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Reimagining English Teaching in Primary Education: Pedagogies for Change

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FOSTERING READING IN ENGLISH TO YOUNG LEARNERS THROUGH AN INTERACTIVE AND PHONICS-BASED APPROACH (IDO9)

Carmen Lucas (Instituto Politécnico de Bragança)

The milestones on first (L1) and second (L2) language acquisition have fascinated researchers and practitioners for decades. However, the findings of the most updated research (Mourão e Lourenço, 2015; Lucas, Rei and Albuquerque, 2021; Yum et al.,n2021) do not always and instantly reflect on the classroom, specifically in Teaching English to Young Learners in Portuguese primary schools. Within this, it is worth highlighting, as per previous studies, the lack of uniformity in terms of sillabi design and implementation in the classroom. Moreover, more continuous professional development opportunities would be welcome.

This paper is set out to gather a more traditional phonics-based approach with the use of innovative interactive whiteboards and classic storybooks to help young learners of English learning how to read and write in English. This study has also as an aim to contribute to research-informed teaching, based in actual findings from the classroom, through and after the implementation of an action-research programme for nurturing the seeds in learning how to read in English.

Therefore the purpose of this study was to examine the effectiveness of read-aloud storybooks, associated with the use of interactive whiteboards, further anchored in a phonics-based approach to teach reading and writing to Young Learners of English.

Participants were 80 (n=80) native Portuguese children, attending the second year of primary school, learning English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classes, aged 7 years old.

The findings suggest that through the use of storybooks, followed by watching the respective videos, together with follow-up phonics activities are effective strategies which Teachers of English to Young Learners can certainly use to “nurture the seeds” for English language learning, considering that they have resulted in improved decoding skills, higher engagement levels in the classroom, stronger phonemic awareness and an enhanced writing ability.