the observation grid grounded the assessment of observation and contributed to the conclusions that might motivate further research and adaptation. Ultimately, and from the perspective of assessing the process, the results of assessing with the rubric were the consistency in assessment, which can be seen in the tables above and which, with time, indicated that assessing the process with the use of this tool and clear and stable criteria fosters consistency and might facilitate how the assessment of process is conducted over time.

Additionally, the participants' improvement points to the result that the rubric and its criteria effectively guided participants to achieve the outcomes established. The use of the rubric aligned to the observation grid allowed consistency in assessment which facilitated the evaluation of participant progression. These improvements greatly improved motivation and attitude towards collaboration, as participants looked forward to collaboration tasks and feedback.

3.7.3. Perception of collaboration: questionnaire

The questionnaire (see Appendix N) gathered data that helped gain insight into how today's students perceive group work and how that perception is related to its assessment. The results of the questionnaire seem exceptionally important given the age group of participants, who neared the end of mandatory schooling, and therefore were expected to have a broader perspective.

While lessons were conducted in two classes (C and D), the questionnaire, requiring written consent (see Appendices J, K, and L), enlisted twenty-one participants. The questionnaire was distributed at the beginning of the scheduled lesson, on paper. Participants were told the questionnaire was anonymous and asked not to identify themselves. The data collected and presented below is the result of all questionnaires filled anonymously and correctly. Participants required fifteen minutes to complete the questionnaire and rarely sought vocabulary clarifications. Nevertheless, no interruptions or disruptions were noted.

3.7.3.1. Questions one through five

For the first question, questioned about the likability of group and pair work, productivity, and participation, the participants displayed the following preferences through the levels of the Likert scale:

Table 7

Participant preferences for questions one through five.

Question	Scale	Strongly Agree	%	Agree	%	Uncertain	%	Disagree	%	Strongly Disagree	%
1. "I enjoy working in pairs."		8	38	11	52	2	10	0	0	0	0
2. "I enjoy working in groups."		7	33	7	33	3	14	4	19	0	0
3. "I learn from group projects."		3	14	9	43	7	33	2	10	0	0
4. "When I work in a group/pair not every member contributes equally."		5	24	8	38	4	19	4	19	0	0
5. "I am consistently informed of what the assessment criteria are when I do a group project in English lessons."		7	33	9	43	4	19	1	5	0	0

Participants displayed a preference for pair work (90%) over group work (66%).

When questioned about learning during group tasks, 10% disagreed with the statement, while more than half (57%) agreed. Additionally, 62% of participants said that not all members of groups and pairs contribute equally to the task and 76% of participants declared they were informed of assessment criteria when conducting group or pair work.

These results point to the fact that although, for other reasons, participants may not enjoy collaborating in groups, there is still a degree of recognition of the productivity and effectiveness of group work for learning or developing skills. Recognizing the educational or cognitive value of collaboration points to the fact that, despite personal likes or dislikes, it was possible to understand what caused this hesitation or distaste and correct the practices that led to it. From the results of this section of the questionnaire, not only is it observable that most participants have a unanimous perception of group work, displaying similar hesitations and preferences, but it is also recognized by a vast majority that not all members of the group contribute equally to the task. This points to the

importance of distinguishing individual contributions in the assessment, in order to ensure accountability.

3.7.3.2. Question six

The sixth question of the questionnaire asked participants about criteria they thought should be considered when students are assessed for group or pair work. Multiple selections were allowed and encouraged. The results are the following:

Table 8

Participant responses to question six.

Skills	Students	%
“Communication skills (speaks calmly and can share ideas clearly and concisely).”	21	100
“Interaction (listens to a partner and answers reciprocally/ contributes positively to discussions).”	20	95
“Creativity (has innovative ideas).”	19	91
“Participation (contributes equally to the project/ is involved in the discussions).”	19	91
“Use of Language (Uses English to express themselves, uses varied vocabulary and correct grammar).”	18	86
“Leadership skills (shows the ability to organize the group and distribute tasks).”	11	52

Participants demonstrated a unanimous consensus on the importance of communication skills for the development of collaborative tasks. From the assessment standpoint, it can be seen that learners associate successful collaboration with the ability to make good use of communication skills. Most participants agreed on the importance of interaction, which seems natural as it goes hand in hand with communication. Leadership skills were the least selected criterion, although more than half the participants considered it important.

In question 6.2, the participants were asked to suggest other criteria that they considered should additionally be assessed. Some participants opted not to answer this question, as they considered the suggested criteria enough.

Table 9

Distribution of answers to question 6.2 according to typology.

Typology	Students	%
Provided suggestion(s)	10	48
Considered the suggestions enough	7	33
Did not provide an answer	4	19

Participants who opted for suggesting additional criteria did so by mentioning effort and dedication (10%), exploration or respect of the scope of the topic (10%), research (10%), and cooperation or peer relations (10%).

Less than half of the participants opted to provide more options. Those who did answer, demonstrated the importance of personal effort being reflected in assessment which, once again, reveals the importance of considering individual performance in the assessment of group or pair work. Additionally, participants mentioned the importance of assessing the degree of cooperation and interaction, which, once again, is strongly related to the importance given to effectiveness in communication. Communication, and its quality, were the criteria most mentioned by the participants which indicates that, to some extent, participants recognize the importance of having the process reflected in the assessment of collaboration.

3.7.3.3. Question seven

Question 7, required a ‘yes’ or ‘no’ response, as well as a justification. The objective was to understand if the participants enjoyed doing pair/ group work in the classroom (in opposition to outside the classroom). 71% of participants revealed their preference for collaborating in a classroom context.

Participants grounded their responses on the following:

- Working closely provides focus and organization.
- All members have equal participation opportunities.
- When the teacher groups learners, the process is dynamic, interactive, and diverse.
- Facilitates learning.

- Development of language and communication skills.
- Closeness to the teacher as a resource.

Participants who stated a preference for classroom collaboration seem to have mentioned the positive aspects as justifications for conducting collaboration in the classroom. From the justifications provided by participants, it can be observed that there was a recognition of the importance of the organization and order of the classroom for the development of successful collaboration. Additionally, participants provided reasons related to fairness and equality which refer to the importance of considering the process in assessment, as well as individual performance. The access to the teacher as a resource was an additional, but relevant aspect that once again participants mentioned as an advantage that is also mentioned in the literature (Spratt, 2011).

Participants who revealed they did not enjoy working in pairs and groups in the classroom – 29% – justified their choice with the following:

- High possibility of disagreements.
- Discomfort with teacher surveillance.
- Noisy classroom.
- Social anxiety interfering with interaction.

Participants who stated dislike for classroom collaboration also mentioned dislike for teacher monitoring, which the learners possibly associate with being assessed and lack of freedom. Some mentioned the possibility of the classroom becoming too noisy, which is related to teacher surveillance, and can and must be resolved, for collaboration to be effective. From the participants' responses, the most significant improvements to be made to collaboration in the classroom were management and organization. Improving these aspects would then be fundamental to ensure even the learners with negative preconceptions could enjoy and benefit from collaboration. Additionally, it calls for a change in the participants' perception of assessment, from threatening to essential.

3.7.3.4. Question eight

For question 8, when questioned about completing collaboration tasks outside the classroom, 57% responded positively. The participants mentioned:

- Development of organization skills,
- A higher degree of independence from peers and teachers.

- Spending extra time with friends.
- Lack of teacher involvement.

However, the remainder of the participants 43%, revealed a negative response, stating:

- The distribution of tasks is uneven.
- Difficulty in organization.
- Less collaboration.
- Uneven workload for the same assessment.

Although the majority of participants revealed enjoyment for collaboration outside the classroom context, the justifications provided included independence from the teacher or lack of involvement in the process overall. Nevertheless, some mentioned the importance of developing useful skills such as socialization and organization. The participants who did not respond positively mentioned the negative aspects of collaboration that surge whenever learners conduct unstructured pair or group work.

Comparing the results of questions seven and eight, it was clear that participants displayed a preference for collaborating in the classroom, which suggests that, to some degree, participants recognized the opportunities and advantages that can arise from it (with an organized environment and access to resources, the engagement with teachers and peers).

3.7.3.5. Question nine

As for question 9, inquiring if participants would prefer to be assigned an individual mark when working in groups, 90% answered positively. Additionally, 86% of participants justified their answers.

Participant A stated, “I think it should be a mix of both: a part of the grade from the work (PowerPoint for example) if it’s done correctly and accurately, and an individual from the presentation (if it’s an oral presentation) or contribution to the overall work (if it’s a PowerPoint) having 0 if they didn’t do the anything. (Individual grade should be worth more than group for example 5 points (group) – 15 (individual))”.

According to Participant B, “In group work, the whole team should be given a mark for the work itself but each person should have a little bit better or little worse mark

based on their presentation. I believe this because the participation of individuals depends on the conditions and other people: for example, if two people come up with a great idea but one of them says it first and assumes a leadership role, they are assumed to have done a better job than the others, while in other situations the other person could have done that. Also, for there to be a leading person, others have to be lead, otherwise, there's just chaos."

According to Participant C, "Yes because usually not all the members participate equally and sometimes it is not fair to have the same marks as the ones who barely participated."

According to Participant D, "In my opinion, group projects should be divided into 2 parts. 1 part to mark the group creativity for instance and other to give individual marks."

According to Participant E, "Yes, absolutely yes! Teachers have to have the ability to know which members worked the hardest and which members did literally nothing."

The quotes above were selected to demonstrate how the most articulate participants responded to being asked about a possibility not often discussed: assessing collaboration individually, and how it contributes to the way it is, or should be, conducted.

However, participants who answered negatively to the statement (10%) mentioned:

"No, because if it is supposed to be a group project each group should decide how to define roles and at the end be assessed for the product they present. One mark for the whole group is more appropriate given it's a group work." (Participant F).

Participant G stated "I only defend this method only if there is a big discrepancy between classmates."

Participant H mentioned a different aspect: "I think teachers should, but I wouldn't like because I would be harmed by my difficulties and I would feel bad with myself."

Most participants mentioned that the mark learners are assigned when collaborating should be a hybrid result of both collective and individual performance. They based this statement often on fairness, as it was perceived that often when a task involved collaboration to some degree, the workload was unbalanced – which the

participants mentioned was due to purposeful avoidance from peers (rather than, for example, uneven distribution of tasks or lack of organization).

Although participants seemed aware, through their answers to question 9, that peers tended to avoid equal distribution of work, when asked to form groups or pairs in other contexts, participants always grouped with the same peers, knowing that “slacking off” was a habit of them.

Participants who answered negatively to the possibility of individual assessment revealed hesitation towards the attribution of roles. Fearing that peers who naturally assumed leadership roles would benefit in contrast to those who embodied other skills and took on different roles.

CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION

Assessing through observation is a demanding task that has positive results when conducted appropriately and with the correct tools. To answer the research question, “How can formative assessment of the process of group and pair work, be carried out in the secondary English as a foreign language classroom?” the rubric and observation grids were essential to collecting and analyzing data, as well as recognizing patterns in the findings. Additionally, the results of the questionnaire proved essential to analyze and draw conclusions as to what the opinions of learners are, regarding the assessment of collaborative learning, as well as its conduction from criteria to instructions.

1. How can formative assessment of the process, in group and pair work, be carried out in the secondary English as a Foreign Language classroom?

1.1. Pre-assessment: grouping learners

Although participants were not directly questioned about group or pair formation, most mentioned it in their responses to the open-ended questions of the questionnaire. When asked to justify the reason for enjoying collaborating in the classroom, teacher grouping was considered an advantage, contrary to what was expected. As mentioned previously, developing a rationale for grouping and pairing learners was an essential pre-step to assessment which ultimately facilitated it.

Given that when participants were allowed to form their own groups or pairs, all chose to work with the closest friends, it came as a surprise to verify some might prefer it differently. Allowing learners to construct their groups without providing directions and expectations, is discouraged by literature (Burke, 2011; Carroll et al., 2019) and proved to be, during this research, a liability to the learners’ performance and assessment.

Most participants revealed a wish to be assigned an individual mark (or part of it), justifying it with the concept of fairness in recognizing individual effort, as not all members of the group tended to partake equally in the solving of tasks. Although participants displayed awareness of uneven effort, they continued to work with the same peers, as it provided a few minutes to discuss several topics unrelated to the task at hand.

The results of experimenting with grouping learners according to their abilities proved to be far more successful for the development of the process as well as the assessment. Although learners often resist or hesitate to work in previously decided

groupings (by the teacher) to ensure the success of the task and of the assessment it is fundamental that the teacher does have some involvement in the process, as it ultimately contributes to more successful collaboration. Allowing learners to form their own groups or pairs negatively impacts the dynamic of the group and often, using the rubric to assess the process, proved to be challenging as the participants disregarded the purpose of the task and had difficulties focusing on the criteria established when working with friends.

1.2. Assessment of the process

Finding strategies to assess the process of collaborative learning was the main focus of this research. Initially, during the observation period of the *practicum*, it became evident that the majority of learners had the perception that the assessment of group or pair work was exclusively done by analyzing the product or result of the task.

It was challenging to reeducate learners and to discuss the topic of collaborative learning with other teachers, as most believed it served the purpose of encouraging students to be responsible for their learning, which entailed that collaboration be conducted outside the classroom, to promote student autonomy and organization skills.

Collaboration can indeed be carried out outside the classroom and away from teacher surveillance, nevertheless, some might argue that improving student autonomy depends on the presence and intervention of the teacher rather than their absence (Han, 2021). If collaboration is perceived as a means to improve social interaction, then it is possible to assume that it can be achieved by communication with the educator, especially considering the role of education in socialization.

The relationship between educators and learners is a stage for incredibly relevant interactions that can even contribute to the motivation of learners (Han, 2021). Therefore, it can be suggested that working and collaborating within the classroom might do more for the improvement of learner autonomy and organization than outside.

Additionally, observing the cooperating teacher in the first stages of the *practicum* made it evident that learners needed to be re-educated towards a format of collaboration that served more purposes beyond assessing oral production, especially in the foreign language classroom.

An essential part of this research was, then, to assess the participants' interactions when solving a task. However, this observation required previous organization and a strict

set of objectives the researcher intends to fulfill with the observation. Being that the research focuses on assessing the process of group and pair work, setting students up for success was essential for the goals to be reached. At first, when students were initially allowed to form their groups, a series of expected events took place.

As has been explored in the literature (Burke, 2011; Carroll et al., 2019; Jacobs et. al 1997; Parameswaran, 2013), through the research presented in the present result, presenting tasks and assessments that students are unfamiliar with requires, above all, that students be aware of expectations. Nevertheless, and considering the progressive move towards student-centered classrooms, learners are dependent on the educator to set criteria, and expectations, and help them achieve success. One of the main conclusions that can be drawn from the observation conducted is that the educator has an active role in helping learners value the work that is done in the process of reaching a final product.

This contribution not only requires that educators set students up for success, but it ultimately proves to be essential as, as shown previously by the observation grids' results, valuing the process results in the growth of learners beyond the curricular contents. Fundamentally, setting students up for success requires that this integration of tasks and assessments be paralleled with constant feedback that provides learners with advice to improve their roles within collaborative tasks contemplating more than the presentation of a final product. When students were made aware of what was expected from groups and individuals during the process through the rubric, their confidence, organization skills, and overall the results of tasks, improved progressively and most students felt comfortable knowing that feedback wouldn't be exclusively related to the final product. It is significant that we introduce the assessment of the process of collaborative tasks to our classrooms, especially when the advantages – learner success – outweigh the disadvantages – an increase in workload for educators.

Future research requires that the strategies to assess individual contribution to collective tasks be further explored inside the classroom, as creating criteria and assessment tools that foresee the distinction between learners individually and collectively is inherently complex. Deepening this research necessarily requires that researchers further investigate the integration of collective tasks within formative assessment practices which benefits greatly from the inclusion of assessment tools that are directed towards the assessment of the process. Additionally, it is relevant for future

research to approach the difficulty of assessing the process in collaboration when educators intend it to be conducted partially or fully outside the classroom.

Researching the assessment of collaboration, particularly focusing on individual contributions required the use of a series of investigation tools that illustrated student perceptions of collaborative work assessment, the reaction to different criteria, and the success of that assessment. Observation was a key aspect of this research that presented interesting results but whose analysis is challenging but of extreme relevance. As mentioned earlier in the present report, collaboration presents advantages from the academic and social development standpoints, it is only then relevant to conclude that providing individual assessment and feedback is mandatory to ensure the success of learners.

The limitations of the rubric used require that it be further adapted according to the task at hand. Although the criterion for contribution was foreseen to be adaptable to the task, for smaller tasks, the rubric proved to be too complex as the teacher often had difficulty in the assessment of all learners in only one session. The rubric used and proposed proved to be useful for tasks that required progressive completion (for example groups and pairs focusing on a more complex task throughout several sessions). However, the improvement shown by learners through the observation grids shows that assessing the process has advantages that cannot be overlooked and therefore future research may focus on the adaptation of the rubric to smaller tasks.

Additionally, the results also suggest that this necessary adaptation of the rubric, for both longer and shorter tasks, must increase the value and importance of the use of the foreign language in the assessment. Although participants did improve communication and speaking skills, it may be important for purposes of assessment to clearly mention the use of the foreign language in the assessment criteria.

Finally, from the results of the research as well as the application of *practicum* teachings, assessing the process demands that educators and learners be equally open-minded. Particularly, teachers must weigh the benefits of conducting collaboration and fully assess it, that is, providing feedback through all steps of the learners' progress that relate to collaboration, from process to product. Conducting it successfully implies involvement in grouping learners and thorough observation that relies on reliable tools such as observation grids and rubrics, and involving learners in their assessment through

feedback that ultimately results in well-rounded learners not just in the foreign language classroom, but in all collaborative contexts.

2. How is learner perception of collaboration affected by its assessment?

The results of the research have helped uncover some of the aspects of the formative assessment of collaborative learning which, at times, cause hesitation in educators and learners to conduct collaboration projects. The results of the questionnaire focused on participant perception of group and pair work, in the way it is often conducted, and how it was affected by assessment.

The participants' preference for pair work over group work is a consequence of how collaboration (particularly group work) and its assessment is conducted. Considering some of the dislikes stated by the responses, more than half of the participants still admit to learning from collaboration. So, if there is in fact learning productivity, the results point to the fact that their dislike does not particularly relate to learning, but rather points to other possible factors.

Learners seem to prefer avoiding collaboration, although they are aware of its educational value. The results of the research show that most participants recognize that one of the problems that occurs most often within the setting of collaborative learning is that of members who do not contribute equally to the resolution of the task.

However, participants disclosed that, from their standpoint, fair and just collaboration results only from all members of the group contributing exactly with the same type of task and role. The participants failed to realize that participating equally in a collaborative setting is not equivalent to all members doing research or presenting results. Students can and must distribute different roles within the same groups to take advantage of a plurality of skills and abilities. This lack of knowledge from participants, which is a direct consequence of a lack of clear and informative instructions on how to conduct successful collaboration from educators, can explain some of the participants' hesitation toward collaboration.

As mentioned previously, instructing students on how to conduct successful collaborative work is essential to ensure that they gain knowledge and skills, as supposedly intended. Nevertheless, when participants were questioned regarding whether or not they were consistently informed of assessment criteria for group work conducted

in English lessons, most participants answered positively, indicating that, to some degree, they had been informed of what the expectations for their performance were. However, these results show that although the assessment criteria had previously been shared, there were still perceptions revealed by the questionnaire that can be explained through the fact the criteria only referred to the final product or there was previously no training conducted to instruct learners on how to manage and conduct the process.

When asked about the criteria that should be considered when assessing collaboration, all participants considered that communication is a relevant indicator of the success of a group or pair. However, the concept of communication may be perceived differently among participants, researchers, and educators. From a student's perspective, communication might just refer to how the groups present the results of their collaboration, communicating orally. To some, it might also mean how well the members communicate amongst themselves. Nevertheless, from both perspectives, the quality of communication was indeed considered an essential criterion, reflective of a group's quality.

With this in mind, the participants' consideration of the quality of interaction as an essential criterion was unanimous. This result seems to show that, to some extent, participants consider that the degree of healthy involvement of groups and pairs, overcoming personal and interactional challenges, should be considered in the assessment.

The criterion least voted by participants was leadership skills. The negative responses given to question 9, where it was suggested the possibility of assigning part of the mark individually, revealed that some participants perceive the distribution of roles as a hindering factor. Participants related the concept of leadership to competition between members, which is deemed unfair for students with lesser skills for leading. This result suggests that possibly participants have not conducted collaboration resorting to a distribution of even roles where, for example, the leader is as valuable as the graphic designer or the researcher. The idea that fair collaboration exists only when all members of the group do the same tasks and have the same roles seems to be deeply rooted in the participants' minds, which requires the reeducation of learners and preadaptation of the criteria used by educators to assess collaboration.

When asked to suggest other criteria, the participants mentioned staying on topic, use of language, and creativity. This suggests that a percentage of participants have a limited view of what formats collaboration can take, mostly because students are used to exclusively being assessed on the product of their work, neglecting the aspects of collaboration that led to that product.

The responses to questions 7 and 8 point to the same conclusion. Although the majority of participants reveal enjoying collaborating in the classroom, the participants who do not, or prefer working outside the classroom, justify so by mentioning aspects of collaboration that, according to literature and research, should not be part of it. Disagreements are present in all tasks that involve more than one student, which can be resolved by providing learners with tools to resolve conflict and promote negotiation. Another heavily mentioned aspect is the discomfort with teacher surveillance, which the learners who enjoy collaborating in the classroom consider an advantage. Perceiving the teacher as a resource was common among participants who vouched for part of the assessment to be individualized.

Participants seem to relate working inside the classroom to closer management and aid from the teacher. The minority of participants who stated it as a disadvantage argue that working in close quarters with the teacher and peers means that they have to work through conflict, rather than avoiding it, and some prefer to do all the work alone, rather than collaborating. The justifications given by participants against working in the classroom are mostly related to the fact that working near the teacher and in the same space as peers does not allow students to avoid collaboration. However, some participants seem to recognize the educational purpose of collaboration, while recognizing that classrooms become harder to manage when students work together, and that collaboration is a challenge for students with social anxiety, as well as other personality traits that make it a challenge to collaborate overall.

Although the reflection of participants revealed interest in considering collaboration as more complex than the final result itself, the valorization of the product over the process is still evident in the responses and calls for an adaptation and modernization of the assessment of group and pair work.

Learners model and adapt their performance according to what is expected of them. As suggested by literature, establishing criteria and making it clear to learners is

essential to shape their views on assessment and the learning process. Only when learners are aware that their contribution to the product is as valuable as its quality, can they employ strategies and effort that allow them to achieve the learning objectives of collaboration, in addition to the learning objectives of the subject. For example, applying collaboration in a foreign language classroom, valuing both process and product, is essential in the development of language skills, as suggested by literature (Jacobs et al., 1997; Oxford, 1997; Spratt, 2011).

The participants were able to recognize the advantages of collaborating in the classroom, besides assessment. They also recognized the educational advantages of collaborating outside the classroom such as perfecting organization skills and time management. However, most participants who stated they enjoyed collaborating outside the classroom, show, once again, that their preference is unrelated to learning and a way to escape from actual collaboration. These participants mention less pressure to conform to norms and the possibility of each member working independently. Nevertheless, upon reflection, some of the participants consider collaboration outside the classroom to have plenty of disadvantages. These disadvantages (uneven distribution of tasks, difficulty to organize, peers who never meet and end up working alone or not working at all) seem to show that participants consider teacher presence essential for collaborative learning, as it helps them to stay focused and secure that the teacher is closely monitoring and assessing performance, rather than just expecting the presentation of the product at a set date.

In regards to the research question, the possibility of assessing the process entails that the teacher is focused on individual contribution – in whatever form appropriate according to the type of task – which naturally results in individual feedback. When participants were asked if they would consider it an advantage to have individual feedback or marks, unexpectedly, most agreed. Participants even suggested that a collaborative learning task should be assessed in more than one dimension, where an individual mark and a collective one, for the group or pair, should be combined into a final result, which goes per the literature and research available on the topic (Carnegie Mellon, n.d.). One of the participants even mentioned that teachers must have the ability to assess individual contributions, which means that, to some extent, the participants recognize the need for traditional collaboration formats to be adapted for students to be valued for their contributions and guided through the aspects of collaboration that are yet to be improved.

To conclude, the results of the questionnaire shed light on how the participants' opinion about collaboration are impacted by the way assessment is conducted. The most significant indicators were: the preference for pair work over group work (which relates to issues of unequal contribution as it was recognized that fair collaboration requires equal contribution); the fact that although assessment criteria were shared, participants recognized shortcomings related to the fact that the criteria was possibly related only to the quality of the product, participants may question the effectiveness of collaboration; the preference for individual assessment indicates a desire for the recognition of individual performance, when participants perceive that their efforts are not recognized they may develop negative attitudes.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: Segment of first lesson plan contemplating collaboration tasks

Unit 4: Multiculturalism
2nd Term, 2023
Carolina de Sousa
Nº 1, 2, and 3 - Vocabulary



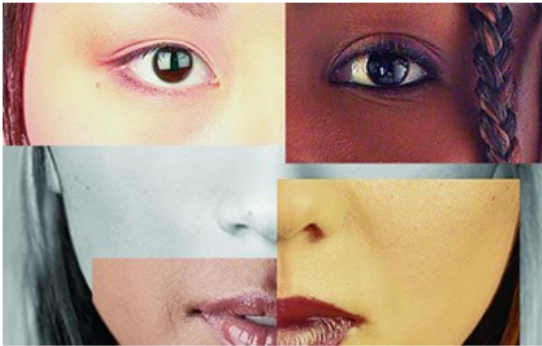
Lesson 2

Learning objectives	Procedures	Interaction	Time	Materials
Explain the thought process behind the answer	✚ Warm up: The teachers asks pairs to share the result of their discussion.	Whole Class	10'	Worksheet 1
Interpret an infographic Infer the meaning of numeric data Compare a piece of writing to factual data Assess the validity of an opinion	✚ Pre-reading: The teacher gives students an infographic for pair analysis related to the demographic of U.S. society and explains to students how to read and retract information from an infographic. ✚ Students are asked to relate their comment to the quote with the information presented on the infographic based on the guiding questions: - Does the data on the graphic confirm your opinion? - How? ✚ Students share their answers with the class.	Pair Work Whole Class	15'	Worksheet 1 (2)

Appendix B: Example of task for collaborative discussion and analysis

3. In pairs, read, reflect on, and discuss the following quote from the video:

The population of the world is becoming increasingly mixed.

This image shows a blank sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

Appendix C: Example of task for collaborative discussion and analysis

4.1. Does the data presented on the infographic confirm or refute your opinion? How?

Appendix D: Example of task for collaborative discussion and analysis



- A. How are the struggles of the maid from the clip of the movie “The Help” (2011) different from those of the woman who hires her?**

Appendix E: Example of task for collaborative discussion and analysis

E. Read the following instructions about the assignment:

- With your pair, you will be designing and editing your own informative TikTok about the Human Rights violations that have been happening in Iran, Afghanistan or another country you would like to mention.
- Produce a 30 second TikTok with information, videos, or photographs alerting and informing about the violations pertaining to women's rights or others you find relevant.
- You must retrieve the information from reputable sources or news outlets.
- If you are not familiarized with the app, or you do not have an account, feel free to use other platforms (video editing apps, Instagram reels, and/or YouTube shorts).
- Save the draft of the video and send it to the teachers' emails () & for any corrections necessary and to later share them with the class!



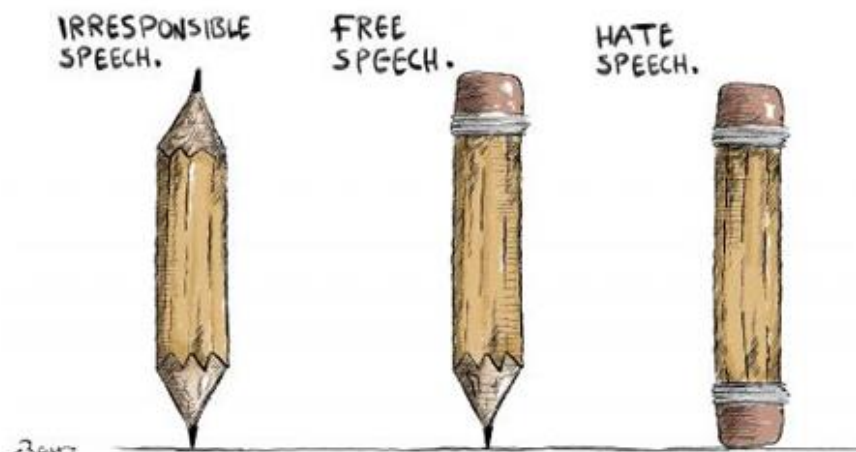
Important reminder: you mustn't record your voice or use your image in your TikTok for privacy reasons!

Appendix F: Segment of lesson plan approaching freedom of speech online

Discuss divergent opinions within a group Deduce meaning from a visual text Produce a response that reflects the group's divergent opinions	 Writing activity: Students work in groups of three to analyze the cartoon on Worksheet 10 and start answering question 3 a): <i>In your group's opinion, what is the difference between irresponsible speech and hate speech?</i>	Group Work	7'	Worksheet 10
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Appendix G: Example of task for collaborative discussion and analysis

- 3) After having discussed the concept of 'Cancel Culture', analyze the following cartoon with your group.



Rafat Alkhatib, retracted from: <https://cartoonmovement.com/cartoon/good-bad-and-ugly-0>

- b) What message did the author of the cartoon intend to spread about freedom of speech?

Appendix H: Rubric for the assessment of the process



Rubric – Assessing the process in Collaborative Learning



Skills	A Exceeds expectations	B Meets expectations	C Improving	D Needs improvement
Contribution (Should be adapted to the task)	Always contributes to discussions and volunteers to help.	Usually contributes to discussions and, at times volunteers to help.	Rarely contributes to discussions and has to be asked to help.	Avoids contributing to discussions and does not volunteer to help.
Cooperation	Makes a consistent effort to avoid or resolve conflict, and to keep discussions productive. Is always focused and has high expectations for the group.	Often avoids conflict and seldom gets distracted. Has expectations for the group.	Does not make an effort to resolve conflict, rarely keeps discussions productive. Is often distracted and the group's performance is not a priority.	Consistently creates or contributes to conflict, is distracted and does not to care for the group's performance.
Commitment	Is continually attentive to detail, and careful with time management. Commits to the role assigned.	Usually careful with detail and time management. Makes an effort to commit to the role assigned.	Does not seem concerned with detail or time management. Rarely fulfills the role assigned.	Is careless and exceeds the time limits, or does not fulfill the role assigned.
Communication	Always listens to others and provides supportive feedback. Shares ideas and suggestions respectfully.	Tries to listen to others and provide feedback. Shares ideas and suggestions although at times not always respectfully.	Rarely listens to others' contributions. Scarcely offers input or shares ideas.	Does not communicate with the group, or communicates negatively. Does not make suggestions or offer feedback, or does so in a negative way.

Appendix I: Observation grid for grouping learners



(Topic) Class: _____



Groups	Observations	Future Adaptations
Group #1 – (members)		
Group #2 – (members)		
Group #3 – (members)		
Group #4 – (members)		
Group #5 – (members)		
Group #6 – (members)		

School year 2022/2023

Teacher Carolina de Sousa

[illegible]

Teacher Carolina de Sousa

Appendix K: Letter of consent to participants



Carta de Consentimento aos Alunos e Alunas

Assunto: Convite para participação no estudo no âmbito do Relatório Final de Estágio

Caro(a), Aluno(a),

O meu nome é Carolina de Sousa, 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 "Collaborative Learning in the Foreign Language Classroom: Assessing the Process" (Aprendizagem Colaborativa no Ensino de Língua Estrangeira: Avaliação do Processo) no decorrer do presente ano letivo, na vossa instituição, e sob a supervisão pedagógica da professora cooperante Isabel Santos.

Este projeto de investigação visa perceber de que modo a avaliação formativa de trabalhos colaborativos entre alunos (a pares e em grupos) pode ser conduzida de modo a gerar *feedback* individual que reflete a participação de cada aluno no desenvolvimento do respetivo trabalho.

A recolha de informação será realizada através de dois questionários anónimos e observação direta da interação entre alunos em sala de aula. Venho por este meio solicitar a vossa autorização para desenvolver o supracitado projeto com as turmas 11ºC e 11ºD, sendo que, igualmente, solicitarei autorização aos respetivos Encarregados(as) de Educação.

Neste sentido, venho convidar-te para participar neste estudo. A tua participação consistirá em responder a dois questionários anónimos acerca do mesmo tópico de investigação e realizar alguns trabalhos em grupos e pares. É importante referir que as tuas respostas aos questionários serão anónimas e que, durante a realização dos trabalhos, a informação será apenas recolhida por observação e usada para fins exclusivos de tratamento académico.

É ainda importante realçar que a tua participação neste projeto será voluntária e que estou disponível para esclarecer quaisquer dúvidas que persistam. Evidenciar que tanto a instituição bem como os participantes serão anónimos, 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.

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.

Carolina de Sousa

[redacted]
Professora Cooperante

Eu, _____, aluno(a) da Escola [redacted],
[redacted], declaro que fui informado(a) dos objetivos do projeto de investigação intitulado "Collaborative Learning in the Foreign Language Classroom: Assessing the Process" e
☐ aceito / ☐ não aceito participar no referido estudo, cuja informação será recolhida e utilizada para fins exclusivos de tratamento académico.

Data: _____ Assinatura: _____

Appendix L: Letter of consent to guardians



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 Carolina de Sousa, 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 "Collaborative Learning in the Foreign Language Classroom: Assessing the Process" (Aprendizagem Colaborativa no Ensino de Língua Estrangeira: Avaliação do Processo) no decorrer do presente ano letivo, na vossa instituição, e sob a supervisão pedagógica da professora cooperante Isabel Santos.

Este projeto de investigação visa perceber de que modo a avaliação formativa de trabalhos colaborativos entre alunos (a pares e em grupos) pode ser conduzida de modo a gerar *feedback* individual que reflete a participação de cada aluno no desenvolvimento do respetivo trabalho.

A recolha de informação será realizada através de dois questionários anónimos e observação direta da interação entre alunos em sala de aula. Venho por este meio solicitar a vossa autorização para desenvolver o supracitado projeto com as turmas 11ºC e 11ºD, sendo que, igualmente, solicitarei autorização aos alunos(as) e aos respetivos Encarregados(as) de Educação.

É ainda importante realçar que a participação neste projeto será voluntária, e que tanto a instituição bem como os participantes serão anónimos, 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 Secundária Professor José Augusto Lucas. 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 e fico a aguardar a vossa autorização.

Carolina de Sousa

Professora Cooperante

Eu, _____, Encarregado(a) de Educação, do aluno(a) _____ que frequenta a Escola Secundária [redacted] declaro que fui informado(a) dos objetivos do projeto de investigação intitulado "Collaborative Learning in the Foreign Language Classroom: Assessing the Process" e ☐ autorizo / ☐ não autorizo a proceder à recolha de informação que será recolhida no âmbito do referido estudo e utilizada para fins exclusivos de tratamento académico.

Appendix M: Letter of consent to the headmaster



Carta de Consentimento ao Diretor de Escola

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

Exmo. Diretor da Escola Secundária _____,

O meu nome é Carolina de Sousa, 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 "Collaborative Learning in the Foreign Language Classroom: Assessing the Process" (Aprendizagem Colaborativa no Ensino de Língua Estrangeira: Avaliação do Processo) no decorrer do presente ano letivo, na vossa instituição, e sob a supervisão pedagógica da professora cooperante Isabel Santos.

Este projeto de investigação visa perceber de que modo a avaliação formativa de trabalhos colaborativos entre alunos (a pares e em grupos) pode ser conduzida de modo a gerar *feedback* individual que reflete a participação de cada aluno no desenvolvimento do respetivo trabalho.

A recolha de informação será realizada através de dois questionários anónimos e observação direta da interação entre alunos em sala de aula. Venho por este meio solicitar a vossa autorização para desenvolver o supracitado projeto com as turmas 11ºC e 11ºD, sendo que, igualmente, solicitarei autorização aos alunos(as) e aos respetivos Encarregados(as) de Educação.

É ainda importante realçar que a participação neste projeto será voluntária, e os participantes serão anónimos, 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.

Carolina de Sousa

Professora Doutora Carolyn Leslie
Orientadora Científica

Professora Cooperante

Em caso de dúvidas ou necessidade de mais esclarecimentos, podem contactar-me através do email _____ . Agradeço, desde já, a disponibilidade, atenção e apoio prestados e fico a aguardar a autorização.

Eu, _____, Diretor da Escola Secundária _____, declaro que fui informado dos objetivos do projeto de investigação intitulado "Collaborative Learning in the Foreign Language Classroom: Assessing the Process" e autorizo a proceder à recolha de informação junto de uma amostra de alunos e professores selecionada para o efeito.

Appendix N: Questionnaire



Questionnaire on the Assessment of Group Work

Please complete the following questionnaire by placing a cross in the appropriate box. Please raise your hand if you have any questions!

	strongly agree	agree	uncertain/ not applicable	disagree	strongly disagree
1. I enjoy working in pairs	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
2. I enjoy working in groups	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
3. I learn from group projects	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
4. When I work in a group/pair not every member contributes equally	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
5. I am consistently informed of what the assessment criteria is when I do a group project in English lessons	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

6. When we do a group or pair project, teachers should assess the following criteria (circle the ones that you think apply):

Interaction (listens to a partner and answers reciprocally/ contributes positively to discussions)

Leadership skills (shows ability to organize the group and distribute tasks)

Communication skills (speaks calmly and can share ideas clearly and concisely)

Use of language (Uses English to express themselves, uses varied vocabulary and correct grammar)

Creativity (has innovative ideas)

Participation (contributes equally to the project/ is involved in the discussions)

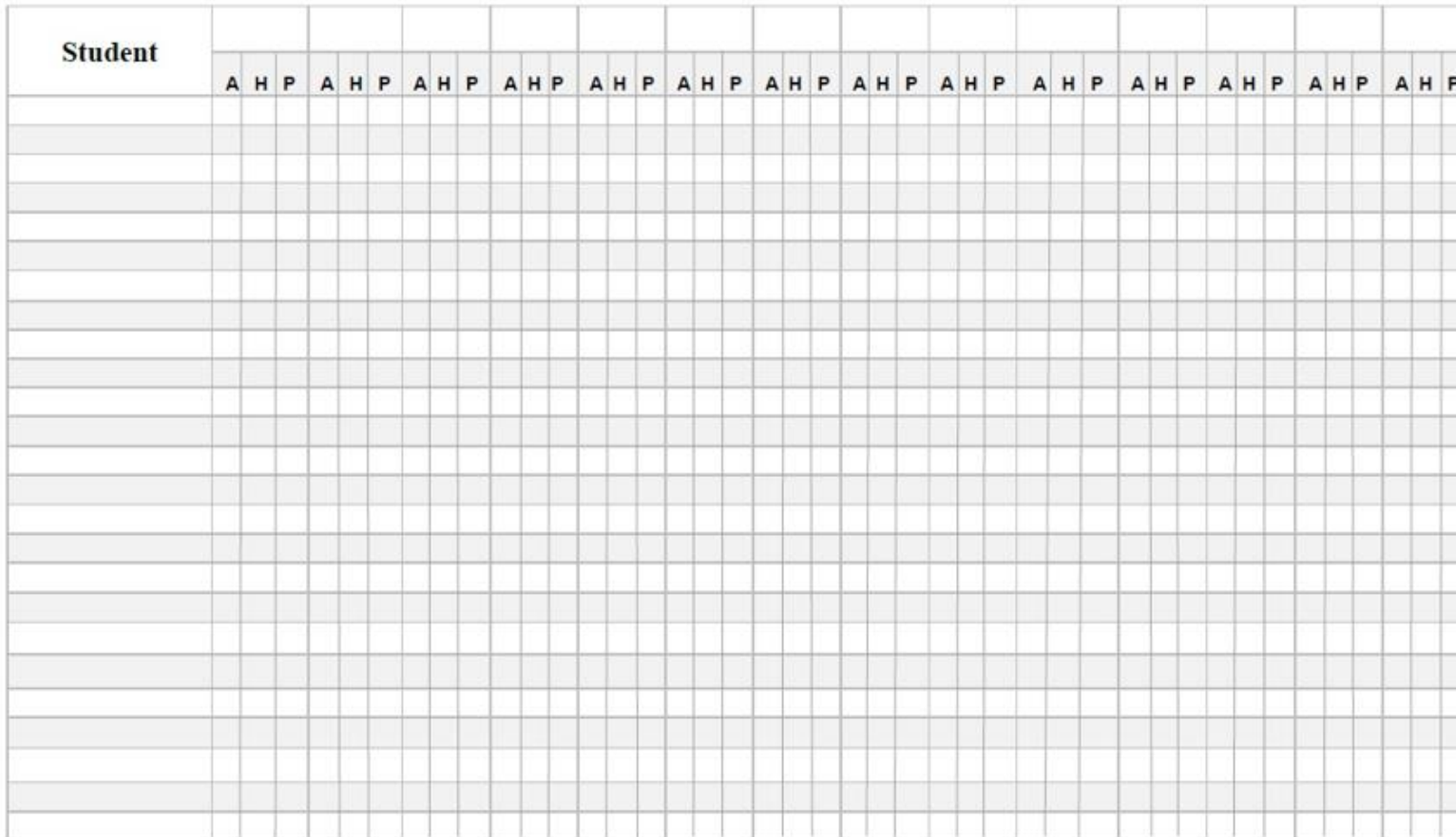
6.2. In my opinion, teachers should assess other criteria, such as...

7. Do you like doing group projects in the classroom? Why? Why not?

8. Do you like doing group projects outside school? Why? Why not?

9. Would you prefer if teachers gave individual marks for group projects? Why? Why not?

Teacher Carolina de Sousa

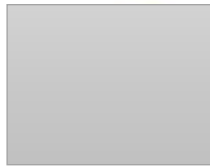


Teacher Carolina de Sousa

(Topic)
Class: _____

[illegible]

Appendix Q: Guidelines for the project ‘World Day of Social Justice’



World Day of Social Justice – February 20th

Group Project Guidelines

Year 11



English Class

Designing a Poster for Human Rights

On the 20th of February, the world celebrates Social Justice. This year you will get a chance to participate in the celebrations more actively, while raising awareness to issues that still stand in the way of justice and freedom for some groups. You will be working with group assigned by the teacher to create a poster to be displayed in school. The poster must be related to one of the following themes: Black Lives Matter, women's rights, child trafficking, child labor, religious discrimination, and freedom of speech. Your poster must call attention to one of these topics and promote change.

You will decide, as a group, which topic you prefer and post it on the Google Doc available on our Classroom feed, until January 25th. Then, you have until February 10th to submit the final version via email (). You can use websites such as <https://www.canva.com/> or <https://genial.ly/> to design the poster (or others you know).

These are some of the crucial aspects of a good poster (and what will be assessed):

- Clear title and slogan - a poster does not include much text, so the words you add must be impactful. Make sure the lettering can be seen from afar (choose an appropriate font and size).
- Shock value - every day we read news about human rights violations, many people have become apathetic to these heartbreaking stories. So, when creating a poster, choose an image or a statistic/graph that might shock the reader (it mustn't be inappropriate, though).
- Text to image ratio – an impactful poster must contain about 1/3 text and 2/3 images or graphs. Remember to state the source of all pictures and statistics.
- Appropriate language – avoid informal language. Your poster must be informative and a call to action and so the language you choose should be able to convince the reader of something.
- Creativity – remember to be creative when designing your poster. The display of pictures and graphs must be thought of creatively, as well as the media you choose and the background design.

Disclaimer: Your group's poster must be completely original. When using images or material you did not create, remember to always reference the source. Otherwise, you put yourself at risk of plagiarism.

Appendix R: Segment of lesson plan approaching human rights violations in Qatar

Name the reasons behind a Human Rights' controversy	✚ Pre-writing: The teacher asks learners why, besides the labor conditions of migrant workers in Qatar, the World Cup has been controversial. The students offer their suggestions (sexuality laws, women's rights, etc.) and the class discusses.	Whole Class	5'	-
Apply previous year knowledge Elaborate arguments in favour or against a statement	✚ Writing exercise: The teacher shares the link https://www.kialo-edu.com/p/b99766fc-311b-4761-892a-5aae4d3a865b/97683 to an online debating platform where students must argue in favor or against the thesis presented: "When we are in France and we welcome foreigners, we often want them to follow our	Individual work	20'	Cellphones Wi-Fi Kialo Computer Projector
Appraise the validity of a classmates argument Contrast and discuss pros and cons	rules, to respect our culture, and I will do the same when I go to Qatar, quite simply. I can agree or disagree with their ideas but I have to show respect for them." - Hugo Lloris ✚ Students are also allowed and encouraged to answer other students' arguments.			

Appendix S: Student contributions to online debate concerning human rights violations in Qatar


Carolina


...

"When we are in France, and we welcome foreigners, we often want them to follow our rules, to respect our culture, and I will do the same when I go to Qatar, quite simply. I can agree or disagree with their ideas but I have to show respect for them." - Hugo Lloris, captain of the France national football team

Prós 	Contras 
  2 I support Hugo Lloris' argument, but there are some cases of cultures like Qatar that are taking peoples' freedom.	  Yes, we have to show some respect for their countries, but we can't follow their rules if they go against our human rights and when queer people couldn't go watch the world cup just because of who they are when queer people couldn't go watch the world cup just because of who they are, then there is already a problem that over bear with the rights and choices of others who do not live or follow the culture of that country
  1 if we want to be respected we must respect others so i agree with this statement - Francisca	  We should always respect other cultures wether we agree or not with their rules and beliefs. However in this case many of the rules go against human rights thats something that everyone should have. By respecting and ignoring the rules and behaviors that go against this rights we may be promoting them or at least not interfering therefore keeping them the same.
  2 I agree because it's another country's culture. No matter if we agree or not, it's still another country's tradition and customs and, if it was our country, we would like that foreigners would respect our culture and customs despite of what they may think.	  1 Unlike our expectations, some customs may be harmful to certain groups of people and minorities and they may violate their human rights, hence we cannot always "go with it" and we would need to intervene, aside from this I understand that some cultures have different laws and we must live by them but some exceptions should be made and some compromises should be met regarding human rights
  1 I agree with Lloris because when we go to other country that is not ours we need to respect their own customs the same as we	
  5	