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Using kinesthetic activities to increase student participation and aid understanding of English as a foreign language in the primary classroom.

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Relatório realizado no âmbito do Mestrado em Ensino de Inglês no 1º Ciclo do Ensino Básico, orientada pela Professora Doutora Maria Ellison de Matos

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Dedicated to everyone who supported me.

Contents

Declaração de honra	3
Acknowledgements.....	4
Resumo.....	5
Abstract	6
List of tables	7
List of graphs	8
List of abbreviations and acronyms	9
Introduction	10
Chapter I - Justification for action	12
1.1. Rationale.....	12
1.1.1. School Context	12
1.1.2. Curriculum	14
1.1.3. Class Profile	14
1.2. Zero Cycle of Action Research:	15
1.2.1. Lessons observed and identification of the problem	15
1.2.2. Research questions.....	16
Chapter II – Theoretical Background	17
2.1. Characteristics of young learners	17
2.2. The brain and movement.....	19
2.3. Motivation in young learners.....	22
2.4. Total Physical Response	24
2.5. Action games and physical activities.....	25
2.6. Learning styles / Multiple intelligences.....	27
2.7. Stirrers and Settlers.....	29
Chapter III - Research design.....	31
3.1. Methodology.....	31
3.2. Data gathering tools.....	31
3.2.1. Structured observation grids	31
3.2.2. Unstructured observation	32
3.2.3. Questionnaires	32

3.3. Results of of the zero cycle leading to the intervention plan of the first cycle of the action research project with the 3 rd year class	33
3.3.1. Contextualization and description of the activities	34
3.3.2. Results of the activity.....	35
3.3.3. Discussion of findings.....	36
3.4. Intervention plan and description of the second cycle of the action research project with the 3 rd year class.....	37
3.4.1. Contextualization and description of activity 1	38
3.4.2. Results	39
3.4.3. Discussion of findings	40
3.4.4. Contextualization and description of activities 2 and 3.....	40
3.4.5. Results	42
3.3.6. Discussion of findings	44
3.4.7. Results of the questionnaires -3 rd year class	45
3.4.8. Discussion of findings.....	46
3.5. Reasults of the zero cycle cycle leading to the intervention plan and description of the first cycle of the action research project with the 4 th year class.....	48
3.5.1. Contextualization and description of activity 1 and 2	49
3.5.2. Results	50
3.5.3. Discussion of findings	51
3.6. Intervention plan and description of the second cycle of the action research project with the 4 th year class	53
3.6.1. Contextualization and description of activity 3	53
3.6.2. Results	54
3.6.3. Discussion of findings	56
3.6.4. Results of the questionnaires -4 th year class.....	56
3.6.5. Discussion of the findings.....	57
Chapter IV - Conclusion	58
4.1. Limitations of the study.....	59
4.2. Suggestions for future research	60
References	62
Appendices	64

Declaração de honra

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[Porto, abril de 2022]

[Ligia Maria Lopes da Silva]

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Resumo

As crianças são por natureza aprendentes ativos que exploram o mundo através do que veem, ouvem e tocam, interagindo com o que lhes rodeia. Por consequente, os seus corpos têm um papel importante no processo da aprendizagem. No entanto, é comum as crianças permanecerem sentadas durante toda a aula na escola primária, o que leva a que as crianças peçam frequentemente para ir a casa de banho devido à necessidade que têm de se mexerem. Outros alunos mostrarão sinais diferentes de inquietação e perda de atenção, o que poderá resultar em pouca participação na aula. Este estudo explora o uso de actividades cinestésicas no contexto de inglês como língua estrangeira na escola primária para ver se os alunos ficam mais motivados e por consequência mais participativos. Também tem como objectivo determinar se tais actividades ajudam no entendimento da língua inglesa facilitando assim a sua aprendizagem. Este estudo foi feito com o 3º e 4º anos da escola primária. Actividades cinestésicas foram implementadas durante o estágio e os alunos foram observados com o intuito de verificar a frequência da sua participação e a compreensão da linguagem alvo. Também lhes foi dado um questionário para responder sobre estas actividades. A observação foi feita por mim e com a ajuda do meu colega de estágio. Os resultados da observação mostram que houve um aumento significativo na participação dos alunos, como também na compreensão da linguagem alvo. Os resultados dos questionários revelam que a maioria dos alunos preferiam ter aulas que incluíssem actividades físicas e que estas actividades ajudavam-lhes a aprender inglês. Os resultados em geral mostram que estes alunos disfrutavam de actividades que envolvem movimento e que usando movimento nas aulas de inglês ajuda a motiva-los, otimizando a sua aprendizagem.

Palavras-chave: movimento, participação, compreensão de linguagem alvo, actividades cinestésicas, actividades físicas.

Abstract

Children are by nature active learners who explore the world through what they hear, see and touch, and in doing so interact with their surroundings. Thus, their bodies play an important role in the process of learning. However, it is common for children to sit for the duration of an entire lesson in primary schools, which often results in children asking to go to the bathroom because they have the need to move. Other students may show different signs of restlessness and loss of attention, which may ultimately result in little student participation in general. This action research project explores the use of movement in the primary English as a foreign language (EFL) context to see whether the students become more engaged and more participative. It also explores whether the use of kinesthetic activities aids understanding of the target language, and thus enhance children's learning. The research was conducted with the 3rd and 4th year primary school children. Kinesthetic activities were implemented during the teaching practice and the students were observed in order to determine how often they participated and whether they had understood the target language. They were also asked to answer a questionnaire regarding these type of activities. The results of the observation showed that there was a significant increase in student participation, as well as understanding of the target language. The results of the questionnaires revealed that the majority of the students preferred to have lessons that included physical activities and felt that such activities helped them to learn English. The outcome of this action research shows that the students enjoyed the activities that involved movement and that using it in the EFL lessons helped to motivate them and enhance their learning.

Key-words: movement, participation, understanding of target language, kinesthetic activities, physical activities.

LIST OF TABLES

TABLE 1- ZERO CYCLE , 3RD YEAR CLASS PARTICIPATION	34
TABLE 2- RESULTS OF ACTIVITY 1 , 2ND CYCLE OF THE 3RD YEAR CLASS.....	36
TABLE 3- RESULTS OF ACTIVITY 1, 2ND CYCLE OF THE 3RD YEAR CLASS	39
TABLE 4- RESULTS OF ACTIVITY 2, 2ND CYCLE OF THE 3RD YEAR CLASS	43
TABLE 5 - RESULTS OF ACTIVITY 3, 2ND CYCLE OF THE 3RD YEAR CLASS	44
TABLE 6 - ZERO CYCLE , 4TH YEAR CLASS PARTICIPATION.....	49
TABLE 7 - ACTIVITY 1 , 1ST CYCLE OF THE 4TH YEAR CLASS PARTICIPATION	50
TABLE 8 - ACTIVITY 2 , 1ST CYCLE OF THE 4TH YEAR CLASS PARTICIPATION.....	51
TABLE 9 - ACTIVITY 3, 2ND CYCLE OF THE 4TH YEAR CLASS PARTICIPATION	54

List of graphs

GRAPH 1- ZERO CYCLE 3 RD CLASS PARTICIPATION.	33
GRAPH 2- RESULTS OF ACTIVITY 1 , 2 ND CYCLE OF THE 3 RD YEAR CLASS.	39
GRAPH 3 - RESULTS OF ACTIVITY 2, 2 ND CYCLE OF THE 3 RD YEAR CLASS	42
GRAPH 4 –RESULTS OF ACTIVITY 3, 2 ND CYCLE, 3 RD YEAR CLASS	43
GRAPH 5 - RESULTS OF ACTIVITY 3, 2 ND CYCLE OF THE 3 RD YEAR CLASS	46
GRAPH 6 - ZERO CYCLE, 4 TH YEAR CLASS PARTICIPATION	46
GRAPH 7 - ACTIVITY 1 , 1 ST CYCLE OF THE 4 TH YEAR CLASS PARTICIPATION.....	50
GRAPH 8 - ACTIVITY 2 , 1 ST CYCLE OF THE 4 TH YEAR CLASS PARTICIPATION	51
GRAPH 9 - ACTIVITY 3, 2 ND CYCLE OF THE 4 TH YEAR CLASS PARTICIPATION	55
GRAPH 19 - RESULTS OF QUESTIONNAIRE 4 TH YEAR CLASS	57

List of abbreviations and acronyms

ASD	AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDER
EFL.....	ENGLISH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE
IPP1	INICIAÇÃO À PRÁTICA PROFISSIONAL 1
IPP2	INICIAÇÃO À PRÁTICA PROFISSIONAL 2
L1	FIRST LANGUAGE
L2	FOREIGN LANGUAGE
Ss.....	STUDENTS
TEFL.....	TEACHING ENGLISH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE
TL	TARGET LANGUAGE
TPR.....	TOTAL PHYSICAL RESPONSE

Introduction

Over the years, there has been some debate as to whether an early start in learning a foreign language is beneficial. It has generally been a common belief that younger is better due to the critical period hypothesis proposed by Lenneberg (1967) (cited in Brewster et al., 2002), which stated that language was better learned in the early stages of childhood and that during this period a child is believed to acquire a second language as they do their first language. However, according to Read (2003), there is little conclusive evidence to support this idea, and having two hours of English a week does not provide the same conditions a child has when learning their first language, which is greater exposure to the language. Nonetheless, younger can be better when the right conditions are provided in primary school classrooms. These conditions depend on other factors such as motivation and the way children learn naturally. There are significant differences between young learners and older learners and teachers need to be aware of these differences in order to be better equipped to provide optimal conditions for learning to take place in the primary school classroom.

The aim of starting young is not to form bilingual children, as they will not be exposed to enough English to achieve this, but “to prepare children linguistically, psychologically, and culturally for language learning” (Boen, 1989, cited in Brewster et al., 2002, p 5). Preparing children psychologically is “giving students an appetite to learn” (Brewster et al., 2002, p 5). It is of vital importance that children’s first experience with English is positive, as they will be having English at school for many more years. If their first year of English is not a positive experience, this negative feeling may well affect the rest of their school years regarding English as a Foreign Language (EFL). Therefore, their first contact with English should be an enjoyable experience (Brewster et al., 2002), where children not only learn English but where they can learn to love English. It is the teachers’ responsibility to create and facilitate an environment that engages, motivates and challenges the learner (Kuczala & Lengel, 2010).

In this Action research project, my aim was to explore a way in which students can be more involved and engaged in learning English by tapping into the way children learn naturally. When observing children in a natural environment, we can see how they learn through handling objects and movement. Therefore, I decided to explore the use of kinesthetic activities in the classroom to see if this would encourage children to be more active learners as opposed to passive learners who sit for a whole hour and are expected to take in information. It has been shown that sitting for long periods of time, is clearly not the best way to promote learning when teaching young learners as it completely overlooks the way children learn and function. Movement, therefore, plays an essential role in learning and this should be taken into account especially when teaching young learners. According to Carla Hannaford (2005) “Learning, thought, creativity, and intelligence, are not processes of the brain alone, but of the whole body. Sensations, movements, emotions, and brain integrative functions are grounded in the body” (Hannaford, 2005, p. 15).

This action research project begins by describing the school context, the curriculum, the students and class profile followed by the problem identified during the lessons observed which led to the research questions and the decision to implement strategies for the purpose of this study. Chapter 2 focuses on the theoretical framework that supports the implementation of the strategies chosen. This includes literature concerning characteristics of young learners, the brain and movement, motivation in young learners, the Total Physical Response method, action games and physical activities, learning styles / Multiple Intelligences and stirrers and settlers. Chapter 3 presents the research design, which includes the methodology employed, data collection tools and the description of the first and second cycle of the action research project for both 3rd and 4th year classes. This is then followed by a conclusion which includes some limitations of this study along with suggestions for future research.

1. Chapter I – Justification for action.

The aim of this chapter is to describe the starting point of the action research project which began in *Iniciação à prática profissional 1* through to *Iniciação à prática profissional 2* in the Master's degree. It begins with a description of the school context where this study was conducted, followed by a description of the primary school curriculum and of the English class profile. Lastly, there is a brief discussion of the classes that were observed in which a problem was identified leading to the research questions of this action research project.

1.1. Rationale:

1.1.1 School Context

This study took place in a private school called Externato Ribadouro, situated in Rua Santa Catarina, right in the heart of the city of Oporto. The educational levels taught at this school range from nursery school to high school. The vast majority of the student population is in the 3rd cycle, i.e. high school. Nevertheless, there is a significant number of students in the 1st and 2nd cycles of school.

The ethos of the school is to not only teach the subjects that are part of the curriculum but also to help the students develop as a whole, both intellectually and emotionally, so as to equip them for life. The teachers work closely with the parents of the students to make sure that their progress goes smoothly and that any issues are dealt with immediately. In addition, the school offers the students psychological support through the *Serviços de Psicologia e Orientação* (SPO), several paediatricians, doctors and psychologists, and support is provided for students with special needs by the *Equipa Multidisciplinar de Apoio À Educação Inclusiva* (EMAEI).

Furthermore, the school runs a project called *Projecto de Integração de Conhecimento* (PIC), where teachers develop projects in a specific area involving knowledge from different subjects. It also provides Content and language integrated learning (CLIL) lessons, in which English is integrated with content of other subjects of the school curriculum.

The premises of the school is a cluster of three, three-storey 19th-century buildings, once private homes, which were refurbished and made into a school. There are many classrooms, a playground, two outdoor basketball courts, an indoor basketball court, a canteen, a computer room, and a library. The classrooms are relatively large, with a lot of natural light, whiteboards, and overhead projectors. They do not have computers though, so the teachers use laptops of their own or provided by the school. In general, the desks are individual and the seating is in rows, except for when they are doing group work, in which case four desks are joined together so that students are facing each other.

1.1.2. Curriculum

The school Externato Ribadouro follows the programme of the *Aprendizagens Essenciais da Direção Geral da Educação (DGE)* when planning the school year syllabus. However, given the fact that some of the students have had English since the 1st year of primary school, the syllabus is not limited to the programme of the *Aprendizagens Essenciais*, and include elements that go beyond the expected level of English for the 3rd and 4th year of primary school.

The school uses the course book *Kids' Box 3* for the 3rd year and *Kids' Box 4* for the 4th year and the syllabus is adapted to the level of these course books while covering what is expected of the 3rd and 4th year, according to the *Aprendizagens Essenciais*. The students have 2 hours of English a week and one hour of CLIL which integrates English with topics they are learning in Social Studies. This is taught by their English teacher. However, their main teacher is present during the CLIL classes. Apart from this, students have Portuguese, Social Studies, Maths, Music, ICT, Art, P.E, drama and Citizenship and Development (*Cidadania e Desenvolvimento*) and they also have learning support (*apoio ao estudo*).

1.1.3. Students and Class Profile

During my teaching practice at Externato Ribadouro, I observed and taught classes of the 3rd and 4th year of primary school, both of which comprised 16 students. Given that the students at this school start having English at nursery school level, some of the students who have been at the school since then will have had more years of English. In both classes, there are students with special needs, one in each group, namely Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). These students are accompanied by the psychologist in the school and they have special conditions when it comes to doing tests.

The 3rd and 4th year students do a test per term and also have continual assessment which is based on their general progress, participation, behaviour and motivation in class, as well as on their homework. The tests are similar to the Cambridge Starters exam. However, they include the syllabus covered in class. The reason for this is to allow students to become familiar with the Cambridge exam format, as well as prepare them for these exams in case their parents request they take them. These exams are recommended by the school although they are not obligatory. The results of their tests are given to them in stars, similar to the Cambridge starters exam and the continual assessment is qualitative (Excellent/ very good/ good/ You can do better).

Both 3rd and 4th year students are assigned homework once a week, which is generally set to do over the weekend. For this reason, they leave their schoolbags in their classroom and only take them home at the weekend.

Due to the fact that the school offers English from pre-school onwards, in general the level of proficiency of these students is generally higher than in most state schools, especially in terms of comprehension. The classes are delivered all in English and their first language (L1) is occasionally used when instructions need to be made clear, there is need for a quick translation as a last resource, or the students need to be reprimanded. The latter happens mainly in the 4th year class as these students can be quite talkative and become disruptive at times. The 3rd year class on the other hand is quite well behaved in general.

1.2. Zero Cycle of the Action Research: Identification of the problem

1.2.1. Lessons observed

I started observing lessons in the second semester of this master's degree, which was in IPP1. At the time the schools were closed and the lessons were being given online through *Teams* until shortly before the Easter holidays 2020, when face-to-face lessons resumed. I observed both the 3rd and 4th year classes until the end of June, 2020. In IPP2, which started in September 2020, I continued to observe both the 3rd and 4th year classes, the 3rd year class now being a new group of students.

Through my observations, I was able to observe several aspects that I deemed pertinent and therefore found it very difficult to choose one aspect seeing that there were several aspects that I thought could be of valuable interest. However, the one which was more noticeable was the students' participation. I am aware that primary school classes tend to have many students and that it can be challenging to get all students to participate. However, it is essential for students to actively participate in the lessons for learning to occur, due to the fact that children, according to Piaget, are active by nature learners (Cameron, L, 2001).

Although I attentively observed classes to find issues I could work on in IPP1, it only became clear to me during my observations of the new 3rd year class and the 4th year class in IPP2. In both these classes, it became evident that there was a small number of students in each class that always participated and the rest chose to listen and seldom raised their hands to answer the teacher's questions.

However, the more quiet students would sometimes be asked to answer, in which case they did. However, their answers sometimes showed that they had not understood what was being asked of them, which led their teacher to use translation to help them. Through observation, using structured observation grids designed to record students' participation, I was able to record the students that participated the most and those that chose to remain more passive.

In these lessons, the seating was always in rows and the students used their course books and activity books (Kid's Box 3 & 4). They worked individually and usually

remained seated throughout the whole lesson. When they were asked questions, only a few would raise their hands to answer.

1.2.2. Research Questions

Having observed that only a small number of students would participate actively, while the others were reluctant to participate unless asked to, I decided to focus my research on student participation and involvement. I asked myself, how could I get the students to *want* to participate more and get them more involved in the learning process, and how could I get these students to be active learners?

Initially, I thought of using games as this provides them with a purpose for using the language, but I also felt that apart from that, it was essential to get them out of their seats and learning not only through hearing an explanation but also through movement as this is how children learn when they are out of the school context. They learn through their senses, which is not limited to hearing and seeing but also moving and touching. As Harmer states, “Their understanding comes not just from explanation but also from what they see and hear and, crucially, have a chance to touch and interact with” (2001, p. 38). This led me to my first research question: *Can using kinesthetic activities increase learner participation?*

Secondly, I focused on the issue that when these reluctant students were asked to answer a question, they often answered in a way that showed that they were not actually following what was being taught, leading me to my second research question: *Can using kinesthetic activities help students to understand the target language?*

2. Chapter II –Theoretical Background

The aim of this chapter is to present some theoretical perspectives related to this study, which are of relevance. First, some important characteristics of young learners and what motivates them will be discussed, as well as the way movement affects the brain and therefore learning. This will be followed by a discussion on the importance of Total physical Response, and the benefits of using action games and physical activities with children in English as a foreign language lessons in primary school. In addition, there will be a discussion on the need for a balance of activities in a lesson to help children stay engaged, including the importance of catering for different learning styles and multiple intelligences, while highlighting the need children have for physical activities.

2.1. Characteristics of young learners.

There are some crucial facts regarding very young learners that teachers need to take into account when teaching primary school children. These have essentially to do with the way very young learners learn, such as children's concentration span, and their physical and emotional development, as well as their ability to learn indirectly. These aspects will be discussed in further detail below.

Unlike adults, children have a very limited concentration span. As Harmer (2001) states, unless activities are extremely engaging, they can easily get bored and lose interest after ten minutes or so. This will vary from child to child. Some children may only be able to concentrate up to 5min. Once they have lost interest, no learning takes place. However, they can concentrate for a surprisingly long time, if they are interested in what they are doing (Ellis & Ibrahim, 2019). Therefore, it is essential for teachers to find ways to engage and maintain childrens' interest. Activities should also be short , varied and allow children to burn off energy given the fact that children have a lot of physical energy and can become restless (Brewster et al., 2002).

Furthermore, within the primary school age range, individual differences in children are especially noticeable and there are vast social, emotional and cognitive, as well as physical and psychological differences (Ellis and Ibrahim, 2019). In terms of

physical development, by the time children reach primary school age, their motor skills will be sufficiently developed allowing them to hold a pencil to write or draw and hold a pair of scissors to cut out. The muscles in their eyes will also have developed enough to allow them to focus on a page, line or words in a book. However, they will not yet have control of bodily movements that enables them to sit still for long periods of time (Brewster et al., 2002). For this reason, children need to be involved in learning where they are physically active. Furthermore, Piaget explains that children are active learners and that they learn by interacting with the world around them (Cameron, 2001). In terms of emotional needs, children need to feel safe and develop a sense of confidence and self-esteem. Therefore, it is important that children receive praise from their teachers. Having classroom routines also helps to create a sense of security and a warm, encouraging atmosphere (Brewster et al., 2002). Nevertheless, children are generally very enthusiastic and very willing to please their teachers.

Another important aspect to take into account is children's ability to learn indirectly. Children are always trying to grasp meaning from everything they see and hear, such as gestures, facial expressions, intonation, actions and circumstances, all of which help them to understand the language (Halliwell, 1992). Therefore, teachers should use all of these ways of conveying meaning when teaching a foreign language. Furthermore, children's capacity to learn indirectly comes from their skill when learning their mother tongue, which they will intuitively apply when learning a foreign language. This happens for example when children are doing a guessing activity. As far as children are concerned, they are not trying to learn phrases or structures but rather their minds are engaged in the task of guessing something in particular and not focused on the language. However by doing the activity they learn the words, structures or phrases without having done it consciously. This process of learning is related to the way we learn our mother tongue. "We acquire it through continuous exposure and use." (Halliwell, 1992 p. 5). This is also known as implicit learning. Teachers should therefore, take advantage of this ability that children have to learn a language.

Lastly, an important aspect about the way children learn is their capacity for creating and having fun (Halliwell, 1992; Moon, 2000). Children love fantasy and imagination and will use them to have fun. If a lesson provides opportunities for them to

act or mime, they will allow their personalities to shine through and bring a spark of individuality and drama into these tasks, while making the language their own. Even in guessing games, students will respond enthusiastically “No!” or “Yes!”, using the language in a natural way (Halliwell, 1992). Thus, we can say that if lessons provide opportunities for children to have fun and engage in meaningful play, they will be engaged and learn in a natural way.

2.2. *The brain and movement.*

At a conference presentation, Jenson (2000) stated “*If learning is not in your body, you have not learned it*”. He believes that it is not the brain that trains the body but rather the body that trains the brain. The reason for this is that according to studies about the brain and movement, it has been shown that movement associated with learning helps to improve neural connections, which occur when learning takes place, information is stored and memory traces are formed (Kuczala & Lengel, 2010). According to Hannaford (1995), neural stimulation essential to learning takes place in response to movement. The greater the movement and stimulation, the greater the number of synaptic nerves interconnections, and therefore, the greater the capacity to learn. In other words, when a child moves, synaptic or neural connections are created. The more synaptic/neural connections a child has, the better and faster they are able to assimilate information, solve problems and think. In other words, Hannaford (1995) found that movement stimulates the neurons and electrical wiring that facilitates the child’s ability to absorb information. Likewise, King (2000) and Dale (1969) (cited in Steven-Smiths, 2004) also believe that learning by doing is imperative to improving a child’s ability to assimilate information and use it in more effective ways. In addition, Blaydes (2000), a neurokinesiologist, found in her research that physical movements are crucial to brain and nervous system development, and that memory is retrieved better when learned through movement, therefore helping children learn.

In the absence of movement or physical activity, the process of learning is weakened (Hannaford, 1995, as cited in Kuczala & Lengel, 2010). When the body is inactive for 20 minutes or longer, there is a decline in neural communication (Kinoshita, 1997, as cited in Kuczala & Lengel, 2010). Moreover, approximately 90% of the

oxygen in our body/brain is stale unless we take a deep breath, yawn, or get up and move. A lack of oxygen can result in confusion and concentration and memory problems (Blaydes Madigan, 1999, as cited in Kuczala & Lengel, 2010). According to Hannaford (2005), allowing children to move helps them to refocus and strengthen their ability to pay attention, as it awakens and activates many of their mental capacities. Furthermore, it is believed that the way we think, learn, and remember can be directly influenced by the physical movements in which we participate (Ratey, 2008, cited in Kuczala & Lengel, 2010). Therefore, students are actively engaged when they use their body while gaining knowledge.

Moreover, the twelve brain-compatible principles developed by educationalist consultant Oberparleiter (2004) also shed some light on how movement affects the brain. The first principle is “The brain is attracted to novelty” (Oberparleiter, 2004 cited in Kuczala & Lengel, 2010, p 19). He believes that movement can be used to provide novelty. The second principle is “The brain pays attention to movement”. Providing movement with a purpose helps to keep students focused and attentive. The third principle is “The brain needs to interact with people and things in its environment.” Class cohesion activities involving movement help to build a sense of community and interaction among students. The fourth principal is “Learning is easier to store, remember, and retrieve if it has an emotional base”. Activities involving movement create positive emotional states which help students to associate positive emotions with learning. The fifth principal is “The brain operates from concrete experience-everything stems from that”. Oberparleiter, (2004) considers that using movement to learn or review a concept makes learning concrete.

Another important aspect is related to the brain’s hemispheres and their function. The brain consists of two hemispheres, the right and the left hemispheres, which are connected by a thick bundle of 250 million nerve fibres called the corpus callosum. Each hemisphere controls the opposite side of the body and the corpus callosum is responsible for the communication between the two hemispheres. It is believed that using movements that cross the midline of the body, i.e. moving the arms or legs from one side to the other, forces the two hemispheres to work together, consequently improving energy and blood flow, decreasing muscle tension, and stimulating the brain

to improve concentration (Dennison & Dennison, 1988; Hannaford, 1995; Promislow, 1999). Furthermore, the right hemisphere specializes in global aspects of learning, while the left hemisphere specializes in logic functions. When both sides of the brain function integrally, learning is enhanced. This is also known as whole-brain learning, which provides a more clear and total picture of learning versus a traditional left hemisphere (language oriented) lesson (Kuczala & Lengel, 2010). Song activities such as “Head, shoulders, knees and toes.” and “Hockey Cokey” require coordination from the left and right hemispheres of the brain, strengthening the corpus callosum and therefore enhancing learning. Through Total physical response, the teacher can also give instructions of movements that cross the midlines.

In addition, over the past two decades, brain research has shed light on implicit learning and its implications in the classroom. Implicit learning is learning that takes place beyond our conscious awareness. Although there are other ways for this to take place, movement is considered to be a strong implicit tool. However, schools in general provide mainly explicit channels for learning, which is through reading, listening, discussion, worksheets, lectures, and the memorization of rote material, often beyond the learner’s realm of relevance or interest. This does not mean that implicit and explicit learning are mutually exclusive. They overlap as they work to support each other (Kuczala & Lengel, 2010). Nevertheless, the brain’s natural way of learning is through implicit channels driven by emotion and movement and characterized by both procedural (riding a bike) learning powered by the cerebellum, and reflexive (emotional) learning processed through the amygdala. The cerebellum, once thought to only be responsible for coordinating movement, also plays a role in matters of attention, long-term memory, spatial perception, impulse control and other cognitive functions. Therefore, *learning by doing* can be a very powerful example of implicit learning and according to Jenson (2000), implicit learning should be increased in the classroom given the fact that through implicit learning, more information can be absorbed and last longer, and bridges may form that connect the body and the brain.

2.3. Motivation in young learners.

Gardner defines motivation as “Effort plus desire to achieve the goal of learning the language plus favourable attitudes towards learning the language” (Gardner, 1985, p 10, cited in Nunan, 2011). Educational psychologists classify motivation as extrinsic/instrumental and intrinsic/integrative motivation. Extrinsic/instrumental motivation is driven by the desire to achieve an external reward, such as receiving a certificate, getting good grades, getting a better job, being able to communicate while travelling and so on. Intrinsic/integrative motivation on the other hand, is driven by the enjoyment of learning something (Nunan, 2011). The majority of researchers and methodologists consider intrinsic motivation to be especially important for encouraging success given that the chances of success are much higher when the students come to love the learning process (Harmer, 2001).

In the case of young learners at primary school age, they generally do not have extrinsic motivation as they are not focused on the future, unless their parents encourage them to achieve good grades with the promise of a reward (Brewster et al., 2002). Therefore, it is important to optimize children’s intrinsic motivation by helping them enjoy learning English as a foreign language. In order to achieve this, teachers should engage students by providing activities that involve fantasy, imagination and movement, as this is what appeals to young learners (Nunan, 2011). As previously mentioned, children have a lot of energy and need to be involved in learning where they can be physically active (Brewster & Ellis, 2002, p 28) and activities that involve movement contribute a great deal to making the classes more fun and enjoyable, which ultimately improves students’ motivation. This makes children want to take part in the activities rather than feeling disengaged (Kuczala & Lengel, 2010). Dörnyei (2001) claims that learning becomes stimulating and enjoyable when learning situations require learners to become active participants. In addition, children need to have a purpose for learning English. Activities such as games, physical activities and stories are not only appealing to young learners but they also provide young learners with a purpose for using L2. This is crucial as it makes English relevant to young learners and students are therefore able to relate to the target language (Nunan, 2011), making the language more meaningful and therefore more enjoyable.

Another important point is that for children to feel motivated, their emotional needs also have to be met. They need to be in an environment where they feel safe and appreciated, as well as feel they are making progress (Brewster et al., 2002). The latter is achieved through scaffolding the target language until children are able to produce the language on their own. Scaffolding, a term coined by Bruner, is based on the idea that children's learning is a process, not merely a product, which can be enhanced or accelerated by breaking learning into stages and providing the building blocks and systems which connect these together (Brewster et al., 2002). Bruner saw children's learning through three modes of representation: knowing something through doing it, through working with a picture or image of it, and through using symbolic means, such as language. It also relates to the theory of the zone of proximal development (ZDP) by Vygosty, who claims that the child learns in a social context with the help of adults, and gradually shifts from the reliance on others to independent action and thinking (Cameron, 2001). Activities involving movement, such as making a gesture to convey meaning or using mime to convey meaning, serves as an excellent way to scaffold language. However, there has to be a balance between the support given by the teacher and a challenge, so that the activities are not over-guided, making them too easy, safe or repetitive. Neither should they be too challenging, as this would have the opposite effect and demotivate students if the activities are too difficult (Brewster & Ellis, 2002). Furthermore, giving students praise also contributes to enabling students to develop a feeling of achievement, improving their self-esteem (Nunan, D, 2011), given that children have a need for individual attention and approval from their teacher (Harmer, 2001). Children are not only learning a foreign language but also learning about themselves and their capabilities, and providing lessons that involve movement help students to discover more about their bodies and capabilities.

Finally, children learn better when they are enjoying themselves and having fun. Two important factors that make the lessons enjoyable, are the teacher and the teaching methods that the teacher employs. The teacher, therefore, plays an extremely important role in making the lessons stimulating and enjoyable (Moon, 2000). In addition, Jenson (2000) claims that movement is the number one manager of student learning states. It helps to create an environment that promotes laughter and fun while engaging students

(Kuczala & Lengel, 2010) and humor can have a great effect on students emotional state. It is known to lower stress levels and anxiety, factors which make it very difficult for the brain to learn new information (Kuczala & Lengel, 2010). Hannord (2005) also emphasizes that apart from enhancing learning, movement and play improves creativity, stress management and health.

2.4. Total Physical Response

Total Physical Response (TPR) is a teaching method created by Asher, a Californian professor of languages (Larsen-Freeman, 2000). This method is based on the way children learn their first language (L1). Asher claims that speech directed to children consists mainly of commands which children respond to physically before they begin to produce verbal responses. In other words, before they are able to produce any language, they are exposed to the language from the moment of birth through intensive listening practice. Most of this language is in the form of directives requiring actions (e.g. Don't cry! Drink your milk!). These principles form the basis of the TPR method (Nunan, 2011). In TPR, the teacher gives the students an oral instruction in the form of imperative drills or commands accompanied with a gesture or an action which they follow by doing the same gesture or action (e.g. Teacher: Touch your nose. Students do the action.). Students understand what they have to do through the gesture or action that the teacher performs. This way, there is no need for the teacher to use L1 as the meaning is made clear through bodily movements (Larsen-Freeman, 2000).

Total physical response is linked to the "Trace theory" of memory psychology (Katona, 1940, cited in Larsen-Freeman, 2000), which holds that the more often or the more intensively a memory connection is traced, the stronger the memory association will be and the more likely it will be recalled. Retracing can be done verbally and / or in association with motor activity. Verbal rehearsal accompanied by motor activity increases the probability of successful rehearsal. This means that language connected to physical activity as is done in the TPR method improves the ability to later retrieve the language (Richards & Rodgers, 1986).

TPR is especially popular for teaching young learners because it focuses on language input that is visual and contextualised, as well as on listening comprehension, thereby developing listening skills, and on *the here and now* which makes the language relevant to children. It also involves a lot of movement and physical activity and there is no formal focus on grammar, which is how children learn their first language. Lastly, children's listening ability may be much more developed than their speaking abilities and TPR eliminates the pressure for students to speak in L2 before they are ready to do so, allowing them to participate actively nevertheless (Moon, 2000). Eventually, when students are ready, they can perform the role of the teacher and give the commands (Nunan, 2011 ; Brewster et al., 2002).

Sharing the concern for the roles of affective learning with the school of humanistic psychology, Asher believes that because this method is undemanding in terms of linguistic production and it involves game-like momevents, it reduces stress and creates a positive mood in the learner, which facilitates learning (Richards & Rodgers, 1986).

2.5. Action games and physical activities.

Generally speaking, games enable the teacher to create opportunities for the practice of the language in a useful and meaningful way. It is also a more natural way of using the language than learning through drilling and therefore it helps to make the language more memorable (Ellis & Ibrahim, 2019). This is due to the fact that games involve the emotions, allowing the meaning of the language to be more vividly experienced, which may explain why it is better absorbed than by learning based on mechanical drill (Write, et al, 2006). Through games, students can experience the language, rather than merely study it.

When teaching children, it is even more important to use physical activities such as action games in the classroom as these provide a clear meaningful purpose for the use of L2 (Moon, 2000). Play is a natural part of a child's life and using games to teach English allows for meaningful play while creating a fun and relaxing atmosphere which helps to optimize learning (Brewster et al., 2002). Having said this, it is nonetheless

crucial that the teacher plans the games carefully to ensure that they focus on the target language and that the students are required to use or understand the TL in order to play the games. There are many types of games that can be used in the classroom. However, for the purpose of this study, the focus is on action games.

Action games, as the word describes, involves movement. These games are especially popular with children given that children have a lot of energy and have a need to be physically active (Ellis & Ibrahim, 2019). This means that rather than having primary school children sit for the whole lesson, the teacher can include some action games in the lesson to get them moving every now and then. There is a range of games that involve movement such as: run and touch games, mime games, games that involve TPR and so on. An example of a game that involves TPR is “Simon says”. The teacher gives an instruction after saying “Simon says”. e.g. “Simon says put your hands on your head”. The students listen and do the action. If the teacher gives the instruction without saying “Simon says” and the students do the action, they are out of the game and are told to sit down. However, the students can still be involved by helping the teacher to see who else does an action when Simon does not say. By doing this kind of TPR game, students are listening to the target language while simultaneously seeing the action modelled by the teacher, which serves to scaffold the meaning of the target language, as well as getting the students to copy and do the actions without the pressure of having to produce the language orally. When a student feels confident enough to produce the language, the teacher can allow the student to give the commands while the teacher monitors.

Another popular game with children is a miming guessing game. This can be done in pairs or groups or even as an open class activity. Children generally enjoy acting, and miming is a type of acting without words. It allows children to practise a vast range of vocabulary, as well as some tenses like the present continuous. Children can mime an action to practice the present continuous, a feeling, a job, an animal, using a specific object etc. The other students try to guess the word or sentence. Children often exaggerate when miming to convey meaning and this usually brings an element of humour to the activity, which helps to improve the students’ emotional state (Kuczala & Lengel, 2010).

One of the advantages of using mime is that there is no need for additional resources (Harmer, 2001). The teacher or the students are the resources. The teacher can provide comprehensible input through mime and gesture to convey meaning and the students can use mime or gesture in guessing games. This can also apply to games that involve TPR. In addition to this, there are some songs that are game-like and include movement, such as a well-known super-simple colour song, where the children are encouraged to run and touch an object of a specific colour when they hear “Find something (colour)”.

However, according to Kuczala & Lengel, (2010), students who have poor self-perception are more likely to refuse to participate in physical activities. They fear they will not be successful and therefore appear foolish. To overcome this issue, teachers need to create a positive environment with movement to help build the student’s motivation. On the other extreme are the hyperactive students whom teachers fear may become disruptive. In general, children at primary school age have a basic need for movement but hyperactive children have an even greater need for movement. In fact, it is very difficult for these children to refrain from movement. By providing them with organized movement activities, they have a chance to do what their brain and body desire.

Although it is true that good classroom management will be necessary for lessons with physical activities to run smoothly, classroom management becomes easier when children are moving to learn, which is something that comes naturally to them. Therefore, allowing students to do physical activities which are teacher-directed and have learning goals will benefit all students in general (Kuczala & Lengel, 2010).

2.6. Learning Styles / Multiple Intelligences

In a class of students, teachers will find that not only do personalities among students differ but also the way students learn. Some students learn better when provided with visual aids, others when manipulating objects, others by what they hear and so on. These different ways of taking in information is known as learning styles and multiple intelligences.

Learning styles refer to the learner's natural and preferred way of learning. Christison (2003) identified the following learning styles: Type 1: Cognitive Style, Type 2: Sensory Style; and Type 3: Personality Style. In each type, there are different types of learners. Within Type 1 (Cognitive Style), there is Field dependent (learns best when information is presented in context), Field independent (learns more effectively step-by-step and with sequential instruction), Analytic (learns more effectively alone and his /her own pace), Global (works more effectively in groups) , Reflective (learns more effectively when he/she has time to consider new information before responding), and Impulsive (learns more effectively when he/she can respond to new information immediately). Within Type 2 (Sensory Style), there is the Perceptual style, which includes: Visual, Auditory, Tactile and Kinesthetic learners (when movement is associated with learning) and Environmental style, which includes Physical (sensitive to the learning environment, such as light, temperature and furniture) or Sociological learners (sensitive to relationships within the learning environment). Within Type 3 (Personality Style), learners differ according to tolerance of ambiguity (referring to how comfortable they feel with uncertainty) and Right or left hemisphere dominance. Left-brain learners tend to be more visual, analytical, reflective and self-reliant. Right-brained learners tend to be more auditory, global, impulsive and interactive (Christison, 2003, p. 270). Each student will have a cognitive, sensory and personality learning style that differ from each other and according to Christison (2003), lesson plans and classroom activities should be varied so that they cater for all learning styles.

Multiple Intelligences defined by Gardner in 1983 describes the different ways in which people process information. He defines eight different types of intelligences, which are: linguistic or verbal, visual or spatial, logical-mathematical, physical, musical, interpersonal, intrapersonal, and naturalist intelligence. Similar to learning styles, it is believed that by possessing knowledge of multiple intelligences, teachers are better equipped to provide variety in activities and the materials they use so that they are able to cater for a range of intelligences, allowing each child to maximise their potential. (Ellis & Ibrahim, 2019, p23). This will also have an impact on participation as students will be more engaged if information is presented in their preferred learning style.

Using action games or other physical activities in a lesson will especially appeal to students whose learning style is kinesthetic according to the learning styles identified by Christison (2003). This means that they learn more effectively when there is movement associated with learning, or according to Howard Gardner, students who possess physical intelligence will learn better through manipulating and moving objects and physical activities. In both studies of learning styles by Christison (2003) and Gardener (1983), it has been shown that students can have other learning styles and preferred ways of processing information and that to cater to all students, lessons should provide a variety of activities that appeal to different learning styles or different intelligences. However, this being said, we have already seen that most children need to be physically active (Ellis & Ibrahim, 2019, p. 21), and that children learn by doing (Moon, 2000), so it seems reasonable to say, without disregarding other learning styles or intelligences, that providing lessons that include physical activities will benefit children in general. Furthermore, it has been suggested that 85 % of students are predominately kinesthetic learners and rely on kinesthetic intelligence for learning (Nunan, 2011 p. 27).

2.7. Stirrers and Settlers

As David Numan (2011) states, given that children have a limited attention span, it is important to vary activities so that children do not disengage. One way of creating a good balance of activities is by having stirrers and settlers in the lesson. This is especially important due to the fact that children have a lot of energy which needs to be well channelled in order to prevent them from becoming bored on the one hand or over-excited on the other.

Stirrer activities can be any activity that is more stimulating, engaging the students physically or mentally so that they are very active (Brewster et al., 2002). As the word itself describes, it stirs children, making them feel excited. These can be action games like “Simon says”, songs, role plays, Total Physical Response (TPR), mingling activities, miming games or even simply asking students to come to the board or the front the class to do something. Settlers on the other hand, are designed to calm students, and as the word describes, help students to settle and focus on a more quiet

activity. This can be a listening activity, arts and crafts, reading, a drawing activity, or an activity, such as a crossword or wordsearch.

It is common for students to sit in rows and be expected to pay attention to verbal input throughout the whole lesson. The need for movement is totally overlooked and therefore, its potential value for creating higher energy levels and maintaining attention is greatly reduced. “Allowing students to get out of their seats to move while learning provides the novelty and change the brain seeks”(Kuzcala & Lengel, 1010, p. 2). It helps to regain students attention while giving them the opportunity to learn through movement. Creating a balance between stirrers and settlers helps to keep students engaged throughout the lesson as well as help them to be more focused and productive. By doing this, teachers are also ensuring that there is a variety of activities that cater to different learning styles and multiple intelligences, including the different skills and different types of interaction.

Teachers are often afraid of using stirrers as they fear that they may lose control of the class and that their students will get overexcited and not be able to settle down once the stirrer activity has finished. Teachers may especially feel that using stirrers that involve movement may lead to discipline problems and lack of control (Kuczala & Lengel, 2010). However, as mentioned previously, children’s attention span is short, which means that children will struggle to pay attention for a long period of time. By allowing students to do a stirrer activity that involves movement, it helps them to refocus and reenergise their brains, strengthening their ability to pay attention (Kuczala & Lengel, 2010). As Kuczala & Lengel state “In fact, when used purposefully and carefully, movement can lead to a more focused, productive and disciplined classroom” (Kuczala & Lengel, 2010, p. 30). Signs that a child is not paying attention are: fidgeting, staring into space, doodling, talking to a neighbour, acting out by breaking class rules, failing to follow directions accurately or completely, displaying attention-getting behaviours, inability to finish activities, shouting answers before the question is completed , and interrupting others (Kuczala & Lengel, 2010). Teachers should pay attention to these signs and be prepared to introduce a stirrer activity to help students refocus.

Chapter III- Research Design

3.1. Methodology

The aim of this study was to observe the number of times students volunteered to participate and the number of times they participated. In order to determine students' understanding of the target language, they were observed in terms of performing a task correctly. The students were also given questionnaires to determine whether they felt motivated by kinesthetic activities in the classroom, as well as whether the students felt that doing these type of activities helped them to learn. The methodology chosen is quantitative, which by nature is expressed in numbers (Dornyei, 2011).

3.2. Data-gathering tools

For the purpose of data collection for this Action Research Project (ARP), structured observation grids, as well as questionnaires with closed ended answers were used. Both type of tools are considered to be appropriate for quantitative research.

3.2.1. Structured observation grids

To begin with, during the zero cycle of the lessons observed, an observation grid was used to determine students' participation in general. This was done by ticking the number of times each student participated. After several classes, the students were categorized into groups according to their participation. This was done for both the 3rd year and 4th year classes. The groups were as follows: students that participate a lot, students who sometimes participate, students who seldom participate and students who never participate. In the case of the 4th year class, the last two categories were combined to form one group which was students who seldom or never participated as this varied and was not very clear.

After having done this, structured observation grids were designed for the first and second cycle, which included all the groups of students given that despite wanting to see how participation varied within the different groups of students, my focus was on the whole class and not just on a particular group of students. For both the 3rd year and

4th classes, structured observation grids were used to record the number of times students volunteered to participate, the number of times they participated and whether they did or said something correctly.

3.2.2. Unstructured observation

Some unstructured observation was also conducted due to the fact that certain observations were made which were relevant to this study but had not been planned. This type of observation can be used when aspects of observation have not been determined prior to the observation, allowing the observer to register behavior which has not been predicted and occur spontaneously (Seliger & Shohamy, 1989; Bell, 2005). Specific behaviour was registered in the form of notes taken when they occurred. This however, did not lead to structured observation grids for these specific behaviours as they happened sporadically and unexpectedly, and did not appear to be a pattern.

3.2.3. Questionnaires

According to Bell (2005), in order to cross-check findings, it is essential to use more than one method of data collecting. This method is known as Triangulation. Laws (2003, cited in Bell, 2005, p. 116) points out that “The key to triangulation is to see the same thing from different perspectives and thus to be able to confirm or challenge the findings of one method with those of another.” To achieve this, questionnaires in Portuguese for both the 3rd and 4th years were designed, which can be seen in appendices 1 & 2. The aim of these questionnaires was to find out how the students felt about doing kinesthetic activities, and it was done in Portuguese to ensure that the students understood the questions well and were able to answer them as accurately as possible. The questionnaire had the following Statements:

- Statement 1: I enjoy participating in activities in which I have to get up and do something.
- Statement 2: I enjoy activities with movement.
- Statement 3: Activities with movement help me to learn English.
- Statement 4: I prefer to remain seated throughout the whole lesson.

Next to each statement, the activities the students did in class were in brackets so that they knew specifically what was being referred to. In order to determine whether the students agreed with these statements or not, they were given a multi-item scale with options to choose from. The options were: Yes / More or Less / No. Students were told to only choose one. As mentioned above, the responses to these statements were closed-ended and therefore this provided quantitative data.

3.3 Results of the zero cycle leading to the intervention plan and description of the first cycle of the action research project with the 3rd year class.

As a starting point, the students were categorized into four groups according to the student participation during the zero cycle. One out of sixteen students participated a lot; seven out of sixteen students sometimes participated; four out of sixteen students seldom participated and four out of sixteen students never participated. Below is the table and graph of these findings.

Graph 1: Zero cycle 3rd year class participation

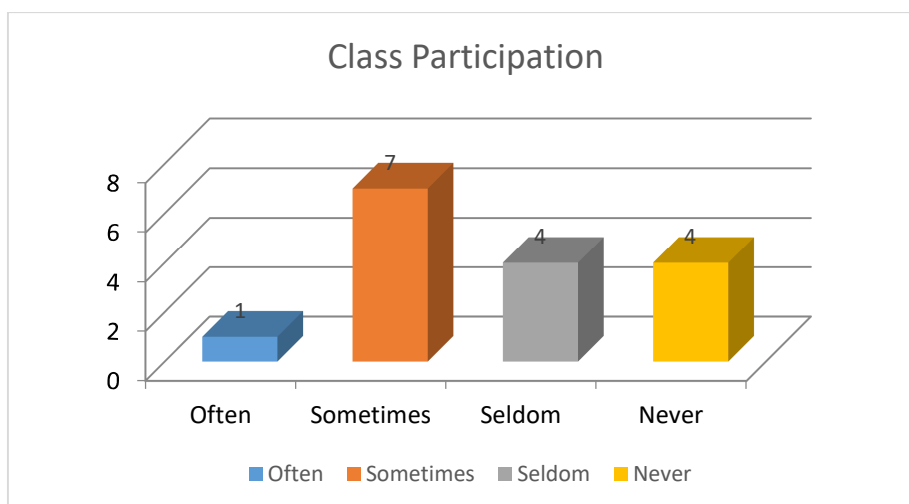


Table 1: Zero cycle class participation

Group 1 : Students who participate a lot.	Group 2: Students who sometimes participate.	Group 3: Students who seldom participate.	Group 4: Students who never participate:
Student A	Student B	Student I	Student M
	Student C	Student J	Student N
	Student D	Student K	Student O
	Student E	Student L	Student P
	Student F		
	Student G		
	Student H		

The strategy implemented was to create activities where students could learn through movement, using Total Physical Response (TPR), mime or a hands-on activity associated with the language, through handling objects. The first activities implemented were conducted on 28th September 2021, through Total Physical Response.

3.3.1. Contextualization and description of the activities

On 28th September, I had to teach prepositions of place to the 3rd year class and since my strategy was to use kinesthetic activities, I decided to use Total physical response (TPR) to help the students learn the prepositions as well as encourage them all to participate. After introducing the prepositions through pictures drawn on the board and drilling the target language first, I got the students to follow commands that focused on these prepositions. For example: Put your hands on your head, behind your back, under your chin, between your legs and so on, also using objects: Put your pencil case on the book, under the book, in your bag and so on. The idea was to help the students learn the prepositions through seeing the action or gesture and copying it while hearing the target language, or through TPR. After this, I did a Simon says game with the students, which also involved TPR but in the form of a game. All the students participated and seemed very engaged. At this point, the students were not being observed yet as with TPR, students are doing what the teacher tells them to do.

Next, the class was divided into two teams and told that they were going to play a game and compete against each other. The sentence “The teddy bear is ____ the box/es” was written on the board, and using realia, which was a small teddy bear and two small boxes, I placed the teddy bear in different positions and each team was asked to say the sentence that was on the board using the correct preposition. My objective was to see if having practiced the prepositions through TPR, they would at this point be able to produce the language on their own. The students worked in teams and helped each other. However, they were told that each member of the team had to have a turn, so that it would not be just a few students monopolizing the game.

3.3.2. Results of the activity

The observation grid was used to observe the students that attempted to say the preposition and whether they got it right.

The teams were as follows:

Team 1: Student A, student M , Student P, Student H, Student D, Student J, Student K, Student C

Team 2 : Student F, Student E, Student I, Student N, Student O, Student , Student B, Student L

Each team received eight sentences as there were eight members in each team and all the students had a turn in giving the answer. In the end, the result of the game was a tie, 8-8. During this game, the prepositions were written on the board but there were no pictures as at this point their understanding of these prepositions was being tested. The shy or less confident students participated as well, albeit with some hesitation which quickly faded as soon as the team confirmed that their answer was correct. All of the students participated and they all gave a correct answer. They did however consult their ideas with the team, therefore they had support in providing an answer.

Table 2 : Results of activity 1, first cycle 3rd year class

Group 1 : Students who participate a lot.	Group 2: Students who sometimes participate.	Group 3: Students who seldom participate.	Group 4: Students who never participate:
Student A ✓+	Student B ✓+	Student I ✓+	Student M ✓+
	Student C ✓+	Student J ✓+	Student N ✓+
	Student D ✓+	Student K ✓+	Student O ✓+
	Student E ✓+	Student L ✓+	Student P ✓+
	Student F ✓+		
	Student G ✓+		
	Student H ✓+		

Key: ✓ = participated; + = answer was correct.

3.3.3. Discussion of findings

During the initial TPR activity, where the students were following commands, all the students did the actions and seemed engaged. During the Simon Says game, the students all participated with enthusiasm and despite having played it twice, they asked to repeat it again. However, I moved on to the team game as my objective was to see how much of the target language the students had grasped through the TPR activity and their willingness to participate within the team game.

The problem with the observation of this activity was that I was able to see whether they had understood the target language and therefore grasped it but unable to determine how willing students were to participate of their own accord given that they were told that they all had to have a turn. It seemed to me that even the students from group 3 and 4 participated happily in the TPR activity and Simon Says activity. However, in the team activity, students M, N and P showed some hesitation when giving the answer. They first consulted with rest of the team before saying the answer out aloud. Nevertheless, their answers were correct and all they needed was confirmation. This seemed more to do with their lack of confidence than with unwillingness to participate.

It is therefore possible to conclude that having used actions associated with the language may have contributed to helping the students grasp the prepositions, which in

turn helped them to identify the correct prepositions and they were also able to say the words correctly. The movement and gesture helped to scaffold the meaning of the target language and the use of TPR helped the students to grasp the meaning of the target language by associating movement and meaning. In addition, the Simon Says game provided the students with a purpose and context to learn the target language indirectly / implicitly, as well as in a fun way.

However, in terms of participation, they were told to participate as they were given instructions to follow my commands, and during the quiz game, they were also told that they all had to participate. Generally children of this age want to please their teacher and they generally do as they are told (Cameron, 2001). Therefore, despite the fact that all the students participated and seemed happy to do so, the conclusions regarding their participation is inconclusive as the students did not participate entirely of their own will and therefore, there was a need to use kinesthetic activities where students were invited to participate but not told to do so, as this compromised the aim of the study.

3.4. Intervention plan and description of the second cycle of the action research project with the 3rd year class.

In order to determine whether students would be willing to participate, an important factor was to allow them to volunteer to participate rather than ask or tell them to do so. Therefore, I decided that in subsequent lessons, I would implement activities that involved the students getting up and handling objects or using movement but that instead of being told or asked to do something, they would be invited to participate in general without being nominated. This way, they would have room to volunteer to participate or not, as they wished.

3.4.1. Contextualization and description of activity 1

On 22nd November 2021, the aim of the lesson for the 3rd year was to revise the rooms of the house and get students to speak about where they lived and describe their house / flat. Therefore, I planned a class activity where they would be involved in sticking some cut-out pieces of furniture made of card in the rooms of a house drawn on the board, after answering the question: *T: Where does the(bed) go? S: In the bedroom.* The aim of the lesson was essentially for the students to learn how to describe their houses/flats. However, my objective was to see how willing they would be in taking part in this activity which involved the students getting up, sticking a piece of furniture in the rooms while using the target language, which was the rooms of the house, as well as see how many of these items of furniture they would remember in the following lesson.

To begin the lesson, I drew a house on the board with 4 rooms, a basement, a garden, a garage and an attic, surrounded by fields and mountains and said: “This is my house. I live in the” and elicited “village”, and continued by saying: “It has got 6 rooms.” In the previous lesson the students had been introduced to the parts of the house by their English teacher. Therefore, I elicited the names of the rooms by saying. “This (pointing at a room in the picture) is where I sleep / watch TV / cook / have a shower , accompanied by gestures for each action. The students replied “bedroom, bathroom, kitchen and so on.” Whether or not they knew these verbs, their meanings were scaffolded by the gestures, making it clear to them which room I was eliciting. The majority of the class participated at this point as I had not asked them to raise their hands. Consequently, most of the students answered at the same time.

After writing the names of each room in the rectangles drawn in the house, the students were invited to go up to the board, and say where each piece of furniture went, by answering the question : “Where does the (bed) go?”, and they would reply: In this case: “In the (bedroom).” and then they were given the cut-out piece of furniture made of card to stick in the appropriate room (see appendix 3). There were enough pieces of furniture so that every student could have a turn. This time the students were not told that they all had to have a turn and instead were given the opportunity to volunteer to go up to the board. For the purpose of data collection, my colleague

observed and registered the students that volunteered to participate, as well as whether they did the task correctly, using an observation grid.

3.4.2 Results:

Seven out of sixteen students volunteered to participate once, one out of sixteen students volunteered to participate two to three times, and six out of sixteen students volunteered to participate more than three times. All the students that participated answered the question “Where does the (...) go?” correctly. What is observed is that there is one student from group 3 (students who seldom participated) and one student from group 4 (students who never participated) who raised their hands to participate more than three times. These results can be seen in the graph and table that follow.

Graph 2 : Results of activity 1 , 2nd cycle 3rd year class

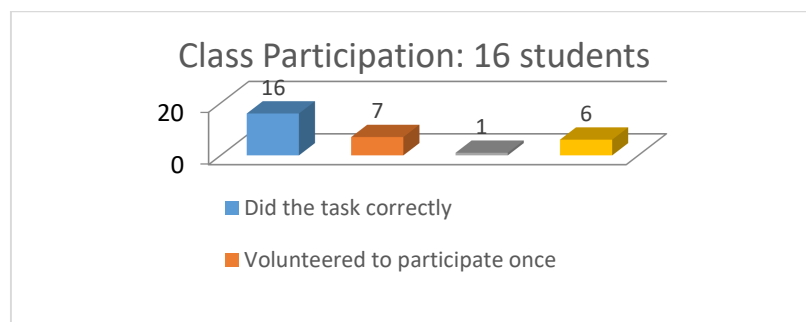


Table 3: Results of activity 1 , 2nd cycle 3rd year class.

Group 1	Group 2	Group 3	Group 4
Student A: xxx✓	Student B: xxx✓	Student I: xxx✓	Student M: x✓
	Student C: Absent	Student J: x✓	Student N: x✓
	Student D : x✓	Student K: x✓	Student O: xxx✓
	Student E : xxx✓	Student L : x✓	Student P :x✓
	Student F : xxx✓		
	Student G: xx✓		
	Student H: x✓		

Key: Volunteered to participate once : x ; Volunteered to participate more 2-3 times : xx; Volunteered to participate more than 3 times: xxx; Did the task correctly: ✓

3.4.3. Discussion of findings

The fact that all students participated at least once without anyone in particular being asked to do so, may show that using an activity that involves the students getting up and doing something helps to motivate the students and increase class participation. Furthermore, as shown in the results there are two students who initially seldom participated or never participated unless asked to, yet these students were keen to participate frequently in this activity which may imply that an activity that gets them out of their seat and doing something may encourage them to participate. However, one of the students from group 4 waited until everyone had had a turn before volunteering to participate and the question was about a repeated item, another kitchen chair. This student in particular has some learning difficulties, which might explain the student's hesitation and not wanting to take risks until something is very obvious. These students often have low-self esteem as a result of their learning difficulties. As previously seen, students who have low self-esteem will avoid or refuse to participate in physical activities in fear of being unsuccessful and looking foolish (Kuczala & Lengel, 2010).

3.4.4. Contextualization and description of activities 2 and 3

On the 23rd of November, I taught the 3rd year class again and continued with the same topic of the house and also taught them the present continuous in the third person plural. This time, I had a large piece of card with a house drawn on it prepared for the class, which was stuck on the wall (see appendix 4). The house had all the items of furniture that the students had used in the previous lesson, all of which were stuck in the appropriate rooms with blue tack. Using post-its with labels of the items of furniture, the students were invited to come up, read the label and then stick it on the corresponding piece of furniture in the house (activity 2). This time the students were encouraged to come up without knowing which item was written on the post-it. My idea was to see how willing they would be to participate regardless of whether they were able to identify the piece of furniture. In other words, my aim was to observe if an activity involving movement (getting out of their seats to do a task) and handling of objects would encourage them to participate as well as take a risk given that they did not know what word I had for them. Furthermore, my aim was also to observe whether,

having introduced those items of furniture in a physical activity in the previous lesson, the students would be able to identify them, showing evidence of understanding or learning.

The same observation grid that was used in the previous lesson was used for this activity. Prior to this activity, the students were given a glossary with pictures of the names of the items of furniture and the words (see appendix 5), which they would be using for a written activity later on. However, they were given the glossary at this point to allow students to check the glossary if they could not remember what the words meant and this way prevent students from feeling anxious in this situation. Once again, my colleague observed and registered the number of times students volunteered to participate and whether they were able to label the item of furniture without looking at the glossary.

The next activity (activity 3) was a miming guessing game to learn the 3rd person plural form of the present continuous, which was based on the grammar of the pupil's book, *Kid's Box 3*, p. 8. My aim was to introduce this grammar structure through mime. First, I wrote some verbs they were going to need on the board and pre-taught them using gestures and mime, such as : cook, sleep, watch TV, eat water the plants, wash your hands, lay the table, fix the car, go up / down to another floor, make your bed etc. Some of these verbs they already knew as they had previously learned the present continuous in the 1st person and 3rd person singular. Volunteers were then asked to go up to the board and mime an action and I wrote on the board "What are they doing?" "They are – ing", and then elicited the answer from the rest of class. This was followed by the question. "Where are they?" and students were encouraged to reply: In the bedroom / bathroom / garden and so on. I had prepared nine simple commands (see appendix 6), such as "Watch TV". One was used as the example to demonstrate what students had to do and the other eight were to ensure that all students would have a turn to mime an action. Therefore, for each command two students would mime an action for the rest of the class to guess.

3.4.5. Results

In terms of student participation, all the students willfully participated in activity 2. Two out of sixteen students volunteered to participate once. Five out of sixteen students volunteered to participate two to three times, and nine out of sixteen students volunteered to participate more than three times. In terms of showing knowledge of the items of furniture, ten out of sixteen students were able to label the items of furniture without looking at the glossary provided and six out of ten students first looked at the glossary before attempting to label the item of furniture. These results can be seen in the graph and table that follow.

Graph 3: Results of activity 2, 2nd cycle 3rd year class.

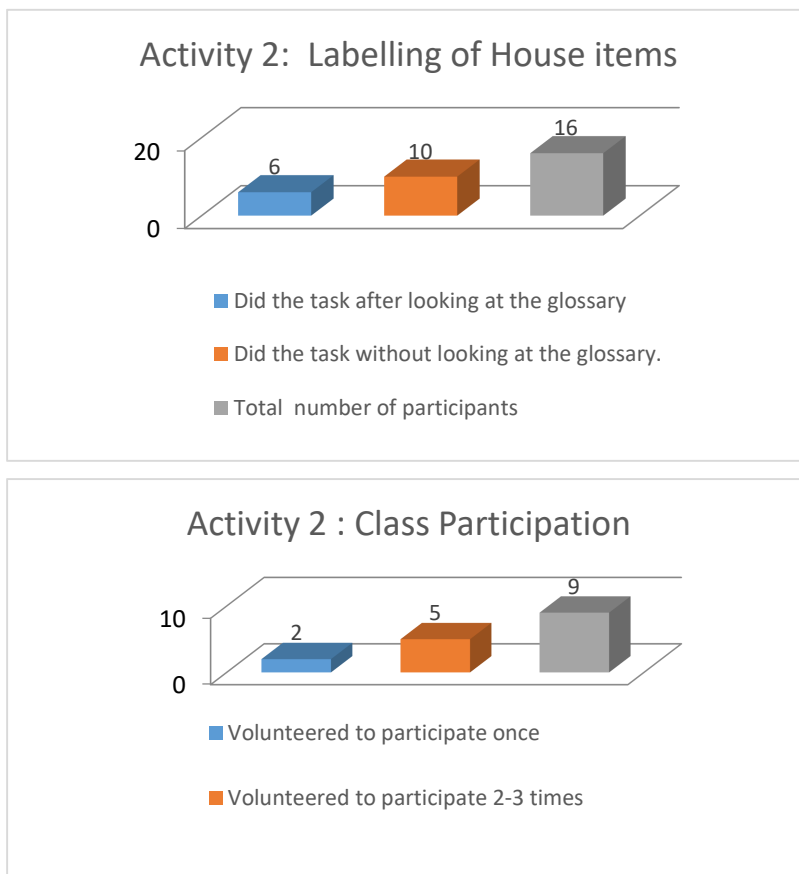


Table 4 : Results of activity 2, 2nd cycle 3rd year class.

Activity 2: Labelling the items of furniture in the house.			
Students who participate a lot.	Students who sometimes participate.	Students who seldom participate.	Students who never participate:
Student A: xxx✓✓	Student B: xxx✓	Student I: xxx✓✓	Student M: x✓
	Student C: xxx✓	Student J: xx✓	Student N: xx✓
	Student D: xxx✓✓	Student K: xx✓✓	Student O: xxx✓✓
	Student E: xxx✓✓	Student L: xx✓✓	Student P: x✓✓
	Student F: xxx✓✓		
	Student G: xxx✓		
	Student H: xx✓✓		

Key:

volunteered to participate once : x ; volunteered to participate more 2-3 times : xx; volunteered to participate more than 3 times: xxx; labelled the item of furniture after looking at the glossary: ✓ ; labelled the item of furniture without looking at the glossary: ✓✓

In Activity 3, all of the students participated once of their own accord. There were only eight sentences to mime, one for two students. Two out of sixteen students volunteered to participate once. Eight out of sixteen students volunteered to participate two to three times, and four out of sixteen students volunteered to participate more than three times. These results can be seen in the graph and table below.

Graph 4 : Results of activity 3, 2nd cycle 3rd year class.

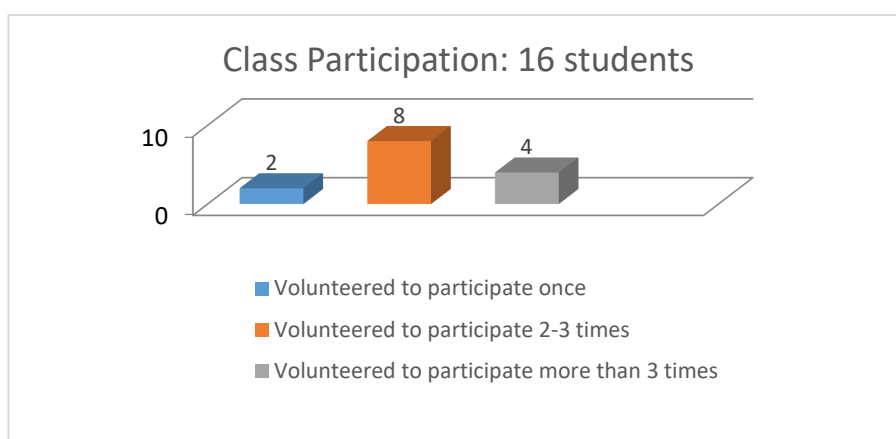


Table 5: Results of activity 3, 2nd cycle, 3rd year class.

Activity 3: Guessing miming game to practise present continuous in the 3 rd person singular form.			
Students who participate a lot.	Students who sometimes participate.	Students who seldom participate.	Students who never participate:
Student A: xxx	Student B: xx	Student I: xx	Student M: x
	Student C: xxx	Student J: xx	Student N: x
	Student D: xx	Student K: xx	Student O: xx
	Student E: xxx	Student L: xx	Student P: x
	Student F: xx		
	Student G: xxx		
	Student H : xx		

Key: volunteered to participate once: x ; volunteered to participate more 2-3 times: xx; volunteered to participate more than 3 times: xxx

3.4.6. Discussion of findings:

In both activity 2 and 3, all the students participated at least once after volunteering to participate and some volunteered to participate more than once. Activity 2 is related to activity 1, which was done in the preceding lesson. In this preceding lesson, the students were not asked to say the item of furniture. They heard it and after answering the question: Where does the (...) go?, with “ In the (a room), they were then told to stick it in the appropriate room in the house that was drawn on the board. In other words they did the task through a form of TPR, following a command. At this point, the students were hearing new language and associating it with old language and performing a task. As mentioned before, there is no pressure for students to produce the language when they perform TPR. The students were exposed to the language visually and audibly, and were asked to perform a physical task that involved them getting out of their seats, going to the board and sticking the item in its correct place. The fact that, in the following lesson (activity 2), ten out of 16 students were able to label the items of furniture without having to look at the glossary, may show that the kinesthetic activity

(activity 1) done in the previous lesson may have helped students to internalise the language and later enable them to recall these items in activity 2.

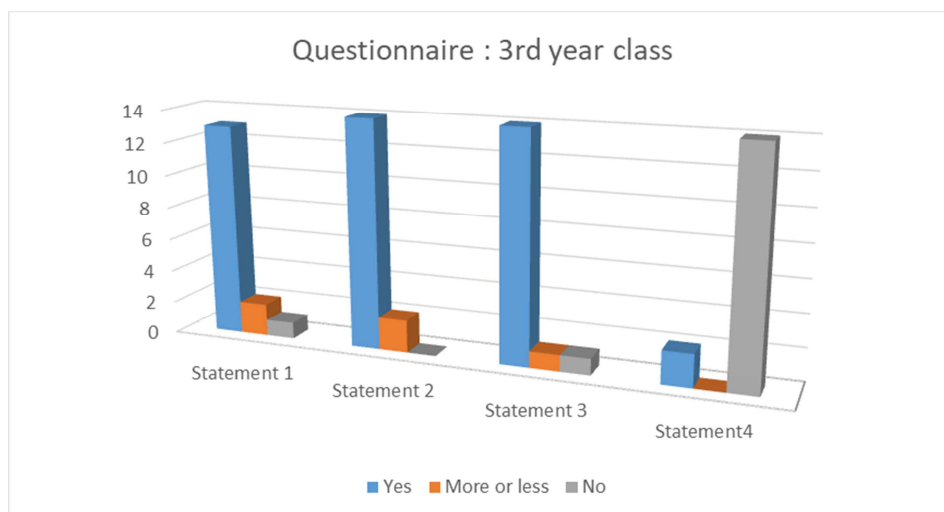
Another observation made is that in activity 2, students did not know which word they were going to get before volunteering to participate in the activity. However, this risk factor did not stop them from participating, which may also show that the simple fact that they could get up and do something was motivating enough for even the less confident students to want to participate. Nevertheless, one of the students from group 4, student P, waited until everyone had had a turn before volunteering. The same student did the same thing in activity 1. This student in particular has a lot of learning disabilities and therefore may lack the confidence to act differently.

3.4.7. Results of the Questionnaires

The questionnaires were given to the students on the last day that I taught them. The reason for this was so that they would be in a better position to reflect on the physical activities they had done throughout my teaching practice and be able to say how they felt about kinesthetic activities. The questionnaire can be seen in appendix 1.

Thirteen out of sixteen students agreed that they liked to take part in activities in which they had to get up and do something. Two out sixteen students said they agreed more or less with this statement, and one out of sixteen students disagreed with this statement. Next, fourteen out of sixteen students agreed that they liked activities with movement, two out of sixteen students more or less agreed with this statement and none of the students disagreed with this statement. For the third statement, fourteen out of sixteen students agreed that activities with movement and gestures helped them to learn English, one out of sixteen said they more or less agreed and one out of sixteen disagreed. For the last statement, two out of sixteen students agreed that they preferred to remain seated throughout the whole lesson and fourteen out of sixteen disagreed with this statement. The results of the questionnaire can be seen in the graph below and in the table in appendix 10.

Graph 5: Results of questionnaires 3rd year class



3.4.8. Discussion of findings

The results of the questionnaire show that the majority of students enjoy physical classroom activities, which may explain the fact that there was an increase in participation when these activities were done. Two of the students that were from group 4 of the zero cycle chose “No” for question four. One of these students, student M, has health issues, due to severe allergies that can cause epileptic attacks, which may explain the student’s preference to remain seated during the entire lesson. In this questionnaire, reference is made to all the kinesthetic activities the students did including some activities which were not part of an official observation, such as the super simple colour song activity where the students had to run and touch something of a specific colour and then return to their seats within a few seconds of the song. They also did a statues game in a lesson of Halloween where they had to act as one of the Halloween characters while the music was playing and then freeze when the music stopped. Another activity that is included in this questionnaire is the Hello song, which was introduced in the first class that I taught them accompanied with gestures for each adjective in the song. This song was repeated in the beginning of every lesson.

Apart from the structured observation with quantitative data, unstructured observation, also known as open observation, was used in the form of notes taken during the lessons in which these activities were done. Through this type of observation,

it was observed that in both the statues game and the colour song activity, the class in general got slightly boisterous with some students falling on the floor and others on top of each other. According to Halliwell (1992), children will indulge in play when given the opportunity. However, it took seconds for them to settle down. In the case of the colour song, as soon as the time they had to run and touch was over, they were all seated. Also, in the statues game, as soon as the music stopped, they did in fact “freeze”, and after this activity was over, they were told to sit in their seats and they settled down and worked well in a post activity, which was a worksheet on Halloween words. This helped to show that these physical activities which are considered stirrers did not cause the class to lose control. There was some overexcitement and a few seconds of chaotic behaviour that quickly changed and they were able to settle down and focus on other activities, which shows how using stirrers and settlers can be effective in keeping students focused throughout the lesson.

Another unstructured observation made during these activities was the fact that in the beginning, when the students were asked how they were, all they knew how to say was “I’m happy” or “I’m fine” and through the “Hello Song” that was accompanied with gestures, they learned to say “I’m good / great / wonderful / tired / hungry / not so good”. Over consecutive lessons given by myself, my colleague and their teacher, this song was used to initiate the lesson as a routine and every time, the students stood up enthusiastically, did the actions and sang the song. They were then asked how they were, giving different answers such as “I’m hungry”, “I’m tired”, “I’m wonderful” and so on. They responded very naturally using the language and the gestures from the song accurately, which may show that having used gestures / actions with the language may have helped to internalize the language and therefore helped them to learn the language. This relates to the third statement of the questionnaire with which the majority of the students agreed (Activities with movement and gestures help me learn English). In addition, in one of the lessons that I taught, the students were asked to stand and sing this song. I played the song on my computer but the sound was not being projected and the students started singing on their own while I was fidgeting on my laptop, trying to fix the sound. In the meantime, they all sang it perfectly without my help and in unison, and they learned the song only from listening to it, seeing the gestures and

copying them. They never saw the lyrics in its written form, yet they learned the meaning of all the words perfectly and were able to use the language with perfect pronunciation.

An additional observation made was in a Halloween lesson, when the students listened to a story about Halloween and then were asked to create a similar story. In the story worksheet they were asked to self assess and rate the story as not so good / good / great. Student H came up to me and asked if he could use “wonderful” instead. Even though “wonderful” in fact is a synonym of “great”, in the hello song, they used good, great and then wonderful, each adjective with a different gesture. *Good* = one thumb up, *great* = two thumbs up and *wonderful* = arms in the air in circular movements outward, which may well have led the students to believe that “wonderful” was more positive than “great”, also due to the fact that they were in a crescendo order. Once again, this shows how actions and gestures can convey meaning and in fact help students to grasp meaning so effectively to the extent that they are able to personalise it.

3.5. Results of the zero cycle leading to the intervention plan and description of the first cycle of the action research project with the 4th year class.

During the zero cycle which started in IPP1 and continued in the beginning of IPP2, in which I was observing lessons, I was able to observe the frequency of participation of the 4th year class and therefore separated the students according to their frequency of participation, and similar to the 3rd year I decided to use activities in class that involved movement and observe whether their frequency of participation would change and whether these activities aided their understanding of the target language. The groups into which students were divided according to the frequency of their participation during the zero cycle can be seen in the graph and table below.

Graph 6 : Zero cycle 4th year class participation.

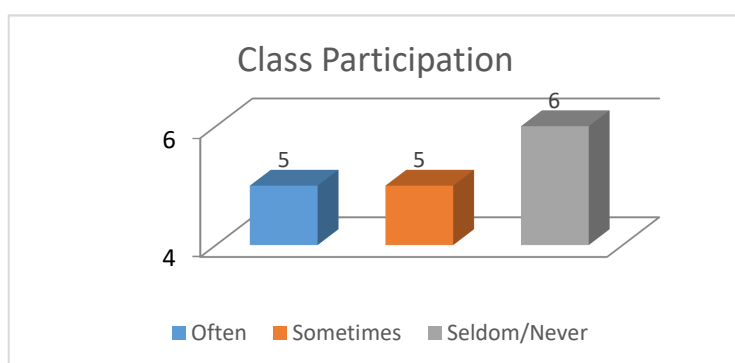


Table 6 : Zero cycle 4th year class participation.

Group 1 : Students that often participated	Group 2 : Students that sometimes participated	Group 3 : Students that seldom or never participated.
Student A	Student F	Student K
Student B	Student G	Student L
Student C	Student H	Student M
Student D	Student I	Student N
Student E	Student J	Student O
		Student P

3.5.1. Contextualization and description of activity 1 & 2

On 8th October 2022, I had planned to teach the interrogative form of the present continuous. In order to review and pre-teach the verbs that the students were going to need for a miming activity in the lesson. The students did an activity which involved going to the front of the class and matching a verb with a silhouette that had been glued onto an A3 card and represented an action. This A3 card had been prepared before the lesson and students were only required to match the picture and the word by sticking the word under the picture using blue-tack. The aim was to have the students get up and do a physical task while saying the target language. Volunteers were asked to do the activity and after a show of hands, one student was chosen at a time to participate, while the rest of the students matched the word and the picture in a handout they were given (see appendix 7). This way they were all doing something.

Later in the same lesson the students played a guessing miming game and were divided into two teams so that they could practise the interrogative form of the present continuous in the 3rd person singular. One student from each team went to the front of the class and mimed an action related to the previous matching exercise. The other team had to try and guess what the student was doing / miming by asking: Is he / she –ing? If the opposing team got it wrong, the team with the student miming the action could try to guess the action. Once again, the aim was to see how willing the students were to participate and the observation was done with the help of my colleague.

3.5.2. Results

In order to collect data, an observation grid was designed and with the help of my colleague, the number of times the students volunteered to participate and the number of times they participated were recorded. Four out of fourteen students volunteered to participate once. Eight out of fourteen students volunteered to participate two to three times and two out of fourteen students volunteered to participate more than three times. These results can be seen in the graph and table below.

Graph 7: Activity 1, 1st cycle 4th year class participation

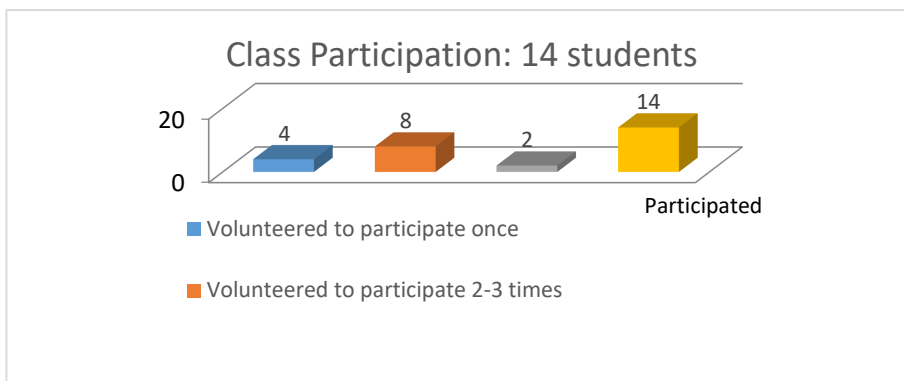


Table 7: Activity 1, 1st cycle 4th year class participation

Activity 1 : Matching activity								
Group 1			Group 2			Group 3		
Students	Volunteered to participate	Participated	students	Volunteered to participate	participated	students	Volunteered to participate	participated
A	xxx	✓	F	xx	✓	K	absent	
B	xxx	✓	G	x	✓	L	x	✓
C	xx	✓	H	xx	✓	M	x	✓
D	xx	✓	I	xx	✓	N	xx	✓
E	xx	✓	J	xx	✓	O	x	✓
						P	absent	

Key : Participated ✓; Volunteered to participate once: x; Volunteered to participate 2-3 times : xx; Volunteered to participate more than 3 times: xxx

In Activity 2, which was the miming activity, three out of fourteen students volunteered to participate once, eight out fourteen students volunteered to participate two to three times and three out of fourteen students volunteered to participate more than three times. In both the matching activity and the guessing miming game, all of the students participated without having been asked to do so. These results can be seen in the graph and table that follow.

Graph 8: Activity 2, 1st cycle 4th year class participation

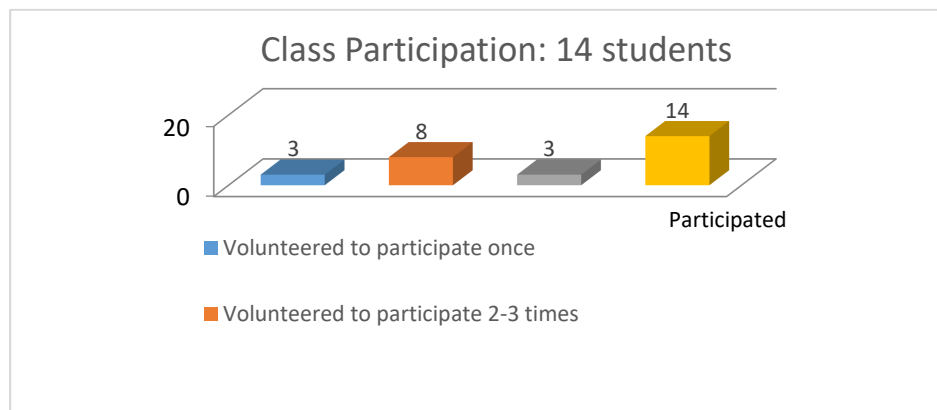


Table 8: Activity 2, 1st cycle 4th year class participation

Activity 2 : Guessing Miming Activity								
Group 1			Group 2			Group 3		
Students	Volunteered to participate	participated	students	Volunteered to participate	participated	students	Volunteered to participate	participated
A	xxx	✓	F	xx	✓	K	absent	
B	xxx	✓	G	x	✓	L	x	✓
C	xx	✓	H	xx	✓	M	xx	✓
D	xxx	✓	I	xx	✓	N	xx	✓
E	xx	✓	J	xx	✓	O	x	✓
						P	absent	

3.5.3. Discussion of findings

All of the students volunteered to participate on their own accord in both the activities, which again may show that using activities that encourage students to get out of their seats and do a physical task may be in itself a motivating factor responsible for

increasing class participation. The fact that some students only volunteered to participate once may have been due to their awareness of fairness regarding other students' participating. Children, especially at primary school age have a very acute sense of fairness and may well think that their colleagues should have a turn as well, and therefore do not volunteer to participate again until everyone has had a turn.

Futhermore, an unstructured observation that both my colleague and I were able to make during the miming game was that the students in general were using the present continuous in the interrogative form correctly and answering correctly as well. As pointed out by Halliwell (1992), when students participate in a guessing game, they are focused on doing the task, which is guessing the action and not on the language itself. However, they will acquire the language through use and repetition, therefore learning the target language in an indirect way, which is what happened in both the activities and was especially noticeable in the miming game. Here, it was also evident how with the support of the teacher (myself), the students were able to gradually go from having support in providing the correct form to eventually using the language on their own correctly. Towards the end of the miming activity, the students were producing the interrogative of the present continuous correctly, as well as responding correctly without my help. This is in line with the theory of the zone of proximal development (ZDP) by Vygotsky, who claims that the child learns in a social context with the help of adults, and gradually shifts from the reliance on others to independent action and thinking (Cameron, 2001). However, this was an unstructured observation and the structured observation grid had not been designed to collect data on students' understanding and knowledge of the target language.

3.6. Intervention plan and description of the second cycle of the action research project with the 4th year class

In order to collect information of both participation and understanding of the target language when using physical activities, the observation grid was redesigned to collect data both on frequency of participation and understanding of the target language.

3.6.1. Contextualization and description of activity 3

On 30th November 2021, I had to teach adverbs of manner, as this was part of the grammar students had in their pupil's book (p 20, Kid's Box 4) and in addition to using pictures that was on a handout prepared for the students (see appendix 8), I also used TPR followed by a game of Simon says at the end of the lesson to help students understand the meaning of those adverbs of manner. The aim of these activities was to aid understanding of the target language, which would be observed in the following class.

On the 3rd December, a guessing miming game was used to revise the adverbs of manner students had seen in the previous lesson. Some slips of paper with some commands (see appendix 9) had been prepared for this activity and volunteers were encouraged to go to the front of the class and mime the actions so that the rest of the class could guess. An observation grid was used to register the students' participation and whether they knew the target language, which included the correct verb and adverb of manner, as well as the correct form, which in this case was the present continuous. This way, I was able to check students' understanding of the adverb of manner together with the interrogative form of the present continuous which was practiced also through mime in a previous lesson.

3.6.2. Results

The data-gathering tool used was a structured observation grid designed to observe who volunteered to participate in the game, who participated (I allowed the student who guessed the action to have a turn if they wanted to and if not I would choose someone else that volunteered to participate), who volunteered to guess, and who guessed correctly. As my colleague was absent this day, I completed the observation grid myself and therefore I limited it to *once and more than once* as it was difficult to control the game and complete the observation grid at the same time, especially as this class was particularly very energetic. Five out of fifteen students volunteered to participate in miming an action once. Nine out of fifteen students volunteered to participate in miming an action more than once. All the students

participated once in miming an action. Three out of fifteen students volunteered to guess the action once. Ten out of sixteen students volunteered to guess the action more than once. Nine out of fifteen students guessed the actions correctly once and five out of fifteen students guessed the action correctly more than once. These results can be seen in the table and graph below.

Table 9: Activity 3, 2nd cycle, 4th year class participation

Group 1	Volunteered to participate in miming.	Participated	Volunteered to guess	Guessed correctly
Student A	xx	x	xx	x
Student B	xx	x	xx	xx
Student C	absent			
Student D	xx	x	xx	x
Student E	xx	x	xx	x
Group 2				
Student F	xx	x	xx	x
Student G	x	x	x	x
Student H	xx	x	xx	xx
Student I	x	x	xx	xx
Student J	xx	x	xx	x
Group 3				
Student K	x	x	x	x
Student L	x	x		
Student M	x	x	xx	xx
Student N	xx	x	xx	xx
Student O	x	x	x	x
Student P	xx	x	xx	x

Key: x = once ; xx = more than once

Graph 9: Activity 3, 2nd cycle , 4th year class participation



3.6.3. Discussion of findings

Given that all the students volunteered to participate in the miming game, some more than once, may once again show that activities involving movement engage the students in general. Despite volunteering to participate more than once, the students were only given one opportunity to participate as there were only 16 sentences and I did not want the activity to go on for longer than that. Most of the students guessed the sentence that was being conveyed through mime at least once. However, in some cases I had to help the student to do the miming since the gestures they were making were not always very clear. The students not only had to convey the action but also the manner in which it was done given that they had to mime an action that included an adverb of manner, for example: *Dance slowly*. This proved to be more difficult than if they had only had to convey the action without the adverb of manner. However, when I intervened by using mime in an exaggerated way, the students were then able to guess the sentence.

In general the students were able to guess the actions and produce the sentence in the present continuous with the correct adverb of manner. This may be due to the fact that in the previous lesson, the students practiced listening to the target language and doing the action through Total physical response (TPR), which gives students time to

learn the target language without the pressure of producing it immediately. In addition, having practiced the target language through TPR means that this language was visual and contextualized which helped to scaffold the language. Moreover, the fact that the students were able to produce the language accurately, may be evidence that having used movement to learn the target language helped to assimilate the information as pointed out by Hannaford (1995)

3.6.4. Results of the Questionnaires of the 4th year class.

For the purpose of triangulation of data collection, a questionnaire was used for the 4th year class which had the following statements: (see appendix 2)

Statement 1: I enjoy participating in activities in which I have to get up and do something. (e.g. Simon says, guessing miming game, matching words and pictures (silhouettes) on a poster)

Statement 2 : I enjoy activities with movement (eg. Simon says , miming game)

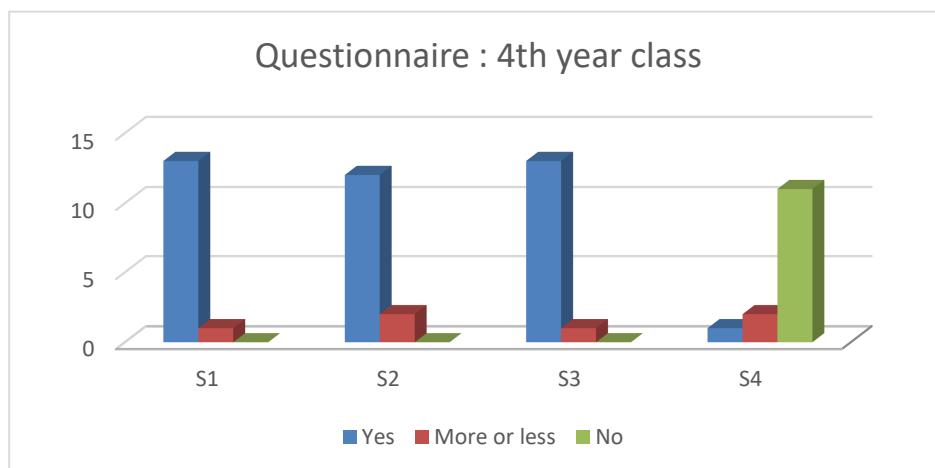
Statement 3 : Activities with movement and gestures help me to learn.

Statement 4 : I prefer to remain seated throughout the whole lesson.

This questionnaire was given to the students in the last lesson that I taught so that students could consider all the physical activities that they had participated in throughout my teaching practice. The questionnaire was written in Portuguese to ensure that students understood the questions well. The students were required to choose only one answer – Yes / More or less / No and in brackets next to each statement, they had the activities they did in class as a reminder. Thirteen out of fourteen students agreed that they liked to participate in activities in which they had to get up and do something; one student agreed more or less with this statement; twelve out of fourteen students agreed that they enjoyed activities with movement; two out of fourteen agreed more or less with the same statement; and thirteen out of fourteen students agreed that activities with movement and gesture/ mime helped them to learn English. However, one student chose more or less for this statement. Lastly, ten students disagreed that they preferred to remain seated throughout the whole lesson, two students were unsure and two students agreed that they preferred to remain seated throughout the whole lesson. The

results of the questionnaire can be seen in the graph that follows and the table in appendix 11

Graph 10 : Results of questionnaire 4th year class



3.6.5. Discussion of findings

The results show that most of the students enjoy doing activities that involve movement or getting up and doing something physical and most of the students think that activities that involve movement and gestures or mime help them to learn English, with very few showing uncertainty regarding these topics. This may show evidence that, as Kuczala & Lengel,(2010) state, movement helps students to refocus and pay attention which is necessary for learning to take place, as well as to assimilate new language (Hannaford,1995). Most of the students disagree with the last statement which means they would rather *not* remain seated for the entire lesson, which is what they usually do in their regular English lesson. This provides evidence that children have the need to be physically active. Only two students were unsure of this last statement and the one student that chose “no” for the last statement is the student who has Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), which may explain his preference to remain seated. Students with some type of learning difficulty may have lower self esteem , and this according to Kuczala & Lengel, (2010), may lead them to avoid activities involving movement.

Chapter IV- Conclusion

During all the activities that involved movement or students getting out of their seats to handle objects, there was a significant increase in student participation in comparison to what was observed in the zero cycle. Even the students who initially seldom or never participated, did so a lot more when they were asked to do a physical task. Furthermore, in the activities that proceeded physical activities or games using the method of total physical response, students were able to show that they had understood the target language when they were asked to identify or produce it. This may show how movement helps the brain to learn and absorb information. It is also a great way to scaffold meaning, helping students to grasp the target language.

The increase in student participation may be directly related to student motivation. It seems that having used activities which allowed students to get out of their seats and participate in an open class activity that involved physically placing objects in their appropriate place, or words next to pictures, using their bodies to convey meaning in miming games or through TPR, may have had a direct impact on their motivation and engagement in these activities. Students were more involved and actively learning, which seems to have had an effect on what they were able to assimilate. In addition, there was more class cohesion, as students were working together to achieve the same goal, which involved indirect or implicit learning. In other words, the students' focus was on doing a task such as completing the labelling of a house montage, or labelling the actions in the silhouette activity, or getting a message across in a miming game. They were not focused on the language. However, by doing the tasks they use the language and learn it. Hence the importance of *learning by doing*, through implicit or indirect learning. These kinesthetic activities provide the students with a purpose, making learning more meaningful. They also serve as stirrers to refocus students' attention, while catering for different types of intelligences and learning styles. A lot these kinesthetic activities appeal to both the perceptual (visual, auditory, tactile, kinesthetic) and sociological learners as they require the collaboration with other students. They can appeal to reflective students who participate when they are ready or

impulsive learners who are more keen to participate from the start. In terms of cognitive styles, they can appeal to global learners who work effectively in groups, field dependent learners given that the physical games or tasks provide a meaningful context, as well as to field independent learners who prefer sequential instruction.

Looking at Gardener's multiple intelligences, these kinesthetic activities do not only appeal to students with physical intelligence. Activities such as mime or TPR games are also very visual and therefore appeal to students with visual intelligence. They involve working with other students, and therefore cater for students with interpersonal intelligence, as well as musical intelligence given that some of these kinesthetic activities are done with music. Lastly they also involve verbal intelligence, whether in an oral, aural or written form.

As Kuczala & Lengel state that "Movement provides both the teacher and student with a stimulating classroom environment. Allowing students to get out of their seats to move while learning provides the novelty the brain seeks. It also provides the opportunity for students to grow cognitively, physically, mentally, emotionally and socially" (Kuczala & Lengel, 2010, p. 2). Despite the fear that teachers may have of losing control of the class when allowing their students to get out of their seats, there are enormous benefits in doing exactly that. However, using good classroom management and routines is essential for students to know when it is time to be active and when it is time to focus on a quiet activity. I believe that both the teacher and the students will reap the benefits in using physical or kinesthetic activities in the classroom, as there will most likely be happy students who will be active learners and hopefully learn to love English. Consequently, this will hopefully have the desired long term effects as they continue to learn English in their future school years.

4.1. Limitations of the study

Introducing physical activities in a class that is not used to doing these types of activities can be quite challenging. With the 3rd year class, there were not any issues and in general the introduction of kinesthetic/physical activities went quite smoothly. Students settled down quite well after a physical activity. However, I did at times

struggle with the 4th year class. They would sometimes become quite boisterous and at times would get out of hand when asked to work in groups. Therefore, there were occasions where I had to stop the activity completely. Having them work in groups would have freed me to go around monitoring and observing their behaviour but I was forced to do more open class activities where I could be in control of the activity. This inevitably forced me to be a participant observer.

In addition, in order for these types of activities to be effective, there needs to be consistency. Students should already expect it and know when to be active and when to be quiet. The fact that the same class was being taught by three different teachers, their English teacher, myself and my colleague who was also doing his teaching practice with the same classes, did not help with consistency, as physical activities were rarely if ever integrated in the classes other than the ones I taught.

4.2. Suggestions for future research

Although this action research is on using kinesthetic activities to improve student participation and aid understanding, there are other ways that can be explored with the aim of achieving the same goals. Children in general like to move but they also enjoy playing games. Therefore, another way to encourage children to participate in class activities is through games. For the purpose of this project I explored a few kinesthetic games, such as “Simon Says”. However, it is worth exploring other types of games, such as team games. Even the less confident students may feel more keen to participate when working in a team and not expected to do or answer on their own.

Using board games can also be a good way to encourage students to participate as this would simulate a natural playtime situation. Board games can be played in groups of four, and this can also help less confident students to participate as they are not doing anything in front of the whole class. This also frees the teacher to walk around the class and monitor and check whether students have understood the target language. In their group, students can learn with and from each other, giving them ample practise to grasp the target language. It would be interesting to conduct an action research on this

and through observation, discover how well students grasp the target and language, as well as how well they are able to produce it within the group context.

Without a doubt, action research can be done in numerous topic areas and it should be done regularly to ensure that teaching is always improving. It is through action research that we are able to test the theory and broaden our understanding in teaching. As Bradbury (2001) states “Action research is about working towards practical outcomes and also about creating new forms of understanding, since action research without understanding is blind, just as theory without action is meaningless.”(Bradbury, 2001, cited by Burns, A in Brown & Coombe, 2015, p. 99).

On a personal note, it was particularly interesting to see how the children I worked with seemed very keen to engage in the activities I used in the lessons and it gave me great pleasure to work with them and observe how well they grasped the language. I look forward to exploring other ways to engage children in learning and making their English lessons meaningful and enjoyable in the future.

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Appendices

Appendix 1 – Questionnaire 3rd year class.

Appendix 2 – Questionnaire 4th year class.

Appendix 3 - Activity 1, 2nd cycle, 3rd year class, 22nd October 2021

Appendix 4 - Activity 2 , 2nd cycle, 3rd year class, 23rd October 2021

Appendix 5 - Activity 2 , 2nd cycle , 3rd year class, 23rd October 2021

Appendix 6 - Activity 2 , 2nd cycle, 3rd year class, 23rd October 2021

Appendix 7 - Activity 1, 1st cycle, 4th year class, 8th October 2021

Appendix 8 - 2nd cycle , 4th year class, 8th October 2021

Appendix 9 - Activity 3 , 2nd cycle , 4th year class, 3rd December 2021

Appendix 10 - 3rd year class questionnaire results

Appendix 11 – 4th year class questionnaire results

Appendix 1- Questionnaire 3rd year class.

Nome : _____

	Sim	Mais ou menos	Não
Gosto de participar nas actividades em que tenho que me levantar e fazer alguma coisa. (ex: Simon Says, jogo de mímica, colocar os móveis na casa, colocar os nomes dos móveis na casa, etc).			
Gosto de actividades com movimento. (ex : Canção/jogo das cores, Simon Says, jogo de mímica, estátuas, the hello song.)			
As actividades com movimento e gestos ajudam-me a aprender Inglês.			
Prefiro estar sentado/a durante toda a aula.			



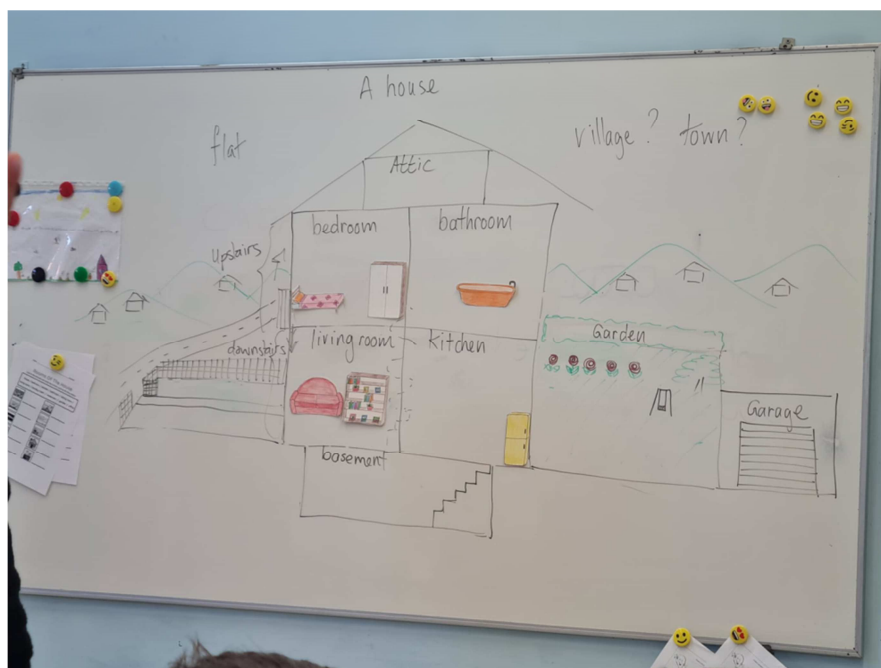
Appendix 2 - Questionnaire 4th year class

Nome : _____

	Sim	Mais ou menos	Não
Gosto de participar nas actividades em que tenho que me levantar e fazer alguma coisa. (ex: Simon Says, jogo de mímica, colocar os nomes dos verbos ao lado das imagens -silhuetas).			
Gosto de actividades com movimento. (ex : Simon Says, jogo de mímica)			
As actividades com movimento e gestos/mímica ajudam-me a aprender Inglês.			
Prefiro estar sempre sentado/a durante toda a aula, sem me levantar.			



Appendix 3 - Activity 1, 2nd cycle, 3rd year class, 22nd October 2021



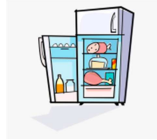
Appendix 5 - Activity 2 ,2nd cycle, 3rd year class, 23rd October 2021

Picture Glossary

cooker



fridge



sink



table and chairs



cupboard



sofa



bookcase



lamp



TV



bed



wardrobe



bedside table



Bath



washbasin



mirror



toilet



shower



plant



painting



fireplace



Appendix 6 – Activity 2, 2nd cycle, 3rd year class, 23rd October 2021

Mime game:

Pre-teach:

watch TV, sleep, eat breakfast, lay the table, brush your teeth, go up / down, wash your hands, water the grass/plants, make your bed, fix the car

2 students :

watch TV-in the living room.

sleep in bed –in the bedroom

eat breakfast – in the kitchen

brush your teeth –in the bathroom

go up to another floor- in the lift

lay the table- in the kitchen

wash your hands- In the bathroom

water the grass- in the garden

fix the car- In the garage

Match the words and pictures:



e.g.



n

watch tv



m

play the guitar

play football

play tennis

play chess

sing

read

write

run

swim

paint

eat

drink

dance

ride a bike



l



j



i

h



a



b



c



d



e



f



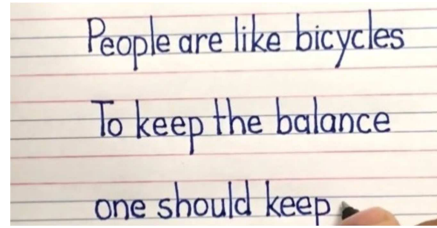
g

Let's learn!

Mary is careful when she writes.

She writes _____

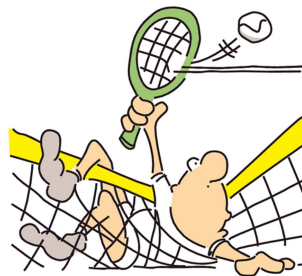
careful+ _____ = _____



Alex is bad at tennis.

She plays tennis _____

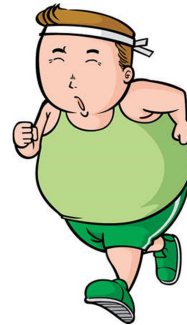
bad + _____ = _____



David is a slow runner.

He runs _____

slow + _____ = _____



In the library, you must be quiet.

You must speak _____

quiet + _____ = _____

BUT :

Debbie is good at drawing.

She draws _____.

good → _____



Appendix 9 - Activity 3, 2nd cycle, 4th year class, 3rd December 2021

Walk slowly	Clap your hands loudly
Speak quietly	Wash your hands carefully
Run slowly	Play football badly
Walk quickly	Play football well
Sing badly	Drink loudly
Eat quickly	Read carefully
Dance slowly	Listen carefully
Tip-toe quietly	Clap your hands quietly

Appendix 10 - 3rd year class questionnaire results

Names 3rd year	I like to take to take part in activities in which I have to get up and so sth			I like activities with movement.			Activities with movement and gestures help me learn English.			I prefer to remain seated throughout the whole lesson		
	yes	+/-	No	Yes	+/-	No	Yes	+/-	No	Yes	+/-	No
Group1												
Student A	x			x			x					x
Group 2:												
Student B	x			x			x					x
Student C	x			x			x					x
Student D	x			x			x					x
Student E	x			x			x					x
Student F	x			x				x				x
Student H	x			x			x					x
Group 3:												
Student I	x				x		x					x
Student J	x			x			x					x
Student K	x			x			x					x
Student L	x			x			x					x
Group 4:												
Student M	x			x			x					x
Student N			x		x				x	x		
Student O		x		x			x			x		
Student P	x			x			x					x
Student Q		x		x			x					x
	13	2	1	14	2	0	14	1	1	2	0	14

Appendix 11 - 4th year class questionnaire results

Names 4th year	I like to take part in activities in which I have to get up and so sth			I like activities with movement.			Activities with movement and gestures/mime help me learn English.			I prefer to remain seated throughout the whole lesson		
	yes	+/-	No	Yes	+/-	No	Yes	+/-	No	Yes	+/-	No
Group 1 :												
Student A	x			x			x					x
Student B	x			x			x					x
Student C	x			x			x					x
Student D	x			x			x					x
Student E	x			x			x			x		
Group 2:												
Student F	x			x			x					x
Student G	x			x			x			x		
Student H	x			x			x					x
Student I	x			x			x				x	
Student J	x				x		x					x
Group 3:												
Student L		x			x		x					x
Student M	x			x			x					x
Student N	x			x			x				x	
Student O	x			x				x				x
	13	1	0	12	2	0	13	1	0	2	2	10