Motivating self and others through a whole-school storytelling project: Authentic language & literacy development

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ABSTRACT

EN This study reports on a whole-school project carried out with preschool and primary children, taking a whole-language approach to literacy development, through a storytelling methodology which uses authentic picturebooks and peer modelling. This article presents the results of an exploratory mixed methods study conducted over a three-year period with the older (10-12-year-old) participants in the project (N=27). Within an action research framework, data was collected from field notes of classroom observations, video recorded sessions, questionnaires and interviews with students and teachers. The study aims to assess the motivational effect of the storytelling project on learners, identify the learning outcomes generated and identify strategies that were particularly effective in generating such outcomes. Through a process-oriented approach, the findings verify the motivational effect of the storytelling project. These findings also help bridge the gap between theory and practice in motivational research and contribute to the growing body of literature on the use of authentic picturebooks in the L2 classroom and the potential benefits of peer modelling.

Key words: STORYTELLING WITH PICTUREBOOKS, PEER MODELLING, READING, AUTHENTICITY, EARLY FOREIGN LANGUAGE LEARNING, PRESCHOOL AND PRIMARY

ES Este estudio presenta un proyecto *whole-school* implementado con alumnado de educación infantil y primaria. El proyecto, basado en un enfoque de lenguaje integral, emplea una metodología *storytelling* con álbumes ilustrados auténticos y un uso estratégico de modelaje por pares. Este artículo expone los resultados de un estudio de métodos mixtos realizado con los/las participantes más mayores (10-12 años, N = 27) durante un periodo de tres años. En el marco de la investigación-acción, los datos recopilados provienen de observaciones y grabaciones en el aula, cuestionarios y entrevistas con estudiantes y docentes. El estudio evalúa el efecto motivador del proyecto e identifica los resultados del aprendizaje y las estrategias que han demostrado ser eficaces en la producción de estos resultados. Desde un enfoque orientado al proceso, los hallazgos verifican el efecto motivador en el alumnado. Estos resultados ayudan a reducir la distancia entre la teoría y la práctica en la investigación motivacional, a la vez que contribuyen a la literatura sobre el uso de álbumes ilustrados auténticos en la clase de L2 y los beneficios del modelaje por pares.

Palabras clave: *STORYTELLING* CON ÁLBUMES ILUSTRADOS; MODELAJE POR PARES; LECTURA; AUTENTICIDAD; APRENDIZAJE DE IDIOMAS EXTRANJEROS EN EDADES TEMPRANAS; EDUCACIÓN INFANTIL Y PRIMARIA

IT Questo studio presenta un progetto che ha coinvolto un'intera scuola e i bambini della scuola dell'infanzia e della scuola primaria. Il progetto si basa sia sull'approccio *whole language* per lo sviluppo dell'alfabetizzazione attraverso la metodologia dello *storytelling* con l'uso di libri illustrati autentici e del *peer modelling*. Questo articolo presenta i risultati di una ricerca condotta con metodi misti che ha coinvolto i bambini più grandi (10-12 anni, N = 27) nell'arco di tre anni. Nel quadro della ricerca-azione, ho raccolto dati scaturiti da osservazioni in classe e sessioni videoregistrate, questionari e interviste con studenti e insegnanti. L'obiettivo dello studio è valutare l'effetto motivazionale del progetto di *storytelling* sui discenti, individuare i risultati di apprendimento e le strategie rivelatesi efficaci nel produrre tali risultati. Attraverso un approccio orientato al processo, i risultati verificano l'effetto motivazionale dello *storytelling* e uniscono la teoria e la pratica nella ricerca motivazionale contribuendo alla letteratura sull'uso di libri illustrati autentici nelle classi di L2 e i potenziali benefici del *peer modelling*.

Parole chiave: *STORYTELLING* CON LIBRI ILLUSTRATI, *PEER MODELLING*, LETTURA, AUTENTICITÀ, APPRENDIMENTO PRECOCE DELLA LINGUA STRANIERA, SCUOLA DELL'INFANZIA E SCUOLA PRIMARIA.

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1. Introduction

Within a whole language approach to literacy development (Galda, Liang, & Cullinan, 2016; Martinez & McGee, 2000), reading is not regarded as a separate skill to be developed once the basics of the language have been acquired; instead, it is conceived as a critical part of the language learning process itself. Furthermore, and from a socio-constructivist approach to learning, this process is an active undertaking in which we learn language by using it (Bruner, 1983) in interactive experiences involving social and collaborative exchanges with others (Vygotsky, 1978). Authentic children's literature can provide a rich starting point for interactive storytelling sessions by engaging children's interest on the one hand and encouraging emerging literacy skills on the other (Brand, 2006; Campbell, 2001; Martinez & McGee, 2000).

This paper reports on a whole-school project that connected literacy development with foreign language learning by aligning L3 learning with strategies already found to be effective in promoting learning and development in L1 and L2. The project was implemented in a rural preschool/primary school in Catalonia where Catalan is the main language of instruction (L1) and Spanish is learned as an L2. While actual usage and knowledge of these two languages depends on the home environment of each student, the school context provides students with an education that aims to develop competence in both languages (Departament d'Ensenyament, 2015b, 2016). In addition, and in line with curricular guidelines, students begin to learn English as a foreign language, referred to here as L3 (Departament d'Ensenyament, 2015a).

Consistent with regular practice in the region, children in the preschool programme (ages 3-5) have their own annex within the school compound. This enables teachers from different educational stages to maintain close contact and coordinate activities bringing children from preschool and primary education (6-12 years old) together. Capitalizing on this situation, the school places considerable emphasis on peer-to-peer work and coordinated activities in which older children become role models for their younger peers. The primary school's L1/L2 literacy programme includes regular activities in which older children read stories to their peers, including students from the lower years of primary and the younger children in the preschool. This established practice has generated positive results for the school, particularly in promoting the following learning outcomes: positive attitudes toward reading, effective oral communication skills, and interpersonal and intrapersonal competence. These results support the theoretical arguments advanced in favour of using peer modelling in education, particularly seeing as it stimulates positive self-efficacy beliefs (Artino, 2012; Bandura, 1977). On such accounts, observing peers carrying out what is perceived to be a challenging task encourages learners to believe that they will also be able to achieve similar goals in the future. Given the consistently positive results obtained using peer modelling strategies in L1/L2 literacy development, the school decided to implement a new project replicating some of the aspects of the peer-to-peer reading programme, while adapting it to the challenges of introducing an L3 (i.e., English), as explained in the first sub-section (Context) of the Methodology described below.

In the first instance, the project aimed to generate similar outcomes to those resulting from the L1/L2 programme (i.e., positive attitudes to reading, effective oral communication skills, and interpersonal & intrapersonal competence), while also aiming to promote positive attitudes toward the foreign language. I carried out an initial study focusing on the attitudinal aspect of the programme. Within a qualitative framework, the study explored the effect of the project on the students' emerging self-concepts as foreign language learners and assessed changes in self-efficacy beliefs prior to and after completion of the project (Waddington, 2019). Results from this previous study highlighted the way in which debilitating learner attributions often impeded the emergence of positive foreign language self-concepts. Three main explanations for low self-efficacy levels emerged: perceived weaknesses in communication skills/comprehensibility, anxieties about pronunciation/accent and identity-related issues/competing languages. Results showed significant increases in self-efficacy beliefs after project implementation and more positive attitudes toward foreign language learning. These initial results encouraged the school to continue with the project and to include it as a permanent feature of their language and literacy programme.

The study presented in this paper aims to build on the findings of the previous study by focusing on the effects of the whole-school and whole language literacy programme on learners. Specifically, and as discussed in detail in the Methodology section, the study aimed to:

- assess the motivational effect of the reading project on learners,
- identify the learning outcomes generated, and
- identify strategies observed to be particularly effective in generating the observed outcomes.

2. Theoretical perspectives and literature review
2.1. Language and literacy development

Considering the development of reading as part of a student's global development presents challenges that go well beyond language, as emphasised by Gail Ellis (2010) in a paper that focused on lower secondary school students (ages 11-14). The main challenges Ellis highlights are: the mixed levels of language skills and knowledge, which can vary considerably within a group; the maintenance of learner motivation over extended periods of time; the selection of age-appropriate, but linguistically accessible material, and students' role in selecting such material; the development of effective reading strategies; the cultivation of positive attitudes and self-confidence; and the development of active citizens. In relation to this latter point, Ellis also places considerable emphasis on the need to build 'communities of readers' and to create opportunities for students to share their reading experiences with each other. Summing up the challenges presented, two principle lines of action emerge:

-   selecting appropriate and motivating reading material, and
-   providing ideal motivational conditions while developing learning strategies.

2.2. Motivation

The question of motivation and the development of effective learning strategies is particularly relevant to the focus of this present study. Influenced by behaviourist approaches, early theories of motivation in education tended to emphasise the transitive nature of learning, understanding the teacher's role as that of a motivator and key agent responsible for stimulating student learning (Williams, Mercer, & Ryan, 2016). Increasing attention to the learner's central role in the learning process and to the need to increase learner participation and autonomy from early ages (Ellis & Ibrahim, 2015) has led to the emergence of more situated and complex approaches to motivation (Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2009), focusing more on the learner, and suggesting that the mere application of external stimuli is not enough. Despite theoretical advances in this field, several authors have highlighted the gap between theory and practice (Lasagabaster, Doiz, & Sierra, 2016; Ryan, 2016; Waddington, 2018). In particular, they suggest that comprehensible guides are needed to support teachers as they endeavour to appropriately and effectively incorporate motivational strategies within their practice, in a way that places the learner at the centre of the process. It is with this practical focus in mind that Ellis (2010) presents Dörnyei's process-oriented approach to motivation (Dörnyei, 2001) as an effective organisational tool for her own study on motivating secondary school students to read. The approach helps identify strategies corresponding to different components of a holistic and learner-based model of motivation: 1) creating basic motivational conditions, 2) generating initial motivation, 3) maintaining and protecting motivation, and 4) encouraging positive retrospective self-evaluation. For Dörnyei (2001), successful language teaching practice must pay attention to *all* components, including the development of effective strategies to address the different components and subcomponents of the model. Nevertheless, a recent study exploring how primary school teachers understand and implement motivational strategies in the foreign language classroom shows a different picture (Waddington, 2018): the majority of strategies reported correspond to the third category of *maintaining and protecting motivation*, with the emphasis being on the resources used and their presentation by the teacher as strategies to *break the monotony of classroom events* or *increase the attractiveness of tasks*. Although participants in the study (primary school teachers) make some references to strategies related to *creating the basic motivational conditions* and *generating initial motivation*, these are exceptional and generally under-developed. Finally, while teachers demonstrated high awareness of the need to encourage students and keep them motivated, no specific examples were reported of strategies used to *encourage positive self-evaluation*. The findings therefore confirm the thesis advanced by previous authors that work is needed to develop more holistic approaches to motivation and to close the gap between theory and practice. The findings also reveal an over-emphasis on attractive resources and a generalised view that *having fun* equates with being motivated. Although fun and enjoyment clearly have their place in learning—especially early learning—they need to be situated and understood within an approach that attends to all aspects of learning, as highlighted by Diana England (2017) in a recent newsletter calling for a more critical approach to 'having fun' in young learner ELT.

2.3. Authentic reading material: picture books

Regarding the selection of appropriate and motivating reading material, like other authors discussed in more detail below, Ellis (2010) advocates the use of authentic material to bridge the gap between pupils moving: from primary to secondary, from storytelling (listening) to independent reading and increased reader involvement, from reading to learn English and reading in English for pleasure, from teacher-led or controlled work to pupil led work, from teacher-selected books to pupil-selected books and reading choices, among other transitions. In this particular case (i.e., with a lower secondary school focus), *authentic* denotes material designed primarily for literary as opposed to language learning purposes and includes, but is not limited to, novels, joke books, storybooks and factual books. In the primary and pre-primary school context, authentic reading material is often associated with the use of picture books, a genre that is gaining increasing acceptance despite initial resistance prompted by the common assumption that such books are for babies and toddlers and in spite of the scarce attention given to picture book scholarship (Mourão, 2017). As in the previous secondary school case, the term *authentic* when used in relation to picturebooks denotes the prioritising of artistic/literary criteria and highlights the fact that the material has not been created or abridged in any way for language learning/teaching. The significance of this point lies not only in the distinction that can be found between controlled or graded language and ungraded or *real* language use. Instead, and as discussed at length by Mourão (2016), the significance lies in the authentic language *use* that such material generates.

> Overall, picturebooks are not *just* authentic texts because of the words they contain, for they enable language use through the learners' interpretation of the pictures, words *and* design, as these elements come together to produce a visual-verbal narrative which is disregarded when there is a focus on the words only. (p. 30)

It is, then, the learners' interpretation of the combined visual-verbal narrative and the language use that this prompts that is particularly significant in the language learning process, as discussed by Sipe (1998) in a semiotic analysis of what happens internally when the reader/listener interacts with the visual-verbal narrative. On this account, and within the classroom setting, the picture book provides the context and springboard for the generation of meaningful language work in which the focus is placed on meaning rather than language, and the aim is to expand children's listening comprehension skills and oral expression (Fleta, 2019). This focus is closely aligned with *whole language* approaches to literacy development in L1 referred to earlier (Galda et al., 2016; Martinez & McGee, 2000), which promote the use of authentic literature (including picturebooks) and the integration of reading and writing across the curriculum. Extending this argument further, other studies emphasise the positive relation between interactive storytelling sessions—with children as actively engaged listeners—and emerging literacy skills (Brand, 2006; Campbell, 2001; Martinez & McGee, 2000).

In the context of second language learning, many authors regard storytelling and picturebooks as much more than one of the multitude of activities and resources available to the language teacher. Instead, and in marked contrast, they consider the storytelling process enacted with the support of picturebooks as the keystone that enables and encourages natural language acquisition (Cameron, 2001; Ellis & Brewster, 2014; Goshn, 2013). As a result, a growing body of scholarly research has emerged to provide theoretical foundations to justify the implementation of storytelling-based pedagogical approaches (Fleta 2015, 2019; Mourão, 2012, 2016, 2017), and to provide teachers and early years practitioners with guidelines and practical ideas for implementing such an approach (Ellis & Brewster, 2014; Goshn, 2013; Jalongo, 2004, 2008), or for supplementing cross-curricular activities (Nespeca & Reeve, 2003). In all the research consulted, emphasis is placed on the learner as active agent in a shared, interactive process. While the importance of this shared role is highlighted, nevertheless, in most cases, the interactions are conceived and designed to be teacher-led, with an emphasis on the benefits generated in terms of learner comprehension and natural language acquisition (Fleta, 2019) and on other more specific skills such as active listening (Jalongo, 2008).

2.4. Peer modelling

The study presented in this paper considers the learning outcomes generated when learners take on the teacher's role and become the leaders of the storytelling process with the guidance and support of their teachers. In this sense, the study aims to contribute towards research carried out on the effects of peer

modelling by considering the effects on the learner who takes on the role of model, and the learner who observes.

Although scarce literature is available discussing the benefits of peer modelling with younger learners, studies with older learners (i.e., university students) suggest that such techniques encourage more participation (Mennim, 2017) and engagement (Brown, Iyobe, & Riley, 2013) in the learning process, while also helping to increase motivation and authentic communication among students (Assinder, 1991). On a more cautionary note, results of a study inspired by Assinder's (1991) earlier findings report fewer positive outcomes and warn against regarding methods as universally applicable panaceas (Spratt & Leug, 2000).

Taking into account the different theoretical perspectives presented, the study carried out aims to contribute to the different lines of research outlined above, linking motivational theories on language and literacy development with the use of authentic children's literature (focusing on picturebooks) as well as the strategic deployment of peer modelling in the language classroom.

3. Methodology

3.1. Context

The storytelling programme was designed in a way that included the whole school, with involvement varying depending on the educational stage. Figure 1 provides a brief summary of the activities carried out within the project, as well as a short description of the general aims at this educational stage according to curricular standards (Departament d'Ensenyament, 2015b, 2016).

- **Curriculum goals**: more balanced attention to all skills development
- **Project goals**: prepare storytelling sessions & related material (handouts) using picturebooks. Carry out interactive storytelling sessions with younger peers

- **Curriculum goals**: initial contact with FL (oral)
- **Project goals**: listen to and interact with stories told by UP students

Upper cycle primary (UP) (10-12)

Preschool (pre-primary) (3-5)

Mid cycle primary (8-10)

First cycle primary (6-8)

- **Curriculum goals**: continued FL development with increasing attention to written form.
- **Project goals**: listen to and interact with stories told by UP students. Complete handouts created by UP students for inclusion in portfolios (writing/reading skills development)

- **Curriculum goals**: more systematic intro to FL. Emphasis on oral, gradual intro of written form
- **Project goals**: listen to and interact with stories told by UP students. Complete handouts created by UP students for inclusion in portfolios (vocab development)
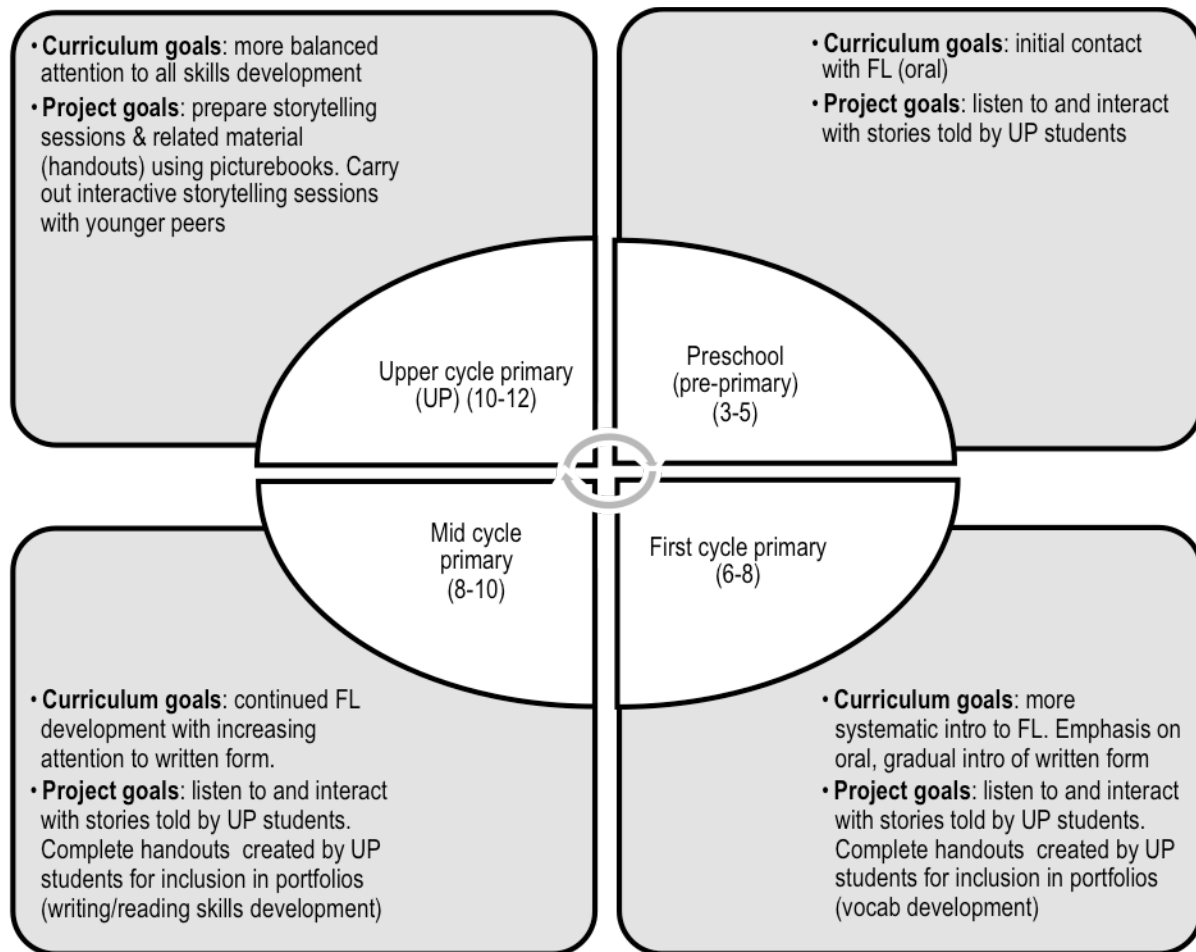
Figure 1. Stages of cyclical storytelling project

As we can observe in Figure 1, the role of the children in preschool, first cycle and mid-cycle of primary school was to listen and interact with stories told by upper cycle (UP) students using picturebooks in the foreign language (FL) they are learning. These storytelling sessions were delivered during the third term of the year during their regular English class time: on some days, instead of their usual class, they received a visit from UP students (in pairs or groups of 3) who had planned a session according to the routine presented in Figure 2.

Our Storytelling Circle Routine

1) Welcoming/greeting the listeners and creating a relaxed atmosphere.
2) Introducing key vocabulary/expressions and/or grammatical structures needed to follow the story.
3) Narrating the picturebook and encouraging maximum interaction among listeners.
4) A game or activity related to the theme of the story.
5) Closing the session and saying goodbye.

Figure 2. Different phases of storytelling routine. Author's own design (see Waddington 2017)

The preparation of these sessions was carried out during the first two terms of the year, with one of the two 1-hour English classes per week dedicated to the storytelling project. The content of these sessions grew out of initial picturebook selection, narrative comprehension (Paris & Paris, 2003) and text comprehension, and was followed by preparation of a storytelling session and the creation of related materials. For the preparation stage, all groups followed the same routine indicated in Figure 2. While students were familiar with the routine from volunteer storytelling sessions, a video recorded session was used to model each phase and to provide students with an understanding of each step of the procedure. The teacher's role was to organise and facilitate these sessions so as to maximise English-speaking time (while allowing for L1 usage when appropriate), provide support and guidance in response to student needs, and ensure that they progressed through each stage of the process. Details of how this unfolded in practice are provided in the Findings section.

3.2. Method

An exploratory mixed-methods study was conducted over a three-year period within an action-research framework. The researcher and author of this paper worked closely with the school during the implementation stage of the project. In this collaborative role, I attended regular meetings with the teachers and was also invited to participate in different class sessions during the three-year period. I attended both meetings and classes in the role of participant observer, where participant observation is "the process enabling researchers to learn about the activities of the people under study in the natural setting through observing and participating in those activities" (Kawulich, 2005, p. 2). A relation of mutual trust had already been built with the school through the researcher's previous role as volunteer storyteller and collaborator at the school. As a result, my participation was viewed as natural and appropriate within this context by teachers and students alike. My role as observer was made explicit in different ways: initially, by providing information about the study aims and obtaining informed consent from teaching staff and families of participating students, and later by extending this information to all members of the educational community. In these informational sessions with students, I explained my university work and clarified that I would observe their activities and record information relevant to the study. Following recommendations for conducting participant research in an ethical manner, I regularly wrote field notes publicly (writing *in situ*) to remind participants of my research and data collection purposes (DeWalt & DeWalt, 1998). This form of close observation has been recognised as particularly beneficial in terms of identifying non-verbal forms of expressions and discovering how participants communicate with each other (Schmuck, 1997), and for developing a holistic understanding of the phenomena under study (DeWalt & DeWalt, 2002). This direct method of data collection was also supplemented with other techniques, which are explained in the data collection and analysis sections below.

3.3. Participants

The study takes as its core sample of analysis the children enrolled in the upper cycle (grades 5 and 6) of primary education, while considering the whole-school context and teacher perspectives. As a low-population rural school, class sizes tend to be small. Nevertheless, collecting data over a 3-year period helped increase the analysis sample to a total of 27 participants, comprising three heterogeneous class groups, as shown in Table 1 below. The numbers in the table constitute the full class sizes, since all children and parents agreed to participate in the study.

Table 1.
Profile of study participants

Group	Females	Males	Age	Observations
G1	5	8	10-12*	Participants during their final year of primary education. All students ages 11-12 except 1 high-ability child (age 10) moved up a grade in the middle of primary schooling. Highly heterogeneous group, some students with learning and behavioural difficulties.
G2	4	2	10-11 11-12	Participants during two consecutive years (5th & 6th grade of primary). Mixed academic abilities but cohesive group.
G3	1	7	10-11	Participants while still in grade 5. Mixed abilities but mainly cohesive group.
Total	10	17		

Note: Students are identified within the study according to Group + letter assigned to each student: e.g., *G1a* refers to the first student (from a randomly ordered list) from Group 1.

3.4. Research Phases
3.4.1. Field work/data collection

Data were collected at key moments during the project implementation from both teacher meetings and class sessions. In terms of the former, field notes were taken at the regular meetings scheduled to discuss the implementation of the different stages of the programme, to discuss progress made and difficulties encountered, and to share in the final assessments of the programme at the end of each school year. Final assessments identified strengths and weaknesses and key areas for improvement. With regard to classroom observations, I attended initial sessions in which students were introduced to the programme, classes during which students worked on the preparation of their storytelling sessions, sessions during which they delivered their storytelling sessions to younger learners, and final classes during which they carried out co-assessment and self-assessment activities. In addition to the field notes taken at all of these sessions, audio and video recordings were made of some sessions to supplement the field notes taken and to provide more data for subsequent analysis. Most of the data recorded mixed L1 and L2 usage, reflecting the flexible attitude toward language use adopted during the classroom sessions, and coinciding with recent theories supporting the need for such flexibility in foreign language classrooms (Durán & Henderson, 2018). Transcriptions were made of these recordings to facilitate the subsequent data analysis process, and the fragments in need of translation into English were reviewed by a professional translator. Finally, data from a questionnaire administered to students in class at the end of the programme (after the assessment activities) were also collected, along with the oral comments that students made during follow-up discussions held in class. The ad hoc questionnaire included questions aimed at identifying student perceptions of their strengths and areas of improvement during the preparation sessions and during the actual delivery of their storytelling session. It also asked them to consider whether they thought the listeners had enjoyed the experience or not, how this made them feel and whether they would like to repeat the experience.

3.4.2. Data analysis

The data collected was subjected to a process of analysis, reflection and evaluation within an interpretative paradigm drawing on 'grounded theory' and using the constant comparison method developed by Corbin and Straus (2008). In light of the threefold aim of the study, the initial focus of analysis concentrated on assessing the programme's overall motivational effect on participants. Data from teacher meetings were analysed to obtain a global sense of the programme from the teachers' perspective. This overall picture was further informed by the analysis of student responses to the post-intervention questionnaire and comments from follow-up discussions, with responses to the final question being subjected to particularly close analysis. This two-part question presented students with a dichotomous "yes or no"

choice in response to the question "Would you like to tell more stories in English?" After choosing from the two options, students were then asked to explain this choice in response to the open-ended question ("Why?"). Analyses of student responses to this question thus provided indicators of a quantitative as well as qualitative nature, which were further supported by the oral data obtained in the follow-up discussions. A Framework approach was then employed, characterised by the intention to maintain a close link with the raw data, while developing a thematic analysis in prioritising the research questions (Ritchie, Lewis, McNaughton, & Ormoston, 2013). In the first instance, the raw data were understood to be all data that could help assess the motivational effect of the programme. All such data were thus extracted and grouped together, following an open coding procedure (Corbin & Strauss, 2008) to help break down, compare, conceptualise and categorise the data in line with the primary goals of the study. By way of example, some initial codes that helped to organise the data included: *helping others* (to capture cases in which students reported that helping their younger peers motivated them to make an effort, or in which teachers reported on the effects of seeing students help each other); *making individual choices* (when students or teachers explicitly referred to being given choices and what this meant to them); and *devising motivational strategies* (when students or teachers explained actions taken to engage and maintain the interest and participation of listeners). This coding process was conducted manually and then subjected to a process of validation to ensure reliability. Two external experts in the area of childhood language education were asked to review the codes. Their feedback helped to validate the process on the one hand, while also providing constructive criticism, which was incorporated into the final stage during which the codes were further organised by adding more options, merging options, and gradually transforming the raw data into more useful data, as described below.

3.4.3. Presentation of findings

Ultimately, in the final stage of analysis, I adopted Ellis' (2010) approach in her study on motivating secondary school students to read, which entails organising and presenting the data analysed according to the four components of Dörnyei's process-oriented approach to motivation (2001). The four components presented the findings in a cohesive and organised manner, while attending to the main study goal of assessing the motivational effect of the reading project on learners. Thus, after presenting the overall picture obtained from the initial analysis (see overview), the useful data obtained from the constant comparison method were organised under the categories of: 1) creating the basic motivational conditions, 2) generating initial motivation, 3) maintaining and protecting motivation and 4) encouraging positive, retrospective self-evaluation. After presenting these findings, the Discussion section attends to the two remaining study aims by identifying and discussing the learning outcomes as well as the specific strategies that effectively produced them. When presenting the findings, all comments have been anonymised using the coding system explained in Table 1. Furthermore, and due to the disproportionate gender distribution in some groups, all references to individual student comments are made using feminine pronouns in order to maintain full anonymity.

4. Findings
4.1. Overview

The mixed method of data collection and analysis contributed to an overall picture, allowing for cross-checking between teacher and student perspectives. From the teacher perspective, analyses of data collected from the regular meetings show that teachers report considerable differences in student motivation levels prior to and following the implementation of the project. The school's decision to continue with the project and to incorporate it as a permanent feature of their language and literacy programme was made in view of its perceived motivational effect on learners and the positive outcomes generated. From the student perspective, data collected showed a general consensus in line with the teachers' perception, as illustrated in the following analyses. In the first year of implementation, during the final class session, one student expressed her disappointment that the project had not been implemented previously, since this meant that her group (grade 6) had only been able to take part in the experience once, unlike their grade 5 peers who would be repeating it the following year: "*it's not fair, they'll get to do it again*" (G1a). This disappointment was shared by other students, suggesting that the experience had built positive attitudes toward this kind of language and literacy work, and had overcome the challenges described by Ellis (2010) (i.e., the selection of motivating reading material and the provision of ideal motivational conditions for the development of communities of readers). These findings are further supported by analyses of the post-intervention questionnaires, in which nearly all students reported that they would like to prepare/tell more stories

following the storytelling circle routine. This contrasted sharply with responses to pre-intervention questionnaires in which most students had expressed clear reservations about their ability to complete such a task (see Waddington, 2019). When analysing the reasons for students' willingness to repeat the experience, we found explanations that provide an initial picture of their overall impression of the value of the experience (see Table 2). The reasons cited by participants included:

- "Because it was good fun and I enjoyed it."
- "Because it's a really good way to learn English."
- "Because I like telling stories to the little ones."
- "Because I like speaking English."
- "Because it's been enjoyable."
- "It's a good way to improve your English."
- "I like to teach English to others by telling them a good story."
- "Because I like learning by explaining things to my classmates."

The terms *fun* and *enjoyable* appear repeatedly during the analysis. Nevertheless, and as advocated by England (2017), the use of these terms seems to be situated within a critical approach to having fun, which conceives enjoyment as a stimulus to learning as opposed to a substitute for learning. Thus, in addition to regarding the experience as fun and enjoyable, learners also made repeated references to the way in which the process had helped them learn more English, emphasising the role that their peers have played in this interactive learning process. Comments such as the one cited above (e.g., "I like learning by explaining things to my classmates") indicate that peer modelling has a two-way effect: generating positive outcomes for the learner modelling as well as the learners being modelled to. For the learner modelling, these positive outcomes are not only detected during the peer modelling activity, while telling the story to peers, but also during the preparation stage as described in more detail below. The findings confirm that having a specific audience (i.e., younger peers) and purpose (i.e., to tell the story well) in mind increases learner participation and engagement in the task set, as suggested by previous studies on the benefits of peer modelling (Mennim, 2017; Brown et al., 2013).

Despite the overall positive effects reported, a small minority of students expressed negative evaluations of the project. Further analysis helped to explain why some students expressed an unwillingness to repeat the experience. In one case, the explanation related to the student's lack of interest and engagement in school life in general. In other cases, analyses revealed that some students found the excessive amount of time spent on the project (one, or part of one, of their two 1-hour English classes every week for the first two terms) to be a negative factor, thereby illustrating one of the challenges highlighted by Ellis (2010) concerning the difficulties of motivating children over extended periods of time. The fact that this finding was detected during the early stages of implementation—at the end of the first year—meant that efforts could be made to adjust the pace of the programme during subsequent years. Finally, in contrast to the majority of students whose participation and engagement increased as a direct result of the peer modelling context, a small minority found the activity 'too hard' and appeared demotivated by the experience. This supports the findings of Spratt and Leug (2000), who warn against regarding methods as universally applicable panaceas. The finding also highlights the need to exercise caution when introducing new methods, taking care to provide students with additional attention and support whenever needed.

This overall picture will now be further extended through the presentation of additional findings in relation to the different categories of the process-oriented approach (Dörnyei 2001) discussed above. The aim is to demonstrate how all components of this approach are addressed and developed during the different experiences reported.

4.2. Creating the basic motivational conditions

Under the first component of the process-oriented approach to motivation, highlighting the need to create basic motivational conditions, it is important to stress how the cyclical, whole-school project design impacted on the learner experience. G1a's complaint that "it's not fair, they'll get to do it again" shows that students conceive the process as an ongoing project involving and connecting learners from different educational stages, as illustrated in Figure 1. The fact that they conceive the project in this way has a marked influence on their learning outcomes, as we will see in the different sections discussed below. In addition to fostering group cohesiveness by facilitating cooperative group work, which enables students to develop tasks

involving different levels of difficulty (see *Maintaining and protecting motivation*), the cyclical design also helped promote cohesion at a school-wide level, by establishing a context in which learners at different stages had an interconnected role. In this way, students gradually progressed from the early stages of contact with the new language to a stage in which they became the ones partially responsible for this initial contact, by telling their own stories (with picturebooks) to their younger peers from preschool, first cycle and mid cycle of primary. This context therefore provides the ideal conditions for building the *communities of readers* and creating opportunities for sharing reading experiences, which is crucial in motivating children to read (Ellis, 2010). According to their teachers, the younger (i.e., preschool) learners benefitted considerably from these conditions, which put them into contact with 'real' language use in the form of authentic picturebooks, and with speakers of the L2 in the form of older role models from their own school. Terms such as 'real' and 'authentic' appeared repeatedly in the data, strongly suggesting that these literary experiences were associated with meaningful language use, as indicated by Sipe (1998) and Mourão (2017), among others. As the children progressed through the different educational stages, the aspirational effect of observing their older peers began to emerge, manifesting itself to a greater or lesser extent depending on the individual learner. Overall, teachers reported high levels of willingness to embark on the project at the end of mid-cycle and beginning of upper cycle, with comments such as "it's our turn now", revealing the students' eagerness to take on what they perceived to be a challenge that had been realised by their predecessors. The fact that entire class sessions had been dedicated to the storytelling sessions at the end of the school year also served to highlight the importance given to these experiences by everyone involved. This was noted by the new upper cycle students in comments such as "it will soon be our turn to tell a *great* story." The word great is emphasised here as its use by a 10 year-old highlights the fact that in addition to assuming responsibility and ownership for the task, learners highly valued the picturebooks as a source of literature. This finding also supports Mourão's efforts to challenge assumptions that regard picturebooks as material suitable for babies or toddlers, and to emphasise their value as multimodal literary objects (Mourão, 2012, 2017).

4.3. Generating initial motivation

Although teacher-reported data revealed that students had high levels of motivation to move up to the storytelling stage, many students displayed low self-efficacy levels and doubted their own ability when called upon to carry out the task (see Waddington, 2019). At this point, students were presented with a clear road-map (Waddington 2017) that indicated the different steps necessary to prepare sessions, which helped set realisable goals and, above all, emphasised the point highlighted by many students in end of project questionnaires that success in their storytelling sessions was mainly due to the hard work invested during the preparation stage. Relevant comments included "it was hard work, but worth it in the end" and "we worked really hard preparing our story." In this regard, having a clear purpose (i.e., performing in public at the end of the year) motivated students to work hard for themselves and also for their younger peers. From their recent past experiences observing older peers, students equated being a role model with being responsible for the younger students' learning, as demonstrated in many of the comments highlighting the extent to which they assumed this responsibility in a way that simultaneously advanced their own learning. For example, "we practiced a lot so they would understand the story" was a typical response to an open question in the end of project questionnaire asking about the reasons for their success in the storytelling session. The fact that this purpose both motivated students and influenced their actions during the preparation stage is demonstrated by two specific examples observed during different class sessions.

In the first example, a group of three grade 6 students were nearing the end of the preparation stage and were practising their session with students from their own class. Ordinal numbers were a crucial element within the narrative of this group's picturebook. They had distributed different roles in the storytelling sequence, and student G1d had assumed the task of asking the listeners to repeat the ordinal numbers when they appeared in the story. Practising with their same-age peers, G1d spent considerable time asking them to repeat the words, labouring over potentially difficult sounds such as the voiced 'th' ($/ð/$). Responding to his classmates who asked why they had to keep repeating the same thing, she explained that the younger learners would need help to be able to make these sounds properly. What is interesting about this example is that the learner in question had undergone several years of speech-language therapy to overcome development difficulties during the first cycle of primary education. The empathy demonstrated in this attempt to support younger learners in their acquisition and reproduction of new language sounds may stem from the learner's own prior experience. The satisfaction obtained from helping others overcome potential difficulties was evident during the group's storytelling session (delivered to first- and mid-cycle students),

particularly when G1d carried out her part of the activity with a confidence and enthusiasm, for which she was strongly commended by the teacher. Apart from increasing authentic communication as outlined by Assinder (1991), the peer modelling experience analysed here helps to develop learner empathy and foster a supportive classroom climate.

In the second example, a pair of grade 5 students were also reaching the end of the preparation stage and were simulating the initial part of the session in front of their teacher and the researcher in a class session organised in the style of a workshop (see below for more description of the workshop format). After showing how they would begin their session, the teacher asked if they thought the listeners (i.e., pre-schoolers, due to the characteristics of the picturebook chosen) would pay attention and be drawn into their story. Initially displaying little concern about the potential listener response to their storytelling session, student G3h claimed that "the little ones are like that; they don't listen to you and they just do whatever they want." On further questioning, and when asked to think specifically about strategies their teacher might use to attract and keep their attention, both students recalled the use of the class English-language 'speaking' puppet (named Tiger Tiger) and asked if they could incorporate it into their session. After adding this effective device into their sequence, they became more at ease in the task and adjusted their planned interactions more appropriately by paying more attention to how to make their listeners feel comfortable and how to engage their interest. On the day of their storytelling session, the two students began by taking turns saying "Hello, [*name of student*]" to each student individually, to which the 4 and 5 year-old children responded "Hello, [*name of storyteller*]" one by one, thus establishing a relaxed atmosphere while also providing the younger learners with a real opportunity to use the new language in a meaningful exchange with their older peers. Once again, the storytelling context provides the opportunity for natural language acquisition as suggested in the previous literature on early literacy development (Cameron, 2001; Ellis & Brewster, 2014; Goshn, 2013; Sipe, 2007).

4.4. Maintaining and protecting motivation

Within this component of the process-oriented approach to motivation, Dörnyei (2001) proposes various strategies, including allowing learners real choices about aspects of their learning, adjusting difficulty levels to students' abilities, and adopting the role of facilitator (pp. 142-143). These three strategies can be observed in the findings highlighted in this section. The first example corresponds to the early stages of the project in which upper cycle students were presented with the collection of picturebooks from which they would select one for their own storytelling session. Several class sessions were dedicated to viewing the picturebooks, forming an initial opinion of their content, collectively sharing ideas, and eventually expressing group preferences based on these initial ideas. During the individual stage, after students had had time to look at the different picturebooks, they were asked to rate them in their learning diaries. They were given the freedom to rate them according to their own criteria and in their own preferred style. The results revealed an interesting variety in modes of expression, which reflected the diversity within the group and the different abilities and preferences of the individual students. Some wrote short expressions in L3 ("It's fun" or "It's boring"), others expressed their ideas more fully in the L1 ("I don't like the pictures" or "It's about a cat. It's really funny"), as in Figure 3, and others rated their preferences numerically, as we can observe in Figure 4.
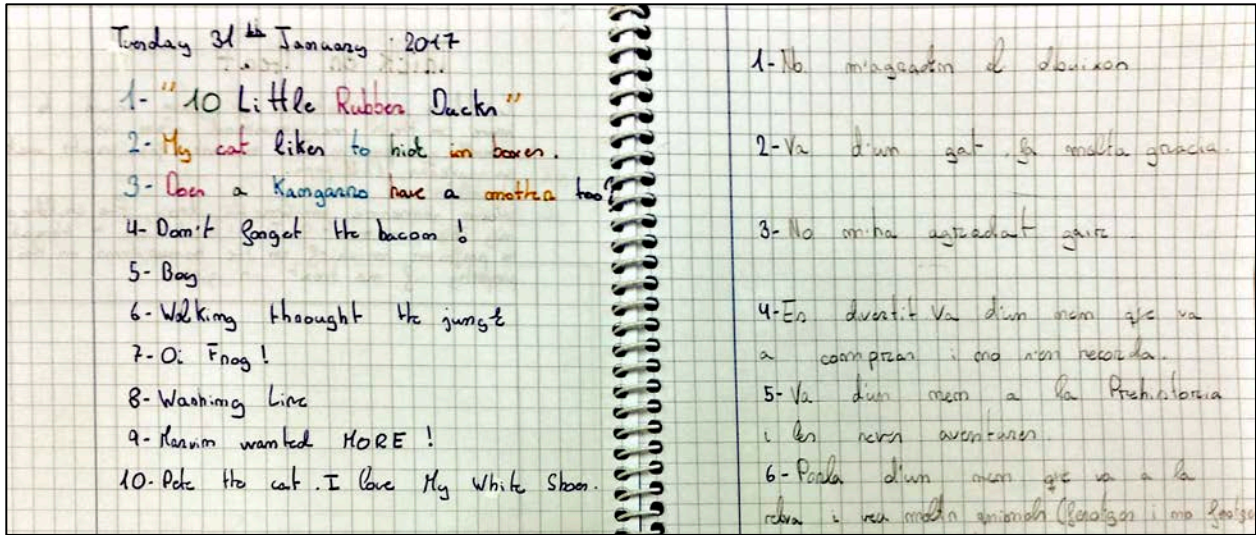
Figure 3. Diary entry rating picturebooks with comments in L1

Figure 4. Diary entry rating picturebooks in numerical order with pictorial support

This initial selection activity gave learners an opportunity to make their own choices that were also adapted to their different abilities, thus setting a pattern for subsequent activities as we will see below.

Reference is made above to the way in which some classes during the storytelling preparation stage took the form of workshops. Aside from the diversity within each student group and the different abilities/characteristics of each individual learner, the fact that each group (or pair) of students worked on a different picturebook meant that the preparation for the storytelling sessions was necessarily diverse. As a result, many class sessions were converted into workshops, with students working in different spaces on their own picturebooks and with the teacher adopting the role of facilitator by guiding them and supporting them in their different preparations. Three examples are provided below to show how this worked in practice and to highlight the key findings that emerged.

4.4.1. Storytelling preparation workshops
Example 1: Linguistic focus

Two students were in the early stages of preparing their story. They had selected one of the most linguistically complex picturebooks available, and, after having initially thought they had understood the narrative, they realized that their full understanding was compromised by unfamiliar vocabulary. Although their teacher reassured them that they could proceed since they were to convey the overall meaning of the story to their listeners, the students were determined to fully grasp the narrative. Taking a bilingual (Catalan to English) dictionary from the bookcase, the students started to look up the words they had never previously encountered and to write down the L1 translations in their learning diaries. Eventually, they decided to translate the whole L3 text from the picturebook page they were working on into their L1, writing down their translation sentence by sentence in their diaries. When asked by the researcher why they were spending so much time doing this when their teacher had told them it was not necessary, they explained as follows:

Excerpt 1.

G2a	By doing this we really understand what it is that we're telling [telling the story].
G2b	And we learn more English. We learn some things we wouldn't usually learn.
Researcher	Like what?
G2b	Useful things, like 'it's getting dark now.' Things like that.
G2a	We also learn what some strange words mean.
Researcher	Strange?
G2a	Yes [half-laughing], things like 'grumpy' or 'naughty'.

The exchange in Excerpt 1 highlights the benefits of giving students the space to make their own learning choices and the effect that this can have on stimulating their autonomy. Both students in this exchange reported that although translation was hard work and time-consuming, it was worth it as they learned a lot from the process. On the one hand, this exchange supports calls for a reappraisal of the use of translation practices in the language classroom. Such calls have been gaining ground since the end of the last century, as outlined by Gomes Ferreira (1999) in her review of late twentieth-century resistance to translation in the English classroom and her exposition of the reasons for its potential revival in the twenty-first century. On the other hand, the extended conversation with these students also highlighted the way in which learners can be encouraged to develop critical awareness regarding the potential flaws in automatic online translation tools and the need to exercise caution when using them. This finding emerged when students shared a whole-class experience in which no one had known the word in their own language for a bird (puffin) that appeared in one of the picturebooks. Although knowing the word in the L1 was not necessary for continued preparation of the storytelling session, and although they could all see what the bird was from the illustration in the picturebook, they still felt compelled to fill this gap in their knowledge. Entering the word into an online translator resulted in a word in the L1 that they discounted immediately as it bore no relation to birds. The next search using a paper L1 (Catalan)-to-L3 (English) dictionary (graded for primary classroom use) produced no results, as the word 'puffin' was not listed. Upon further investigation, the students found a more extensive Spanish (L2)-to-English (L3) dictionary, and this time their search yielded the Spanish word 'frailecillo'. On hearing this, one of the students in the group exclaimed 'I've got it!' Hearing the word in L2 (Spanish) prompted the student to recall the word 'cadafet' in her first language (Catalan). What is interesting about this finding is the enthusiasm shown by students when recounting the experience and the fact that they still laughed about it days or weeks after the event had occurred, suggesting quite strongly that the experience had been meaningful and memorable for them. Within a plurilingual

context, this also suggests that learners were becoming increasingly aware of the benefits of being able to draw on different languages and that the teacher, as facilitator, was adopting a flexible attitude to language use, which could have positive effects on the learning process, as argued in recent studies illustrating cases of translanguaging in the classroom (Durán & Henderson, 2018).

Example 2: Artistic focus

While students G2a and G2b were discovering the complexities of translating into their L1, students G2c and G2d were elaborating their own colourful masks to represent each of the animal characters in their story. When asked why they were doing this, they explained that using these masks would help the younger listeners follow their story, by encouraging them to relate the words they were hearing with the visual supports they were seeing. This explanation was followed by an impromptu display of how exactly they would do this, clarifying who would narrate the story and who would act out the characters using the masks, thus showing a well-thought out plan in which each student assumed a specific role. Demonstrating their plan prompted further creativity, as they decided that the mask wearer would also make the corresponding animal noises, thereby adding audio support to their handcrafted visual supports. Although opting to focus on the artistic side meant that less time was spent on linguistic aspects that could have been improved further (pronunciation of some key expressions, for example), the students preferred to invest time and creativity into the artistic and aesthetic dimension of their session, resulting in a storytelling performance which they and the listeners clearly enjoyed. When asked if it might have been better to orientate the pair towards work on linguistic aspects and to deter what could have constituted avoidance tactics (i.e., spending excessive time cutting out paper masks instead of working on language), the teacher highlighted the benefits of allowing students to make their own choices and progress at their own pace. This justification revealed a classroom practice closely aligned with recent motivational theories, which argue for a balanced, learner-centred approach to motivation (Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2009; Williams et al., 2016) and contrast with the predominantly teacher-centred/resource-based approach found in a recent study of primary school practice (Waddington, 2018). Further analysis of this experience demonstrated the sagacity of the teacher's decision to allow the students to continue at their own pace instead of pushing them toward more linguistic work at that particular time: firstly, their storytelling session was very positively received by the listeners (first-cycle primary students) and their self-assessments of the experience indicated that this reaction had boosted their confidence and motivated them to continue learning the language; secondly, while carrying out their artistic activities, they were simultaneously listening to the other groups and contributing to some of the conversations taking place (such as the class translanguaging experience with 'puffin' described above), thereby displaying an interest in the language and their growing metalinguistic awareness. This experience highlights the need to protect motivation—as suggested by the wording of this component of the process-oriented approach—by respecting learner needs, allowing students to go at their own pace and viewing learning as an ongoing process.

Example 3: IT focus

In the final example, and during the same workshop session as the previous two examples, another pair of students were working with a laptop. Like the first group, this pair had also selected a linguistically complex picturebook, and, after working through it and understanding it, they were developing strategies to convey the unfamiliar vocabulary and the general narrative to their peers (mid-cycle primary). They had decided in a previous session to create a PowerPoint presentation, asking their teacher for permission and a laptop to do so. In the session analysed, they had already created the presentation and were working on the different slides. When asked by the researcher about their decision to create a PowerPoint, they explained that it would help the listeners follow their story by giving them additional visual support to supplement the illustrations already provided in the picturebook. After typing pages from the picturebook into the slides, they started to experiment with different design options, changing colours, highlighting parts of the text and using animation. They explain the need for this in Excerpt 2.

Excerpt 2.

Researcher	What's that you're highlighting?
G2e	They're the things that are the most difficult.
G2f	And they're also [first checks how to say the noun in L1] rhymes. We're highlighting all the words that rhyme. [checks the verb in L1]
Researcher	Ah. I see. And what are you going to do with it?
G2f	We're going to ask them to listen to us and repeat the rhymes with us.
Researcher	(looking at other slides) I see you've used some different colours here.
G2e	That's to show different voices.
G2f	When we tell the story we're going to exaggerate the different voices.
G2e	And do you like this? [showing a slide using animation]
Researcher	Oh yes. That's good. How have you done that? [the students show how they discovered and applied the animation options]
G2f	We think it will help to keep their attention.
G2e	Our story is a bit long and they might switch off. This might help.

Apart from developing their own skills (linguistic, ICT, creative thinking), these students showed a high capacity for anticipating interactions with others and for adopting non-verbal communication strategies to facilitate and promote effective interactions. As in the two previous examples, the purpose they were working towards and their imminent role as peer models stimulated their own learning and the future learning of their younger peers. Furthermore, their own decision to create a PowerPoint presentation and their close attention to how the different features and design options would facilitate comprehension support the findings of recent studies that highlight the benefits of ICT-based methods for developing literacy skills at primary-school age as well as the importance of social interactions for making the best use of such skills (Genlott & Grönlund, 2013).

4.5. Encouraging positive retrospective self-evaluation

The findings already discussed reveal a classroom environment in which students are constantly reflecting on and evaluating their own learning process and that of others. In addition, and after the storytelling sessions had been completed, specific time was designated within class sessions for students to evaluate their own performances and those of their classmates during the storytelling sessions. In the first instance, analysis showed that students tended to evaluate their peers' performances more positively than their own. Regarding self-evaluations, in some cases these were found to be excessively critical, potentially demotivating and inconsistent with teachers' positive evaluations of the work.

In the first session dedicated to evaluating other groups' sessions and providing them with feedback, a "Two Stars and a Wish" activity was designed to help students organise their ideas and highlight at least three points from their peers' sessions: two which they considered worthy of praise (stars) and one aspect they thought could be improved (wish). A rubric was created providing example sentence starters (e.g., "I really liked the way you…", "You did a good/great job…", "Maybe you could…") to help students produce relevant sentences, thus combining language work with the development of evaluation and interpersonal skills. The activity was first developed orally, with students watching fragments of video recordings of the storytelling sessions and then constructing sentences with the help of the teacher. Students then wrote down their evaluations and completed a rubric for their portfolios, which contained all work related to the project (see Figure 5).
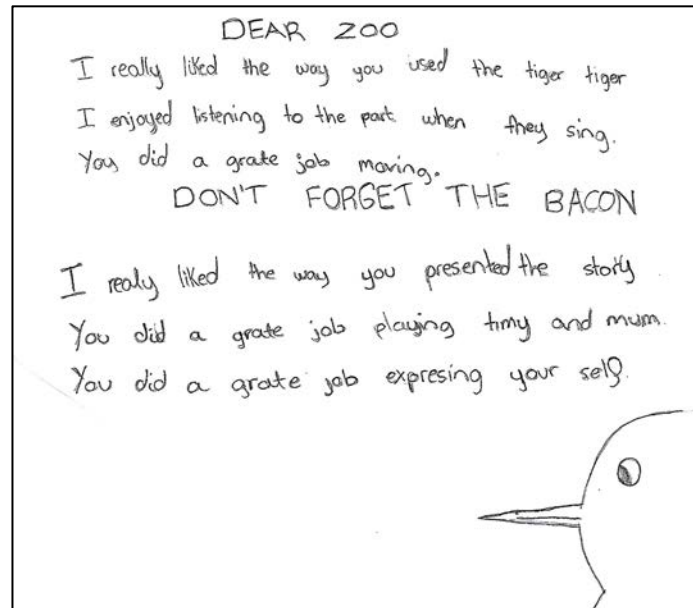
Figure 5. Peer evaluation: "Two Stars and a Wish" activity

While analysis of both teacher and student reflections pointed to the benefits of this activity in terms of building student confidence and identifying specific areas for further improvement (e.g., pronunciation was cited most frequently), it also highlighted the need to dedicate more time to the activity itself and to pre-teach and practice some specific functional language needed for giving feedback. Students expressed clear interest in the activity and confirmed that it was useful for them, but they also indicated that they needed more help to be able to express their opinions in the L3.

As noted above, the analysis of students' self-evaluations indicated that learners were more critical of their own performance than that of their peers and that work was needed to help them carry out a more realistic and constructive evaluation of their own abilities. This finding supports calls by others for more research and practical work to help L2 learners calibrate their self-assessment of own performance (Trofimovich, Isaacs, Kennedy, Saito, & Crowther, 2016). Further analysis of this question, examining and contrasting comments made by students, suggested that watching themselves in the video recordings may have had a negative influence on students' self-evaluations. This hypothesis resulted in a decision being made to refrain from video recording the sessions in the following year and to conduct the self- and peer-evaluations on the basis of student recall and with the aid of evaluation rubrics used to record observations and reflections.

5. Discussion

With regard to the overall aim of this study, the findings suggest that the reading project had a strong motivational effect on the learners. In particular, and considering each of the four dimensions of a process-oriented and holistic approach to motivational practice, we can identify specific learning outcomes generated by the experience. In the first instance (*Creating the basic motivational conditions*), the findings show how the project encourages learners to conceive learning as an ongoing process involving close interactions with others. This growing awareness helps promote collaboration at a small-group level, fostering the acceptance and nurturing of diversity within groups, as well as cohesion on a wider level, which contributes to an interconnected school environment. The promotion of authentic and meaningful language using picturebooks generates positive attitudes toward reading while simultaneously increasing students' willingness to participate in the learning process. In the second instance (*Generating initial motivation*), and in relation to intra- and inter-personal factors, it is particularly worth highlighting the growing awareness among students of the relation between effort investment and successful learning on the one hand (intra-personal) and the importance of inter-personal factors on the other. In relation to the latter, the empathy displayed by the older students and their increasing awareness of the impact of extra-linguistic factors on successful communication is noteworthy. Considering the next component (*Maintaining and protecting motivation*), apart from the

specific language-learning outcomes generated, the project design and workshop format adopted during part of the preparation stage seems to be effective in encouraging students to take ownership of their learning and to become increasingly autonomous in their work. The examples highlighted in the findings also indicate that students' metalinguistic awareness was boosted during the process as they became increasingly aware of the benefits of being plurilingual. Finally (*Encouraging positive retrospective self-evaluation*), findings show that students consider evaluation to be highly useful and enjoy giving and receiving feedback. Two factors emerge from the findings that deserve particular attention since they could have a negative effect on learning outcomes. The first relates to the lack of correlation between teachers' and students' evaluations of performance and the tendency of the latter to be overly critical of their own performance in contrast to that of their peers. Further research needs to be carried out to explore this observation and a specific study is now underway comparing self-evaluations with and without the use of video recordings. The second point relates to the language development aspect of the self-evaluation activities that were carried out. Results indicate that students find it particularly difficult to express their opinions freely in the foreign language, as would be expected in a low-exposure context such as the one described in this study. In view of this, particular attention needs to be paid to scaffolding student learning and providing sufficient support to enable them to carry out tasks in a way that stimulates further learning and avoids demotivating effects.

Although conceived and discussed separately, the learning outcomes highlighted above are understood as part of a holistic experience comprising different opportunities and challenges that are experienced differently by each learner. Considering the final aim of this study, and in order to highlight the pedagogical implications of the findings, strategies that have been observed to be particularly effective in generating these outcomes have been identified. While in this case they have been detected in activities carried out within the storytelling project, they are considered to be sufficiently generalizable regardless of the methodology employed. Effective strategies include:

- using peer modelling
- stimulating student autonomy
- fostering ownership of own learning process
- having a clear purpose
- generating contact with authentic language
- stimulating authentic language use
- allowing learners to be creative
- allowing learners to set their own challenges and go at their own pace (which can be different even in small working groups or pairs)
- encouraging both self- and peer-evaluation
- stimulating constructive self-reflection

The discussion of the outcomes and strategies identified has mainly focused on the motivational effects on the older learners, in line with the main aims of this study. Although further studies are needed to explore the effects on the younger learners, it is worth noting one point. Reference has been made in the findings section to the difficulties posed by some of the picturebooks and the strategies consequently devised by the older learners to aid their younger peers' comprehension. Observations indicated that although listeners did not understand all the language used in the stories, they still maintained high levels of enthusiasm and engagement and appeared to follow and understand the narrative of the story. This supports arguments that narrative comprehension is fundamental to beginning reading (Paris & Paris, 2003), and suggests that the strategic use of picturebooks can promote positive attitudes not only toward early reading but also to language learning in general.

6. Conclusion

This article contributes to previous work considering reading within a whole-language approach to literacy development (Galda et al., 2016; Martinez & McGee, 2000), paying attention to the motivational aspect of the experience within the context of foreign language learning (Ellis, 2000). In so doing, the present article also contributes to previous work aiming to bridge the gap between theory and practice in motivational studies (Lasagabaster, Doiz, & Sierra, 2016; Ryan, 2016; Waddington, 2018), showing how attention to the different aspects of a process-oriented approach can help create and sustain a motivational climate in the language classroom. The descriptions of classroom experiences provided in the findings section

may interest teachers focused on broadening their understanding of motivation and in implementing similar projects in their own schools. The findings of the study will also be of interest to researchers and practitioners keen on using peer modelling with children and developing storytelling projects with picturebooks in the foreign language classroom. With regard to the former, the findings provide further evidence supporting the use of peer modelling to boost self-efficacy beliefs (Artino, 2012; Bandura, 1977), develop positive and situated foreign language learner self-concepts (Waddington, 2019), and promote successful language learning (Cave et al., 2018; Csizér & Magid, 2014). However, in line with arguments advanced by previous authors (Spratt & Leug, 2000), caution should be exercised when attempting to generalise these results. Although data was collected from three different heterogeneous groups over a three-year period, the total sample remains small, and further research is therefore needed to explore the extent to which the positive findings obtained can be replicated in other contexts.

With regard to the storytelling methodology, the findings support the growing body of research advocating the use of storytelling to promote whole-language approaches to reading and language development (Galda et al., 2016; Martinez & McGee, 2000) and the use of picturebooks to generate authentic communication in foreign language learning (Ellis & Brewster, 2014; Fleta, 2015, 2019; Goshn, 2013; Mourão, 2012, 2016, 2017). This study extends this line of research further by highlighting the benefits of placing students at the centre of the interactive storytelling process. From this perspective, the linguistic challenges presented by authentic picturebooks provide the basis for meaningful and purposeful language work, leading to exchanges that generate multiple benefits for the students leading the storytelling sessions and the children interacting with them.

Acknowledgments

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