

Employing formative feedback to enhance primary students' oral interaction: Exploring formative assessment

Carolina Magalhães Pinto

Relatório de Estágio de Mestrado em Ensino de Inglês no 1º Ciclo do Ensino Básico

Março, 2022

Relatório de Estágio apresentado para cumprimento dos requisitos necessários à
obtenção do grau de Mestre em Mestrado em ensino de inglês no 1º ciclo do
ensino básico realizado sob a orientação científica de
Professora Doutora Carolyn Leslie e de Professor Doutor Rogério Puga.

Dedicatória

A todos aqueles que ofereceram uma mão de apoio ao longo deste percurso.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Foremost, I would like to thank my family and friends who showed me endless support throughout the course of my practicum and the development of my first action research. Thank you mum for always supporting me. Thank you grandma for listening to me rant. To my friends, I thank their patience and their words of encouragement.

I would also like to thank the students who embraced this project so kindly and a special thank you to my co-operating teacher Vera Batista for always offering a helping hand throughout this research project, for whom I express my deeply gratitude.

My research would have been impossible without the aid and support of my supervisor Professora Doutora Carolyn Leslie. Her guidance, advice as well as endless (but necessary!) comments and suggestions led me through all the stages of this project.

EMPLOYING FORMATIVE FEEDBACK TO ENHANCE PRIMARY STUDENTS' ORAL INTERACTION: EXPLORING FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT

CAROLINA MAGALHÃES PINTO

ABSTRACT

KEYWORDS: formative assessment, teacher's feedback, oral interaction, young learners, primary education, English as a foreign language

This report describes the action research project conducted as part of the practicum during my Master's degree studies in teaching English at primary level. The study aimed to implement and explore the potential of formative feedback to enhance students' oral interaction skills to gain a better understanding of the implication of formative feedback in the learning process in fourth graders. Moreover, it aimed to determine the efficiency of formative assessment in EFL teaching contexts by employing teaching tasks which served as assessment, providing various meaningful opportunities for learners to further develop their oral interaction competence, as well as to implement assessment tools that can support their ongoing learning. Lastly, it served to foster positive attitudes in young learners towards assessment and language learning. The study ran from late-September to mid-December and involved a group of 24 children aged nine to ten in year 4 at primary level. The research methodology tools used were two questionnaires, the teacher's feedback on pair work tasks, a teacher's journal, observation of pair work tasks and two observation grids. The data collected was analysed qualitatively and quantitatively, as part of a small-scale, classroom-based action research project. Results indicated that teaching tasks can serve as effective assessment tools, capable of considering the learner's present competence as well as skill development in order to progress students' language learning. The data gathered demonstrated students' new awareness of the benefits of pair work, which can be influenced by the relationship between the members of each dyad. The study also concluded that over time, timely and descriptive feedback, in combination with the explanation of expected learning goals, can benefit the learner to progress in their language learning and achieve the proposed learning goals.

A UTILIZAÇÃO DE *FEEDBACK* FORMATIVO PARA A OTIMIZAÇÃO DAS INTERAÇÕES ORAIS DE ALUNOS DE 1.º CICLO: ESTUDO DE AVALIAÇÃO FORMATIVA

CAROLINA MAGALHÃES PINTO

RESUMO

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: avaliação formativa, *feedback* do professor, interação oral, jovens aprendentes, educação primária, inglês como língua estrangeira

O presente relatório visa descrever um projeto de investigação realizado durante o estágio do Mestrado em Ensino de inglês no 1.º ciclo do Ensino Básico. Este relatório tem como objetivo a implementação e exploração do potencial do *feedback* formativo para a otimização das capacidades orais dos alunos e para obter um conhecimento mais aprofundado sobre o impacto da avaliação formativa no processo de aprendizagem de alunos do 4.º ano. Em segundo lugar, o presente estudo pretende determinar a eficiência da avaliação formativa no contexto do ensino de inglês como Língua Estrangeira, através de tarefas pedagógicas de avaliação que proporcionaram diversas oportunidades para o desenvolvimento da competência interação oral dos alunos, bem como para a implementação de ferramentas de avaliação que acompanhem a aprendizagem contínua dos mesmos. Em último lugar, este relatório permitiu fomentar uma atitude positiva nos alunos face à avaliação e à aprendizagem da língua. O estudo decorreu entre o final de setembro e meados de dezembro e envolveu uma turma de 24 alunos do 4.º ano do 1.º ciclo, com idades compreendidas entre os 9 e 10 anos. A metodologia de investigação utilizada consistiu em dois questionários, *feedback* da professora relativo a tarefas realizadas em pares, um diário da professora, observação de trabalho em pares e duas grelhas de observação. Os dados reunidos foram analisados de forma qualitativa e quantitativa, de acordo com a metodologia de investigação-ação em pequena escala. Os resultados indicam que as tarefas pedagógicas podem servir como ferramentas de avaliação eficaz, que atendem às competências existentes e ao desenvolvimento das mesmas, com vista a determinar o melhor percurso para o progresso na aprendizagem. Os dados recolhidos demonstraram o desenvolvimento de uma nova perceção dos alunos relativamente aos benefícios do trabalho em pares, que pode ser influenciado pela relação entre membros de cada par. Por fim, o estudo concluiu que *feedback* oportuno e descritivo, em conjunto com a explicação dos objetivos de aprendizagem pretendidos, pode beneficiar o aluno a nível do progresso na aprendizagem da língua e na concretização dos objetivos de aprendizagem propostos.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction	1
I. Background to the study	1
II. How did the idea originate?	1
III. Purpose and aims of the research	2
Chapter I: Literature Review	3
I.1. Introduction	3
I.2. What is summative assessment?	3
I.3. What is formative assessment?	4
I.4. The role of formative feedback	5
I.5. Focusing on oral interaction	6
I.6. Summary	6
Chapter II: The Action Research	8
II.1. Context	8
II.2. Methodology	9
II.2.1. Ethical considerations	9
II.2.2. The pair-work tasks	9
II.2.3. Observation of the pair-work tasks and observation grid	10
II.2.4. Teacher's feedback and feedback checklist	11
II.2.5. Questionnaires	12
II.2.5.1. Assessment questionnaires	13
II. 2.5.2. Feedback questionnaires	13
II.2.6. Teacher's journal	13
II.3. Results	14
II.3.1. Observation of the pair-work tasks	14
II.3.2. Teacher's feedback	15
II.3.3. Pair-work observation grids	16
II.3.4. Questionnaires	19
II.3.4.1. Assessment questionnaires	19
II.3.4.2. Feedback questionnaires	23
II. 4. Discussion and conclusion	26
II.4.1. Reflecting on research findings and limitations of the study	26
II.4.2. The importance of the action research for my development as an EFL teacher	28

II.4.3. The relevance of this research for the EFL teaching in the Portuguese context	29
II.4.4. Future research	30
References	31
Appendices	35
Appendix A: Consent letter to parents/tutors	36
Appendix B: Consent letter to school administration	37
Appendix C: Consent letter to children	38
Appendix D: Pair-work task 1	39
Appendix E: Pair-work task 2	40
Appendix F: Pair-work task 3	41
Appendix G: Pair-work task 4	42
Appendix H: Pair-work task 5	43
Appendix I: Pair-work spoken interaction observation grid	44
Appendix J: Teacher's feedback checklist	45
Appendix K: Assessment questionnaire	46
Appendix L: Feedback questionnaire	47

Introduction

I. Background to the study

The main purpose of language learning is to communicate and transfer meaning to others, thus in a primary English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classroom, it seems pertinent to transmit this idea of the importance of spoken interaction. Teachers can rely on children's innate desire to interact and communicate with others and use it to promote language learning, and more specifically, develop their communicative skills.

A significant portion of a teacher's time is devoted to the assessment of students in most educational settings (Lipnevich & Smith, 2009). Assessment is the main mechanism that provides information about student learning and, as an integral part of instruction, it affects decisions about placement, grades, curriculum and instructional needs (Edutopia, 2008). In order to create more successful young, foreign language learners, teachers can resort to an ongoing and cyclical process to gain a better understanding of the child's skills, entitled formative assessment, which aims to support student learning and improvement, in addition to serving as input for managing and planning teaching. It gathers concrete evidence to monitor pupils' language learning progress whilst involving them in their learning.

Undeniably connected to formative assessment, formative feedback enters the beforementioned cyclical process. Due to the plethora of definitions available in recent literature, I will be using one from Shute (2008) who described formative feedback as the "information communicated to the learner that is intended to modify his or her thinking or behaviour for the purpose of improving learning" (p. 154). However, research reports that most teachers come across several difficulties when implementing this aspect in their teaching process (Moreira et al., 2021). Thus, my study resulted from my interest to explore this crucial area of assessment and one of its components, teacher's feedback with the intent to develop learners' oral skill.

II. How did the idea originate?

Over the course of my Master's degree, and amid class observations and carrying out my practicum, I began to notice a pattern between teacher and students in the classroom. There seemed to exist a gap between the place where students were and what they needed to do to advance their language skills and abilities, to achieve more successful language development. Additionally, lessons were test-oriented, meaning that students were put under a great amount of pressure to do well in tests, providing only a snapshot of learning at a particular time, looking backwards instead of forwards. A nationwide study investigating assessment practices in

Primary English Education conducted in Portugal (Moreira et al., 2021) reported that “testing remains the main tool for collecting evidence of learning” (p.13), often accounting for 40% of a student’s total mark. Likewise, it revealed the scarcity of student involvement in their assessment process and prior research has emphasized how these factors generate negative language experiences as well as demotivation amongst young learners (Hattie, 2012; Ryan & Henderson, 2018).

Consequently, this area quickly caught my attention and I, as a student teacher, began seeking ways to close that gap. My search led me to formative assessment and teacher's feedback, which conveyed the impression of being capable of answering the questions underlying this research project: How can teaching tasks be employed to serve as useful and effective formative assessment instruments in EFL primary classrooms for teachers and learners, fostering a positive relationship between pupil and school assessment and how can formative feedback be used to support the development of young learners’ oral interaction?

III. Purpose and aims of the research

My aim was first to determine the potential and efficiency of formative feedback to enhance students’ oral interaction, therefore gaining a better understanding of the implication of formative feedback in the learning process, in EFL primary classrooms. Secondly, this research project aims to explore the effectiveness of formative assessment in EFL primary contexts by employing it via teaching tasks, providing various opportunities for learners to further develop their oral interaction, but also to implement assessment tools that can support their learning. Thirdly, the study serves to develop positive attitudes in young learners towards assessment and language learning, which “are affected by their educational and personal contexts” (Jang, 2014, p. 91). It is of the utmost importance that effective assessment experiences promote a positive learning atmosphere.

The first chapter of this study is dedicated to the literature review, which provides important theoretical background information and offers clear definitions for the main concepts that underline this paper. Chapter II describes the action research and presents the context, the methodology selected and how the data was analysed. In addition, it also reports the results, which are discussed and analysed. Furthermore, it also addresses the impact of this research on my development as an EFL teacher, the relevance of this research in the Portuguese context and lastly, the need for future research.

Chapter I: Literature Review

I.1. Introduction

To theoretically contextualise my action research and to explain its relevance, it seems pertinent to describe the key concepts that will be explored throughout my research. This section presents a review of recent literature on summative assessment and formative assessment while reflecting on the weight and role that formative feedback has in education settings as well as on the importance of the development of spoken interaction.

In recent years, several authors and researchers have emphasized the importance of re-evaluating the quality of assessment in today's classrooms (Jang, 2014; Wiliam, 2011). Likewise, the usefulness of involving students in the assessment procedure was highlighted, to create more proficient and autonomous learners. The combination of these two desires resulted in the growth of the interest in formative assessment, one of the main concepts explored in the upcoming literature review.

I.2. What is summative assessment?

The purpose of summative assessment “is to describe learning achieved at a certain time for the purposes of reporting to parents, other teachers, the pupils themselves and ... to ... school governors or school boards” (Harlen & James, 1997, p. 370). Summative assessment is based on graded written tests carried out by the teacher, and it is concerned with measuring learning through performance. It is a snapshot of a learner's knowledge at a particular time, and it does not realistically illustrate their level of proficiency. There is no learner involvement in summative assessment and it “does not feed back into the next round of teaching” (Cameron, 2001, p.222). Moreover, for some students, tests can be stressful, can lead to anxiety and create negative language learning experiences which ultimately demotivate learners. Thus, this type of assessment predominantly focuses on reading and writing skills, leaving aside skills such as speaking and oral interaction.

Learners are summatively assessed using standardized tests meaning that they all take “the same test under the same test condition” (Jang, 2014, p.75). Their performance is graded based on prearranged scores and afterwards, compared against “pre-established references” (Jang, 2014, p.75). In EFL teaching practices, there has been an increase in the need for teachers to prepare students for written tests, adapting their teaching methodology according to the test's requirements. Washback, the belief that tests directly impact teaching and learning, can have a negative impact on the development of educational curricula (Brown, 2002; Taylor, 2005). Test preparation restricts classroom activity, demonstrating the power of assessment over teaching and learning. Cameron (2001) illustrates its recurrence in today's educational context and states

that assessment should serve teaching “by providing feedback on pupils’ learning that would make the next teaching event more effective, in a positive, upwards direction” (p.215), contrary to summative assessment’s nature.

In short, summative assessment represents the overall educational progress of learners, contrasting with the role of formative assessment which assesses learners during day-to-day teaching (Harlen & James, 1997).

I.3. What is formative assessment?

According to Jang (2014), formative assessment is used to provide students with feedback at various stages of the learning process and to provide teachers with evidence for evaluating the effectiveness of their teaching. “Assessment is no longer understood to be a thing or an event ...; rather, it becomes an ongoing, cyclical process that is woven into the minute-to-minute and day-by-day life of the classroom” (Thompson & Wiliam, 2008, p. 5). Opportunities for formative assessment, which happens alongside teaching and learning, circumstances in which students learn, are consciously created by the teacher to support students’ learning, who then develops their teaching on the information collected and attempts to “address the understandings and misunderstandings that are revealed” (Thompson & Wiliam, 2008, p. 5). Formative assessment involves the learner in the assessment process through sharing learning outcomes as well as success criteria. Students gain a better understanding of their learning and consequently become more autonomous (Jang, 2014; Leslie, 2021). It offers an ongoing picture of a learner’s ability, due to its focus on all skills and it is less likely to create negative emotions in comparison to written tests. As reported in previous literature (Shirvan, Tahereh, & Yazdanmehr, 2020), positive emotions in EFL settings might increase students’ awareness and understanding of language learning. Therefore, effective assessment, such as formative assessment, can be connected to experiencing enjoyment in educational contexts, consequently developing learners’ language competence.

Formative assessment can serve “as a means to improve teaching and learning and to being generally responsive to learner needs” (Rea-Dickins & Gardner, 2000), to support ongoing student learning and improvement. By keeping a continuous representation of a learner’s ability, teachers can collect data on a child’s understandings as well as difficulties they might encounter, adapting teaching to meet various learning needs. “Everyday learning tasks and activities, as well as routine observation and dialogue” (Klenowski, 2009, p.2) can be employed consistently to guarantee that children are being assessed reliably and continuously as well as determine the way forward (Britton, 2021), considering variables such as student effort, progress, and context.

Ultimately, formative assessment is essentially feedback to both parties, teacher and student, regarding “present understanding and skill development in order to determine the way forward” (Harlen & James, 1997, p.369), where the aim is to include the learner in the necessary steps to take next, involving and helping them reach cognitive realizations.

I.4. The role of formative feedback

Formative feedback, an element that is inherent to the formative use of assessment, can be described as the information reported to students with the intent to improve knowledge and overall language learning (Shute, 2008) and according to Pearson (2016), it is a crucial component of an ideal instructional cycle, synonymous with feed-forward. As has been previously reported in the literature, for feedback to be considered effective, it must take into consideration a very wide range of learner characteristics as well as linguistic and contextual variables (Pearson, 2016). Research (Britton, 2021; Jang, 2014) proposes that feedback, to have a bigger chance of being absorbed by young learners, should be timely, provide both praise or positive aspects and areas to improve as well as focus on learning goals. As mentioned in Jang (2014), "teachers may use information from the observations to refine assessment tasks, adjust their difficulty levels, plan subsequent interventions to address differential performance among students" (p.86). Hence, the data collected from observing learning tasks will be analysed by the teacher, influencing the type of formative feedback she decides to provide to help students improve their performance in similar tasks in the future.

In order for learners to close the gap between what is understood and what is aimed to be understood (Sadler, 1989 cited in Hattie & Timperley, 2007), feedback should provide specific and descriptive information regarding the task and learning objectives. To improve their language learning cognitively, learners may use feedback to “confirm, add to, overwrite, tune, or restructure information in memory, whether that information is domain knowledge, meta-cognitive knowledge, beliefs about self and tasks, or cognitive tactics and strategies” (Hattie & Timperley, 2007, p. 82). Additionally, effective feedback has been described to entail the active involvement of the student, consequently developing their autonomy as learners (Kerr, 2020). Prior research suggests that feedback is subject to pupils’ attitudes and interpretations, individual characteristics and types of tasks employed (Jang, 2014; Shute, 2008). Research that has been carried out on the role of feedback with young language learners advocates that students demonstrate greater interest in knowing areas to improve on when combined types of feedback are used by teachers to give information to learners in order to scaffold and guide their language learning.

Furthermore, another pertinent aspect related to feedback is the emotional responses of children upon receiving it. Pupils need to be amenable to the information contained within the feedback provided in order to feel motivated enough to act upon it. A more comprehensive, systematic, and theoretical analysis of the probability of students “likely to experience negative emotional responses than others” in regard to feedback (Ryan & Henderson, 2018, p. 880) is paramount.

I.5. Focusing on oral interaction

When learning a foreign language, speaking is considered the most important skill (Rao, 2019). The main purpose of language learning is to communicate and transfer meaning to others, which often entails perceiving “the foreign language as a means of communication” (Cameron, 2001, p.39). Storch (2002) advocates how “language facilitates cognitive development because it is a semiotic tool that mediates the interaction between the expert and the novice” (p.121). According to Cameron (2001), “from early childhood, the desire to connect emotionally and communicate with other people seems to drive speaking” (p.38). Many researchers and authors advocate the advantages of pair or group work, affirming that it can increase the amount of talking time available in lessons (Storch, 2002; Tuan & Nhu, 2010). Due to its interactive nature, in combination with engaging, meaningful, and level-appropriate learning tasks, research shows that it is possible to obtain tangible learning results through collaborative and communicative interaction.

Previous research shows that effective tasks should be meaningful, engaging, and purposeful as well as use language that can be found in the “real world” (Oliver & Philip, 2014), where language is contextualised and meaningful communication may occur. Speaking represents a significant role in foreign language learning although previous studies and research reveal that it is usually insufficiently tackled in EFL classrooms (Moreira et al., 2021; Raba, 2017). Formative assessment is a tool that exhibits the right characteristics to assess speaking since it is constantly monitoring, documenting, and analyzing students’ daily utterances, supplying effective evidence of their language level and speaking competence to the teacher who then provides constructive feedback to improve their speaking performance. Portuguese legislation does not address the issue of how speaking should be assessed, a constraint mentioned in the Moreira et al. (2021) report.

I.6. Summary

In recent years, there has been a shift in the focus of attention towards the improvement of classroom assessment. A large number of existing studies in the literature have examined the constraints and restrictions of current and popular summative assessment methods, such as

standardized testing, capable of providing only a snapshot of learning at a particular time. Overly concentrating on achievement can look past “what students know, can do and care about” (Hattie, 2012, p.4). Research conducted by Moreira et al. (2021) reported that in Primary English Education in Portugal, written tests are primordial and remain the most common assessment tool, where literacy skills are preferred over oracy. However, there is evidence that relying on a more formative approach to assessment will consequently contribute to the improvement of learning (Black & Wiliam, 1998). Additionally, enjoyment can affect learning since experiencing positive emotions are related to successful learning. Consequently, effective assessment, such as formative assessment, can be linked to experiencing enjoyment, which can expand learners’ language learning (Shirvan, Tahereh, & Yazdanmehr, 2020).

This section provided evidence regarding the use of formative feedback as a way to close the gap between current and desired pupil achievement, endorsing a closer relationship between assessment and classroom learning (Wiliam, 2011). As stated by Montalvo-Balbed (2012), “formative assessment provides a feedback loop to adjust ongoing instruction and close the gaps in learning” (p.3), thus improving students’ speaking competence by helping them identify their strengths and weaknesses in the focused skill.

In this study, I hope to provide evidence that supports the ideas and findings in previous literature regarding formative assessment, closely linked to teaching tasks and feedback as feed-forward, transforming the process of teaching into an “ongoing and cyclical process” (Thompson & Wiliam, 2008, p.5). Another goal is to meet the learners’ needs while simultaneously fostering a positive attitude between the latter and assessment in the school context.

Chapter II: The Action Research

II.1. Context

The study took place in a state primary school in the outskirts of Lisbon, Portugal. The classroom had access to the internet and an interactive board, which were used in every lesson. With an inviting playground, students were encouraged to run and play. The participants involved in this study were a group of 24 fourth-year students, with an average age of 9. The class was composed of 13 boys and 11 girls, making a well-balanced classroom atmosphere, gender-wise. Six students were Brazilian, one was Italian while the remainder were Portuguese. The children were all native Portuguese speakers. This was their second year having curricular English. They had two lessons of English per week, one hour each. The majority of the class was participative and showed, throughout lessons, increasing interest and curiosity for the language. With their mainstream teacher, they often worked collaboratively. However, pair or group work was intrinsically connected to a more disruptive and noisier classroom environment. Overall, this group of learners revealed high levels of cognitive abilities (such as problem-solving, planning, and complex idea comprehension) which helped immensely in their understanding of this study's aims and purposes, contributing to its general success.

English classes in the previous year were heavily reliant on the course books. As expected within school policy, students were to be assessed both summatively and formatively. The coursebook together with the workbook and picture dictionary adopted by the school was *Smiles 4* (Dooley & Evans, 2016). It was supplemented by other materials and resources, especially prearranged to develop learners' oral interaction skills. The topics approached were part of the *Aprendizagens Essenciais de Inglês do 4º ano* (Direção-Geral da Educação, 2018), the official document that establishes the goals for each language skill such as listening, spoken interaction, spoken production, reading and writing along with the guidelines for vocabulary and grammar as well as the intercultural domain. Other reference curriculum documents such as the *Perfil dos Alunos à Saída da Escolaridade Obrigatória* (Direção-Geral da Educação, 2017) highlight the importance of giving priority to oral interaction and the development of oral skills throughout this teaching cycle. Similarly, the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (Council of Europe, 2018) emphasizes how “spoken interaction is considered to be the origin of language” (Council of Europe, 2018, p.81). Oral interaction occupies a central position in the CEFR scheme at pre-A1 and A1 levels. Therefore, interacting meaningfully is essential when learning a language and can be supported when teachers implement guided tasks which ultimately lead to more creative and autonomous use of language by the learners.

II.2. Methodology

The adopted form of research was a small scale classroom-based action research study. As stated by Burns (2010) this methodology is best suited for classroom research since it aims to provide an answer to an existing classroom dilemma “by using a reflective research cycle of planning, acting, observing and reflecting” (p.4). This method of research aids teachers in the improvement of their teaching skills which goes hand-in-hand with their reflective practices. As a result, learners are also benefited.

To assure the success of this research, an action research plan was elaborated. The first stage concerned the planning of the study and included obtaining all the necessary permissions from the school board, parents and children as well as organizing the data collection tools, which occurred from late September to mid-October. The second and third stages, action and observation respectively, took place from October to mid-December. Throughout this period, I implemented the research methodology and collected data, while simultaneously reflecting on the effectiveness of the teaching tasks being employed and the feedback being provided. The last stage entitled the reflection and writing stage, occurred in January where all the data collected from the questionnaires, task observations and feedback practices were analysed and interpreted, resulting in the writing of the final report.

II.2.1. Ethical considerations

To obtain informed consent from all the stakeholders involved, meaning the school administration, the parents and children, letters (Appendices A, B and C) were sent and signed by all, after receiving approval from my university adviser. Guidelines for how to gain permission were followed (Phillips & Carr, 2010) and all three letters contained information regarding the topic and aims of the research, data collection tools to be implemented, a timeline of the project, the assurance of confidentiality and how the project would be made public. The letters were written in Portuguese.

A portion of one lesson was dedicated to explaining the objectives and the data collection tools that I would be using with the children, before distributing the consent letters. For this purpose, a PowerPoint presentation was created to support the students in their understanding of the project, namely regarding the stages of implementation of feedback. Doubts were clarified and students proceeded to choose their pseudonyms.

II.2.2. The pair-work tasks

The tasks used during this study were designed to develop the communicative skill of primary students in the target language. Hence, the tasks were completed in pairs and focused on improving their oral interaction skill through the use of information gap activities, creating

a real need for communication. This formative assessment tool fed into the students' final mark in combination with summative types of assessment such as written tests and oral presentations, expected within school policy.

Although pair-work tasks were used often, only five were considered and consequently analysed for this study. Table 1 details the tasks chosen to be analysed for this study (Appendices D to H) as well as the vocabulary and grammatical structures being analysed. All the necessary vocabulary and process language was introduced beforehand. The tasks described below led to an increase in the amount of time children spent talking as well as an improvement in learners' ability to be more autonomous during class, creating a more student-centred classroom.

Table 1. Information gap pair-work tasks – Dates, vocabulary and grammatical structures

Tasks		Vocabulary	Grammatical structures
1	<i>My</i>	Classroom materials	<i>In my schoolbag, I've got a/an...</i>
29th	<i>Schoolbag</i>	(e.g., pen, dictionary, globe,	• Verb have got
September		rubber, ruler)	• Indefinite articles a/an
2021			
2	<i>Chocolates</i>	Cardinal numbers (1-100)	<i>The number ... is (colour).</i>
11th October	<i>Jar</i>	and colours	• Verb to be
2021			
3	<i>My</i>	Halloween vocabulary	Completing a poem with the
25th October	<i>Halloween</i>	(e.g., ghost, skeleton, spider,	given vocabulary.
2021	<i>Poem</i>	monster, wizard)	<i>Number ... is ...</i>
			• Verb to be
4	<i>My</i>	School subjects and days of the	<i>On Mondays, I've got...</i>
24th	<i>Timetable</i>	week	• Verb to have
November		(e.g., maths, P.E., history,	
2021		science)	
5	<i>Santa's</i>	Christmas vocabulary and colours	Discovering a message.
15th	<i>Secret</i>	(e.g., hat, presents, Santa, beard)	• Verb have got
December	<i>Message</i>		• Question word what
2021			• Indefinite articles a/an

II.2.3. Observation of the pair-work tasks and observation grid

During the course of my action research, all the data collection tools depended on observation. Observation is deemed a vital tool for researchers. It is a self-reflective process and enables researchers to gather information about teaching critically, something that is not

done in day-to-day teaching normally (Burns, 2010). It also allows for data to be collected for student assessment.

The three pairs of students selected were fairly representative of the entire classroom: two stronger students, Hero Nicks and Lizzy, who had a native English-speaking grandmother; two weaker students, Mari and Omi Ranha, as well as two average ones, Annita and Godzila. I collected systematic and detailed information about their oral performance during their completion of the pair-work tasks using a grid (Appendix I). Students worked on all these tasks in the same selected pairs, which were created due to established classroom arrangements.

Observation grids are checklists previously prepared (Burns, 2010), that served the purpose of obtaining evidence on students' progress and performance development regarding their appropriacy of vocabulary, fluency, the accuracy of grammar as well as overall task achievement during oral interactive tasks. These categories were selected based on and adapted from published formative assessment observation grids (Iannou-Georgiou & Pavlou, 2003; Somogyi-Tóth, 2012). They were divided into three separate levels of performance. Level 1 was the highest level while level 3 represented the lowest. Regarding appropriacy of vocabulary, the lowest level consisted of insufficient use of vocabulary, with significant use of Portuguese, while the highest referred to the use of an appropriate range of vocabulary, with little to no use of L1. Concerning fluency, its levels ranged from extensive and frequent pauses that hindered communication, to little to no pauses. Concerning accuracy of grammar, the lowest level consisted of little to no accurate use of the given grammatical structures, while the highest level referred to successful employment.

The data collected was analysed quantitatively and qualitatively. It was compared to determine if there was a correlation between students' oral performance and the teacher's systematic use of formative feedback. This analysis was complemented by the information present in the questionnaires and pertinent notes in my journal.

II.2.4. Teacher's feedback and feedback checklist

The type of feedback employed during this research can be defined as "information that is intended to help the learner in some way, given continuously during learning" (Kerr, 2020, p. 2). According to the same author, effective feedback requires the active involvement of the student, is specific and related to learning goals and is correlated to learning tasks.

As has been previously reported in the literature (Britton, 2021), explaining the learning objectives and outcomes, as well as criteria for success, are key strategies to support learners in improving their learning outcomes and "on how best to move their learning forward" (Britton, 2021, p.259). When learners are aware of learning objectives, they become more

focused and independent therefore allowing the lessons to be more student-centred, where the teacher scaffolds, observes and gathers information regarding the learners' abilities.

Throughout this research, formative feedback was given orally to the whole class after the completion of two to three pair-work tasks, with the aim of increasing pupils' oral interaction skills. Speaking entails the combination and integration of certain language aspects such as fluency, appropriacy of vocabulary and accuracy of grammar, amongst others. These categories were observed and registered during the students' performance of pair-work tasks.

Various types of motivational feedback were used in combination to try to guarantee learners would meet previously established learning goals as well as progress in their oral skills. Descriptive feedback, which details information that addresses learners' qualities and reports future learning goals, and procedural feedback, which mentions mistakes related to performance to address possible areas for improvement were employed with consideration of the students' level of cognitive maturity (Jang, 2014).

The *Teacher's feedback checklist* (Appendix J) was utilized to obtain organized data regarding the frequency and type of feedback given to pupils. It was filled out by the teacher after the lessons where feedback was given. The log of my oral feedback utterances and practices allowed me to summarise the main concerns I was addressing to students as well as to adapt the type of formative feedback I provided the class. The data collected was analysed quantitatively, presented in tables, as well as supplemented with notes from the teacher's journal and with the task observation grid (Appendix I).

II.2.5. Questionnaires

According to Brown (2001, as cited in Dörnyei, 2003), questionnaires can be defined as "written instruments that present respondents with a series of questions or statements to which they are to react either by writing out their answers or selecting from among existing answers" (p. 6). In addition, Richards and Lockhart (2007) state that questionnaires are capable of gathering information vis-à-vis students' beliefs, motivation, preferences and attitudes on certain features of teaching and learning, in a manner that is effective and efficient, and the questionnaires in this study contained attitudinal questions (Burns, 2010), to discover individuals' attitudes, opinions, beliefs and interests in relation to assessment and teacher's feedback.

For this study, two different questionnaires (Appendices K and L) were implemented during the action stage. With clear and simple language, both were employed twice and were answered in the classroom, in the teacher's presence. Participants were encouraged to share

any existing doubts regarding the questionnaires so dialogue between teacher and student was maintained during its completion.

II.2.6.1. Assessment questionnaires

The *Assessment Questionnaire* (Appendix K) concerned pupils' thoughts and opinions regarding assessment tools, both summative and formative. The goal was to determine students' thoughts and opinions concerning school assessment, especially within the English classroom, to answer my first research question.

This questionnaire was distributed at the beginning and the end of the research period. The results from both were compared and the results are presented in tables, described as percentages. It included three open-ended questions as well as three closed-ended items such as yes/no and multiple-choice questions. The data collected from the closed items of the questionnaires was analysed quantitatively and expressed as a percentage. The data resultant from the open items required both quantitative and qualitative analysis meaning that patterns in pupils' responses were identified and subsequently categorized. Results from the quantitative analysis are described as percentages.

II. 2.6.2. Feedback questionnaires

The *Feedback questionnaire* (Appendix L) was distributed in the middle and at the end of my research. This tool collected the students' opinions and thoughts regarding how they used the feedback to achieve a higher level of task achievement. It contained three statements and a four-point Likert scale as well as three open-ended questions, where opportunities were created for participants to demonstrate their understanding in regard to formative feedback, to try to answer the second research question.

Questionnaires were administered after the completion of two to three pair-work tasks that received formative feedback, which was given orally to the whole class. It is relevant to note that no student had ever been exposed to the concept of feedback. Students' initial and final answers were compared. Closed items were analysed quantitatively and described as percentages. Open questions were analysed both quantitatively and qualitatively by reading and re-reading answers and looking for common themes, as well as compared to determine if there had been any changes in opinions with regard to receiving and applying teacher's formative feedback. The results are registered in tables and expressed in percentages.

II.2.7. Teacher's journal

Keeping a journal "enables a teacher to examine teaching in a way that is unavailable through other means" (Richards & Lockhart, 2007, p. 8). Written accounts of teaching

experiences allow for reflective practice and result in noticing patterns, possible problems and new solutions to implement in the classroom.

During my research, each lesson had an entry and it followed a structure to guide my writing process. I registered my thoughts on the overall success of the lesson, students' attitudes towards the proposed learning tasks, their performance in each task, my oral feedback utterances and practices as well as areas to improve in future lessons. In short, it allowed me to gather richer qualitative data about students' level of interest in pair-work activities, participation levels and their overall progress in spoken interaction. I collected the data qualitatively and the results are presented as quotes from my journal entries.

II.3. Results

The results presented in the following sections aim to reveal the outcome of my action research project, with the aim of improving learners' oral interaction skills through formative feedback. The data collection tools used were the assessment and the feedback questionnaires, distributed twice, complemented by observation and feedback grids, as described above, as well as by the use of the teacher's journal. The data collected was analyzed to obtain answers to the questions which originated this research:

- How can teaching tasks be employed to serve as useful and effective formative assessment instruments in EFL primary classrooms for teachers and learners, fostering a positive relationship between pupil and school assessment?
- How can formative feedback be used to support the development of young learners' oral interaction?

II.3.1. Observation of the pair-work tasks

The combination of methodology such as observation, the assessment questionnaire and the teacher's journal allowed me to reflect on the usefulness of the pair work tasks, or teaching tasks, their appropriateness and effectiveness as formative assessment instruments for teachers and learners.

Throughout this research project, students were involved in a pair or group work task in almost every lesson, which contributed to increasing the amount of talking time each student had as well as promoting autonomous work. As the term progressed, I was able to notice how their attitudes and willingness to participate in pair-work activities evolved too. On 17th November 2021, I wrote a bullet-point list in my teacher's journal: "Very happy with this lesson! Students used the new vocabulary in a meaningful way; pair work shows signs of

progress in terms of collaboration, aims are achieved, good participation levels overall; growing interest for the language!”.

Initially, students exhibited puzzled looks and instructions needed to be explained twice for pair-work tasks, a fact I attributed to an absence of similar tasks done in the third grade. Modelling the activities with the pupils helped clarify task instructions. The use of a teacher’s journal allowed me to keep a log of students’ progress regarding this aspect: “Instructions are understood after the first time explaining them” (17th November 2021), which contrasts with earlier entries where I addressed my frustrations about this matter.

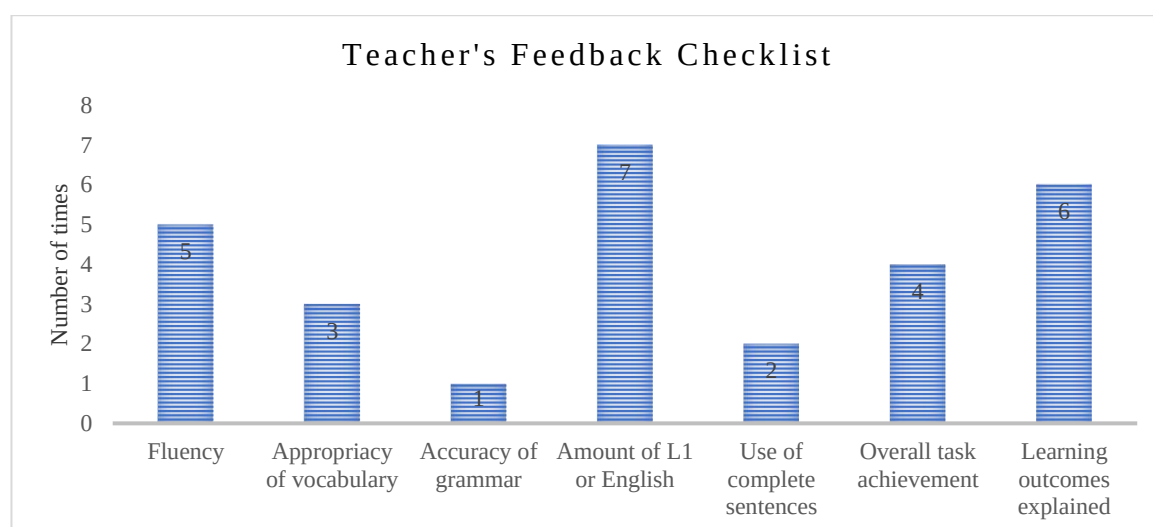
Equally as important was explaining to children what the expected learning objectives and outcomes for the task were. I began implementing this on the 18th of October and on the 3rd of November I wrote, “Students used the language. Explaining what the learning goals are for each activity seems to improve their effort to use English”. This can be associated with the notion that formative assessment “must lead to action for improved learning; hence relevance to the goals of learning is paramount” (Harlen & James, 1997, p.371). Clearly stating and explaining what the learning outcomes for each task are, leads to successful learning (Britton, 2021; Kerr, 2020).

II.3.2. Teacher’s feedback

As aforementioned, a checklist (Appendix J) was created to obtain organized data regarding the frequency and type of feedback given orally to pupils, as a means to analyse the feedback provided throughout this research. After each lesson where some form of feedback was given to students, I would log its type and add secondary observations. After considering past journal entries and both grids, I pondered the type of feedback that needed to be provided to learners to move them closer to the desired goals, increase motivation as well as correct any possible mistakes, pushing them to better performances in future identical tasks.

The results from the checklist's data carried out in thirteen lessons from the middle of October to the middle of December are presented in Table 2. It shows that I focused feedback on the amount of L1 or English on 7 occasions, fluency on 5, and overall task achievement on 4. These were areas I believe students could improve on in order to achieve the learning goals, based on prior tasks performance. Comparing results from Tables 2 and 3, it is possible to conclude that: students' use of L1 during tasks did not improve despite my feedback; the category fluency received more focus when giving feedback as well as a positive increase in observed learner’s development; lastly, areas such as accuracy of grammar and use of complete sentences were not the main focus during the feedback process.

Table 2. Occurrences and type of teacher's feedback over 13 lessons



Additionally, another factor to consider is that the type of pair-work tasks did not comprise extensive grammar or sentences, or they encompassed grammatical structures already known to this group of learners. Moreover, I decided to include the times learners were aware of the learning outcomes for the task, a factor from which, as mentioned before, pupils benefited. Once more, there is no clear relation between teacher's feedback and pupils' spoken interaction progress. I believe results would have been more profitable if feedback was given individually and over a longer period of time.

II.3.3. Pair-work observation grids

Intending to promote oral fluency and more accurate use of previously introduced language (Oliver & Philip, 2014), I closely observed and registered the pairs' performance progress with the assistance of a spoken interaction observation grid (Appendix I). The five tasks selected for this research were information gap activities. Table 3 shows students' development according to the chosen criteria during the five tasks that were observed. Level 1 represented the highest level while level 3 was the lowest.

The results collected from stronger students such as Hero Nicks and Lizzy reveal no notable changes in their performance during pair-work tasks after corrective feedback was provided. From the beginning, both displayed strong abilities in their oral skills, thus results are not surprising. Nevertheless, it is worth mentioning that the amount of L1 used decreased over the course of the observed tasks, possibly due to the teacher's implementation of formative feedback, which referred to its use.

Godzila could be considered an average student. The relationship with his dyad influenced his language development: "Godzila with Lizzy seems to be working. They work as a team and try to solve their problems" (Teacher's journal, 20th October). Godzila's development in the

spoken interaction skill was gradual and the results recorded on the observation grid demonstrate an increase in his fluency and progress in appropriacy of vocabulary. Although he continued to make heavy use of L1 to complete the tasks, I interpreted it as more of a crutch. Lizzy, his pair, “is patient and waits” (Teacher’s journal, 25th October).

Table 3. Pair-work observation grid: students’ spoken interaction progress

Tasks	Students	Fluency			Appropriacy of Vocabulary			Accuracy of Grammar			Use of L1			Overall task achievement		
		1	2	3	1	2	3	1	2	3	1	2	3	1	2	3
Task 1	Hero Nicks	X			X				X			X		X		
	Omi Ranha			X		X				X		X			X	
	Godzila			X		X			X			X			X	
	Lizzy		X		X			X				X		X		
	Mari			X		X				X			X			X
	Annita		X		X				X			X			X	
Task 2	Hero Nicks	X			X			X			X			X		
	Omi Ranha			X		X		X				X			X	
	Godzila			X		X		X					X		X	
	Lizzy	X			X			X			X			X		
	Mari			X			X	X					X		X	
	Annita		X		X			X				X		X		
Task 3	Hero Nicks	X			X			X			X			X		
	Omi Ranha		X			X			X			X			X	
	Godzila		X		X				X			X			X	
	Lizzy	X			X			X			X			X		
	Mari			X		X			X			X			X	
	Annita		X		X			X				X		X		
Task 4	Hero Nicks	X			X			X			X			X		
	Omi Ranha		X			X			X			X			X	
	Godzila		X				X		X				X		X	
	Lizzy	X			X			X			X			X		
	Mari			X		X			X			X			X	
	Annita	X			X			X			X			X		
Task 5	Hero Nicks	X			X			X			X			X		
	Omi Ranha		X			X			X			X		X		
	Godzila		X		X				X			X		X		
	Lizzy	X			X			X			X			X		
	Mari		X			X			X			X		X		
	Annita		X		X			X				X		X		

Annita, the second average student, revealed progress in the category accuracy of grammar. Despite exhibiting potential, Annita did not profit from the teacher’s feedback in

areas such as fluency or L1 usage during pair-work tasks. I believe that if feedback was given individually and over a longer period of time, Annita would have developed her spoken oral interaction further.

Mari was one of the weaker students. From the start, Mari displayed a negative attitude regarding pair-work and tasks which focused on the spoken interaction skill. On the 20th of October, I recorded “Mari didn’t try to participate in the pair-work activity and always asks what she’s supposed to do. She orally repeats the language and has good pronunciation, but tasks are not carried out at all (in all pair work activities)”. Over the course of the lessons, Mari improved in the areas concerning appropriacy of vocabulary, L1 usage and overall task achievement. What I began to notice from observing this student was that my feedback in relation to the categories mentioned previously, reassured her of her abilities, serving as a means of reinforcement for her to be more confident to conclude the task. This student is evidence that formative assessment facilitates learning since it provides feedback that can support ongoing student learning and improvement (Britton, 2021; Rea-Dickins & Gardner, 2000).

Omi Ranha was an inattentive child although his progress in the matter of fluency and accuracy of grammar is evident. Amid pair-work tasks, he remembered to use the vocabulary although “with some pauses, using some L1” (Teacher’s journal, 25th October 2021). At this point, Omi Ranha began to improve vis-à-vis accuracy of grammar, remembering and employing the feedback provided to complete the task.

In short, the data collected above answers my second research question *How can formative feedback be used to support the development of young learners’ oral interaction?*. Feedback was administered orally to the whole class after the observation of two to three pair-work tasks and demonstrated how learners could develop their oral interaction. In this short span, learners understood the teacher's feedback to be mostly helpful and incentivizing but close observation of the six learners demonstrate an absence of student interiorization as well as its implementation. Therefore, results are inconclusive in regard to a direct correlation between the impact of feedback and their spoken interaction progress during pair-work. Although no negative emotional responses to feedback were registered, feedback did not seem to motivate the students to develop their oral interaction. Yet, I believe the feedback I provided to learners regarding their pair-work speaking interaction activities served as feed-forward, allowing learners to gain a better understanding of areas to improve in future tasks. Moreover, students were exposed to a plethora of formative teaching tasks which allowed them to cultivate a positive relationship with school assessment, one of this study’s aims which can also be found

in my first research question. In addition, an increase in children's autonomy to perform the tasks proposed was noticeable.

II.3.4. Questionnaires

II.3.4.1. Assessment questionnaires

To answer the study's first research question, the assessment questionnaires (Appendix K) were presented with the purpose of collecting information about students' opinions regarding different assessment tools and their preferred activities during English lessons. The open questions were created in the hope of obtaining a better insight into learners' beliefs and attitudes regarding summative tests and pair-work activities. Table 4 presents and compares the results from the first and second questionnaires.

Table 4. Students' perceptions on summative assessment and formative assessment methods, which include preferred methods of learning and in-class activities

Statements	Students' answers (% and numbers of students)			
	First questionnaire		Final questionnaire	
	(November)		(December)	
	(n=24)		(n=20)	
Multiple answers allowed				
1. I feel like I learn English when I do...				
– Individual activities	21%		40%	
	(5)		(8)	
– Pair-work activities	92%		85%	
	(22)		(17)	
– Tests	54%		50%	
	(13)		(10)	
– Oral presentations	71%		55%	
	(17)		(11)	
One answer allowed				
	Yes	No	Yes	No
2. I like doing English tests.	88%	12%	85%	15%
	(21)	(3)	(17)	(3)
3. I like pair-work activities.	92%	8%	95%	5%
	(22)	(2)	(19)	(1)

In the first questionnaire, as shown in Table 4 (question 1), students revealed that they believed they learn more through pair-work activities, with 92%, followed by oral

presentations, with 71%, and lastly, with 54%, tests. At the time, students were already familiar with pair-work tasks and knew these would feed into their final mark. These results are corroborated by an entry in my teacher's journal written on 17th November where I mentioned that their interest levels for the proposed activities had been increasing and pupils were becoming less teacher-dependent during pair-work, demonstrating more autonomy and reliance on their language skills. In addition, 88% of students enjoyed doing English tests while 12% of students stated that they did not (question 2). The small percentage of students justified their answers by describing negative feelings associated with written tests such as stress, lack of confidence and anxiety. In question 3, the majority of students (92%) said they enjoyed pair-work activities while 8% did not. This latter percentage refers to two participants who stated that they disliked pair-work due to their partners' lack of understanding of the tasks "*porque às vezes a pessoa não sabe muito bem inglês*" [Because sometimes the person doesn't know English very well], which contrasts with their understanding; and their colleagues' pace performing the activity "*porque são muito lentos*" [Because they're very slow]. Compatibility between learners plays a crucial role in pair-work activities and the relationship they share with their peers closely influences their performance during pair-work tasks. Pinter (2007) suggested how young learners might struggle in collaborative tasks because they have greater difficulty considering their partner's needs.

In the second assessment questionnaire, distributed close to the end of the term, it seems pertinent to refer that four students were absent from school, due to Covid-19. The obtained results show a slight shift in pupils' answers. 85% of students still show a preference for pair-work activities, 55% for oral presentations, followed by 50% who think they learn English with tests. A possible explanation for this outcome could be that, although students participated and were engaged during pair-work tasks, they did not consider these to be *real* assessment tools used by the teacher in spite of the teacher's explanation and reminders. Learners identified how beneficial pair-work can be to progress in their speaking competence but ultimately did not ponder them as assessment instruments that would reflect in their final mark, which is not surprising since pair-work is not always synonymous with assessment. Moreover, questions 2 and 3 revealed similar answers to the first questionnaire. 85% of students enjoy English tests and 95% of students like pair-work activities. Identical results can be seen for the percentage of students who selected "No" in both questions 2 and 3.

Overall, although the percentages are slightly different from the first assessment questionnaire to the second one, it is important to have in mind that four students did not complete the last questionnaire, and some of them had contrasting opinions from the majority

of the class regarding assessment, such as preference for written tests and negative attitudes towards pair-work. Secondly, students' exposure to other assessment tools besides oral presentations and written tests allowed them to develop their preferences in regard to learning English, which included the formative assessment tools specified.

The qualitative analysis of answers to the open questions (2.1., 3.1. and 4.) present in these two questionnaires showed how, in some cases, students had identical perceptions and ideas towards assessment. Similar answers were compiled and can be analyzed in Table 5.

Table 5. Students' attitudes towards assessment – conclusions and similarities among open-ended answers 2.1., 3.1. and 4 (in numbers and %).

Tests are associated with learning English	14 (63%)
Tests help improve their English	5 (21%)
Tests are associated with negative emotions	5 (21%)
Assessed pair-work is more enjoyable and associated with having fun	9 (38%)
Assessed pair-work is easier and quicker than tests	5 (20%)
Pair-work promotes collaboration and/or clarifies doubts	6 (25%)
Students enjoy working with their friends	11 (46%)

Emotions can affect learning since experiencing positive reactions in educational settings are related to successful learning. Essentially, enjoyment, which can be described as a sense of accomplishment, can be linked to undergoing effective assessment tasks such as the ones present in formative assessment. Thus, if learners prefer certain types of assessment methods over others because they associate them with enjoyment, they are predisposed to obtaining better results and expanding their language competence (Lucardie, 2014). In short, students' attitudes towards assessment influence the effectiveness and usefulness of assessment instruments since ineffective tasks might be synonymous with less preferred ones. More than 80% of students associate written tests with learning and improving their English. Some pertinent answers that justify this elevated percentage are:

- “*Porque até aprendo quando não acerto uma pergunta.*” [Because I learn even when I don't get an answer right] (Tricky, December)
- “*Aprendemos mais palavras e aprendemos com os erros.*” [We learn more words and learn from our mistakes] (Pudim, December)
- “*Porque eu gosto de me desafiar.*” [Because I like challenging myself.] (Bob, December)

Nine-year-old students identify tests as being more mentally stimulating and some give more importance to reading and writing skills, disregarding the speaking and oral interaction skills, which are present in the official documents that establish the goals for each language skill such as *Aprendizagens Essenciais de Inglês do 4º ano* (Direção-Geral da Educação, 2018) and *Perfil dos Alunos à Saída da Escolaridade Obrigatória* (Direção-Geral da Educação, 2017) as well as the CEFR (Council of Europe, 2018), which highlights the paramount importance of the development of the oral interaction skill when learning a language.

In contrast, 21% of students associate or experience negative feelings with tests. In both questionnaires, Loucura states that she feels insecure and nervous due to the amount of pressure put on her during those moments (question 2.1.): “*Porque eu não me sinto segura quando faço testes.*” [Because I don’t feel sure of myself when I do tests.] (November); “*Porque não me sinto confortável.*” [Because I don’t feel comfortable] (December). Fortnite expresses his difficulty in understanding the questions in written tests, therefore not feeling very confident in his capabilities to do well, afraid that such assessments do not reflect his true abilities. Identical answers were given in both questionnaires: “*Porque às vezes as perguntas são difíceis..*” [Because sometimes the questions are difficult] (November); “*Às vezes não entendo as perguntas.*” [Sometimes I don’t understand the questions] (December). On the other hand, he feels comfortable whilst doing pair-work activities, enjoys doing them while simultaneously understanding their relevance for practising his spoken interaction skill in English. Mari, one of the chosen participants to undergo close observation during pair-work tasks, changed her answers from questionnaire one to questionnaire two. In the first one, she replied yes to “Do you like doing English tests?” (question 2), justifying it by saying she learnt more. Yet, in the final questionnaire, besides replying *no* she added “*eu acho um pouco difícil para mim*” [I think it’s a bit difficult for me] to question 2.1. This suggests that after being exposed to and included in different types of teaching tasks, Mari felt that she struggled with written tests, a possible justification for her low mark. Similarly, it supports the idea that pencil and paper tests are not an inclusive assessment tool therefore may not be able to cater to different learning styles. In addition, Mari added to her initial response in the first questionnaire as to why she enjoys pair-work activities (question 3.1.): “*porque é divertido e sinto que aprendo melhor*” [Because it’s fun and I feel like I learn better], consequently reinforcing the concept previously discussed.

Compared with tests, Table 5 shows that pair-work was viewed by 58% of students as an enjoyable, faster, and easier type of assessment, which promotes positive emotions such as enjoyment in the classroom, closely linked to successful learning. Additionally, 25% of

students believed that pair-work encourages collaboration, which in turn creates opportunities for peers to clarify doubts amongst themselves, a more comfortable scenario for shy children, for example. Below are some students' replies to the open-ended question 3.1. "Why do you like doing pair-work activities?":

- "*Porque falamos inglês.*" [Because we speak in English.] (D, December)
- "*Porque a professora ajuda!*" [Because the teacher helps.] (Loucura, December)
- "*Porque ainda aprendemos.*" [Because we still learn.] (Loucura, December)
- "*Porque quando estamos a trabalhar aprendemos mais.*" [Because when we are working we learn even more.] (Mbappe, December)
- "*Porque acho que aprendo melhor/mais.*" [Because I think I learn better/more.] (PKXD, November and December)
- "*Consigo perceber um bocadinho mais.*" [I can understand a little bit more.] (Lince, December)

Learners who disliked pair-work, such as Pi-12-YT and Taspio, maintained their opinion throughout the study. Additionally, both learners stated why they felt they learnt English better with tests, "*porque temos que pensar sozinhos*" [because we have to think for ourselves], (Pi-12-YT, November) reinforcing their preference for individual work. Mari, on the other hand, who initially stated she also learnt better with tests, changed her opinion over the period of the research, expressing how she struggled during their completion.

II.3.4.2. Feedback questionnaires

The *Feedback questionnaire* (Appendix L) collected the students' opinions and impressions regarding the implementation of the oral feedback being provided by the teacher and consequent personal use in the following tasks. Table 6 compiles the results obtained by the three closed items of the first and second feedback questionnaires.

As shown below, in the first questionnaire distributed in November, 58% of the class stated that they enjoyed pair-work activities to practice speaking in English (item 1.1.). This value rose to 70% in the questionnaire distributed in December. Likewise, 67% declared that they liked receiving my feedback after the pair-work tasks in item 1.2. This percentage slightly decreased to 65%, in the second questionnaire. 29% of students claimed they agreed with that statement while 4% selected "disagree". This result is supported by an entry in my teacher's journal where I described this student's initial and persistent confusion with the concept of feedback which, with a number of explanations, was resolved, as can be seen in the results presented in the December questionnaire.

Table 6. Students' perceptions of teacher's formative feedback on pair-work tasks that focus on spoken interaction

Statements	Students' answers (% and numbers of students)							
	First questionnaire (November) (n=24)				Final questionnaire (December) (n=23)			
	Agree a lot	Agree	Disagree	Disagree a lot	Agree a lot	Agree	Disagree	Disagree a lot
1.1. I like pair-work activities to practice speaking in English	58% (14)	42% (10)	0%	0%	70% (16)	26% (6)	0%	0%
1.2. I like receiving teacher Carolina's feedback after the pair-work activities	67% (16)	29% (7)	4% (1)	0%	65% (15)	35% (8)	0%	0%
1.3. I use the teacher Carolina's feedback to improve the way I speak in English	25% (6)	67% (16)	4% (1)	4% (1)	35% (8)	61% (14)	9% (2)	0%

The data collected from item 1.3. is closely related to the second research question *How can formative feedback be used to support the development of young learners' oral interaction?*. When students were asked if they employed the feedback to improve their speaking skills, 67% selected "agree" in the first questionnaire. Only 25% selected "agree a lot". In the final feedback questionnaire, pupils' answers changed to some extent with a slight decrease to 61% who claimed they used the feedback. 35% of students selected "agree a lot". The analysis of this result illustrates a group of learners who started to internalize the importance of the feedback to improve their speaking in English in the short period available for the duration of the research.

In the same item (1.3.), in the November questionnaire, 4% claimed to disagree with the statement and another 4% disagreed a lot. However, in the last questionnaire, the student who selected "disagree a lot" changed his answer to only "disagree". The analysis of his individual answers showed how still unclear the concept of feedback remained to this student, based on his vague responses to the open-ended question number 2, "What type of feedback does the teacher give?", one being "*Não sei*" [I don't know]. Unfortunately, this student did not reveal to me his uncertainty regarding the notion of feedback.

In sum, students' opinions and attitudes towards formative feedback did not fluctuate by much. Both feedback questionnaires demonstrate similar results which indicate that this group

of 24 participants did not change their thoughts or efforts in regard to the employment of descriptive and verbal feedback about their oral interaction skill. Only a small percentage tried to use the feedback regularly during tasks whereas the majority continued to need to be reminded of the categories chosen to achieve the learning objectives proposed for the oral interaction skill. A plausible explanation for this result could be the lack of time available for students to interiorize the feedback provided and the type of it.

Through the qualitative analysis of the three open-ended questions (1.2.1., 1.3.1. and 2.) featured in the feedback questionnaires, we gain some insight into pupils' beliefs as to *why* they enjoyed the feedback, *how* they used it and lastly, *what type* of feedback they were able to recognize. When asked "Why do I like receiving feedback from the teacher?" (Item 1.2.1.), these were some of the replies:

- "*Porque quando a professora dá feedback sei onde tenho de melhorar.*" [Because when the teacher gives feedback I know where to improve.] (M, December)
- "*Porque ajuda-me a saber se estou a fazer bem ou mal as tarefas.*" [Because it helps me to know if I'm doing the tasks well or not.] (M, November)
- "*Porque ajuda-me a falar melhor inglês.*" [Because it helps me to speak better English.] (Bob, November)
- "*Porque gosto de receber coisas boas do meu trabalho.*" [Because I like to receive praise for my work.] (Tutucs, November)
- "*Ajuda-me a entender mais sobre a atividade.*" [It helps me to better understand the activity.] (Fortnite, November)

This sample of answers indicate that some students understood that feedback was essentially specific descriptive information about their individual performance and how to do it more effectively. Results from task observations do not demonstrate how feedback led to an increase in learner motivation to perform better in upcoming tasks. Yet, if students continued to be exposed to the teacher's feedback, results could have improved. The answers also indicate better task understanding and the expected need to be praised for their performance. When asked "How do I use the feedback?" (Item 1.3.1), these were some insightful students' answers:

- "*Lembro-me e utilizo para falar inglês.*" [I remember and use it to speak English.] (Bob, November)
- "*Se não souber pronunciar bem as palavras, a professora ajuda-me com o feedback.*" [If I don't know how to pronounce the words well, the teacher helps me with the feedback.] (Hermion, December)

- “*Para conseguir falar inglês como deve ser.*” [To be able to speak English properly.] (Lince, December)
- “*A pronunciar as palavras.*” [To pronounce words.] (Omi Ranha, November)

The answers above demonstrate students’ perceptions about how they used the feedback which were to use the language and to improve pronunciation. However, students’ statements and observed performance do not correlate, meaning that perhaps there was a gap between students’ perception and action upon feedback. I believe that with time, and possibly with individualized feedback, learners could have employed it in a more fruitful manner. Table 7 displays the similarities found in students’ opinions towards feedback when asked “What type of feedback does the teacher give?” (question 2).

Table 7. Quantitative analysis to open item number 2: “What type of feedback does the teacher give?” (in numbers and %).

Helps with speaking in English	11 (46%)
Shows areas to improve	8 (33%)
Teacher’s support, incentive, and easier to learn	5 (21%)

46% of students believe that the feedback that was being provided to them regarding the pair-work speaking tasks helped them in their speaking skills. 33% claimed that they enjoyed receiving feedback since it showed them which areas of the language to improve. Lastly, 21% of students saw it as a supportive and incentivizing tool. In addition, one student stated how feedback showed them the place they currently were in their learning, generating more cognitively aware students as well as engaging them as owners of their learning (Thompson & Wiliam, 2008).

In sum, feedback was conceptualized by learners as a way of scaffolding their learning, where the teacher assumed the role of supporting and facilitating their second language acquisition process. Overall, results showed how timely, descriptive, and cognitively appropriate feedback served as feed-forward.

II.4 Discussion and conclusion

II.4.1. Reflecting on research findings and limitations of the study

This small-scale action research project addressed the significance of formative assessment in EFL primary classrooms, focusing on the employment of one of its components, formative feedback. Moreover, it aimed to understand if formative feedback deployed by the teacher had an impact on the performance of 24 fourth-graders during pair-work activities, created to develop their spoken interaction skill. From October to mid-December, a methodology was implemented to support the development of students’ oral interaction skills in the FL to

enhance their performance in tasks by using the feedback I provided, following criteria I deemed relevant.

One of this study's aims was to employ teaching tasks capable of being useful and effective assessment instruments in EFL primary classrooms, as well as employ other assessment methods besides written tests that could forge more positive relations between pupils and assessment. In every lesson, students were involved in teaching tasks and in the majority of them, pair-work was present. The data gathered from formative assessment via tasks allowed me to build and maintain a continuous representation of a learner's ability and adapt my teaching to meet their learning needs as well as provide descriptive feedback, increasing student knowledge and understanding, which answers this research's first question. Therefore, teaching tasks served as useful and effective assessment instruments in an EFL primary classroom for the teacher and learners.

Secondly, although students identified how beneficial pair-work can be to progress in their language learning and achieve the proposed learning goals, they ultimately did not consider them as credible assessment instruments, despite the teacher's explanation of how these tools would feed into their final mark. Nonetheless, during the study, learners' involvement in teaching tasks increased their understanding and interest levels for the proposed activities which consequently improved their autonomy, enjoyment, and language learning, one of this study's aims and again, an answer to the first research question. Complementary information from my teacher's journal corroborated this conclusion. In sum, positive experiences with language assessment were observed and registered due to the implementation of effective formative assessment via teaching tasks.

Overall, this group of 24 fourth-graders, age 9, associate written tests with learning and improving their language skills. Learners identify tests as being more mentally stimulating and more importance to reading and writing skills is given by the majority, with a tendency to dismiss oral interaction. The latter is mentioned in official documents such as *Aprendizagens Essenciais de Inglês do 4º ano* (Direção-Geral da Educação, 2018), *Perfil dos Alunos à Saída da Escolaridade Obrigatória* (Direção-Geral da Educação, 2017) as well as the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (Council of Europe, 2018) but should be given more significance. A possible explanation for this predominant opinion might be their experiences with summative assessment so far, which outweigh the ones with formative assessment. Everything students do is a potential source of information about understandings and misunderstandings. Through the use of formative assessment, the teacher can support learning by sharing learning goals as well as provide feedback that serves as feed-forward,

involving students and activating them as the owners of their learning and finally, designing effective learning tasks that produce evidence of students' abilities (Thompson & Wiliam, 2008). Formative assessment could change teaching in the classroom by enhancing student learning with the measures described beforehand.

To answer the second research question, teacher's observation was implemented in day-to-day practice making it possible to develop and adapt the provided feedback on pair-work task performance. After the completion of pair work tasks, various types of formative feedback were used in combination to try to guarantee learning goals achievement, which demonstrated how learners could progress in their oral skills. Students understood that feedback was essentially specific descriptive information about their performance and how to improve from that point on. Results indicate that the feedback was focused on the amount of L1 or English, fluency, and overall task achievement. Questionnaire results demonstrate students' perceptions about how and where they applied the feedback, which was namely to use the language and word pronunciation, an aspect absent from the analysed categories. In this short span, learners understood the teacher's feedback to be mostly helpful and incentivizing but close observation of the six learners demonstrate an absence of student interiorization as well as the implementation of feedback.

Lastly, I recognize a constraint that compromised a deeper understanding of feedback which was the lack of time available to fully understand its notion and consequent implementation in year 4 learners. A longer period of time to develop my action research would have allowed me to continue to apply feedback to learners and possibly develop their language learning. Furthermore, possibly delivering individual feedback after tasks, instead of doing it to the whole class, could have led to more rewarding and successful results since it could comprise individual preferences and problems.

II.4.2. The importance of the action research for my development as an EFL teacher

The development of an action research project during my training as a future EFL teacher allowed me to deepen my knowledge on how to create a suitable environment for young learners to foster a positive relationship with the language but also with the assessment instruments we teachers have at our disposal. Not only was I able to create and develop tools for the students, such as learning tasks, but I was also given the opportunity to utilize observation grids to consistently collect data regarding the learners' oral interaction skill. Keeping a continuous track of students' abilities allowed me to adapt and evaluate the effectiveness of my teaching as well as be more aware of my learners' needs, a crucial part of

which is connected to formative assessment. The selected methodology enabled me to analyse and deconstruct notions that are often misunderstood in the teaching community, such as summative and formative assessment, and shed light on the importance of the development of speaking among young learners as well as the many benefits of employing feedback to ultimately support and enhance students' ongoing performance and achievement.

Equally as important was how this study allowed me to reflect on my practice in a critical manner, not merely with the use of my teacher's journal but also with the open dialogue between the children and me.

II.4.3. The relevance of this research for EFL teaching in the Portuguese context

In Portuguese FL classrooms, the development of literacy skills is favoured over oracy and the most common assessment tool remains the written tests (Moreira et al., 2021). Within this study, negative emotions have been associated with testing by fourth-graders, who merely after four years of curricular school experience reactions such as stress and insecurity. Although a minority, it is crucial that varied assessment tools are combined to include all students in order to foster language development. The Portuguese education system and school directives perpetuate these traditional forms of assessment and various other factors keep on sustaining it. As stated by Moreira et al. (2021), testing remains the main tool for gathering evidence of student learning which contrasts with the literature reviewed for this research regarding formative assessment and how it feeds into teaching and not backwards as summative assessment does. The MAIA Project (Direção-Geral da Educação, 2019) was conceived and developed to improve the assessment and teaching practices of teachers with the goal of improving student learning. This project aims to provide better solutions and actions that converge toward the development of quality learning.

Over the course of this action research, formative assessment took place alongside teaching and learning and proved to be an effective tool to collect data on students' skills and progress, supporting their ongoing improvement. It fed into learners' final mark in combination with the summative assessment tools being applied according to the school's assessment policy. Likewise, observation grids were reliable tools to gather evidence to monitor children's progress in all skills entailed in FL learning, if used systematically for formative assessment. Throughout this study, feedback was explored with year 4 learners and proved advantageous if employed frequently and according to pupils' current stage of language learning, progress and context. Students were actively involved during lessons which improved their autonomy as learners.

Lastly, as the literature reviewed for this research confirmed, learning a language is inherently related to communicating and transferring meaning to others. A variety of opportunities should be created for students to develop their spoken interaction and ultimately, production. Pencil and paper tests do not allow learners to engage, explore and use the language they learn orally, in communicative contexts.

II.4.4. Future research

The matter of the validity of varied types of feedback in a primary context may be a subject for future research. Although this report addresses the benefits of feedback in pair-work tasks to support the development of spoken interaction in young learners, the time constraint is noticeable. The findings of this study may be used to enhance oral interaction with similar groups of learners in identical contexts. In addition, the variables identified should be taken into consideration namely students' abilities, effort and willingness, progress, and, as reported by previous research, the relationships established between pupils.

Additional studies to deepen the understanding of the impact of feedback in language learning in a primary context are required.

REFERENCES

- Black, P. & Wiliam, D. (1998). Assessment and classroom learning. *Assessment in Education: Principles, Policy & Practice*, 5(1), pp. 7-74. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.1080/0969595980050102>
- Britton, M. (2021). *Assessment for learning in primary language learning and teaching*. Multilingual Matters.
- Brown, J. D. (2002). Extraneous variables and the washback effect. *Japan Association for Language Teaching Testing & Evaluation Special Interest Group*, 6(2), pp. 12-15.
- Burns, A. (2010). *Doing action research in English language teaching: A guide for practitioners*. Routledge.
- Cameron, L. (2001). *Teaching languages to young learners*. Cambridge University Press.
- Council of Europe. (2018). *Common european framework of reference for language: Learning, teaching, assessment. Companion volume with new descriptors*.
- Direção-Geral da Educação. (2017). *Perfil dos Alunos à Saída da Escolaridade Obrigatória*.
- Direção-Geral da Educação. (2018). *Aprendizagens Essenciais de Inglês do 4º ano*.
- Direção-Geral da Educação. (2019). *Projeto MAIA: Monitorização, acompanhamento e investigação em avaliação pedagógica*.
- Dooley, J. & Evans, V. (2016). *Smiles 4*. Express Publishing.
- Dörnyei, Z. (2003). Questionnaires in second language research: Construction, administration, and processing. *Teaching English as a Second or Foreign Language (TESL-EJ)*, 6(3), pp. 8-156.
- Edutopia. (2008, July 15). *Why is assessment important?* Retrieved from www.edutopia.org/assessment-guide-importance
- Harlen, W., & James, M. (1997). Assessment and learning: Differences and relationships between formative and summative assessment. *Assessment in Education: Principles, Policy & Practice*, 4(3), pp. 365-379.
- Hattie, J. & Timperley, H. (2007). The power of feedback. *Review of Educational Research*, 77(1), pp. 81-112.

- Hattie, J. (2012). *Visible learning for teachers: Maximizing impact on learning*. Routledge.
- Iannou-Georgiou, S. & Pavlou, P. (2003). *Assessing young learners*. Oxford University Press.
- Jang, E. (2014). *Focus on assessment*. Oxford University Press.
- Kerr, P. (2020). *Giving feedback to language learners*. Cambridge University Press.
- Klenowski, V. (2009). Assessment for learning revisited: An Asia-Pacific perspective. *Assessment in Education: Principles, Policy and Practice*, 16(3), pp. 263-268.
- Leslie, C. E. (2021, July 17). Formative assessment in the primary English classroom. *34th Annual APPI online Conference 'Teacher and learner agency'*.
- Leslie, C. E. (2021). Interaction patterns and support for learning in the primary foreign language classroom. *Porta Linguarium*, 36, pp. 65-82.
- Lipnevich, A. A., & Smith, J. K. (2009). "I really need feedback to learn:" Students' perspectives on the effectiveness of the differential feedback messages. *Educational Assessment, Evaluation and Accountability*, 21(4), pp. 347-367.
- Lucardie, D. (2014). The impact of fun and enjoyment on adult's learning. *Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 142, pp. 439-446.
- Montalvo-Balbed, M. (2012). Using formative assessment to help English language learners. *English Language Learners and the Common Core*, pp. 1-5.
- Moreira, M. A., Mourão, S., Leslie, C., & Monteiro, E. (2021). *Avaliação das aprendizagens de inglês no 1º CEB: Um estudo em Portugal Continental*. CETAPS, NOVA FCSH.
- Oliver, R., & Philip, J. (2014). *Focus on oral interaction*. Oxford.
- Pearson. (2016). *Providing educational feedback*. White Paper. Retrieved from <https://www.pearson.com/content/dam/one-dot-com/one-dot-com/us/en/pearson-ed/downloads/Feedback.pdf>
- Phillips, D. K. & Carr, K. (2010). *Becoming a teacher through action research: Process, context, and self-study* (2nd ed.). Routledge.
- Pinter, A. (2007). Some benefits of peer-peer interaction: 10-year old children practising with a communication task. *Language Teaching research*, 11(2), pp. 189-207.

- Raba, A. A. (2017). The Influence of Think-Pair-Share (TPS) on improving students' oral communication skills in EFL classrooms. *Creative Education*, 8, pp. 12-23. Retrieved from <http://dx.doi.org/10.4236/ce.2017.81002>
- Rao, P. S. (2019). The importance of speaking skills in English classrooms. *Alford Council of International English & Literature Journal (ACIELJ)*, 2(2), pp. 6-18.
- Rea-Dickins, P., & Gardner, S. (2000). Snares and silver bullets: Disentangling the construct of formative assessment. *Language Testing*, 17(2), pp. 215-243.
- Richards, J. C., & Lockhart, C. (2007). *Reflective teaching in second language classrooms*. Cambridge University Press.
- Ryan, T., & Henderson, M. (2018). Feeling feedback: Students' emotional responses to educator feedback. *Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education*, 43(6), pp. 880-892.
- Shirvan, M. E., Tahereh, T., & Yazdanmehr, E. (2020). The dynamics of foreign language enjoyment: An ecological momentary assessment. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 11, pp. 1-14.
- Shute, J. V. (2008). Focus on formative feedback. *Review of Educational Research*, 78(1), pp. 153-189.
- Somogyi-Tóth, K. (2012). Observation tasks: A workbook for student teachers. *The Teacher Trainer Journal*, 26(3), pp. 8-47.
- Storch, N. (2002). Patterns of interaction in ESL pair work. *Language Learning*, 52(1), pp. 119-158.
- Taylor, L. (2005). Washback and impact. *English Language Teaching Journal*, 59(2), pp. 154-155.
- Thompson, M., & Wiliam, D. (2008). Tight but loose: Scaling up teacher professional development in diverse contexts. In E. C. Wylie (Ed.), *Tight but loose: A conceptual framework for scaling up school reforms*. (pp. 1-43). Educational Testing Service.
- Tuan, L. T., & Nhu, N. T. K. (2010). Theoretical review on oral interaction in EFL classrooms. *Studies in Literature and Language*, 1(4), pp. 29-48.

Wiliam, D. (2011). What is assessment for learning? *Studies in Educational Evaluation*, 37, pp. 3-14. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.stueduc.2011.03.001>

APPENDICES

Appendix A

Consent letter to parents/tutors

Pedido de autorização aos Encarregados de Educação

Caros pais e encarregados de educação,

O meu nome é Carolina Pinto e ao longo do 1º período deste ano letivo, irei realizar o meu estágio na turma dos vossos educandos. Para a conclusão do meu Mestrado em Ensino de Inglês no 1º Ciclo é necessário desenvolver um projeto de investigação, que estará descrito no meu relatório final de estágio. Intitulado como ***Employing formative feedback to enhance primary students' oral interaction: Exploring formative assessment*** (A utilização de *feedback* formativo para a otimização das interações orais de alunos de 1.º ciclo: Estudo de avaliação formativa), este projeto tem como principal objetivo a evolução do desempenho oral dos vossos educandos através da aplicação do *feedback* fornecido por mim. Paralelamente, é expectável que os mesmos desenvolvam uma relação positiva com os diferentes métodos de avaliação.

Venho por este meio solicitar a sua autorização para incluir o seu educando neste projeto, que tem data de início em setembro de 2021 e conclusão em dezembro do mesmo ano. O tipo de intervenção requerida por parte das crianças será bastante intrínseca ao normal decorrer das aulas do inglês, onde eles participarão em atividades com o intuito de evoluírem a sua competência de interação oral. A recolha de dados será efetuada mediante o uso de questionários, observação e avaliação do desenvolvimento das atividades em sala de aula, excertos do meu diário de professora. A participação dos educandos é voluntária podendo os mesmos deixar de participar em qualquer momento.

A instituição e os alunos permanecerão anónimos em qualquer circunstância. A totalidade da informação adquirida, resultados e conclusões farão parte do relatório final de estágio de Mestrado em Ensino e possivelmente em artigos académicos e conferências.

Se tiverem questões, agradeço que me contactem através da professora titular de turma, estarei disponível para as esclarecer.

Agradeço que me conceda a autorização o mais breve possível para proceder à implementação do estudo em causa, permitindo que o seu educando faça parte deste projeto.

Carolina Pinto

Professora Doutora Carolyn Leslie
Orientadora de Estágio
FCSH, Universidade Nova de Lisboa



Eu, _____, encarregado de educação de _____, declaro que fui informado(a) dos objetivos do estudo intitulado *Employing formative feedback to enhance primary students' oral interaction: Exploring formative assessment* e autorizo o meu educando a participar no estudo.

Data: _____

Assinatura: _____

Appendix B

Consent letter to school administration

Pedido de autorização para a realização de projeto de investigação

No âmbito do protocolo estabelecido entre a Universidade Nova de Lisboa e este Agrupamento para a realização do estágio em Ensino de Inglês no 1.º ciclo, venho por este meio solicitar a vossa autorização para a realização do projeto de investigação inerente à conclusão do relatório final do mestrado. Intitulado como *Employing formative feedback to enhance primary students' oral interaction: Exploring formative assessment* (A utilização de feedback formativo para a otimização das interações orais de alunos de 1.º ciclo: Estudo de avaliação formativa) e decorrerá entre setembro de 2021 e dezembro do mesmo ano, durante o meu estágio com a turma do 4.ºA da Escola XXXXX. Este projeto de investigação tem como objetivos explorar métodos de avaliação formativa nomeadamente a utilização de *feedback* por parte do docente de forma a estimular o desenvolvimento da competência interação oral dos alunos. Paralelamente, pressupõe-se que os mesmos desenvolvam uma relação positiva com os diferentes métodos de avaliação a que serão sujeitos.

A recolha de dados será efetuada mediante o uso de questionários, observação e avaliação do desenvolvimento das atividades em sala de aula, excertos do meu diário de professora. A informação recolhida será analisada e os resultados obtidos estarão presentes no relatório final de estágio. Serão igualmente solicitadas autorizações aos encarregados de educação e aos respetivos alunos. A sua participação é voluntária podendo os mesmos deixar de participar, por algum motivo, em qualquer momento.

A instituição, os docentes e funcionários, tal como as crianças permanecerão anónimas em qualquer circunstância. Nunca serão tiradas fotografias nem obtidas imagens da instituição ou das crianças.

Agradeço desde já a vossa colaboração para proceder à implementação do estudo em causa e manifesto a minha disponibilidade para qualquer esclarecimento através do meu e-mail XXXXX.

Carolina Pinto

Professora Doutora Carolyn Leslie
Orientadora de Estágio
FCSH, Universidade Nova de Lisboa

Eu, _____, Diretor do Agrupamento de Escolas da XXXXX declaro que fui informado dos objetivos do estudo intitulado *Employing formative feedback to enhance primary students' oral interaction: Exploring formative assessment* e autorizo os alunos da turma do 4.ºA da Escola XXXXX a participarem no estudo.

Data: _____

Assinatura: _____

Appendix C

Consent letter to children



Olá!

Chamo-me Carolina e, tal como tu, sou estudante e ainda estou a aprender coisas novas todos os dias para me tornar uma boa professora de inglês. Ao longo do 1º período, vou estar na tua turma a ensinar inglês e a fazer um estudo para a universidade. O meu objetivo é ajudar-te a melhorar a forma como falas com os amigos em inglês através de comentários. Juntos vamos explorar outro tipo de avaliação, para além dos testes.

A tua participação e ajuda é **voluntária**, ou seja, podes decidir participar ou não. Podes decidir deixar de participar a qualquer momento.

Como o meu estudo consiste em para transformar as aulas de inglês em experiências positivas e ajudar-te a brilhares nas conversas em inglês que tens com os amigos, vamos fazer muitas atividades e jogos a pares para praticarmos a forma como falas em inglês sobre muitos assuntos, e no final, vamos falar sobre como melhorar, de modo a que, na próxima atividade, seja ainda melhor! Em seguida, vamos responder a uns pequenos questionários que me vão ajudar a perceber se desta forma consegues melhorar a falar inglês.

Se escolheres participar deves escolher um nome secreto porque não vou poder usar o teu nome verdadeiro. Os teus pais sabem acerca do meu estudo e se tiveres alguma questão, **estou sempre disponível!**

Pinta a tua resposta



A Carolina explicou-me que irá realizar um estudo durante o 1º período na minha turma.		
A Carolina explicou-me qual é o objetivo do estudo e que eu posso ajudá-la se quiser.		
A Carolina explicou-me o tipo de atividades que vamos realizar nas aulas de inglês e que os comentários vão servir para me ajudar a melhorar a minha comunicação.		
A Carolina explicou-me que o estudo serve para melhorar a minha comunicação em inglês.		
A Carolina disse-me que a minha opinião vai ser importante para o estudo dela.		
A Carolina disse-me que não vai usar o meu nome verdadeiro.		
A Carolina explicou-me que posso deixar de participar em qualquer momento e que não fazia mal.		
A Carolina explicou-me que se tiver alguma pergunta, ela está sempre disponível.		
Eu percebi tudo o que a Carolina nos explicou sobre o estudo dela.		

Pinta o que corresponde à tua resposta:

Sim, quero participar.

Não quero participar.

O teu nome secreto para este projeto é... _____.

A tua assinatura: _____

Data: ____/____/____

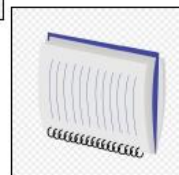
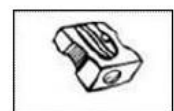
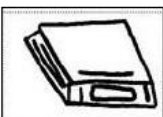
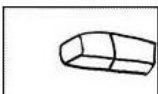
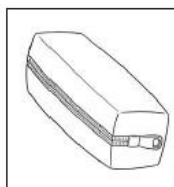


Appendix D

Pair-work task 1

Name: _____

Date: _____



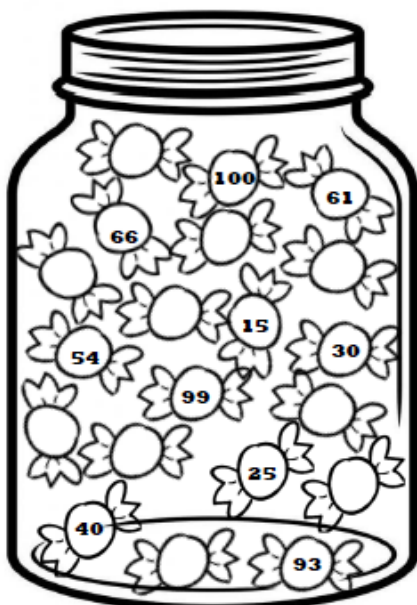
Appendix E

Pair-work task 2

Name: _____

Date: _____

Listen to your friend and colour the chocolates according to their numbers.



The number 90 () is green.

The number 21 () is pink.

The number 17 () is blue.

The number 47 () is orange.

The number 36 () is black.

The number 72 () is red.

The number 60 () is yellow.

The number 12 () is purple.

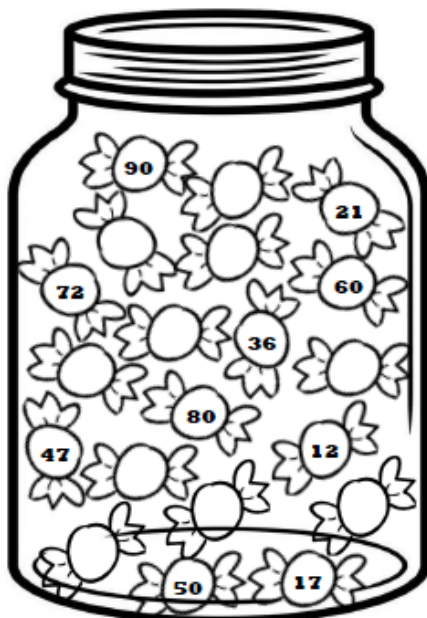
The number 80 () is brown.

The number 50 () is green.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Listen to your friend and colour the chocolates according to their numbers.



The number 15 () is blue.

The number 30 () is green.

The number 40 () is red.

The number 25 () is brown.

The number 100 () is blue.

The number 61 () is black.

The number 54 () is purple.

The number 99 () is pink.

The number 66 () is orange.

The number 93 () is yellow.

Appendix F

Pair-work task 3

Name: _____ Date: _____

Student A

Build your own Halloween poem! Listen to the words your friend says!

Halloween

There's a 1 at my window,
 A 2 by my door.
 The 3 at my table
 Keeps on smiling more and more.
 There's a 4 in my bedroom,
 A 5 whose face is 6.
 They used to be my family,
 Now they are dressed for Halloween!

Number 1 is **ghost**.

Number 2 is **witch**.

Number 3 is **black cat**.

Number 4 is **spider**.

Number 5 is **monster**.

Number 6 is **purple**.



Name: _____ Date: _____

Student B

Build your own Halloween poem! Listen to the words your friend says!

Halloween

There's a 1 at my window,
 A 2 by my door.
 The 3 at my table
 Keeps on smiling more and more.
 There's a 4 in my bedroom,
 A 5 whose face is 6.
 They used to be my family,
 Now they are dressed for Halloween!

Number 1 is **witch**.

Number 2 is **skeleton**.

Number 3 is **scary cat**.

Number 4 is **monster**.

Number 5 is **wizard**.

Number 6 is **orange**.



Appendix G

Pair-work task 4

Name: _____

Date: _____

Student A

Tell your friend your timetable: On Mondays I've got...



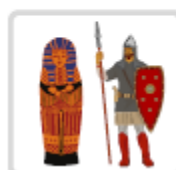
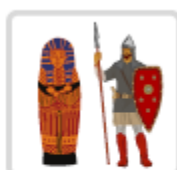
Monday

Tuesday

Wednesday

Thursday

Friday



Appendix H

Pair-work task 5

Name: _____

Date: _____

Ask, "What's A2?"

Student A

Say, "It's ..."

	1	2	3	4
A		has		
B			a	
C		and		

Santa's secret message:

Name: _____

Date: _____

Ask, "What's A1?"

Student B

Say, "It's ..."

	1	2	3	4
A			got	a
B	 (white)			 (red)
C			many	

Santa's secret message:

Appendix I

Pair-work spoken interaction observation grid

*	1: Communicates effectively with no pauses.	***	1: Appropriate use of grammatical structures to complete the task.
	2: Communicates with pauses.		2: Sufficient use of structures to complete the task.
	3: Frequent and long pauses. Difficulties in communicating.		3: No use/Incorrect use of grammatical structures required for the task, hindered communication.
**	1: Appropriate range of vocabulary to complete the task. No use of L1.	***	1: Carried out the task successfully, with relative ease.
	2: Sufficient use of vocabulary to complete the task. Little use of L1.		2: Carried out the task but with some difficulty.
	3: Insufficient use of vocabulary that hinders communication. Too much use of L1.		3: Had difficulties in carrying out the task.

Students		Criteria															Observations/Comments
		Fluency*			Appropriacy of vocabulary**			Accuracy of grammar***			Amount of L1			Overall task achievement****			
		1	2	3	1	2	3	1	2	3	No use	Little use	Too much	1	2	3	
Pair 1	Hero Nicks																
	Omi Ranha																
Pair 2	Godzila																
	Lizzy																
Pair 3	Mari																
	Annita																

Appendix J
Teacher's feedback checklist

DAYS / TASK	Feedback focused on...						Explained learning outcomes	Observations
	Fluency	Appropriacy of vocabulary	Accuracy of grammar	Amount of L1 or English	Use of complete sentences	Overall task achievement		

Appendix K
Assessment questionnaire

ENGLISH
Assessment Questionnaire

Marca com uma cruz (X) a tua resposta:

1. Sinto que aprendo inglês quando faço (podes seleccionar várias):

- ☐ Atividades individuais (por exemplo, fichas)
- ☐ Atividades a pares
- ☐ Testes
- ☐ Apresentações orais



2. Gosto de fazer testes de inglês.

- ☐ Sim
- ☐ Não

2.1. Porquê?

3. Gosto de fazer atividades a pares.

- ☐ Sim
- ☐ Não



3.1. Porquê?

4. Qual é a tua atividade favorita das aulas de inglês?



Secret name: _____

Date: ____/____/____

Appendix L
Feedback questionnaire



Feedback Questionnaire

1. Marca com uma cruz (X) a tua resposta:

	Concordo muito 	Concordo 	Discordo 	Discordo muito 	
1.1 Gosto de fazer atividades a pares onde pratico a forma como falo em inglês.					
1.2 Gosto de receber <i>feedback</i> da professora Carolina depois das atividades que realizo a pares.					1.2.1. <u>Porquê?</u> (justifica se consegues)
1.3. Utilizo o <i>feedback</i> da professora Carolina para melhorar a forma como falo em inglês.					1.3.1. <u>Como?</u> (justifica se consegues)



2. Que tipo de *feedback* é que a professora dá?

