ESE POLITÉCNICO DO PORTO

Marta Alexandra Ferreira da Costa Fernandes

Diatopic Variation in Primary School: from English and its varieties to other languages

MESTRADO EM ENSINO DE INGLÊS NO 1º CICLO DO ENSINO BÁSICO

dezembro 2018

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Projeto submetido como requisito parcial para obtenção do grau de
MESTRE EM ENSINO DE INGLÊS NO 1º CICLO DO ENSINO BÁSICO

Orientação

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how greatly I've been blessed.

ABSTRACT

This project focuses on the diatopic variation of the English language, its status as a global language (Crystal, 2003) and how this topic can be tackled in primary schools. Using English, and its linguistic varieties (McArthur, 2001; Meyer, 2009) as a conduit for the teaching of other languages, in hopes of developing the students' plurilingual and intercultural competence (Byram, Fleming & Pieper, 2013), three other languages were introduced in classroom practices: Spanish, Hindi and Mandarin.

Furthermore, study plans were analyzed in hopes of ascertaining the importance given to language variation in teacher training programs. Primary school English teachers were also asked directly about their perceptions on varieties of English, as well as their preparedness to tackle this subject.

The empirical study was developed within the scope of a supervised teaching practice and within a naturalistic interpretative paradigm (Aires, 2015) with some characteristics of critical experientialism (Alarcão, 2001). This study was supported by qualitative and quantitative data collection and analysis (Gil, 2008), making use of field notes, questionnaires, group discussion and unit plans.

The results show that students respond positively to this type of approach. However, as a result of the absence of training in the matter, many teachers are not confident enough to develop activities which features English language varieties.

Keywords

Varieties of English, Primary School, Plurilingual Approach, Teacher Training

RESUMO

Este projeto tem o seu enfoque na variação diatópica do inglês, o seu estatuto de língua global (Crystal, 2003) e como este tópico pode ser abordado no 1º Ciclo do Ensino Básico (CEB). Utilizando o inglês, e as suas variedades linguísticas (McArthur, 2001; Meyer, 2009) como propulsor para o ensino de outras línguas, com o objetivo de desenvolver nos alunos uma competência plurilingue e intercultural (Byram, Fleming & Pieper, 2013), três outras línguas foram introduzidas nas práticas de sala de aula: Espanhol, Hindi e Mandarim.

Além disso, foram analisados planos de curso, com o intuito de determinar qual a importância dada a variação linguística em cursos destinados a futuros professores Foram ainda questionados diretamente alguns professores de inglês do 1º CEB sobre as suas perceções sobre variedades do inglês, bem como a sua habilitação para abordar o tema nas suas práticas.

O estudo empírico foi desenvolvido no âmbito da Prática de Ensino Supervisionada num paradigma naturalista interpretativo (Aires, 2015) com características de experiencialismo crítico (Alarcão, 2001). Este estudo foi baseado na recolha e análise de dados de teor qualitativo e quantitativo (Gil, 2008), para os quais foram utilizados notas de campo, questionários, discussão em grupo e planificações de unidades.

Os resultados demonstram que os alunos respondem positivamente a este tipo de abordagem. No entanto, uma vez que este tópico não é parte integral do currículo na formação de professores, muitos deles não se sentem capazes de desenvolver atividades que incluam variedades do inglês.

Palavras-chave

Variedades do inglês, 1º Ciclo do Ensino Básico, Abordagem Plurilingue, Formação de Professores

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INTRODUCTION

Since language is a product of the culture of those who speak it (Laraia, 2001) and linguistic variation is an important aspect of sociolinguistics, as it occurs due to geographical and historical factors (Hudson, 1996), among others, it is undeniable that language learning is an opportunity to open doors for our students, as well as broaden their horizons. In the post-globalized society we currently live in, and in a time where people are more interconnected than ever due to the widespread exposure to different languages and cultures through media and technology (Cruz & Orange, 2016), one could argue that previously conditioning borders no longer exist (Rocha & Maciel, 2015), giving way to an increasingly evident notion of diversity, particularly within the European Union (EU).

Adding to that the migratory patterns which have been established in recent history, we feel more than ever overwhelmed by social and cultural diversity (Ramos, 2009) for which we must prepare our students for. There are 24 official languages spoken in the EU, several others spoken by minority groups, and people of an estimated 175 nationalities inhabiting the territory, so it is now more than a possibility but rather an inevitability that we will come across people whose language and culture differs from our own. It is thus essential to comprehend that the teaching of one single foreign language is no longer enough (Trim, 1997).

Having said that, the inclusion of a foreign language in early childhood education is paramount for the successful development of a plurilingual competence, as there seems to be a point at which the learning of foreign languages becomes a more difficult task (Cruz & Miranda, 2005). As English is perceived as a global language, commonly believed to be spoken by most people around the world, this appears to be most likely choice for a first foreign language. However, the teaching of English as a foreign language faces challenges that derive from the globalization of current society, and the rapid development of countries such as Australia, Canada, etc. along with the increased 'cohesion and autonomy of their Englishes' (Esteves & Hurst, 2009, p. 3), one of these challenges being directly linked to choosing which variety or varieties of English schools should teach (Bieswanger, 2008). Due to the exposure and worldwide spread of both the American and British varieties of English, it is safe to assume that one, or both, of these would be the optimal variety, instead of an African one, for instance (Tollefson, 2007). However, we often hear the term *standard* applied to a single variety, and this may raise questions, as is suggests that there is a consensus on what the standard of a language or variety is (Farrell & Martin, 2009), which could devalue the other varieties of a language. The authors only reference the English language, but the same thought can be applied to any other language, and the idea of linguistic diversity within a same language is one I believe students should be aware of. On this note, a questionnaire was made to collect teacher's representations on this matter.

Having a multilingual and intercultural approach as a main objective and considering that children who learn different languages are more inclined to develop positive thoughts and attitudes towards languages and their speakers (Andrade, Lourenço & Sá, 2010), I took the opportunity to, in English

class, introduce languages other than English, always choosing languages spoken in countries, or territories, where English is an official language. Some examples of this will be explored in more detail in Part II. At the same time, I believe that teachers could look to develop activities which allow students to become plurilingual and pluricultural within a language with so much history, as is the case of English (Cruz, 2017).

However, as previously mentioned, the main objective was to provide students with the opportunity to be exposed to the linguistic and cultural diversity of the world, hoping that this would allow for a better understanding of the Other, and the world itself (Andrade, Lourenço & Sá, 2010), and that it could help in preventing the development of prejudiced and stereotyped ideas. In order to succeed in the future, the students must be prepared to face difference and diversity and be able to accept and respect it as part of their reality.

This report is divided into two parts. The first will consist of an overview of the steps that lead to the implementation of English as a compulsory subject in Portuguese primary schools, as well as of EU documentation regarding multilingualism and its promotion, and the exploration of concepts and ideas which made up the theoretical basis for this study, namely varieties of English and plurilingual practices. In the second part, I will present the practical study I have developed, and the documental analysis of the unit plans carried out in the classroom during my internship.

PART I

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK - LINGUISTIC DIVERSITY FROM THE INSIDE OUT

In the first part of this report, I will expose the theoretical foundation on which I built the conceptions and ideas that became the base of this study. To begin, a timeline of the developing status of English as a primary school subject in Portugal will be presented, with the aid of both national and European documents which inspired and made possible the introduction of the aforementioned as a compulsory subject. To follow, the focus will shift into the main topic of study and exploration: language variation. Diatopic and diachronic variation within the English language, language standardization, and, finally, language and cultural diversity. The main goal of this study is to attempt to understand the importance of early childhood language education and how the English classroom can be useful in the development of a plurilingual and pluricultural competence.

CHAPTER 1 - ENGLISH AS A COMPULSORY PRIMARY SCHOOL SUBJECT

Considering the post-globalized world we live in nowadays, particularly in the European territory, where borders have become blurred lines, and the free circulation of people and goods have radically changed the geographical, political, economic and linguistic landscape of the continent (Sousa, 2004, p. 29), we must ask ourselves what is the role of languages and language education in today's society (Cruz & Miranda, 2005). It seems to me that it is, now, imperative that our citizens are aware of the vast linguistic and cultural diversity that surrounds them.

From that standpoint, one can argue that the best way to guarantee such awareness, today and in the future – as we must understand that the society of tomorrow will be an even more globalized one than that which we know today -, is to introduce foreign languages in the school's curricula early on. The goal is to educate children who understand values such as tolerance and respect (Cruz & Medeiros, 2009, p. 3), and prepare them to deal with difference and diversity in a positive way in the future they will undoubtedly face. Having said that, it is also important to stress that the intended goal of early childhood language teaching is not the achievement of proficiency levels in several languages, seen as 'fundamental knowledge of more than one foreign language is more important than an error-free proficiency in only one' (Fretz, 2000, p. 75), and, as stated in the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR, 2001, p. 5), 'the aim of language education is profoundly modified (…) the aim is to develop a linguistic repertory, in which all linguistic abilities have a place'.

In Portugal, the interest in language teaching has increased significantly in recent history. This interest has been mostly displayed towards English, as this is the most common foreign language spoken in the EU (Eurobarometer, 2012, p. 12), and such has been proven by the recent implementation of English as a compulsory subject in primary schools. In the following subchapters, I will retrace the steps taken by our governing agencies to make that happen, as well as explore its potential.

1.1. Implementation of English in primary school: a timeline

It wasn't until recently that English became part of the primary school curriculum across the country. However, there have been institutions offering English as part of their curriculum for many years, mainly private schools, and some preschools as well – this is the case of the school where I did my internship, where English has been taught as a primary school compulsory subject for over 20 years. In the public-school sector, although there was no legislation at the time that enforced it, some schools also offered English classes as an extracurricular activity some years before the first legislative measure taken towards that effect. This was true for the one I attended, Escola Básica Augusto Lessa, in Paranhos, where I frequented a weekly, hour long, English session after school hours.

It was in the school year 2005/2006, as for the Despacho n.º 14 753/2005, that it became mandatory for all public schools to offer the option of English extracurricular classes, although the students were not obliged to attend. This, as should have been predicted, caused some problems in the following school years. As English was a mandatory school subject when starting year 5, and considering the non-compulsory nature of the aforementioned extracurricular lessons, not all students arrived at this stage with an equal understanding of the English language, bringing to light discrepancies in their performance and creating challenges for any teacher who encountered such a situation (cf. APPI, Relatório Final de Acompanhamento, 2008).

It seems to me that, although the intention was good, the outcome was not an optimal one. In the Despacho n.º 14 753/2005, it is said that this initiative is an attempt to have the Portuguese educational system catch up to European standards, but the same document also states that 'o desenvolvimento do programa não pode perturbar o normal funcionamento das actividades curriculares dos alunos ou do estabelecimento de ensino' (p. 9786) which, in my opinion, partially devalues the importance of said measure. That is to say that were they certain that the addition of English classes, even at an extracurricular level, would be beneficial to the students, they would not have thought that they could in any way disrupt the functioning of the school, but rather enrich it.

According to Gonçalves (2011), the promotion of multilingualism and plurilingualism, concepts I will explore further in Chapter 2., by the EU has been a priority for many years. The same author marks the Treaty of Rome, signed in 1958, as one of the first documents to highlight its importance, and the Treaty of Maastricht, signed in 1992, as the one to kickstart the emphasis placed on language learning and the promotion of plurilingualism and linguistic diversity the EU stands for today. I believe these were the European standards that were meant to be met with the addition of English as an extracurricular activity.

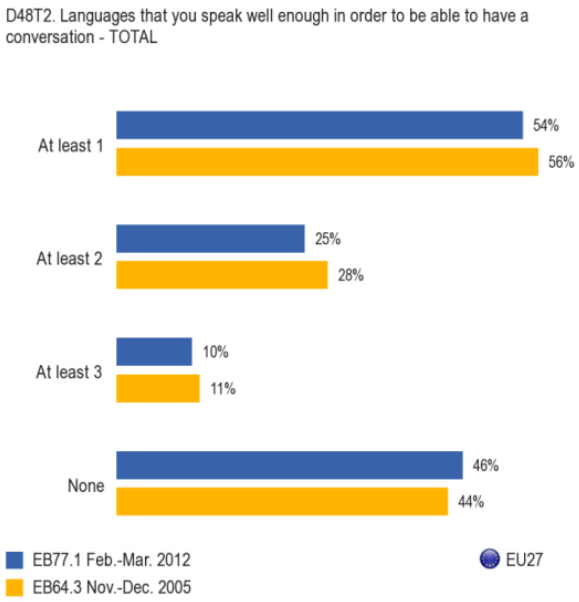
However, one must think about the conditions in which these classes were taught, who they were taught by, and their nature. Since these classes were not curricular, and were in fact meant to not disrupt the normal functioning of the school in any way (Despacho n.º 14 753/2005), one could argue that the teachers hired to do this job were often met with less than optimal conditions, unstable

ones even (Fortunato, 2017, p. 6), which would cause obstacles for both teachers and students: a) teachers, because they would not have the necessary conditions to perform as they should, and b) students, in the sense that they would not be making the most of their experience, which could possibly affect their attitude towards English in the future. For all the reasons mentioned above, and although the idea behind such a measure is appreciated, it seems clear that this was not the best solution.

The next step forward in regard to English teaching in Portugal happened in 2013, when the then Minister of Education, Nuno Crato, reached out to the National Education Council and asked them to find a way to implement English as a compulsory subject in primary school (Lusa, 2013, WEB), in an effort to unify the teaching of English across Portuguese primary schools, as well as move towards the meeting of EU standards.

In the Presidency Conclusions of the Barcelona European Council (2002, p. 19), it is stated that the Council deemed the 'teaching at least two foreign languages from a very early age' a goal for years to come. Despite the fact that this goal was established in 2002, and numerous other initiatives to celebrate and promote multilingualism and diversity in EU territory (European Day of Languages, exchange programs such as Comenius or Erasmus, etc.), the publication of the Special Eurobarometer 'Europeans and their Languages' (2012, p. 3), for which 'some 26.751 respondents from different social and demographic groups were interviewed', shows that, according to data from a similar inquiry from 2005, the percentage of EU citizens who speak foreign languages did, in fact, decrease (as seen in Graph 1).

Even though the decrease is not drastic, percentage wise, it still appears to be worthy of concern, especially considering that the EU has been promoting language learning, linguistic diversity and multilingualism for quite some time.



Graph 1 – Languages that you speak well enough in order to be able to have a conversation.

In May 2014, it was announced in Parliament that English would, in fact, became a part of the primary school's curriculum starting the next school year (Sanches & Ribeiro, 2014, WEB). This became official with the release of the Decreto-Lei n.º 176/2014, on December 12th, with the intent to 'harmonizar e tornar coerente todo o ensino da língua inglesa', advancing changes to be made to other educational levels as well. This implementation was Portugal's first real step towards a unified and organized teaching of the English language.

In the following subchapter, I will explore the potential and benefits on this measure and analyze the document drafted to guide it, the Metas Curriculares.

1.2. Potential and benefits of that implementation

Although it is still in its early stages, the implementation of English as a primary school compulsory subject was a very important measure and it is accompanied by a great deal of potential. Considering that 'language education is quite critical to the pupils success in the world of the future' (Cruz & Orange, 2016, p. 2), it is important to take such steps forward. As previously mentioned, the goal pursued by the Ministry of Education was to give 'maior coerência e solidez ao ensino deste idioma fundamental no mundo moderno' (Decreto-Lei n.º 176/2014, p. 6064), in an effort to prevent the arising of the problems, also mentioned earlier, regarding the different levels of English with which students arrived at year 5. Furthermore, they sought to improve upon the overall teaching of the language, taking into account that 'cerca de metade dos examinandos do 9º ano revelou ter apenas conhecimento elementar ou muito alementar da língua' (Fortunato, 2017, p. 7-8) when taking the Cambridge University's Preliminary English Test, administered across the country in 2015, as per the Despacho n.º 15747-A/2014.

If we consider language education an essential skill to have, and that it is 'the basis for professional success in the 21st century' (Cruz & Orange, 2016, p. 2), it makes sense to strive for a better, more complete curriculum. Moreover, it is a way of catching up to other European countries, where foreign language teaching and promotion have been around for several decades, like in Denmark or Sweden, where it was introduced in 1958 and 1962, respectively (Cruz & Medeiros, 2009, p. 3).

In order to guarantee the unification and organization of English teaching practices, the Ministry of Education drafted a document which guides and regulates them – 'Metas Curriculares de Inglês' (MCI).

This document consists of a set of tables containing the content deemed relevant for language learning at each school year, and it is divided into seven domains: Listening, Reading, Spoken Interaction, Spoken Production, Writing, Intercultural Domain, and Lexis and Grammar. It is often said that the primary goal of early childhood language teaching is the focus on self-expression and the development of a communicative competence, term coined by Hymes (1966), who said that we must not only learn to use language correctly, but also appropriately, so as to achieve successful communication. With that in mind, and 'if the purpose of language study is language use, then

the development of language proficiency should be guided and evaluated by the learner's ability to communicate' (Savignon, 2017, p. 1), one could argue that, in the MCI (Bravo, Cravo & Duarte, 2015) and in general classroom practice, the importance given to all the language domains, mentioned above, would be equal. However, that appears to not be the case.

Since acquiring and developing a communicative competence includes being able to use a language appropriately, it would make sense for the Intercultural Domain mentioned in the MCI (2015) to be as complex and well thought out as the Lexis and Grammar one, for instance. However, it appears that the Intercultural Domain is not very intercultural at all. The year 3 objective for the Intercultural Domain, *'Localizar diferentes países no mapa'* (Bravo et. al, 2015) is, for this school year, the most intercultural reference. The same document does mention festivities, but it does not specify which ones, or where they are from, leaving those decisions in the hands of textbook writers and/or teachers, thus not guaranteeing the inclusion of intercultural references. This happens in the year 4 objective, for the same domain, 'Identificar festividades em diferentes partes do mundo' (ibid) which anticipates some interculturality. Based on this brief overview, 'it could be argued that the intercultural aspects are somehow missing i.e. they are not vividly shown' (Lilian, 2017, p. 19). The Intercultural Domain table includes objectives for up to year 9, never really delving very deep into the cultural pool, meaning there are no direct links to many intercultural aspects in what concerns most of the listed objectives (ibid, p. 20). Thus, the choosing of the topic this report focuses on was my attempt at introducing some, much needed, from my personal point of view, interculturality into the lessons.

The way the MCI (2015) have been organized incites the question: why not introduce the cultural aspect of a language alongside it from the very beginning? In her 2003 book *'Pedagogía Intercultural'*, Teresa Aguado defends that schools should provide a cultural environment in which acculturation can take place (p. 104). Acculturation is 'a process through which a person or group from one culture comes to adopt the practices and values of another culture, while still retaining their own distinct culture' (Cole, 2018, WEB). In this sense one could argue that the MCI (2015), were a step back rather than forward in the promotion of diversity, considering that the 'Orientações Programáticas' (Bento et. al, 2005), a document which guided and regulated the teaching of English as a non-compulsory subject in years 3 and 4, states that early language teaching should help raise awareness to linguistic and cultural diversity (Fortunato, 2017, p. 11). The following year, a similar document, Orientações Programáticas (Dias & Toste, 2006), this one meant to regulate teaching in years 1 and 2, lists the 'benefícios que o desenvolvimento precoce de uma competência comunicativa numa língua universal como o Inglês necessariamente implica' (p. 5), as one of the reasons for the introduction of early foreign language teaching. These ideas seem to have been lost along the way, as the main focus of early childhood English teaching appears to be, in fact, on Lexis and Grammar.

The MCI (2015) appear to have been drafted 'centrado no produto final e não no processo em si' (Fortunato, 2017, p. 11), meaning that the main goal of teaching based on this method is to

guarantee positive test results, something that is quantifiable and shareable (nationally and internationally), rather than make sure that students are actually able to understand and make use of the language they are learning.

Due to the perceived lack of cultural content and because 'quanto mais cedo podermos desenvolver na criança competências de natureza social e cultural, mais apta estará ela no futuro a interagir com os outros' (Sousa, 2004, p. 71), it was my goal, as previously mentioned, to introduce some aspects of it into my planned lessons, allowing the students the opportunity to contact and interact with other languages, hopefully contributing to the further development of this communicative competence. How this was done will be explored in further detail in Part II.

In the following chapter we will focus our attention towards the topic of language variation. We will begin by exploring the history of English, how it came to become the language we know today and its widespread across the globe.

CHAPTER 2 – LANGUAGE VARIATION THEN AND NOW

As is taught in History lessons in classrooms across the world, "the British empire was unprecedentedly large" (Taagepera, 1997, p. 488). In fact, the British Empire was the largest and most widespread ever recorded, having peaked in 1925, time at which the British ruled over 35.5 million squared kilometers (ibid: 486), which amounts to approximately 24% of the world's land surface. Having said that, it comes to no surprise that the English language has gained the status it possesses in the modern world.

2.1. The invaders and their contribution to the English language

English, as we know it today, is said to have originated around the year 450, in the 5th century, when Germanic tribes first settled in the British Isles (Crystal, 1986; Gelderen, 2014). There were three tribes which made their way to the territory at around the same time: the Angles, the Saxons and the Jutes, each coming from a different area of continental Europe. Before their arrival, inhabitants of the Isles spoke a Celtic language, brought to the Isles in the first millennium BC, this one already having been in contact with Latin, brought to the Isles by Julius Caesar and his Roman army in 43 BC (Crystal, 1986, p. 8). As contact was established, the 'Germanic speakers adopted some linguistic features from the original inhabitants' (Gelderen, 2014, p. 51), thus originating a language with contained traces of Celtic, Latin and Germanic. As each tribe settled in different areas of current Britain, it can be speculated that language variation was already present at this stage (Crystal, 1986, p. 6). In fact, as can be seen in Figure 1, four different dialects of Old English can be distinguished: Northumbrian, Mercian, West Saxon, and Kentish (Baugh & Cable, 2002, p. 47; Gelderen, 2014, p. 51). West Saxon can be thought of as the first standard of the English language, as most literature from this period is found in this dialect (ibid).

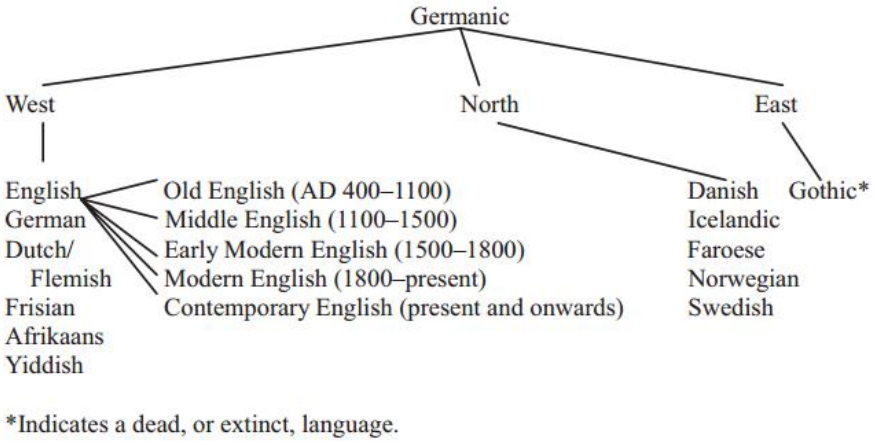


Figure 1– Germanic languages (Meyer, 2009, p. 24)

As illustrated, in Figure 1, English can be categorized into five stages of development: Old English, Middle English, Early Modern English, Modern English and Contemporary English. However, this categorization can also encompass only four of the five stages mentioned by Meyer, as many don't differentiate Modern English from Contemporary English – and Meyer himself presents them as, seemingly, co-existent.

Considering the long stay of Celtic speakers in British territory, it may come as a surprise that its influence on English is hardly noticeable, excluding in the areas where most of the Celts gathered upon being faced with the Roman armies (Crystal, 1986, p. 8). In fact, 'only a handful of Celtic words were borrowed at the time, and a few have survived into modern English, sometimes in regional dialect use' (ibid). Some words that have made their way into every day lexicon include names such as: Thames, Avon, Dover, London, and Kent.

Latin, however, has had a powerful influence on the English language, first with the Roman invaders and, later, the Norman Conquest. The Roman settlers 'gave new names to many local objects and experiences, and introduced several fresh concepts', many of which referred to animals, plants, food, clothes, as well as religion, commerce, military and building (ibid). Indeed, 'the great majority of words in Old English having to do with the church and its services, its physical fabric and its ministers, when not of native origin were borrowed at this time' (Baugh & Cable, 2002, p. 78), with the arrival and introduction of Christianity.

The Anglo-Saxons ruled in Britain for centuries, largely unthreatened by outside forces. This changed in the late 8th century, when the first Viking raiders arrived on English shores. For some time, these new invaders seemed only interested in obtaining riches, to which effect they attacked and plundered along the coast of England, and later further inland, making no attempt to settle (ibid, p. 84). Their first arrival in England is said to have taken place in 787, but it wasn't until nearly a century later, in 867, that a large army – known as the Great Heathen Army – took hold of the city of York (ibid). Several years went by, and during this time both parties claimed victories over each other. Eventually, after many battles and numerous new arrivals from Denmark, England would see its first Danish King – Sweyn Forkbeard ascended the throne, in 1014 (ibid, p. 85). Over the course of these three centuries, the two languages – Old English and Old Norse – were presumably in frequent, if not constant, contact with each other. Crystal estimates around two thousand words in the current English vocabulary have Old Norse origins (1986, p. 126). At that time, the British Isles had already been in contact with four languages brought to them by peoples from different ends of continental Europe.

Britain was not the only territory the Vikings has taken hold of, with Rollo becoming the first Duke of Normandy, in Northern France, where several of his people 'adopted the French language and culture' (Johnson, WEB). When, in 1066, King Edward of England, an Anglo-Saxon King who had taken back the throne from the Danes, died without an heir, his brother-in-law was appointed as his successor (ibid). William, the then Duke of Normandy was displeased and thus began the Norman Conquest of England. King Harold, the appointed successor, faced other enemies as well, namely his

brother Tostig, who had joined forces with Harold, King of Norway, in an effort to dethrone Harold. After a fatiguing battle against Tostig and King Harold's armies, the English soldiers marched towards Kent, where William and his Norman army awaited them (ibid). This battle is known as the great battle, the Battle of Hastings, shortly after which William, the Conqueror, was crowned King of England. With this victory, a new language would be introduced into British territory: French.

The change from Old English to Middle English is believed to have happened during this period. According to Meyer, two significant changes to the English language at this time were 'the addition of many words of French origin to the English lexicon, and the continuing decline in the number of inflections found in Old English' (2009, p. 32). The number of words available in the English lexicon, according to Crystal, is estimated to have doubled to 100,000 due to the introduction of French (1986, p. 126). Middle English underwent such changes that some argue that its contact with the Anglo-Norman French caused it to become a creole (Meyer, 2009, p. 33; Gelderen, 2014, p. 111). However, Gelderen claims that Middle English does not have the properties of a creole (2014, p. 111), supported by Thomason & Kaufman, who defend that the effects of French on the English language were as standard as those of the other languages it came in contact with prior to French (1988, p. 308), and Meyer adds that 'the linguistic changes to English during this period followed the natural course of linguistic change' (2009, p. 33).

The Normans were the last successful invaders of British territory, but the English language continued to change. Several events throughout the years contributed to these changes, particularly during the period now known as the Renaissance (Crystal, 1986, p. 60). Meyer (2009, p. 33-34) lists three major cultural events of the time which had a significant effect on English, marking the shift from Middle English to Early Modern English:

a. The introduction of the printing press, by William Caxton, in 1476, allowing English to evolve from a mostly vernacular language and increasing literacy rates;

b. The publication of the first dictionaries and grammars, which were crucial to the codification, and ultimate standardization, of English by providing a record of its lexicon and rules of usage;

c. The colonization of America, its independence from Britain and its rise in status and power, which fueled the expansion of the British Empire and the worldwide spread of the English language.

Apart from the cultural events mentioned above, one particular linguistic event of this time shaped the English language into the one we know today: the Great Vowel Shift (GVS). In fact, 'this shift resulted in vowels either being raised on the vowel chart or becoming diphthongs' (ibid, p. 33), which occurred in stages throughout many years.

Spelling	1400	1500	1600	1700	ModE
i (ice)	i	ej	ɛj	aj	aj
ee (meet)	e	i	i	i	i
ea (meat/great)	ɛ	ɛ	ej	i/ej	i/ej
a (ace)	a	a>ɛ	ɛ	ej	ej
ou (out)	u	ow	ow	aw	aw
oo (boot)	o	u	u	u	u
oa (boat)	ɔ	ɔ	o	ow	ow

Figure 2 – Stages of the Great Vowel Shift (Gelderen, 2014, p. 166)

As is evidenced by Figure 2, the changes began somewhere in the 16th century, and by the 18th century the sounds produced had stabilized into those of Modern, or Contemporary, English pronunciation. It is to note that, due to the introduction of the printing press and the publication of dictionaries and grammars, as well as other works of literature, English spelling had become fixed, and while the GVS significantly altered pronunciation, the spelling was not affected by this and so the 'vowel symbols no longer correspond to the sounds they once represented' (Baugh & Cable, 2002, p. 224).

William Shakespeare played, according to Crystal, a crucial role in the development of English (1986, p. 62). Shakespeare was the first to put terms like *'obscene'* or *'puppi-dogges'* into writing, and, although these terms likely already existed in oral speech, 'his usage would have been influential developing popular awareness of it, and thus increasing its circulation' (ibid). His works are also useful to scholars, as they showcase the way the language was developing at the time of their writing.

Other great influences on the English language include, naturally, the expansion of the British Empire (see subchapter 3.2), the Industrial Revolution of the 19th and 20th centuries, as well as developments in areas such as technology and medicine, and changes in the political and social climate (Gelderen, 2014, p. 209), all of which caused a significant influx of lexicon into the English language.

In this subchapter, we have taken a quick look through History in order to understand how English came to be the language we know today. Having been influenced by Celtic, Germanic, Scandinavian and Latin languages, English was already a rich and complex language before it set sail across the world, during the British expeditions, which only enriched it further.

2.2. The expansion of the British Empire: a timeline

The formation of the United Kingdom, as we know it today, began in the 16th century, when Wales was formally united with England through the signing of the Acts of Union of 1536 and 1542. Scotland, which had been under British rule since the early 17th century, was formally united with England and Wales through the signing of the Act of Union of 1707, thus originating the United Kingdom of Great Britain. Nearly a century later, Ireland became a part of the UK, through the signing of the Act of Union of 1800. It wasn't until 1922 that the Republic of Ireland gained its independence,

with the remaining counties, still part of the UK, forming Northern Ireland (Encyclopedia Britannica, 2018, WEB).

On top of their efforts to conquer and rule land closer to home, the British had their sights on the Spice Trade of the Orient. Fueled by competition with the Spanish and the Portuguese, King Henry VII enlisted John Cabot to lead the way in finding a route to the Orient. Cabot, however, failed in doing so and instead came across, in 1497, North American land – the current location of Newfoundland, Canada (Luscombe, n.d., WEB). Several attempts of expansion and settlement were carried out throughout the 16th century but they all failed.

In the early 17th century, the East India Company established trading posts in India and, due to Company's activities, the Straits Settlements (current Singapore and Malaysia) became British territories as well. Nowadays, the Singaporean English variety, wich some call a creole, is commonly referred to as Singlish and it is said to be 'easy to learn, but hard to execute' (Banerji, 2016, WEB). Besides differences in accent and intonation, significant grammar distinctions can also be identified, e.g. 'a modern-day Singaporean could say "I go bus-stop wait for you," to mean that he will wait for you at the bus stop' (ibid). The word order displayed in the example provided would be considered ungrammatical by most Western speakers of English, but, to Singaporeans, this structure makes sense as it is congruent with that of other languages spoken in the country.

Also in early 17th century, the British set sail to North America in 1607, permanently settling, for the first time, in Jamestown, Virginia. From then on, throughout the 17th century, the British established more settlements across North America, as well as the West Indies. By 1670, the British had colonies in New England, Virginia and Maryland, as well as settlements across the Caribbean (Bermudas, Barbados, Jamaica, etc.) and in Africa. In the 1670s, the Hudson's Bay Company was established in what is now Canada (Encyclopedia Britannica, 2018, WEB). It should be noted that the English spoken in the Caribbean has been highly influenced by Spanish, as both languages coexist in this territory. Furthermore, Caribbean English is an umbrella term and it should be made clear that it, in fact, refers to several international varieties and English-based creoles spoken in the different islands (Nordquist, 2014, WEB). Some examples of how it is distinguishable from Standard British or American English are: a) word order, as it is common to find local speakers using the interrogative '*You are coming?*' rather than the more standard '*Are you coming?*' (ibid); b) th- stopping, i.e. in words such as *think* or *that* the /th/ sound is pronounced as /t/ or /d/ respectively; c) h- dropping, i.e. the /h/ sound is often left unpronounced in words such as happy or house; and d) the lack of plural markings, e.g. 'my relative, they were involved…' (British Library, WEB).

The 17th century also saw the beginning of the British slave trade (Encyclopedia Britannica, 2018, WEB), which saw native Africans forcefully taken to British colonies, mainly North America, for slave labor. This continued until the 19th century, when An Act for the Abolition of the Slave Trade was signed in 1807, prohibiting slave trade across the entirety of the British Empire. The slaves being brought to America are believed to have spoken creolized English, Dutch and Portuguese languages. However, as a result of their need to communicate with each other, they eventually developed their

own language 'marked as much by its rhythm, tempo, and stress as its vocabulary and grammar' (Pollitzer 1999, cited in Greaves, 2010, p. 2). This language became known as Gullah, Geechee, or Sea Island Creole and it is said to have originated in early colonial America (ibid).

The 18th century was an eventful one for the British. In 1763, after battling France for dominance over Canadian territory, the British emerged victorious. The same had happened, in the 1750s, in India, where the British were provided an accession of land which, ultimately, ensured their rule over the territory for years to come. English is now an official language of India, having been transplanted there by British colonizers. The term 'transplanted language' is, according to Kachru (1976), applicable to a language that is 'used by a significant number of speakers in social, cultural, and geographical contexts different from the contexts in which it was originally used' (p. 24). As such, English can be said to be a transplanted language in India. As is the case with most national varieties, Indian English also refers to English as it is spoken in that territory, which is not characterized by homogeneity in its use (Kachru, 1976, p. 8).

On the other hand, the American Revolutionary War (1775-1783) saw the colonies escape British rule to form what is now known as the United States of America. In an effort to compensate for such a loss, the British ventured further and, in 1788, settled in Australia. At the same time, Canada was thriving due to the migration of inhabitants of the new USA who were still loyal subjects to the British throne (Encyclopedia Britannica, 2018, WEB).

Much like the previous one, the 19th century proved a fruitful one for the British. In 1806, the British took possession of Cape Good Hope, and they later expanded across the territory now known as South Africa. In fact, "the greatest 19th-century extension of British power took place in Africa" (Encyclopedia Britannica, 2018, WEB), at which time the British extended their rule over several African countries - including Egypt, Sudan, Nigeria, Ghana, among others. Also in the 19th century, New Zealand became a British colony, status made official in 1840. During the previous year, the idea of self-governing colonies was introduced, in relation to Canada, for the first time, and it was put into effect in 1847, later expanding to other colonies (Australia, New Zealand, Cape Colony, among others). Throughout the coming years, British rule extended towards surrounding islands in the Pacific – Fiji, Tonga, Papua, etc. – which led to the creation, in 1877, of the British High Commission for the Western Pacific Islands (ibid).

After becoming self-governing colonies, in the second half of the 19th century, these territories were later given the status of dominions, in 1907. In 1910, Cape Colony and surrounding territories were joined together to form the Union of South Africa, also a British dominion. After Britain had declared war on Germany in the name of all colonies and dominions belonging to the British Empire, the need for further independence arose, and thus originated the League of Nations, in 1920, which granted each dominion the status of "independent states equal to Britain" (ibid).

A decade later, in 1931, the Statute of Westminster formalized the definition of dominion drafted by Arthur Balfour, at the British Imperial Conference of 1926, in which he referred to them as "autonomous Communities within the British Empire, equal in status, in no way subordinate one to

another in any aspect of their domestic or external affairs, though united by a common allegiance to the Crown, and freely associated as members of the British Commonwealth of Nations." (The National Archives, WEB). The Statute of Westminster was the first step towards the formation of the Commonwealth of Nations, which nowadays includes "53 independent and equal sovereign states" (The Commonwealth, 2018, WEB).

The exploration and colonization carried out by the British throughout the centuries took the English language on a journey across the world, where it settled, grew and evolved into the different "Englishes" we know to exist today. In the next subchapter, we will look at some of the factors which cause and/or facilitate language change and variation.

2.3. Contributing factors to language change

Language variation is a topic that I, personally, find fascinating. That is why I was moved to share it with the students, in hopes that it would enrich their learning experience. Although the goal I set for them was awareness, i.e. realizing that said variation exists, I felt it was important for me to try to understand the extent of this variation, as well as how and why it came to be.

Before delving any deeper into the subject, it is important to understand what language variation means. Languages are living, natural, open systems which are susceptible to change (Cruz, 2017, p. 79), and they allow those who speak it to express themselves in unique ways – this is why some defend that 'language' and 'variation' are two concepts which are inherently connected (ibid). According to Thomason (2012), 'all dialects start with the same system, and their partly independent histories leave different parts of the parent system intact' (WEB), meaning that while, more so in English than other languages, most of the varieties of English spoken around the world ate mutually intelligible, there are still specific characteristics which are unique to each of them. In this subchapter, we will explore some of the factors which contribute to the ongoing changes all languages undergo throughout their history.

Scholars have debated which term would be better suited to refer to the changes undergone by a language: change or evolution (Meyer, 2009, p. 39). In common speech, and among many linguists, the two have come to be used interchangeably, with evolution used as a term to 'describe the gradual changes that any language experiences over time'. However, there are others who defend a direct correlation between language evolution, and, in the more Darwinian meaning of the term, the evolution of the human species (ibid, p. 40). If one considers the need to explore and expand across borders part of the evolution of mankind, then an argument could be made in favor of such a theory.

Croft (2000) defends that, while in communication with each other, speakers of a language engage in what the author dubs 'normal replication' and 'altered replication' (Meyer, 2009, p. 40). Normal replication would occur generationally, with one form of speech being replicated time and time again to children as they acquire language: that is, until such an instance when someone slightly alters that form, at which time the replication becomes altered, rather than normal. Meyer offers the example

of *'whom'* and its now frequent replacement with *'who'*, which he believes easily illustrates both types of replication. For a time, speakers would only use the form *'whom do you trust?'*, and this would have been passed down through generations and remained the same, until someone, at some point, uttered the form *'who do you trust?'*, the latter being an example of altered replication. The author, however, adds that this particular issue will not persist, as 'whom will die out of English, resulting in the passing on of *Who do you trust?* as a type of normal rather than altered replication' (ibid).

Crystal says that people often find it easy to cast judgement on the way someone speaks if they do so differently than us (1986, p. 298). Perhaps, if we understood why this happens, we would not be so quick to judge others. Linguistic changes occur due to both internal and external factors, which means that even without any geographical, social, cultural, political, etc., changes languages would still suffer alterations, because that is their nature (Meyer, 2009, p. 41). An example of internal change is the process during which a language goes from a fusional one, 'in which one form of a morpheme can simultaneously encode several meanings' (SIL Glossary of Linguistic Terms), to an isolating one, 'in which almost every word consists of a single morpheme' (ibid). Internal change can also occur as the speakers of a language strive for 'ease of articulation' (Gelderen, 2014, p. 8), when they stop using certain endings – as mentioned before, throughout its history, English has lost most of the inflections which were present in Old English – and instead rely on additional words to convey meaning, the categorical change, or conversion, of a word is also an example of internal change (ibid), and this particular process of word formation has become increasingly popular in recent years, through the use of the Internet and social media, e.g.: the use of *'ghost'* as a verb, to describe the sudden disappearance or loss of communication with someone.

On the other hand, external change occurs mostly due to contact with other languages (Meyer, 2009, p. 41). The changes to the English language mentioned in subchapter 3.1. all happened due to external factors. 'External changes are unpredictable since it is impossible to foresee who will migrate where, or what fashion will catch on' (Gelderen, 2014, p. 8), i.e. there is no way of knowing what or when the next big change to the English language will come to pass. However, small changes occur constantly, especially in today's post-globalized society, where speakers of different languages, and people of different cultural backgrounds are in constant contact with each other. The effects this contact can have on a language is difficult to measure, but, in an attempt to do so, Thomason & Kaufman (1988) proposed a five-point scale ranging from *'casual contact'* to *'very strong cultural presence'*. 'Throughout its history, English has had contact with many languages, resulting in varying degrees of change in the language' (Meyer, 2009, p. 41), and this history is part of the ongoing evolution of the English language, which is still happening today.

Language variation can, as we have seen, be traced back to the early developmental stages of English. However, now more than ever, people are becoming more and more aware of its existence due to radio, television, cinema, the internet, among other technological developments which have helped English become what Crystal refers to as a 'global language' (2003). English is currently an

official language in 54 countries, 27 non-sovereign states, and the *de facto* language of the United Kingdom, the United States, and Australia. In every one of these countries, the language is spoken differently, both when you compare them to each other and when looking at variation within the country itself.

Upon their arrival at each of these territories, the British were faced with new objects, and concepts for which they had no known terms, which incited the need to come up with new words to describe them (Meyer, 2009, p. 41). This happened every time, and so the lexicon grew. However, the vocabulary needed in one territory was not universal, rather specific to each of those new places. Furthermore, in many of those territories, the British came across peoples of different cultures and who spoke different languages, and those languages, in contact with English, altered the way the latter was spoken in a specific territory. There are a number of words in English today that are associated with and said to have originated from, for example, Native American languages, e.g.: skunk, in its original form *squuncke*, was the name given this animal by Native Americans in Massachusetts; hickory, originally *pawcohiccora*, finds its origin in colonial Virginia; and pecan derives from the original form *pakani*, introduced by Native Americans from the current state of Illinois (Merriam-Webster, WEB). These are examples of words and expressions which were introduced into the English language, because the need arose to find terms to refer to previously unknown animals, food items, etc., upon the British's arrival in America.

It is known that, during colonial times, the British settled with the intent of teaching their language, and customs, to the locals they encountered. I have previously mentioned the notion of altered replication, which happens when someone doesn't reproduce what they have heard exactly as they have heard it, and the form of speech which they will then replicate is altered (Meyer, 2009, p. 40). At a time when the British were teaching the locals their language, one can assume that they will have begun using it alongside their own native language, which may have caused this phenomenon to take place. The levels of language most commonly affected by language change are usually phonology and phonetics (Hickey, 2001, p.2), which is why the most evident differences between the existent varieties of English, besides vocabulary, are found in the accents of speakers from different regions.

Moving ahead in time, once settled in a new territory, society would begin to evolve politically, socially, technologically, etc., which again would have led to the need for new words to refer to new concepts (Coven & Yeager, 2009, WEB). The evolution of society, as a whole, and of distinct cultural groups within, is not likely to cease at any point in the near future, which could mean that new words will continue to emerge as new developments are brought to light, as well as new meanings being attributed to words or phrases already known by speakers, through the use of metaphors and metonymy (Hickey, 2001, p. 15).

One could argue that the 21st century society has greatly affected the English language, with slang, particularly that used on the Internet, bringing about significant change (Zazulak, 2016, WEB).

Lexicographer Erin McKean says that it is the speakers' job to decide what is or is not a word (2014, TED), and that we should be encouraged, rather than deterred, to 'make up' new words.

There are several ways in which new words can enter a language, one of which we discussed in subchapter 3.1: foreign borrowings, when words from other languages are taken to fulfil a linguistic need – English has borrowed vocabulary from several languages, like *kumquat* from Chinese or *ninja* from Japanese (ibid), both which are now as vital a part of the English language as any other. Apart from borrowing, there are several processes of word formation which have lent their services to linguistic change: a) compounding, which result from the affixation or suffixation of morphemes or words, into root words, giving them new meaning (Crystal, 1986, p. 128), shown in such words as *heartbroken*, or *bookworm*; b) conversion, in which a word from one class, is used as if it belonged in a different class - verbs can become nouns (*a swim*), nouns can become verbs (*to bottle*), adjectives can also become verbs (*to empty*), and even phrases can become nouns (*free-for-all*) -, and this can happen with almost every word class (Crystal, 1986, p. 129); c) blending is another process of word formation, and it is similar to compounding, with the exception that elements of one or more of the words are lost – *brunch*, which is a blend of breakfast and lunch, and *smog*, a blend of smoke and fog, are examples of the products of this process (ibid, p. 130); and d) back-formation is another interesting process thanks to which new words are introduced – some examples are the verb *edit* having been introduced to the language after the noun *editor*, or *televise* after *television* (ibid).

Due to the large role played by the Internet and social media, new words and expressions are constantly being introduced. Most of these words exist only within this context for some time, but eventually become generalized as people start using them in their daily lives, fueling their distribution and increased usage. Examples of expressions which have transcended the Internet are abbreviations or acronyms such as LOL (laughing out loud), OMG (omg), YOLO (you only live once), and BAE (before anyone else) (Zazulak, 2016, WEB), which have slowly but surely found their way into common speech. Language variation can be found within one region of a country due to other social factors such as age, economic status, religion, etc., because language is closely intertwined with an individual's identity (Meyer, 2009, p. 43), and, as such, it could be said that each person uses language differently from everyone else.

'Most contemporary linguistic commentators accept that change in language, like change in society, is inevitable' (Zazulak, 2016, WEB), as the two go hand-in-hand. Languages are tools of communication, and we should be free to use them in a way that allows us to express how we feel and what we think, even if that means making up new words (McKean, 2014, TED).

It is important that we understand how and why language changes, and how we each contribute to that change. Furthermore, it is crucial that we understand that there is no one right way of speaking a language, and that the most important aspect of communication is getting your point across. For that reason, I believe language variation is a topic which students should contact with from an early age, seen as 'the more we know about regional variation and change in the use of English, (…) the less we are likely to adopt demeaning stereotypes about people from other parts of the country, or

the world' (Crystal, 1986, p. 298), and the main goal of education is to ensure that we prepare our students for whatever future they may encounter, understanding that, in today's society, that future will certainly be riddled with, not only but also, linguistic diversity. More people seem to share this thought, seen as the topic of language variation is one that has, recently, began to capture the attention of educators teaching English as a foreign language in Portugal (cf. Oliveira, 2017; Lilian, 2017).

CHAPTER 3 – ENGLISH AS A GLOBAL LANGUAGE(S)

English is one of the most widely spoken languages in the world. This is true due to historical reasons, referring to the expansion of the British Empire, but also more recent developments in areas such as media and technology (Esteves & Hurst, 2009, p. 2). Regardless of whether or not English is an official language in a certain country, it is sure to mark a strong presence in most of them, particularly in EU territory, where English is the most commonly spoken foreign language (Eurobarometer, 2012, p. 20).

According to Crystal (2003, p. 141), there are probably already more speakers of English as a second or foreign language than there are natives, which I believe can be explained by the rise in the importance given to this language in the past decades, which, in its turn, arises from the political and economic power held by nations such as the United Kingdom and the United States of America over Europe and the world.

Considering the widespread of English across the globe and the number of people who speak it, we must ask 'can one speak of one Global or International English or should we rather be speaking of different "Englishes"' (Esteves & Hurst, 2009, p. 1). As has already been mentioned, the development of countries such as Australia, Canada, or South Africa has given way to further deviation from British or American standards (ibid, p. 3), thus opening the floor for such a discussion. Piccardo (2018, p. 78) says that there is, in fact, more than one English, as all languages have many varieties.

Chevillet (1991) argues that 'every speaker of English (…) will soon need to be bilingual: on the one hand, to continue refining a rich, particular and personal English so as to affirm their own identities, on the other to master a world English that lets them communicate on a planetary level' (in McArthur, 2003, p. 31). That is to say that English has travelled far and beyond, and one must keep up with it to be able to express themselves and communicate successfully both within their own community, and outside of it. 'Native speakers of English generally are monolingual and are not very good at tuning into language variation' (Morrison, 2016, WEB), as they believe that English is one single language and thus intelligible between all its speakers.

According to Crystal (2003, p. 145), international varieties express a national identity. It can be argued that varieties can also be regional, for instance, thus expressing the identity of a particular group, taking into account the context in which such variety arose.

In the following subchapters, I will explore the idea of variety versus language as well as how variation comes to exist, standard language(s) and the implication of this variation in the teaching of English as a foreign language.

3.1. Varieties of English versus World Englishes

During my time at the school, prior to the beginning of my sessions (the context of the internship will be presented in Part II), while helping a group of students with an exercise, I was interrupted. I was

reading a text in the students' textbook *Smiles 4* (Dooley & Evans, 2016, p. 12) that talked about Autumn. As I read that exact word, a student said *'Não é assim que se diz outono'*, leaving me confused. He then read it himself, and, in doing so, helped me realize what he meant. Since I identify, and contact, with most closely with American English, I had pronounced it **/ˈɔtəm/** (Collins Dictionary Online), while the students were accustomed to hearing it pronounced **/ɔːtəm/** (ibid), causing the confusion. This was the first time the subject of language variation came up, and what incited my interest in the matter.

According to Yule (2006, p. 194), 'every language has a lot of variation, especially in the way it is spoken', but that is not the only language domain in which differences can be found. A similar episode happened during my first session, when I absentmindedly wrote 'neighborhood' on the board, instead of 'neighbourhood' as was in the textbook. As a student pointed out the "mistake" to me, I took the opportunity to, once again, bring up the subject of language variation.

In order to discuss the topic at hand, variety or language, we must first try to conceptualize both. The glossary entry for language in Meyer's 'Introducing English Linguistics' (2009), reads 'English and French are considered languages because they are mutually unintelligible' (p. 229), with the author adding that this notion is problematic since 'Swedish and Norwegian are considered languages, yet they are mutually intelligible' (ibid), the same being applicable to Portuguese and Spanish, and several other language pairings. The Oxford Online Dictionary defines language as 'the method of human communication, either spoken or written, consisting of the use of words in a structured and conventional way' (WEB), indicating language is a wide set of rules, the understanding of which is shared by all those who speak it. However, the Oxford English Dictionary also offers a definition of language in which it is seen as 'a system of communication used by a particular country or community' (WEB), while the Cambridge Online Dictionary defines language as 'a system of communication consisting of sounds, words, and grammar, or the system of communication used by people in a particular country or type of work' (WEB), and I believe that these definitions lead us in a somewhat different direction. By mentioning the fact that a language is used by the people of a certain country or community, these definitions open the door to variation, particularly diatopic and diastratic variation.

Diatopic variation refers to the geographical aspect of language, meaning that in different countries, or regions, languages are spoken differently (Coseriu, 1981), whereas diastratic variation refers to the social aspect of a language, since people from different backgrounds, social classes or groups, may speak a language differently from one another (ibid). For the purpose of this report, I will focus mainly on diatopic variation, although I feel that the two dimensions are intrinsically connected.

In order to distinguish variety from language, or attempt to, we must understand what a variety is. Hudson (1996, p. 24) defines variety as 'a set of linguistic items with similar social distribution'. Considering the presented definitions of both these concepts, one might argue that American English, for instance, can be perceived as both a variety and a language of its own. According to

Hudson (1996, p. 24), 'a variety may be much larger than a lay 'language'' but it 'can also be much smaller than a 'language', or even than a 'dialect'', due to the flexibility of this term's meaning.

It may be useful, then, to try to define the term 'dialect' which, according to Yule (2006, p. 195), refers to 'features of grammar and vocabulary as well as aspects of pronunciation', while Meyer (2009, p 225), defines it as simply 'a variable form of a language'. With these definitions in mind, it becomes somewhat difficult to distinguish variety from dialect, and either concept from that of 'language'. According to McWhorter (2016, WEB), there is no actual need for the distinction to be made between language and dialect, arguing that 'popular usage' is the only reason for this attempt, with the author also adding that, in said popular belief, 'languages are written and standardized and have a literature, while dialects are oral, without codified rules, and have no literature' (ibid). With this in mind, one might argue, once again, that American and British English can be perceived as both varieties, or dialects, of a single English language, or languages in their own right, seen as both have their own standards, and are distinguishable in their written form.

As previously mentioned, our focus will be the diatopic variation of English, and to explain this variation, we must look back and examine how English came to become the widely spoken language it is today. According to Crystal (2003, p. 29), there are two reasons why: 'one is geographical-historical; the other is socio-cultural'.

The British expeditions which started in the 17th century, towards the Americas, Africa and Asia, carried on into the 18th century with settlements in Australia, and the height of the Empire was reached in the 19th century, with changes occurring in all its colonies and further expansion in Africa, are the main reason why English spread out across the globe, as seen in chapter 2.2. On top of the already massive native English presence worldwide, 'the language has penetrated deeply into the international domains of political life, business, safety, communication, entertainment, the media and education' (Crystal, 2003, p. 30), making it essential for non-native speakers to learn it in order to have the best chance at succeeding in their endeavors, particularly on a professional level. With the rising number of English speakers in all the colonized territories, more people speak English outside of Europe, where it originated, than within it (McArthur, 2003, p. 36).

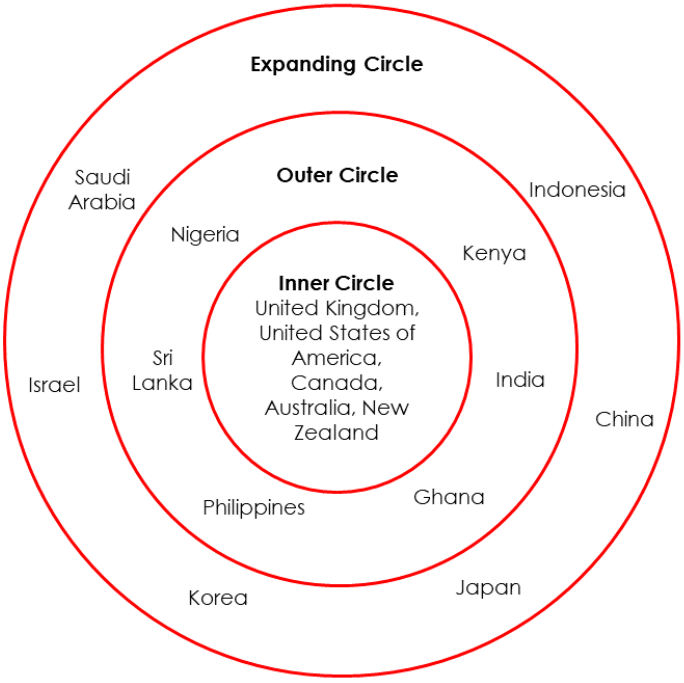


Figure 3 – Kachru's Three Circles of English (adapted; 1992, p. 356)

Kachru (1992, p. 356) composed a model (see Figure 3) in which he divided the World Englishes into three categories. The "Inner Circle" includes countries where English arrived with its first diaspora, during the earlier expeditions of the 17th and 18th centuries, and where English is now the primary language. The "Outer Circle" refers to non-native English countries, most of which were once British colonies, and where English is used as a language people who don't share the same mother tongue can use to communicate – essentially, countries where English is a lingua franca. The "Expanding Circle" refers to countries where English has no official role, or historical relevance, but where it is still widely used as the language of business, tourism, etc. In my lessons, I decided to call the students' attention to the role of English in countries of all three circles, focusing mainly on the inner circle British and American English varieties, but discussing the presence of the language in both India, where it is an official language, and China, country in which English plays a significant role along with other foreign languages spoken in the same territories: Spanish, Hindi, and Mandarin. This will be explored in further detail in chapter 2 of Part II.

The fact that English is spoken so widely across the globe doesn't, in of its own, necessarily explain why there is so much variation within a language with a single origin. According to Piccardo (2018, p. 78), language variation derives from socio-economic factors such as age, or context – for instance, medical terminology, which is not understood by people outside of that community, or even slang, which is normally associated with younger speakers of a language.

There are, however, other aspects which contribute to this. For instance, and looking back at the expansion of the British Empire, when settlers found themselves in a new environment, such as

North America, they felt the need to find words to describe it, and these terms would be specific to their speech alone, as the British would not share this need (Crystal, 2003, p. 142). This, paired with the evolution of language throughout time, accounts for most of the variation we see today.

According to Crystal (2003, p. 146), the biggest difference between Englishes is vocabulary. 'There are many cultural domains likely to motivate new words, as speakers find themselves adapting the language to meet fresh communicative needs' (ibid), which explains why the Englishes spoken in every single one of these territories differs from each other, in varying levels. We must remember that language and culture go hand in hand, as Yule (2006, p. 216) defends that 'we develop awareness of our knowledge, and hence our culture, only after having developed language'. That is to say that without the ability to use and comprehend language, we are unlikely to be able to learn about the culture – this applies not only to first language acquisition, but also foreign language learning.

Recalling Hymes's definition of communicative competence, without the ability to learn the culture we are not able to communicate effectively, and if the goal of primary school foreign language teaching is making sure students can communicate, then both language and culture are essential. This pertains to the matter of varieties of English in the sense that, if the students are not aware of the linguistic and cultural diversity that exists within the world of English, they run the risk of being able to communicate with only a specific group of people, who share the same English they have learned. It falls onto us, foreign language teachers, to guarantee that 'a competência comunicativa do aluno seja realmente completa a ponto de entender não só o código linguístico, mas também o "*código cultural*"' (Novaski & Werner, 2011, p. 6).

There is yet another aspect to consider when speaking of the English that is spoken around the world, and that is the contact with other languages existent within a certain region or territory. Sridhar (2012) says that with the constant contact of English with other native languages spoken in the same area, new varieties of English are emerging. This brings back the question: are they varieties or are they different languages?

Thinking of some specific examples, the one that instantly comes to mind is Spanglish, a linguistic phenomenon that has been observed, mainly in the United States, since the 20th century. There is no consensus between scholars of the topic about what Spanglish actually is, some arguing that it is a case of codeswitching, while others say that borrowings and neologisms are what affect the speech (Betti, 2010, p. 35). It can be argued that this hybrid is a way for Latin Americans born or residing in the United States to both adapt to their current surroundings, while, at the same time, clinging to their origins, as 'diversos jóvenes latinos se consideran bilingües y biculturales' (ibid, p. 34).

There are some who refer to Spanglish as a pidgin (Devlin, 2017, WEB). A pidgin is defined as 'a variety of a language that developed for some practical purpose (…) among groups of people who had a lot of contact, but who did not know each other's languages (Yule, 2006, p. 201). According to Devlin (2017, WEB), Spanglish doesn't necessarily fit this description as it is not used strictly to facilitate communication between speakers of different languages.

Regardless of whether or not Spanglish is seen as a language of its own, it constitutes a linguistic phenomenon that has left its mark, not only on its speakers but also in the media culture. Betti (2013, p. 33) says that literature granted Spanglish its legitimacy, thanks to Latin American authors from countries like Mexico, Puerto Rico and the Dominican Republic. *Yo-Yo Boing!*, a novel by Puerto Rican Giannina Braschi, was the first novel published in Spanglish, in 1998. Although other works had been published using both languages before then, *'la autora no parece hundirse en la ambivalencia y la inseguridad que puede ocasionar vivir entre dos lenguas y culturas, producto de la misma experiencia transculturadora, sino que el conocimiento y empleo de ambas para pensar, expresarse y crear ha intensificado sus proyectos estéticos y literarios'* (Loustau, 2005, p. 440), which is to say that the way in which Braschi used Spanglish reveals the deep intertwining of both the languages and the cultures with which she contacted throughout her life, displaying her status as a true bilingual. At one point in the novel it reads '*if I respected languages like you do, I wouldn't write at all. El muro de Berlín fue derribado. Why can't I do the same. Desde la torre de Babel, las lenguas han sido siempre una forma de divorciarnos del resto de la humanidad. Poetry must find ways for breaking distance. I'm not reducing my audience. On the contrary, I'm going to have a bigger audience with the common markets-in Europe-in America. And besides, all languages are dialects that are made to break new grounds'* (Braschi, 1998, p. 142). It could be argued that this type of literature is the author's way of better representing the linguistic reality of plurilingual people, particularly those of Hispanic ancestry living in America who speak both languages and are likely to codeswitch in their normal, day-to-day life (Aldama, 2013, p. 37).

In more recent years, Spanglish can be often found in pop culture, both in movies or television series, but mainly in the music industry. Latin music has skyrocketed to popularity in the United States, and all over the world (Petridis, 2017, WEB), thus luring several English-speaking artists to collaborate with Latin ones, creating bilingual songs that have, and continue to spread across the globe, carrying this mixture of cultures with them.

Spanglish is but an example of the changes that arise from the contact of English with other languages, and according to Sridhar (2012) this '"nativizing" of English will continue, and these variant forms will continue to generate scholarly interest'.

Codeswitching, a concept which was introduced earlier, is also an important one to take into account, both as language speakers and language teachers. Codeswitching, in the eyes of Hudson (1996) is a process 'in which a single speaker uses different varieties at different times' (p. 56). The author equates varieties with registers, in fact, he warns to the use of 'the term 'variety' to refer to the kind of thing which is traditionally referred to as language, dialect, or register' (ibid) throughout his section 'Mixture of varieties', indicating that the distinction between these terms is not a relevant one. Modupeola (2013) defines codeswitching as 'a communicative phenomenon of constantly switching between two languages in a bilingual's speech repertoire' (p. 92), a definition that is very similar to those of several other authors: Haugen (1956) defines it as the alternate use of different languages; Gumperz (1982) refers to it as the juxtaposition of passages of speech from different

grammatical systems or subsystems within the same exchange; and Milroy & Muysken (1995) who defines it as the alternate of different languages in the same conversation (Makulloluwa, 2013, p. 582-583). Likewise, Poplack (2004) defines codeswitching as 'the utterance-internal juxtaposition, in unintegrated form, of overt linguistic elements from two or more languages, with no necessary change of interlocutor or topic' (p. 589), adding that this is one of many linguistic manifestations of language contact. This phenomenon is believed to be linked to the level of proficiency of the individual bilingual, or plurilingual, speaker, i.e. the more proficient they are in the languages they speak, the more likely they are to switch between them (ibid, p. 594) and, because 'the balanced bilingual has the option of integrating his utterance into the patterns of the other language' (Poplack, 1980, p. 583), this phenomenon happens in a natural and often unconscious way.

With these definitions in mind, one might argue that codeswitching is a process in which speakers of more than one language, native or not, make use of their overall language knowledge in order to 'manipulate or influence or define situation as they wish, and to convey nuances of meaning and personal intention' (Modupeola, 2013, p. 92, based on Sert, 2005). This process, and the flexibility on which it stands, may offer speakers a chance of better expressing themselves in certain situations.

Considering all that has been mentioned, I believe it is safe to say that no definite distinction between variety and language can be made. This distinction, however, or the lack thereof, is not, in the particular case of this study, the most important aspect. What is, in fact, important is to understand that this discussion exists, and the reason for its existence. That is to say that, regardless of whether one considers the variants of the language 'Varieties of English' or 'World Englishes', one must accept the wide range of variants which exist around the world and the implications of their existence in linguistic, cultural and, ultimately, pedagogical terms. I will, from this point forward, refer to these variants as varieties.

3.2. Standard English, whose English is that?

The term Standard English implies that there is a consensus on what it refers to, when, in fact, this is not the case (Farrell & Martin, 2009, p. 2). The standard variant of a language is an 'idealized variety, but exists for most people as the version that is accepted as the official language of their community or country' (Yule, 2006, p. 194), which automatically implies the existence of more than one Standard English - each English-speaking community or people will have their own idea of what their standard is. This is why there is a Standard British English, a Standard American English, Standard Australian English, Standard Indian English (ibid, p. 195) etc., but, again, this standard variety is but one of many which exist within a same territory.

Generally, the standard is considered to be the most widely used variety in written form, mass media, and the one which is normally taught in schools (ibid). With this is mind, McArthur (2003, p. 104) asks 'which criteria would be used to underpin the standard against which writing, print, and speech might be checked and marked 'good', 'bad', 'right', 'wrong', 'proper', 'improper'?'. In his

book, 'Sociolinguistics', Hudson (1996) claims that 'standard languages are the result of a direct and deliberate intervention by society' (p. 32), which he calls 'standardization', a process during which a standard language is created, having gone through four stages (based on Haugen, 1966).

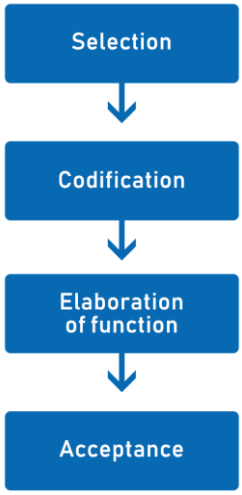


Figure 4 – Stages of standardization.

The four stages, as seen in Figure 4 are:

1. *Selection*, a process of great importance, given the fact that the variety which eventually develops into the standard, and, consequently, the people who already speak that variety, will gain prestige over the others;

2. *Codification*, or the unification of the grammatical form of the variety in question, with dictionaries being written to create a "rule book" which speakers of other varieties must strive to learn;

3. *Elaboration of function*, meaning that the new standard variety must be usable in all relevant branches, such as government, and in important documents such as educational and scientific ones, as well as literature;

4. *Acceptance*, mainly by relevant members of the population, as the variety of the community, and ideally the country. This would serve as a 'strong *unifying* force (…), a symbol of its [the country's] *independence* (…) and a marker of its *difference*' (Hudson, 1996, p. 33).

The fact that there are so many varieties of English, and 'this lack of a clear, agreed-upon definition of the term standard presents a problem for learners and teachers of English' (Farrell & Martin, 2009, p. 3). Recalling the question posed by Esteves & Hurst (2009, p. 1), where the authors inquire about the existence of a global English or, rather, many Englishes, it seems important to say that 'a language achieves a genuinely global status when it develops a special role that is recognized in every country' (Crystal, 2003, p. 3).

Considering the history of the language, its origins and its expansion, one might say that English did, in fact, have this role, due to the grandeur of the British Empire. Nowadays, English may have an

even stronger hold on the title of global language, due to its use as a language of international relations, travel, media, and communications (Crystal, 2003). However, and as discussed in the previous subchapter, there are a great many varieties of English, and neither one of them should be seen as "better" or more "appropriate" than the others.

This may cause problems for learners of English as a foreign language (EFL), as they may become confused as to which variety they should, or even want, to learn, as well as for teachers, and governing bodies, in the sense that they themselves may struggle to decide on which variety to teach (Tollefson, 2007, p. 25).

It has been mentioned before that varieties such as Australian English, and South African English are becoming more autonomous and straying farther away from British or American English standards (Esteves & Hurst, 2009, p. 3). Considering this, and the increasingly interconnected society in which we live, '21st century speakers and learners of English need to be linguistically, sociolinguistically and pragmatically equipped to be able to communicate with native and non-native speakers of English' (Bieswanger, 2008, p. 27), which means that students need to be aware of this diversity so they can learn from, and adapt to it.

'Most textbooks assume that the target language is one of the major standardized varieties, usually American or British English' (Tollefson, 2007, p. 25), and particularly, in EU territory, these two are expected to be the only ones which are referenced frequently. Upon analyzing some textbooks currently being used in primary schools in Portugal, Oliveira (2017) concludes that, while British and American varieties can, in fact, be found in these teaching materials, there is little to no mention of any other variety of English (p. 53). Turning my attention, particularly, to Smiles 4 (Dooley & Evans, 2016), the textbook used at the school in question, I found that it was heavily set in its use of Standard British English, and where some lexicon with closer ties to an American variety could be found, there was no reference to this fact, i.e. some variation can be found, but this has no educational purpose without the evident reference of the distinction between the different varieties.

The amount of English language content we, and our students, have access to nowadays is immense. From movies, television shows and music to video games, and the Internet, we live in an age where everything is easily accessible and contact with, and exposure to different languages, cultures and people is inevitable. Despite this, and even though several varieties are gaining strength outside their own countries or regions, 'the increasing importance of different Englishes (…) however, appears to be still only marginally reflected in ELT curricula and teaching material' (Bieswanger, 2008, p. 28). Tollefson (2007) also says that 'in this sense, ELT is largely unaffected by sociolinguistics, as all sociolinguists agree that variation is normal, necessary, and intrinsic to all language varieties, including standard languages' (p. 30), and, by not including mentions to other varieties, the teaching of EFL is not as effective as it could be.

Apart from the varieties spoken in countries where English is an official language, there are other varieties emerging across the globe (see Figure 2 on page 24) in territories where English is used for a specific purpose, like business in East Asia, and 'local use patterns become more common' (ibid, p.

32), essentially paving the way for a new variety. These varieties allow its speakers to express themselves and their identity, and their culture, based on their own context (Crystal, 2003, p. 145; Farrell & Martin, 2009, p. 4), and, as such, are no more or less valid or relevant than any other variety of English.

Bieswanger (2008, p. 28) reports on encounters with adult students of intermediate English, in which some had shared experiences of having found themselves in 'situations in which their native or non-native interlocutors had been speaking "*so strangely*" (…) that their "*school English*" (…) did not enable them to take part in certain English-language conversations', and clarifies that the standardized variety, which they had learned at school, did not match the variety with which they were faced.

Thus, the question remains: which variety or varieties of English should be taught at schools? The answer, I believe, is not a simple one, nor is it a single one. Since the goal of early childhood education is to prepare students for the future, and help them in the development of a communicative competence (Savignon, p. 2017), and considering that language can never be devoid of its cultural and social influence (Novaski & Werner, 2011, p. 6), the context in which the teaching of EFL is inserted cannot be overlooked.

It is important that teachers take into account the past experiences, the interests and the needs of their students when planning their lessons. It is also likely that, generally, teachers do not get to choose which variety or varieties they will be teaching. The goal is not to teach every variety of English in class, as that would be an impossible task, but rather to guarantee that the students are aware of the linguistic and cultural diversity which exists among English-speaking communities. In chapter 2 of Part II of this report, I will present some data concerning teacher training and preparedness to tackle such topic in their lessons.

During my sessions, I presented some examples of variation between British English and American English, in relation to the topics at hand, but the existence of other varieties was a recurrent theme of conversation from very early on. I believe it is important for students to know that this variation exists, and that this awareness should accompany their journey as learners of the English language.

CHAPTER 4 – FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEACHING IN PRIMARY SCHOOL

Considering that the need to learn different languages is essential nowadays, and that 'o domínio de outras línguas torna-se indispensável na ampliação da visão do mundo e na compreensão de outros povos e culturas (Cruz & Cruz, 2006, p. 1), it was my goal during my internship to work towards a plurilingual and intercultural approach.

One could argue that every classroom, regardless of the nationality or ethnicity of the students present in it, is a multicultural one. Every student that comes to us has had different experiences, different encounters, and has a different story from all others, meaning that they are likely to respond to things differently, based on each of their backgrounds.

This idea was brought to my attention during an English lesson, taught by Professor Patrícia Ferreira, adeptly themed 'Multicultural Classroom'. During this lesson, in which all students were of Portuguese nationality, as well as native speakers of Portuguese, the Professor asked us simple questions to which we all had different answers. I had never thought about that aspect, but it is true that despite the fact that there are cultural items which are shared on a national level, there are regional customs which are not necessarily shared by everyone around us.

Cruz & Orange (2016, p. 3-4) say that our lesson planning must strive to 'respect their [the students'] knowledge, which has already been socially constructed in the community to which they belong', meaning that despite the students' similarities, they are likely to differ greatly from each other as well, and that is to be considered.

Taking advantage of the fact that most children already have positive attitudes towards languages in general (Andrade, Lourenço & Sá, 2010, p. 84), and the fact that, although there is no consensus on what the ideal age for the introduction of a foreign language is, there is data to support that the ability to learn them diminishes at around the age of twelve (Cruz & Miranda, 2005, p. 6), I thought the exposure to several different languages at a primary school level would incite curiosity in further exploration.

Since 'a língua que falamos é, acima de tudo, o instrumento pelo qual transmitimos a nossos pares as ideias que temos a respeito do mundo que nos rodeia' (Novaski & Werner, 2011, p. 1), it seems essential that students are equipped with a communicative competence that allows them to do just that – express themselves and their ideas, as well as understand the world around them without having to deal with linguistic barriers.

My main goal with the exposure to these languages was the prevention of the formation, or further development, of prejudiced or stereotyped ideas about languages and the people who speak them. It is important that students develop awareness to the linguistic and cultural diversity which is an undisputable reality of today's post-globalized society. This idea in reinforced by Cruz & Miranda (2005) who said that 'os principais objetivos que se pretendem atingir com a aprendizagem duma língua estrangeira predem-se com o desenvolvimento de atitudes sócio-afetivas para com as línguas e culturas diferentes da(s) da criança, desenvolvendo, desta forma, também aspetos de carácter

cognitivo' (p. 9), meaning that not only would the students be developing emotionally, but also intellectually, towards a greater understanding of the world, its people, and also themselves.
In the following subchapters, I will be looking at some key concepts, as well as exploring some of the research done on plurilingualism and its relevance, particularly in what concerns English language teaching.

4.1. Key Concepts

Throughout this first part of the report, two terms have been mentioned: multilingualism and plurilingualism. Although these are often used interchangeably, there are authors who distinguish the two. According to the CEFR (2001, p. 4), multilingualism refers only to the knowledge of more than one foreign language, and it can easily be attained by a wider range of options being offered at schools. However, multilingualism can also be defined as the presence of several languages in a certain area, not necessarily meaning that people who live in said area are multilingual (Beacco et. al, 2016, p. 20). On the other hand, the notion of plurilingualism places great emphasis on culture and context, saying that as they learn languages the learners do 'not keep these languages and cultures in strictly separated mental compartments, but rather builds up a communicative competence to which all knowledge and experience of language contributes and in which languages interrelate and interact' (CEFR, 2001, p. 4).
In simpler words, Piccardo (2018) claims that multilingualism does not pay attention to the relationship between the languages spoken, whereas plurilingualism 'portrays the idea that we can hardly consider language diversity and different languages as a series of pieces that are separate from each other' (p. 77). The two terms can also be divided into domains, with multilingualism playing a social role, and plurilingualism an individual one (ibid), which is to say that, at a surface level, we are, in fact, seen as people who possess sufficient knowledge of more than two languages to be labeled multilingual, but, within, the correlation between those languages and all that they entail is one that cannot be ignored.
A communicative competence, previously mentioned in subchapter 1.2, is one that allows individuals who possess it to use language correctly and appropriately (Hymes, 1966), which means they are able to adapt the use of language to the situation and the context they are in. Considering that, at this stage, we speak of plurilingualism, we must also speak of a plurilingual competence, which is defined as 'the ability to use a plural repertoire of linguistic and cultural resources to meet communication needs or interact with people from other backgrounds and contexts, and enrich that repertoire while doing so' (Beacco et. al, 2016, p. 20). Byram, et. al (2013), similarly, define it as the 'capacity to successively acquire and use different competences in different languages, at different levels of proficiency and for different functions' (p. 3). A plurilingual competence, then, is developed through the learning of new languages, and about the cultures which accompany them. For this to happen, however, it is important that linguistic and cultural diversity be promoted and play a stable

role in education, as the development of a plurilingual development is what is believed necessary to resist 'linguistic and cultural homogenisation' (Araújo & Sá & Melo, 2007, p. 52).

Nevertheless, learning a language and about the culture of its people is not enough to guarantee successful communication - to achieve that, one must develop an intercultural communicative competence. Byram et. al (2013) define intercultural competence as the combination of acquired knowledge, skills and attitudes a speaker needs to make use of in order to recognize, understand and interpret the point of view of others (p. 3). Thus, allying the communicative, plurilingual and intercultural competences, combined to aid in the development of an intercultural communicative competence, we then focus on the intercultural aspect of the communicative experience, transforming language learning into the development of a set of skills which will allow the speaker to draw from their linguistic communicative repertoire to establish successful communication with others, while, at the same time, developing a sense for global citizenship (Cruz, 2011, p. 22).

Other concepts I find relevant are those of pluriculturality and interculturality. Pluriculturality can be defined as the ability to partake in different cultural contexts by learning a language (ibid), and interculturality 'denotes the ability to experience otherness and diversity, analyse that experience and derive benefit from it' (ibid), which means that not only would we be capable of participating in cultural situations, but also immerse ourselves in them, understand them and learn from that process, thus contributing to the development of an intercultural competence, that is 'the ability to change one's knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors so as to be open and flexible to other cultures' (Chunhong & Griffiths, 2011, p. 114).

One final concept that is important, for both areas of study – Varieties of English and Plurilingualism, is intercomprehension. The term itself is quite self-explanatory, inter- being a prefix which indicates reciprocity, but different authors have different definitions of it. In fact, there is no consensus on what exactly intercomprehension is, an approach, a skill or a technique.

Cruz & Cruz (2006) define intercomprehension as 'uma abordagem que coloca cada aluno em contacto com uma grande variedade de línguas' (p. 2), while Andrade, Lourenço & Sá (2010, p. 71, based on Morin, 2000) add it is about understanding plurilingual and intercultural communication in an integrated perspective of knowledge construction, with both texts defending that intercomprehension allows the students to develop positive attitudes towards different languages, as well as contributing to their development as individuals, aiding in the understanding of the self and the Other (ibid) and the development of a metalinguistic skill (Cruz & Cruz, 2006, p. 2).

Primarily seen as a cognitive process, intercomprehension defines a speaker's or a group of speakers capacity to understand a foreign language without having studied it beforehand, in a certain given context', but the author offers a second definition, in which intercomprehension is also 'a communication technique through which a speaker S1 uses his/her own linguistic system when relating to a speaker S2 deploying a different linguistic system' (ibid), with both speakers being able to carry out a conversation, each in their own language, without the need for a third, shared one.

I often see examples of this online, with people each speaking their languages, which their interlocutor understands, but perhaps is not comfortable making use of. One other example that comes to mind is that of a movie, shown in a class with Professor Canha, directed by Manoel de Oliveira and titled *Um Filme Falado* (A Talking Picture), which I believe is the perfect illustration of this concept. The scene in question shows four people at a dinner table, all of them of different nationalities and speaking different languages – English, French, Italian and Greek – and, yet, having a conversation amongst themselves without the need for a shared linguistic code.

The development of a plurilingual competence, as well as an intercultural one, and intercomprehension should be the ultimate goals of early childhood foreign language teaching, as these are the ones that would better prepare the students to become successful communicators.

4.2. Plurilingual approach to English teaching

> 'It is time for parents to teach young people early on that in diversity there is beauty and there is strength. We all should know that diversity makes for a rich tapestry, and we must understand that all the threads of that tapestry are equal in value no matter their color.' - Maya Angelou, in *Rainbow in the Cloud*, 2014

This quote, by Maya Angelou, showcases the authors appreciation for diversity, a feeling which I share, and so does the EU, as is evident in their motto 'United in diversity'. The author mentions 'color' specifically, however, this idea can be applied to all other aspects of life in which people differ from each other – language, culture, religion, etc. Angelou also refers to parents as those who should teach their children about diversity, but, as foreign language teachers, no one is better suited for the task than us. It is, then, our job to strive to teach our students about diversity, 'procurando o desenvolvimento, nas crianças, de conhecimentos, atitudes e capacidades fundamentais para lidar com a diversidade, a globalização, a celeridade do conhecimento e o contexto de imprevisibilidade a que se assiste nas sociedades atuais' (Andrade, Lourenço & Sá, 2010, p. 86), hoping that this will help them adjust to, and thrive in, the global societies of today and tomorrow.

As an inexperienced teacher myself, I think about the best way in which to help my students develop these very important skills and attitudes. Considering that young and inexperienced teachers tend to adapt to the type of practices that are generally accepted by and transmitted within the teaching community (Bizarro & Braga, 2005, p. 824), it is a concern of mine that I too will follow in this path. That is why it is important that 'os professores de línguas sejam actores de mudança, numa sociedade multicultural' (ibid), especially the younger ones, as they will be the ones to shape the future of language teaching. With this in mind, it was my goal to plan activities which appealed to the students emotionally, as this dimension 'fosters their connection to their own identity, their previous experiences, and with the world of sensations' (Cruz & Orange, 2016, p. 4).

As has been previously mentioned, the introduction of a foreign language early on is highly beneficial for young learners, as there is evidence to suggest that children have a greater ease learning foreign languages than adults do (Cruz & Medeiros, 2009, p. 6). More recent studies suggest that our capacity to learn languages does indeed diminish throughout the years (Schmid, 2016, WEB).

Not only is it easier to learn languages as a child, but the goal of early exposure to different languages is to incite the curiosity and interest of students towards languages in general (Candelier, et. al 2007, p. 21), as well as help them develop values such as tolerance and respect for those that are different, in hopes of preparing them for a future in Europe, which defends these same values (Cruz & Medeiros, 2009, p. 3). Furthermore, learning foreign languages will equip the students with skills such as linguistic and communicative reflection (ibid, p. 2), metalinguistic, metacommunicative, and metacognitive strategies (Andrade, Lourenço & Sá, 2010, p. 81), which they can then reutilize. The early development of these skills and strategies will aid these students in the learning of other foreign languages in the future. Having said that, one could argue that students who are introduced to foreign languages, and cultures, early on are likely to have a greater ease in learning other languages in the future than those whose first contact with foreign languages happens later in life.

According to Cruz & Miranda (2005, p. 2), English is the most sought after foreign language in schools. This makes sense, as English is still seen as a global language, however, 'one single vehicular language is not a panacea for international communication in a linguistically complex Europe' (Trim, 1997), and so a plurilingual approach is the best option given the current climate, seen as it makes it possible for students to learn more efficiently, due to the fact that some competences are general and while being taught a new language, the students will reinforce the knowledge they possess of the languages they already know (Cenoz & Gorter, 2013. p. 596).

Learning foreign languages is now an essential part of education as, beyond the linguistic domain, learning a language means that we are one step closer to understanding different people and their cultures, thus opening up to the world (Cruz & Cruz, 2006, p. 1). This openness will not only allow us to make stronger connections with other people, but it will also help us see the world through their eyes (Sousa, 2004, p. 31), hopefully allowing us to "walk in each other's shoes" and understand what life is like for the Other. Moreover, knowing different languages, cultures, and peoples, will help the students find 'espaços num mundo em constant tranformação e onde a mudança de línguas é cada vez mais solicitada' (Andrade, Lourenço & Sá, 2010, p. 73), while at the same continuing to develop skills and strategies which aid in language learning and communication (ibid).

On this note, I believe it is relevant to introduce the concept of linguistic relativity – commonly known as the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis. This theory defends that each language has its own categories, and that we, as native speakers of a certain language, are influenced by these categories in how we see the world. Yule (2006) claims that there are two versions of this theory: a weak version, in which 'we not only talk, but to a certain extent probably also think about the world of experience, using the categories provided by our language' (p. 218); and a strong version, which the author calls linguistic

determinism, which claims that we cannot think beyond the categories provided by our language (ibid).

Following this train of thought, Tomatis (1991) defends that 'ao mudar de língua, progredimos e enriquecemos o nosso pensamento. O indivíduo não é privado da sua identidade, confere-lhe, antes, uma nova dimensão' (p. 57). Considering this theory, I believe that foreign language teaching gains yet another layer of importance, particularly in today's society. If we can offer our students an opportunity to learn to see the world in different ways, to enrich themselves as both students and individuals, then we must take it. This is what I aimed to do, through exposure to several languages and content related to different cultures, sparking conversation between the students.

Cruz & Orange (2016) see 'language learning as a commitment to citizenship' (p. 4) in 21st century EU. Sousa (2004, p. 31) adds that exercising citizenship intimately correlates with possessing a plurilingual and pluricultural competence, and Breidbach (2003) emphasizes the 'linguistic need for the development of citizenship through participation in a multilingual, culturally diverse, and global setting' (p. 16). In a society so diverse as that found in the EU, where every citizen possesses not only their national citizenship, but also a European one, it is important that we are prepared to actively engage in the democratic scene of the EU, and informed so as to make educated decisions. It is, then, our job as language teachers, and educators, to help set our students on the right path so they may become active citizens.

Having said that, it is important to emphasize that the goal is not to achieve proficiency in all the languages, the key is awareness (Piccardo, 2018, p. 80). Most multilingual speakers do not have a native-like proficiency of all the languages they speak, in fact, that is very uncommon (Sridhar, 2002), particularly with foreign language learners, which is why having native speakers as a reference for the level of proficiency we must achieve is inappropriate (Cenoz & Gorter, 2013, p. 594), especially if we take into account the amount of native speakers (of English) there are around the world and the fact that each of them use language in their own way.

Piccardo (2018) says that plurilingualism is not the same as polyglotism, and that plurilingualism 'means that you have this awareness, this capacity to draw on different resources, and also freedom to do that, not just the ability, but this confidence and risk-taking attitude of using whatever elements you have, without being confined by being restricted to purity' (p. 80), which allows the plurilingual speaker to, more or less successfully, communicate even in situations where they don't necessarily have enough knowledge of a certain language, but can still draw on those skills and strategies they have developed. Allowing students the freedom to use both their native and target language in the English classroom, with enough margin to make [reasonable] mistakes, gives them an opportunity to explore and represent the relationships between their lived experiences and their acquired academic knowledge. Fluency, however, cannot be taught directly, its development is a timely process which requires a sufficient amount of linguistic competence to be built beforehand (Krashen, 1998, p. 32). It is to be noted that the purpose of language education is not the achievement of absolute fluency, but rather the search for the development of an intercultural

communicative competence, which equips students with the necessary tools to succeed in the future.

In language learning, comparing the target language(s) to one's mother tongue is fundamental (Novaski & Werner, 2011, p. 3), making it a more efficient learning experience. During this process, the students learn about the target language, as well as their own mother tongue, as they develop their metalinguistic skill and understand things they previously didn't, causing them to look at their mother tongue in a different light (Piccardo, 2018, p. 81).

Considering all that has been said in chapters 2, 3 and 4, I believe that the study of this matter is a relevant one, particularly the focus on varieties of English as that is not a common topic approached in primary schools. The linguistic and cultural diversity present around the world, and particularly in the European Union, and increasingly so in Portugal, is a matter that should be brought to students' attention early on, and my belief in that is what drove me to the choice of this subject matter.

PART II

EMPIRICAL STUDY – CLASSROOM PRACTICES AND RESULTS

CHAPTER 1 – ACTION RESEARCH: THE PROJECT DESIGN

The following chapter focuses on the design of the research project, and the characterization of the environment in which it was developed. This project was developed within the scope of the course unit *Prática de Ensino Supervisionada*, inserted in the third and last semester of the Master's Degree in Teaching of English in Primary School. Every aspect of this traineeship was developed under the supervision of the school's English teacher and a faculty member from the university.

1.1. Research methodology, questions and objectives

At the starting line of this traineeship, we were presented with the challenge to find a research topic which would bring forth new and useful knowledge in what concerns the teaching of English in Primary Schools. As seen in chapter 1 of part I, the introduction of English as a compulsory subject in Primary School is a recent development in Portugal. As such, not many studies have been done in this particular area of expertise. That said, the plurilingual approach has been the subject of study with young learners for a while now (cf. Andrade, Lourenço & Sá, 2010; Andrade & Martins, 2009; Cruz & Medeiros, 2009) due to its growing importance in today's post-globalized society. However, the matter of linguistic variation, rather than diversity, has, to my knowledge, not been studied in relation to Primary School aged children up to this point, with the exception of the study carried out by Oliveira (2017) which included a component referent to the South African English variety.

With this in mind, it can be argued that some additional difficulties arose from the lack of practical examples to stand on while designing this study, due to the fact that 'there are no studies about the same subjects, as occurs in exploratory investigations' (Minayo, 2012, p. 623). We will, then, proceed on the foundation that this was an exploratory investigation, with the mail goal of understanding whether or not the introduction of a theme such as language variation could be a) interesting enough to capture the students' attention, and b) beneficial to the students' overall learning experience. In order to do this, a project design was drafted, and research questions and objectives were formulated to guide the investigative process, i.e. 'um conjunto flexível de linhas orientadoras que relaciona os paradigmas teóricos com as estratégias de pesquisa e os métodos de recolha do material empírico' (Aires, 2015, p. 20).

As was my intention to develop an investigation based on my own pedagogical practices, I believe this study finds itself within the realm of a qualitative epistemological and methodological perspective, seen as 'the main verb of qualitative analysis is understand' (Minayo, 2012, p. 623), which is what I sought out to do. A qualitative methodology allows the researcher to approach the field work without restricting themselves by pre-determined categories (Moura, 2003, p. 12). When employing a qualitative methodology, I find myself working within an interpretative paradigm (Aires, 2015), taking a naturalistic approach which is considered better suited for the first contact with research work in education (Afonso, 2014, p. 14), in which 'theory gives method, but method also

directs theory' (Frey, 1994, p. 552), i.e. because this type of investigation is based on the continuous work done in the classroom, one applies the theory in one's practice, while, at the same time, that practice reshapes ideas and formulates more questions which, in turn, will lead to further exploration of theory.

Aires (2015) lists six interpretative paradigms (p. 19, based on Denzin & Lincoln, 1994), constructivism being the one I most closely relate to. According to the author, this paradigm assumes a) a relativist ontology, which defends the existence of multiple realities, b) a subjective epistemology, wherein the researcher and the subjects of the investigation have their own understanding of the reality they are inserted in, and c) a naturalistic methodological approach (Aires, 2015, p. 18). This definition is similar to one offered by Lincoln & Guba (1985) for what they call the naturalistic paradigm, as they too defend a) the multiplicity of realities, b) the idea that the researcher and subjects are in constant interaction and cannot be viewed separately, c) the exclusive validity of idiographic statements - which pertain to a specific individual, or group and should not be generalized (Crossman, 2017, WEB) -, d) the 'mutual simultaneous shaping' of those involved, and e) the idea that all inquiry results in valuable information (Frey, 1994, p. 554-555). I find it important, however, to mention Alarcão's critical experientialism (2001), a relatively new paradigm which values the shared building of knowledge between those involved in the investigation and defends the simultaneous work in research and application (Leitão, 2009, p. 66). In this perspective, the work is built based on practice, and through reflection, observation, transformation and communication with the researcher themselves, their practice and those who surround them (Alarcão, 2016, p. 45). Considering this, I believe I have, in what concerns this study, positioned myself within a naturalistic interpretative paradigm, with some critical experientialism characteristics, supported by a qualitative methodological perspective.

Taking into account the subject matter at hand, I set out to answer the following research questions:

1. How can English, as a language and a primary school subject, contribute to the development of a plurilingual and intercultural competence?
2. What role can, or should, different varieties of English, play in Primary School English teaching?
3. Are teachers prepared to approach the topic of English variation in the classroom?

With these in mind, I formulated objectives, and determined which data collection tools and techniques to make use of, which I believed would help me find adequate answers to the questions presented above. Scientific literature, field notes, group discussion, questionnaires, and lesson plans are the tools and techniques I ultimately decided to use to collect the necessary data to proceed with this study.

As mentioned, I resorted to the reviewing of relevant scientific literature pertaining to the importance of foreign language teaching to young learners (cf. Cruz & Orange, 2016; Cruz & Cruz, 2006), the benefits of early exposure to foreign languages and cultures (cf. Sousa, 2004; Andrade, Lourenço & Sá, 2010), and the extensive variation found within the English language (Crystal, 1986;

Crystal, 2003; Meyer, 2009), which have all been discussed in detail in part I of this report, to help build a foundation on which to guide my practice on. This type of technique allows the researcher to gather information they would otherwise not be able to obtain, in quantity and of quality, while at the same type saving time best spent elsewhere (Gil, 2008, p. 147).

Secondly, I used field notes, taken after every lesson, which resulted of both participatory and non-participatory observation of the class' lessons. 'A observação consiste na recolha de informação, de modo sistemático, através do contacto directo com situações específicas' (Aires, 2015, p. 24-25), and by taking a stance as an 'observer as participant' I was able to participate in the activities being carried out while, at the same time, being fully conscious of my observational goal, which allowed me to gather information about the group and its involvement in the activities in a more complete manner (Kawulich, 2005, WEB). Some of the advantages of this method of data collection, according to Colás (1998), are the potential for the study of group dynamics and relationships in different contexts; the ability to easily gather inner-group information which would, otherwise, hardly be obtained; and the easy gathering and register of non-verbal information picked up during this process (Aires, 2015, p. 27). Kawulich (2005, WEB) adds that 'observations may help the researcher have a better understanding of the context and phenomenon under study', which aligns with Colás' ideas in what pertains to the easier immersion of the researcher into the culture of the studied group, allowing for a broader, more complex view of the group as a whole, and also the individuals which are a part of it. Furthermore, this direct involvement with the subjects of the investigation, and the systematic register of field notes, made possible the maintaining of a reflexive posture on part of the investigator throughout the whole process (Fernandes & Tomás, 2011, p. 11).

Group discussion was another data collection technique I decided to employ, as it seemed to be an easy, yet fruitful way to gather information from the students, during the course of the lessons. This technique is normally used in qualitative research, and it consists of the production of spoken speeches by members of a particular social group, 'possibilitando uma representação em que se reflecte a dinâmica de uma realidade' (Aires, 2015, p. 38). This technique works on the basis that any conversation is a "whole", i.e. no interjection can be withdrawn from the whole without losing its meaning (ibid, p. 39), as they are made within a specific situation, in response to a specific stimulus, and with a particular intent, and, therefore, cannot be decontextualized. Aires (2015) adds that this technique, while employed in the classroom, needs to be inserted naturally into the course of the lesson (p. 40), which means that these moments need to be planned and time must be set aside for them. I employed this technique several times, by way of informal conversation with the students, but having always planned to do so in relation to the topic of the lesson.

One other data collection tool used for this study was a questionnaire, aimed at primary school English teachers. Questionnaires consist of a group of questions which is presented to the subjects in order to gather information referring to knowledge, beliefs, feelings, values, etc. (Gil, 2008, p. 121). Formulating a questionnaire is the process of transforming research objectives into specific questions (ibid), hoping that the data you obtain from them will be useful in furthering the investigation at

hand. Some of the advantages of the employment of this tool are: a) the fact that it guarantees the anonymity of those who take it, b) the possibility of taking it at whatever time is most convenient, particularly in this case, as the questionnaire was taken online, and c) the separation between the investigator and the participants (ibid, p. 122), all of which help to ensure the commodity of those answering the questions, decreasing the chances of their answers being in any way compromised by the investigator.

Finally, I also gathered information from my own lesson plans, which I constructed based on theoretical research and previous observation of the students in their learning environment. The analysis of these documents allows me to revisit, and better understand the purpose of, and the intention behind the activities carried out with the students during the course of the traineeship. Table 1, on page 66, summarizes the project design presented in this subchapter.

Research Questions	Objectives	Data	Analysis
How can English, as a language and a Primary School Subject, contribute to the development of a plurilingual and intercultural competence?	To reflect on how the introduction of English in the primary school curricula can aid in the early development of these competences.	Scientific literature; Group discussion; Unit plans; Field notes.	Documental analysis; Content analysis.
What role can, or should, different varieties of English play in primary school English teaching?	To reflect on if, and how, the introduction of this subject matter can be beneficial to students at this educational level; To collect and examine teachers' viewpoints on this matter.	Scientific literature; Questionnaires; Field notes.	Documental analysis; Content analysis.
Are teachers prepared to approach the topic of English variation in the classroom?	To ascertain if teacher training plans include references to this subject matter; To collect and examine teachers' viewpoints on this matter.	University courses study plans; Questionnaires.	Content analysis; Statistics analysis.

Table 1 – Research questions and objectives, and data collection and analysis options.

Considering the chosen epistemological and methodological paradigm, data collection tools and techniques, as well as the context in which this research was developed, it is important to note that this study presents characteristics of an action research study. This type of research consists of a process of careful and systematic examination of one's own educational practice (Ferrance, 2000, p.

1). The author adds that the motivation behind this type of research is often the simple wish of wanting to know more, as 'good teachers are, after all, themselves students' (ibid, p. 13) who should strive towards the constant expansion and renewal of their possessed knowledge. In this same line of thought, Moura (2003) says that action research is synonymous with applied research, i.e. the investigator is actively involved in the situation which they are studying (p. 14). This is a complex process which requires active in-practice research, with the purpose of improving upon that practice (Alarcão, 2001, p. 24).

Stenhouse (1998) defends that action research studies are automatically substantial due to their core goal of benefiting the students' learning experience and/or propel the teachers' professional development directly, and adds that 'a investigação-ação realizada pelos docentes, torna-se o meio pelo qual o currículo se concretiza' (Jordão, 2004, p. 4), a vision that is shared by Elliot (2000) who defines action research as the study of a social situation aimed at improving the quality of the interactions which occur within it (Jordão, 2004, p.5). Carr and Kemmis (1988) share similar views, defining action research as a form of self-reflexive research, carried out by teachers in order to better understand their educational environment and their practices (Jordão, 2004, p. 6). We are then 'perante uma perspectiva interaccionista e sócio-construtivista, de aprendizagem experiencial, de formação em situação de trabalho, de investigação-acção' (Alarcão, 2001, p. 4), in which the subject of the investigation is, first and foremost, the teacher's practice and how it resonates with their students, while the purpose of the investigation is to find ways in which to improve the aforementioned practices, while considering not only the students' educational and social needs but also the personal and professional development of the teacher investigator.

1.2. The school and the students: a brief characterization

As mentioned in Part I, this traineeship was carried out in a private school, in Vila Nova de Gaia, Porto. In order to characterize the students and the environment, we must first learn about the school itself, which was founded in 1879.

According to the school's Educational Project, this is a Private and Cooperative Education establishment currently operating on two educational levels: Pre and Primary school, in accordance with rules stipulated by, and with permission from, the Ministry of Education (Projeto Educativo, p. 7). The same document lists as some of the basic principles of the institution: freedom, autonomy, responsibility, flexibility, courage, decisiveness, originality, critical thinking, solidarity, and respect (ibid, p. 7-8).

It is the school's intention, as referenced in its Educational Project, to promote curricular transversality, and raise awareness for environmental conservation, as well as, in what pertains to the curricular orientations of both Pre and Primary schools, which make a case for the discovery and exploration of new things: to provide opportunities for intercultural exchanges, to create opportunities for contact with new situations which also allow for the exploration of the world, to

promote the use of technological and communicative tools, to provide opportunities for the development of projects, and organize activities which promote and develop explorative and investigative skills (ibid, p. 15). The school's interest in diverse learning experiences is extended to its offer of extracurricular activities. According to the school's website, it currently has available the following: ballet, piano, swimming, chess, soccer, golf, mindfulness and robotics, as well as a study hall.

Apart from this, the school has also implemented a project for Content and Language Integrated Learning . This project entails the introduction of the English language in the teaching of subjects such as Math or Science and is being developed in partnership with *Escola Superior de Educação* and its investigation center. The project was implemented in the school year 2017/2018 with the goal of, after a three year period, transforming the school into a bilingual one (ibid). Although the full implementation of this project was exclusive to new year 1 classes, the remaining students also have weekly sessions of CLIL, some of which I was able to observe.

From what I was able to witness, the school and its governing bodies, do, in fact, strive to present their students with exciting opportunities for contact with people from different backgrounds and cultures. I was fortunate enough to have been able to aid in that, instances which will be explored in detail later on.

As mentioned, this is a private institution, with, for the most part, students of an elevated socio-economic status. According to the school's Annual Activities Program, the students' families are frequently involved in activities throughout the school year, with occasions such as holidays being marked by school plays or showcases. However, these are not the only times the families are involved, nor are families the only people to be involved in activities at the school. The institution has strong ties with the community it is inserted in, providing the students with opportunities to contact with different people, e.g. students from a local Senior University, or students from a local association which deals with people suffering from mental illnesses (Associação Portuguesa de Pais e Amigos do Cidadão Deficiente Mental). Furthermore, the students are taken on field trips which allow them to explore the world outside of the classroom, making for a more holistic learning experience.

At the time of the traineeship, which was carried out during the school year 2017/2018, there were three 4th year classes at the school – 4º A, 4º B and 4º C. The subject of this study was 4º B, which consisted of 20 students, seven of who were girls (35%) and 13 of whom were boys (65%). Of these 20 students, 19 were nine years old at the beginning of the school year (95%) and one was eight years old (5%). Two of the students in this class were classed as having special needs, and during my initial observational period – before I began teaching – I noticed that two other students seemed to need some special attention. During my lessons, I tried to guarantee that all the students were engaged and attentive, as it soon became clear that they were not all equally participative, and it was my goal to ensure that the entire class was benefiting from the lesson. Some disparity on the level of English understood by the students also became evident, with two students, in particular, standing

out from the rest. Ultimately, the group functioned well, with the students being able to work together and help each other, and so the aforementioned disparity was hardly noticeable throughout the course of the lessons.

CHAPTER 2 – PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF RESULTS

In this chapter, I will present the results obtained through the data collection tools and techniques mentioned in chapter 1. Said presentation will be accompanied by a critical content analysis and interpretation of those results, under a qualitative and quantitative perspectives, and taking into consideration the theoretical framework presented in Part I of this report.

The presentation of data and results will follow the same chronological order in which the research questions were presented in Table 1, with each subchapter ahead looking to answer the research question it pertains to.

2.1. Hello, Hola, Namaste and Nǐ hǎo: a plurilingual approach to language teaching

The present report focuses heavily on matters of linguistic and cultural diversity. In order to gather information on this topic, I decided to include in my practice activities which featured foreign languages other than English. It is suggested that the best time to introduce a foreign language is before the age of ten (Wlassoff, 2018, WEB), with some saying that the children's ability to learn it begins to diminish at around the age of twelve (Cruz & Miranda, 2005, p. 6), which means that primary school aged children are prime candidates for foreign language learning.

Considering, on top of that, that children are naturally curious about things that are different, and less prone to become embarrassed when making mistakes (ibid, p. 8), as well as the fact that they generally demonstrate positive attitudes towards languages (Andrade, Lourenço & Sá, 2010, p. 84), primary school seems to be the best stage at which to begin working towards the development of their plurilingual competence, which would allow them to acquire and use competences in different languages for different purposes, and an intercultural competence, defined as the 'combination of knowledge, skills, attitudes and behaviours which allow a speaker, to varying degrees, to recognise, understand, interpret and accept other ways of living and thinking beyond his or her home culture' (Byram et. al, 2013, p. 3). Early language teaching can also help in awakening children's overall interest in and curiosity towards languages in general (Cruz & Cruz, 2006, p. 8), which would benefit them in their long-term journey through life in the 21st century.

Taking this into account, I decided to plan for activities which included three languages spoken in countries or territories where English has legal status: Spanish, the Mexican variety, as this is the most widely spoken variety in the United States; Hindi, an official language of India, alongside English; and, finally, Mandarin, spoken alongside English in the Chinese territory of Hong Kong. In the following subchapters, I will present the activities carried out as way of introduction for each of these languages, as well as the students' reactions to and thoughts about these activities.

2.1.1. *En español* : Spanish language in the English classroom

Spanish is now the second most widely spoken language in the world, with close to 500 million native speakers, and a total number of speakers estimated to be closer to 800 million (Intituto Cervantes, 2018, p. 5) as it is the language of the majority of countries in Central and South America, as well as Portugal's only neighbor, Spain. The Spanish language has seen a rise in its status and widespread in recent years, particularly in terms of Spanish-language media content being distributed worldwide (Petridis, 2017, WEB). Due to this fact, as well as a personal affinity with the language, I thought it would be interesting to see how the students reacted to the introduction of Spanish in their English lessons, anticipating that they would be intrigued, seen that, as defended by Andrade, Lourenço & Sá (2010), children tend to express positive attitudes towards languages (p. 84).

This was the only out of the three aforementioned languages which was present throughout the traineeship, i.e. Hindi and Mandarin were both explored once, while Spanish played a recurring role (see annexes 1 and 2 for the complete unit plans). The first time it was introduced in class, I used a PowerPoint presentation (see Figure 4) for the purpose of vocabulary presentation. The students had, in the previous lesson, learned this vocabulary in English, so apart from its role in a plurilingual approach, it also served as revision. Before introducing the activity to the group, I projected the presentation on the board, where it read *'Partes de la casa'*. I noticed the students were confused at first, as I saw them looking at the board and then commenting amongst themselves. A short moment had passed when I turned to them and asked if they knew what was written on the board, the following interaction having been made note of in my field notes:

> T: *Does anyone know what that says?*
> Ss: *Partes da casa.*
> T: *That's right. What language is that?*
> Ss: *Espanhol!*
> T: *Very well, it says 'partes de la casa'. Do you want to say it with me?*
> Ss: *Partes de la casa.*
> T: *Well done! So, what do you think we're going to do now?*
> S13: *Vamos aprender espanhol.*
> T: *Yes, we are. Would you like to? Vocês querem aprender espanhol?*
> Ss: *Sim!*

From the start of the activity, the students seemed excited about the prospect of a new language being introduced in class. As the activity progressed, I noticed that even the students who had shied from joining in at the beginning, had begun to take part alongside the others. Even though it was a simple vocabulary presentation activity, the students were engaged and participative; in fact, they seemed to be enjoying it. I took particular note of an interjection made by a student halfway through the exercise:

T: Everyone say it with me… 'el baño'.

Ss: *'El baño'* [repeated it twice]

T: *How do we say this in English?*

S17: *Bathroom.*

S8: *Às vezes quando compramos gel de banho diz lá 'gel de baño'.*

This interjection proves that the students, to varying extents, and in the same way we do, contact with languages frequently in their daily lives, and this should not be ignored, but rather taken advantage of, since through the process of learning a new language the students will so be reinforcing whatever linguistic knowledge they already possess (Cenoz & Gorter, 2013. p. 596).

The purpose of this activity was to assess their reaction to the unforeseen introduction of a language other than English in class and based on the enthusiasm with which they partook in the activity, I was sufficiently convinced that the group would react positively to similar activities in the future.

Figure 4 – 'En español' activity.

This activity focused solely on the oral aspect of the language, taking to repetition to, hopefully, aid in the memorizing of the sounds of the language (Cruz & Cruz, 2006, p. 8). That said, the students were given a worksheet so they could have a written register of what they had learned.

Once finished with the vocabulary presentation, it was time to move onto the second part of the activity which consisted of a matching game. Each student was given a piece of paper with a part of the house written on it: half of them in English, the other in Spanish. The original idea was to have the students get up and go around the room to find their pair, as movement inside the classroom can serve as both a motivator and engagement tool, but it also provides benefits to the students. Unfortunately, due to imposed time constraints, this was not possible. Alternatively, one by one, the students read their word aloud to the class, using the structure 'I have the…' or the Spanish alternative 'Yo tengo el/la…', and the student who had their pair would have to announce it.

At the end of the lesson, when the activity had concluded, I asked the students if they had liked it, and if they would want to do it more often. They all seemed quite enthusiastic about the idea of another moment like this one taking place in the English classroom. It was then that one student asked if they would be learning any other languages, which I found both intriguing and exciting. I asked the students what other languages they would like to learn and was met with a long list of possibilities: French, Italian, Russian, German, Japanese, and, among others, the one I would

ultimately opt for, Mandarin. This is an example of one of the activities carried out in the classroom which involved the Spanish language. It was also the first time a new language was introduced, and as such, it allowed me to withdraw some conclusions: a) the students were curious about the new language they were learning, showing that the subject of foreign languages was of interest to them, and b) the "newness" of this type of activity influenced the classroom dynamic, acting as a motivational agent and grasping the students attention.

2.1.2. *Same, same but different*: Storytelling

'Same, same but different' (see Annex 3) is a children's book written Jenny Kostecki-Shaw and published in 2004. The book focuses on two children, Elliot and Kailash, who live in America and in India, respectively. The two become pen pals through school, and begin sending each other drawings and pictures of different aspects of their lives: their houses, their families, etc. Through the exchange of drawings and letters, they learn about each other's world, realizing that, despite their differences, they are still very similar. Same, same but different. I selected this book because I felt it responded nicely to the school's educational project in which contact with different cultures is encouraged, and because I felt it provided the students with an opportunity to develop social and cultural skills, something which we should strive to do from an early age (Sousa, 2004, p. 71).

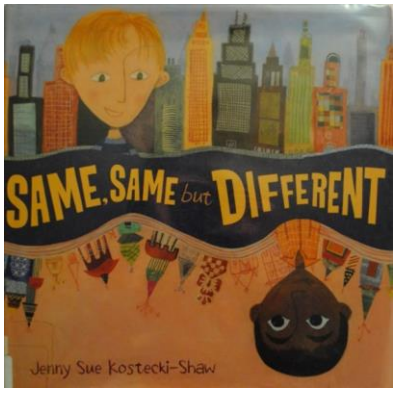


Figure 5 – *Same, same but different* book cover.

'Using real books with pupils in order to develop critical thinking skills can be an engaging, natural, familiar and fun task' (Cruz & Orange, 2016, p. 9), and this book in particular allowed for the exploration of the representation of two distant and distinct cultures. The students, and myself, were sat on the ground, surrounding the board on which the pages of the book were projected, and before we began reading the story, as a pre-reading activity, I asked the students to look at the cover and tell me what they saw.

T: *What differences do you see between the two sides?*

S5: *Os meninos não são da mesma cor.*

S7*: The buildings are different. Os do lado do Elliot são maiores.*

T: *What do you think that means? Porquê que acham que os edifícios são diferentes?*

S18: *Porque o Elliot vive na cidade, e o outro menino não.*

T: *Where does Kailash live then?*

S18: *Se calhar num país da África…*

S12: *Ou da Ásia*.

T: *What about Elliot? Where does he live?*

S9: *Em Inglaterra?*

S4: *Eu acho que é na América.*

There was a moment of discussion during which the students tried to determine where each of the boys was from based on the backgrounds behind them, and their clothes, comparing the two and drawing on their pre-existent cultural knowledge to guess countries they felt would fit these representations, thus promoting critical and creative thinking, as well as allowing the students to develop their intercultural competence (Byram et. al, 2013, p. 3).

The telling of this story was accompanied by signs, both from American and Portuguese Sign Language (cf. Annex 4). I believed that the addition of this aspect would contribute to the involvement of the students in the telling of the story, transforming this moment into an active rather a passive one.

Figure 6 – Sign language in storytelling.

Furthermore, throughout the story, we would pause to examine the illustrations, and discuss the differences we could find between Elliot's and Kailash's world. What this book allowed me to do was bring to the classroom the potential for a cultural discussion (Cruz & Medeiros, 2009, p. 2) between the students and myself, which resulted in the comparison of the different worlds being presented to us by the book, as well as the students' own.

At one point in the story, after Elliot and Kailash have compared their homes, families, pets, cities, and modes of transportation to school, Elliot shows his friend the alphabet he uses, the English alphabet. Kailash returns the favor, by sending him a drawing of his own alphabet.

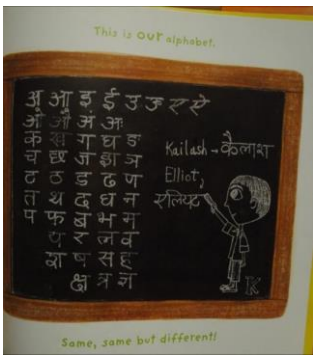


Figure 7 – Page from *Same, same but different.*

The students were asked if they had ever seen this alphabet, and if they knew which language it was used in. To try and help, I asked what languages they knew that used alphabets different from Portuguese or English. The students named Arabic, Hebrew, and even Spanish – S18: *Em espanhol há o 'n' com tilde*, but none of them mentioned Hindi. I then told them which language this alphabet is used in and asked them in what country people speak Hindi. At this point, several students correctly answered India. The students seemed curious about this alphabet, more so when I showed them the table pictured below:

Figure 8 – Hindi alphabet.

Upon seeing this, some of the students began attempting to sound out the letters, showcasing once again their curiosity and their interest in languages in general. Once we reached the end of the story, I presented the students with a problem: *What if Elliot or Kailash didn't get their letters?* The purpose of this was the promotion of creative thinking and the development of problem solving (Cruz & Cruz, 2006, p. 4). While I do believe that a better problem could have been brought up, the purpose of the activity was still met, with the students theorizing as to why this could have happened, and how they could get it back.

Similarly to what had happened with the introduction of Spanish, the students reacted positively to not only their brief contact with the Hindi language, but also the feeling of strangeness (Byram, 1997) brought by the differences between their own world, and the representation of Kailash's in the book. I believe this moment provided the students with a memorable and significative learning experience,

and also aided the further development of, what seemed to be, already positive attitudes and feelings towards linguistic and cultural diversity.

This story was called back upon some time after this activity was carried out, as the opportunity presented itself for the students to trade postcards with a group of children from a Russian school. I was asked to take over and help the students plan and write their postcards, which allowed me to promote the contact with different peoples, languages and cultures even further. When told about this exchange, several of the students mentioned the story *'Same, same but different'* saying that they too were now going to be presenting part of their world to a child from a different country. A discussion was had in order to determine what type of information the students should share with their new friends, and they decided that they wanted to show them their favorite places in the cities they live in, their favorites foods, etc. As the postcards were being sent out weeks before Christmas, I encouraged the students to write 'Happy Holidays' using the Russian Cyrillic script, making yet another connection to the book, where both children also used different alphabets. Some examples of postcards the students produced can be seen in Figure 9.

Figure 9 – Postcards sent to a Russian school.

The fact that the students made the connection between the story they had read and this activity shows that the students found the storytelling activity to be one of significance, one which provided an effective and lasting learning experience by appealing to the emotional dimension of the learning process (Cruz & Orange, 2016, p. 4) and allowing the students to be involved, so they could later relate that which they had learned to their own experience.

2.1.3. The Very Hungry Caterpillar: 好饿的毛毛虫双语

The topic of the second unit plan (cf. Annex 2) was '*Food is great!*' (Dooley & Evans, 2016, p. 40-51), and so I chose to explore the story book '*The Very Hungry Caterpillar*', written by Eric Carle and published in 1969. However, considering that I had already undertaken a storytelling activity, I decided to do it differently, so as to provide the students with different types of activities. Taking advantage of one of the best resources available to us, the Internet, and not trusting my Mandarin

skills, I took to YouTube to find something I could use to help in this endeavor. I was able to find a dual language video which narrated the story, while also using animation. The video was uploaded by a native speaker of Mandarin, hence my decision to use it in class, providing the students with authentic contact with the language.

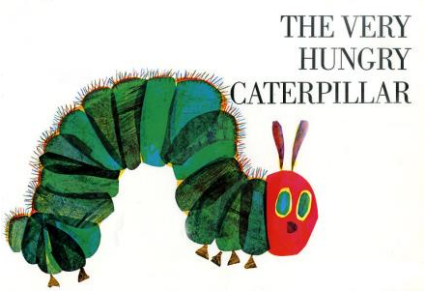


Figure 10 – *The Very Hungry Caterpillar* book cover.

I designed a story guide (cf. Annex 5) that the students would have to fill out as they listened to the story. The activity was organized in three parts, in the same way that a normal storytelling activity would be:

First, the students were shown the book cover and asked if they knew the story, or what it was about. After they all said no, I asked them to examine the book cover and title to try and find out. Following a brief moment of discussion, they all agreed that the story would be related to food;

Secondly, the students were shown the video once, having been able to focus all of their attention on the screen, thus being able to both listen to and read the story in Mandarin. During the first listening, the students were attentive and enveloped in the activity. Once the video ended, I distributed the story guides and read through them with the group to guarantee that they understood all of the questions. I then played the video a second time, once again, looking to repetition to aid in the acquiring of the sounds of the languages (Cruz & Cruz, 2006, p.8) and this time, the students were expected to listen to the story while simultaneously filling out the story guide. Finally, I replayed the video a third, and last, time so that those who had not been able to completely finish could have the opportunity to do so.

The post "reading" activity was a Mandarin trace sheet, seen in Figure 11, featuring the most relevant vocabulary items taken from the story. I wanted to provide the students with the time to try their hand at drawing the characters, and they seemed eager to do so. I handed out the trace sheets and told them to trace the characters as many times as they felt necessary, and then maybe try to draw them on their own notebooks, which almost all the students did.

Figure 11 – Mandarin trace sheet.

As the lesson came to an end, one of the students asked if I could show them how their name would look like in Chinese characters, as they had seen Kailash write Elliot's name in '*Same, same but different*'. Once again, the natural curiosity children are said to have towards what is new and different was being showcased.

After carrying out these activities with the students, and seeing the way they responded to them, with openness and enthusiasm, I believe that a plurilingual approach is not only beneficial for the development of a plurilingual and an intercultural competences, and ultimately their overall development as individuals and citizens of the world, but that this type of activities can, in fact, function as a "break" from the norm and, consequently, as a motivational agent for students.

As stated in Part I of this report, the early exposure to foreign languages is used as a means to promote curiosity towards languages and language learning (Cavalier et. al, 2007, p. 21), considering that knowledge of other languages has become indispensable in the 21st century (Cruz & Cruz, 2006, p. 1) and it falls to language teachers to offer our students the best chance at acquiring such important knowledge and skills.

In the next subchapter, I will be looking at pertinent literature and teacher's perceptions to try and ascertain whether language variation should play a role in language education.

2.2. Varieties of English: is there enough room in the classroom?

One of the core aspects of this report is the emphasis on varieties of English and their importance in the world we live in today. As discussed in chapter 3 of Part I, these varieties are viewed by some as languages in their own right. McArthur (2001) and Crystal (2003) talk about a family of languages, world Englishes rather than one single language. The question, then, is how should we teach English to our students? Better yet, which English should we teach?

In the age of the Internet and considering our primary school students are digital natives, term coined by Prensky (2001), i.e. they have grown up in a time where technology is all but unavoidable,

and as a result they are comfortable using it, they have much easier access to content from all over the world than previous generations did. Whether it be in school or at home, through books, music, movies, video games, etc., our students are in frequent contact with languages other than their own. In English class, they are in contact with a) their English teacher, b) the textbook and other teaching materials, and c) each other. In this case, the teacher (myself) identifies very closely with an American variety of English, while the textbook (*Smiles 4*) uses, primarily, the Standard British English variety (cf. Oliveira, 2017). This means that, during my lessons, the students were in contact with both varieties simultaneously. However, they were also in contact with each other, listening and speaking to each other and the teacher, which I believe we can consider yet another variety, one that may be specific to the context of our classroom.

It was mentioned in chapter 3 of Part I that the desire to study this matter arose from an interaction with a student. I took note of this interaction, since it had incited some interest:

> T: [após ter sido chamada] *Precisam de ajuda?*
> S15: *Sim, não sabemos como se chama isto.* [aponta para o livo]
> T: *Deixa-me ler o texto. '(…) My favourite season is Autumn because…'*
> S18: *Não é assim que se diz.*
> T: *Assim como? 'Autumn'?*
> S18: *Porquê que não lês o 't'? Não se diz Autumn?* [repetiu a palavra com enfâse no som /t/]
> T: *Pode-se dizer das duas maneiras, depende do sotaque de cada um.*

After this interaction, I explained to the students that there are differences in the way some words are pronounced depending on which variety of English they speak, or the speaker's accent, and repeated the word in both my normal accent and in a British one, explaining that both were correct.

Knowing that the students would be expected to comply with British English standards in their written tests, I decided to produce most of my materials in congruence with those same standards, except when specifically designed to showcase the different varieties. However, as stated, I identify mostly with an American variety, and so, in few occasions, there were "mistakes" in those materials, which the students noticed. This type of interaction opened the floor for a discussion on this matter, an opportunity which I took. When told that I had misspelled 'neighborhood', I asked the students why they thought that. Most of them offered the same answer: because it is different from what is in the book. Taking advantage of the material resources available, I took to the Internet and opened the Oxford English Dictionary Online where I typed the word they had told me was misspelled.

Figure 11 – *Neighbourhood* in the OEDO.

As the dictionary page was projected on the board, I called their attention to the second line seen in Figure 4. Some of the students asked what *US* meant, but others swiftly answered saying it meant United States. I then explained that the US meant that, in the United States, the world was spelled differently, but that it was not wrong. According to Bieswanger (2008), the issue of which variety to teach EFL learners has been widely discussed throughout the years (p. 27-28), and I do not believe there is ever going to be a consensus on a single answer, because there cannot be one correct answer that makes sense in every context in which English is taught to non-native speakers of the language (Farrell & Martin, 2009, p. 4).

That being said, I opted for the introduction of vocabulary related to the units I was expected to teach, in both Standard British and American varieties. I decided on these because the students were already familiar with both, and because it was also my intention to take a plurilingual approach, i.e. apart from varieties of English, the students also contacted with three different languages, all spoken in territories where English is an official language. Therefore, I had to make decisions which would allow me to still explore the topics I intended to study, while at the same time keep my practice in accordance to the MCI (Bravo et. al, 2015) and the supervising teacher's program.

Once the students were aware that they would be learning both the British and American terms for the vocabulary pertaining to the units we were exploring at the time, a change in dynamic was felt during vocabulary presentation activities. This type of activity was carried out, almost exclusively, through the use of interactive online tools (such as *Educaplay*, *Padlet*, *Flipquiz*) as the use of technology in the classroom helps the students be more actively involved and is a more effective way to appeal to all students, regardless of their learning style (Mareco, 2017, WEB).

Figure 12 – Household items/Furniture: vocabulary worksheet.

Figure 5 illustrates one of those interactive online tools, in which I created four different vocabulary "maps". The activity consisted of two steps: demonstration, i.e. vocabulary presentation, wherein the student would touch one of the numbers on the screen and read the words or expressions aloud to the class, which I would then repeat myself; and gameplay, at which time the words would appear, one by one, on the screen and the student would have to choose the correct item to match it. Whenever there were different expressions for one item, the class would try and guess which one

was the British and which one was the American one. In fact, as seen in the bottom left quadrant of Figure 5, it says 'cupboards' (BrE) and there is no AmE alternative. A student noticed this as well and asked '*Não há outra maneira de dizer armário?*'. Rather than answer his question, I asked the class if they knew a different word for armário:

> T: *Tens razão, há uma palavra diferente. Alguém sabe qual é?*
> S11: *Pode ser armary.*
> T: *Podia, sim, seria parecido com português. Mas não é essa.*
> S7: *Eu já ouvi dizer 'cabinet' na televisão.*
> T: *É essa mesmo. Na América, costuma-se dizer cabinet.* [escrevi a palavra no quadro]

The first student's answer is an example of a natural linguistic process, known as calque, wherein the learner will attempt to translate the original word in its most literal form (Bartley & Benítez-Castro, 2013, p. 50), into the target language. On the other hand, the other student's reply proves that we cannot dismiss the students' personal experience with the language, but rather try to channel it and use it to the advantage of their learning process.

Throughout the course of this unit (cf. Annex 1), titled '*My home and my neighbourhood*' in the textbook (Dooley & Evans, 2016, p. 26-39), there were not as many opportunities to explore this particular topic as I had wished, due to vocabulary limitation and time constraints. There was, however, a discussion about the countries where English was spoken. When showing the students pictures which illustrated the different types of homes which can be found around the world, in an attempt to showcase cultural and social diversity, one student asked if people spoke English in all of those countries, e.g. Italy, Mexico, Greece, Cuba, Ethiopia, etc.

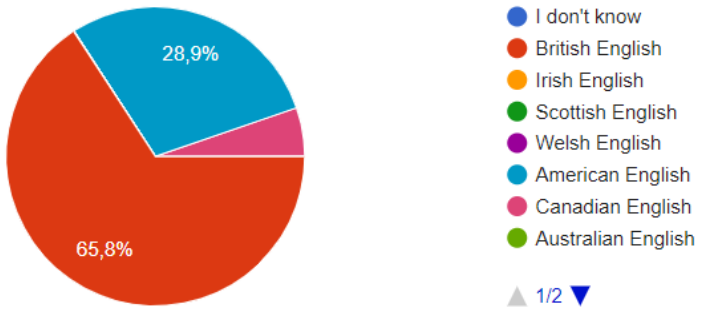
> T: What do you think? Vocês acham que se fala inglês nestes países todos?
> S19: Sim, se calhar eles também aprendem na escola.
> T: You're right. Eles podem aprender inglês na escola como vocês. Mas acham que o inglês é uma língua oficial nestes países todos?
> Ss: Não!
> T: Em que países é que o inglês é uma língua oficial? Who knows?
> Ss: Inglaterra, Estados Unidos, Austrália…
> S20: Na Escócia e na Irlanda também, porque fazem parte to Reino Unido.
> S18: E em alguns países da África, não é?
> T: That's right, fala-se inglês em muitos países diferentes. No Canadá, na Índia, na Nigéria…
> S12: Na Índia também? Pensei que lá se falava indiano.
> T: Na Índia falam-se muitas línguas diferentes, incluindo inglês e hindi.
> S18: Na África do Sul também se fala inglês?
> T: Sim. E vocês acham que nestes países todos também há diferenças como entre os Estados Unidos e o Reino Unido?

When they are asked this question, several students said that they probably sounded different from each other, and that maybe they had different words for certain things like the British and the American do. The answers provided by the students suggest that they are already aware that English is spoken in different parts of the world, and that, at that point in time, they already had some notion that there are differences, however slight, to be found in each of these parts. Therefore, I believe this type of approach is to be taken into consideration, as language variation is an important aspect of the overall linguistic knowledge we are trying to promote (Backley, n.d., p. 95).

Although I do not think it is necessary, or necessarily useful, to teach specific characteristics pertaining to several different varieties at this educational level, I do argue that awareness and understanding of language variation can aid in the prevention of a, potentially harmful, overgeneralization and standardization of the language. 'The diversity of Englishes that international students will be exposed to in their future education and employment should be reflected in their exposure as learners' (Garside, 2017, WEB), that is, if we want to give our students their best chance at succeeding in a 21st century society, where we are always connected to each other and to the world.

In order to gather other people's perceptions on this matter, particularly primary school English teachers, I designed a questionnaire with questions pertaining their thoughts on varieties of English and their importance. The sample consists of 38 respondents, all of them teachers or teachers in training of Portuguese nationality (100%). 35 of those who answered identify as female (92.1%), with the remaining three identifying as male (7.9%). In what concerns the age of the participants, one is under the age of 25 (2.6%), one is aged somewhere between 25 and 30 (2.6%), 24 are aged somewhere between 31 and 40 (63.2%), while the final 12 are over the age of 40 (31.6%). When asked what their native language was, 37 out of 38 participants said Portuguese (97.4%), with one saying their native language is English (2.6%).

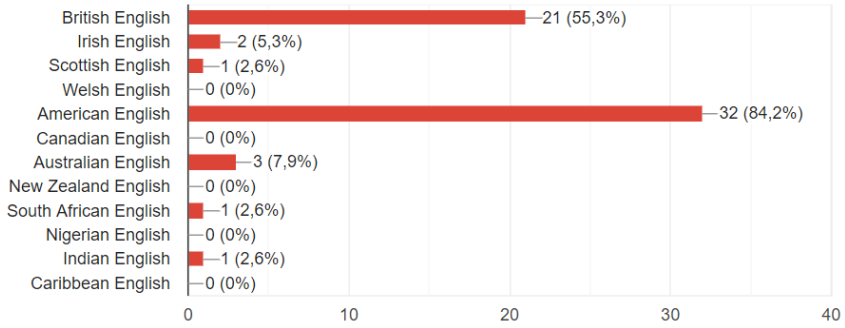
It then seemed important to find which variety they personally identify most closely with. The answers to that question can be seen in Graph 2 below.



Graph 2 – '*Which Variety of English do you, personally, most identify with?*' – Results.

As seen in the graph, 25 out of 38 participants claimed they identify most closely with British English (65.8%), with 11 respondents saying they mostly identify with American English (28.9%) and the

remaining two identifying most closely with Canadian English (5.3%). Along with this question, I believed it important to, then, ascertain which varieties they had the most contact with in their daily lives.



Graph 3 – '*Which Varieties of English do you, personally, have the most contact with on a daily basis?'* – Results.

As seen in graph 3, pictured above, the variety of English most commonly selected was American English, with 32 of the participants (84.2%) claiming to have frequent contact with this variety. This can be explained, in part, by the fact that the United States produces large quantities of mainstream entertainment and media content, which are constantly available to us, whether it be on the radio, on television, etc. Several of the respondents also said they have frequent contact with the British English variety (55.3%), which, much like the case of AmE, can also be associated with entertainment and media content distributed in this variety, as well as a number of other sociocultural factors. Other varieties mentioned are Irish English (5.3%), Scottish English (2.6%), Australian English (7.9%), South African English (2.6%) and Indian English (2.6%). I would like to note that, despite the fact that two of the respondents claimed to identify most closely with the Canadian English variety, none of them marked this variety as one with which they have frequent contact with. Surely, if you were to closely identify with a certain variety over the others, this would arise from the fact that there is, at least, some contact established with that particular variety of the English language. Personally, I say that I identify most closely with an American variety of English due to the fact that that is the one I have had the most contact with in my life outside of school, and this contact shaped the way I have come to use the English language.

Similarly, when asked which varieties of English they thought their students had the most contact with, only the two most "common" varieties were mentioned with 12 of the respondents saying they believe the students are in frequent contact with British English (31.6%), and all but one of the participants claiming they believe their students mostly contact with American English (97.4%). The accuracy of their beliefs, as well as that of my own, is difficult to measure, however, I find it difficult to believe that the children of today are not exposed to varieties other than BrE and AmE in their lives outside of school. Although it is understandable that one of these two would be the target varieties for the teaching of non-native speakers (Siemund, Davydova & Maier, 2012), due to the

power and status of the countries from which they originate, it is important to understand that 'no language or regional variety is inherently better or worse, they are just different' (Oliveira, 2017, p. 52), and by not including remnants of any other varieties in EFL, we are, I believe, doing the English language, our students and ourselves a disservice.

On this same note, I thought it was important to ask the teachers' about their perceptions on this matter. When asked about whether they believed their students could benefit from a broader knowledge of the English language, i.e. including the awareness towards language variation, 29 of the participants said yes (76.3%) while nine said no (23.7%). At the same time, when asked if they thought the topic of language variation should be part of the English curriculum at this educational level, 20 of 38 respondents said yes (52.6%) and 18 said no (47.4%). The fact that some of the participants said they did not believe that their students could benefit from a broader knowledge of the language they are learning is quite confusing, as I believe that it should be our goal, as educators, to help the students learn and evolve as much as they possibly can. On the other hand, I understand why some say that this topic should not be of concern in primary school English teaching, although I am not in agreement. Many have studied the benefits of early exposure to linguistic and cultural diversity, saying that when taught from an early age to respect and understand different cultures, children are likely to develop positive feelings and attitudes about themselves and towards others (Cavaluzzi, 2010, p. 6). Furthermore, if 'successful communication is more a question of understanding, and being able to engage successfully' (Clark, 2014, WEB), then the understanding of different varieties of English is key.

After answering the aforementioned question *'Do you think your students would benefit from a broader knowledge of the English language?*', the teachers were asked to give some insight into their answering by justifying their answer. I will now present some of the answers I found most relevant for the study in hand.

The first answer which caught my attention, was one in which I saw my own personal ideas reflected: '*I admit I'm only comfortable explaining differences between the British and the American varieties, and I try as hard as possible to explain those are not the only two English varieties, so there is no such thing as "correct English". The Ss deserve to know the diversity is broad and they actually enjoy knowing more about "different Englishes"'.* This statement offers a simple, to-the-point, summary of what my goal was in introducing varieties of English in this study, and in my lessons – this participant, a teacher between the ages of 31 and 40, who has been in the field for less than two years, believes that students should be educated in the subject of language variation, and adds, presumably drawing from her own experience, that the students enjoy learning about linguistic differences.

Other respondents also claim that the students are nowadays, to varying degrees, exposed to varieties other than BrE and AmE, although they did not select any more than those when asked what varieties their students contacted with, and that, due to that fact, they should be educated about them. Most of those who agree that the approaching of this topic at this educational level would be beneficial for students, argue that the other existent varieties should be acknowledged, an

idea that is supported by many scholars who claim that there are no linguistic grounds for the argument that one variety is superior to the others (Tegegne, 2015, p. 266).

On the other hand, however, there are those who claim that the students '*need to learn the basics of the language first*'. I must say I am not entirely certain what the "basics" of the language are, but I can only assume they mean lexicon and grammatical structures. Although I do agree that those are equally important aspects of the language, the learning process should not be linear, i.e. the students should not learn different aspects of the language at different times, but rather learn about the language as a whole. The goal of language teaching is supposedly the development of a communicative competence, many syllabuses still appear to be grammar based today, as they were when examined by Gopinatban & Saravanan (1985, p. 69).

Based on the revision of some pertinent literature on the matter of English language variation, the different varieties, and their role in education worldwide, as well as the answers obtained through the questionnaire presented to the teachers, it is safe to say that there is no one single opinion on whether or not the different varieties of English should be included in the primary school curriculum. A more in-depth study would need to be carried out to try and ascertain whether the further exploration of language variation would be beneficial to the students' overall learning process. However, based on my observation, there is, on part of the students, an openness and a curiosity to learn more about this subject, and while the goal is not to have students become fluent in every single variety or dialect present in the English language, I do believe that the early exposure to these varieties, as well as other foreign languages, will help in their overall development as well educated and tolerant world citizens.

The American National Association for the Education of Young Children (1995) defends that 'the early childhood teacher who is trained in linguistic and cultural diversity can be a much-needed resource' (p. 6), which is why, in the next subchapter, I will be looking to teacher training to try and determine if language variation is, in fact, something teachers are being educated in.

2.3. Varieties of English in teacher training

In order to ascertain whether or not primary school teachers are prepared to approach the topic of language variation in their lessons, I looked, first, at current study plans from some higher education institutes from Northern Portugal which offer teacher training for the purpose of Primary School Education – *Mestrado em Ensino de Inglês no 1º Ciclo do Ensino Básico*. Moreover, I composed a questionnaire aimed at English teachers currently working at this educational level, which contained questions about their training in the subject of varieties of English.

To begin, I looked at the master's degree which inspired the production of the present report, at Higher Education Institution 1. The mentioned master's degree has a duration of three semesters, though the third and last semester consists almost entirely of the traineeship and consequent investigation. The study plan for this degree (cf. Annex 6) sees no mention of a course which

specializes in English varieties, something which we will come to recognize as a pattern in this subchapter. However, there is one course I would like to take note of: *Culturas em Língua Inglesa*. This is a course that I, myself, partook in as a student of this institution during the school year 2017/2018.

The course form lists as one of the skills to be developed in this class 'understand the evolution of the English language in time and space, distinguishing and comparing the different varieties of the English language' (2017, p. 3), hinting towards a diachronic and diatopic view of English. In fact, throughout this course, linguistic and cultural diversity were recurrent topics, with four anglophone countries being the target of analysis: United Kingdom, United States of America, Australia, and South Africa. Despite not having delved too deeply into language variation, several examples were presented to and by the class, generating discussion and, most importantly, raising awareness towards this matter. Thus, in spite my personal belief that a course specialized on language variation would be beneficial for English teachers in training, I believe that the introduction of these concepts does prove important in the overall development of our linguistic competence.

Next, I looked at the study plan for the same master's degree, this time from Higher Education Institution 2 (cf. Annex 7), which also has a duration of three semesters. Once again, there is no mention of a course specific to varieties of English. Having looked through the course forms of all available courses for this master's, there is no mention whatsoever of varieties of English in any of them. It is possible that the matter is approached in *Inglês C2.1*, as one of the objectives listed in its course form is 'demonstrar um mais vasto conhecimento do mundo falante de inglês, como por exemplo conhecimento socio-cultural, diversidade cultural, etc.' (2018, WEB), however, there is no reference which guarantees its approach. This means that, depending on what the professor understands by cultural diversity or sociocultural knowledge, the topic of varieties of English may be completely absent during the three semesters this master's degree consists of. One other course in which this topic could be introduced, or discussed, is *Literatura Inglesa*. Literature is one of the oldest forms of expression, so it seems natural to me, that this could propel the exploration of the topic of language variation, particularly considering the extensive selection of English-language literature from anglophone countries available nowadays.

The study plan for *Mestrado em Ensino do Inglês no 1º Ciclo do Ensino Básico* (cf. Annex 8), from Higher Education Institution 3, again with a duration of three semesters, also does not mention a course that specializes in varieties of English. There are, however, some courses which may include some reference to this topic: *Língua e Cultura Inglesa*, and *Literatura Inglesa*. In the course form for the first, one of the skills the students are expected to develop is listed as 'conhecer os aspetos históricos do Inglês e os costumes, hábitos e tradições das regiões de língua ingles' (WEB), which, despite singling out cultural aspects such as customs and traditions, may open the floor for some discussion on language variation within the Commonwealth; the latter, being a course on literature, may not seem as obvious a choice, but, as previously mentioned, there is a large number of literary

works, written in English, by people from all over the world. The exploration of such works could be the basis for a discussion about language variation.

Following this, I looked at the study plan of Higher Education Institution 4 (cf. Annex 9) for the same master's degree, which, again, has the duration of three semesters. As has been the case, there is no course designed specifically for the teaching of varieties of English, although there are some courses in which the topic appears to fit into: *Língua e Cultura Inglesa*, *Pluralidade Linguística e Educação* and, finally, *Literatura de Expressão Inglesa*.

There is no course form available for the first or last listed courses, and as such, I have no way of knowing whether the topic of varieties of English is approached in them or not. However, for *Pluralidade Linguística e Educação*, one of the objectives listed in the course form is 'refletir sobre a diversidade linguística e cultural do mundo, perspetivando modos de contribuir para a sua preservação e valorização' (Araújo & Sá, WEB), and while this does not necessarily guarantee that varieties of English are taken into consideration, it is possible that this is the case. After all, language variation does amount to linguistic diversity, as the discussion of the status of the varieties or dialects of English is one that has yet to reach a consensus, as seen in chapter 3 of Part I.

Lastly, I went through the study plan for this master's degree as offered at Higher Education Institution 5 (cf. Annex 10), where, again, it has the duration of three semesters. As is the case for all the previously presented study plans, this one also does not mention a course specialized in varieties of English. That said, in the same line as what we can see in Porto Polytechnic's study plan, there is one course which features, in its form, a direct mention of language variation: *Inglês Falado – speaking and listening*. In fact, the course form lists multiple skills which the students are expected to develop which relate to the variation of English: a) 'compreender como e porque é que a língua falada é diferente nos mais diversos contextos', hinting at diachronic and diatopic variation, exploring how and why this variation occurred, as we did in chapter 2 of Part I; b) 'avaliar como o discurso do quotidiano real varia entre diferentes pessoas, grupos sociais e regiões', again referring to the diatopic, as well as the diastratic – in between social groups (Coseriu, 1981) - dimensions of language variation; and c) 'reconhecer e compreender as diferentes formas do inglês falado', highlighting accents, dialects, slang and idioms as examples of variation (2017, p. 1).

Even though, as listed in the contents section of this document, most of the dialects, or varieties, explored are those found within England (e.g. Brummie, Geordie, Estuary English), I still believe that this course will prove beneficial to those who take it, as it allows for a broader understanding of the English language. Furthermore, if concepts such as diachronic, diatopic and diastratic variation can be applied to intranational variation in England, they can easily be transferred and applied to intranational variation of other English-speaking countries, as well as international variation around the around.

Finally, I would like to note that there is one other class, this one by the name of *Inglês Escrito – reading and writing*, which features no mention whatsoever of language variation. Although we have established that, due to the standardization of the written form of English, thanks to the introduction

of the printing press and the publication of dictionaries and grammars (Meyer, 2009, p. 33-34), the most distinguishable aspect between different varieties of English is, in fact, the accent and pronunciation, it still seems odd that no reference is made to language variation in its written form – as we know exists.

Based on the analysis of these study plans, it can be said that, while linguistic and cultural diversity now plays a significant role in the teacher training process, as it should, language variation is either not thought of at all, or mostly glanced over. Bieswanger (2008) tells us that the vast majority of English users are non-native speakers, that there are several different varieties of English being used around the world today, and that even native speakers of the language rarely use the standardized forms we refer to as British English or American English (p. 32), and we, as future teachers of English need to understand this, and be educated in this matter so that we may help prepare our students, as well as ourselves, to deal with the everchanging linguistic landscape of current society.

To complement these findings, I will now present and interpret teachers' answers to some questions about their own training and education in the subject of varieties of English, and their own thoughts about whether they feel capable of approaching this topic in their classrooms. The data obtained through these questionnaires provides information about 38 participants, all of them teachers, practicing or in training, whose personal information has been presented in subchapter 2.2.

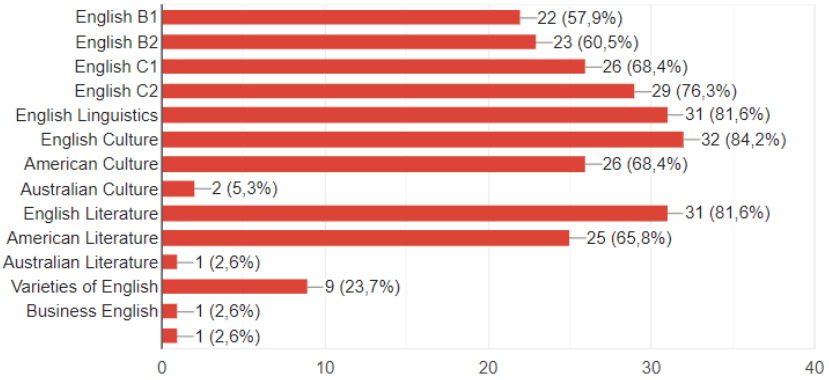
As the subject of the study is varieties of English, I felt it was important to ask teachers about any direct contact they may have had with different varieties in anglophone countries. When asked if they had ever lived in a country where English is an official language, 33 respondents said they had not (86,8%) while the remaining five said they had (13,2%). Having found out whether or not teachers had lived in an anglophone country, it was useful to know in which countries they had spent time in, and for how long. Thus, when asked in which English-speaking countries they had lived in, of the five who had previously answered yes, two responded they had lived in the United Kingdom (40%), two others said they had lived in Canada (40%), one said they had lived in Ireland (20%), and another that they had lived in Zimbabwe (20%). In what concerns their time spent abroad, three said they had lived there for longer than three years (60%), one responded that they had spent less than one year abroad (20%), and, finally, one other said they had spent some time between one and two years living abroad (20%). As mentioned, the purpose of these questions was to determine if the participants had had any immersive experience in an English-speaking country.

The following questions are all related to their teacher training, in congruence with the topic of this subchapter. Firstly, they were asked what type of higher education degree they possessed, to which 17 answered they had Bachelor's Degree (44.8%), 20 said they had Master's Degree (52.6%), and one said they had a Doctorate (2.6%). On top of that, they were asked at what institution they obtained their teaching degrees, with the answers revealing that the participants studied at a variety of national, and two international, higher education institutions, including all five of the ones from which we analyzed study plans. A total of 13 respondents (34.2%) attended one of the five institutions mentioned earlier in this chapter. Other answers included: six participants who had

obtained their degree from University of Lisbon (15.8%), three from University of Évora (7,9%), one from the University of Surrey (2.6%) and one from the Federal University of São Paulo (2.6%).

Besides finding out where the participants studied, it also seemed important to find out how long ago they finished their respective degrees. When asked how long ago they had completed their teacher training, three of the participants responded that they had finished less than two years ago (7,9%), while four claimed to have finished between two to five years ago (10,5%), another four said they had concluded their studies between five to ten years ago (10,5%), with 15 of the respondents saying they had finished between ten to fifteen years ago (39.5%), and the final 12 saying that had obtained their degrees over fifteen years ago (31.6%).

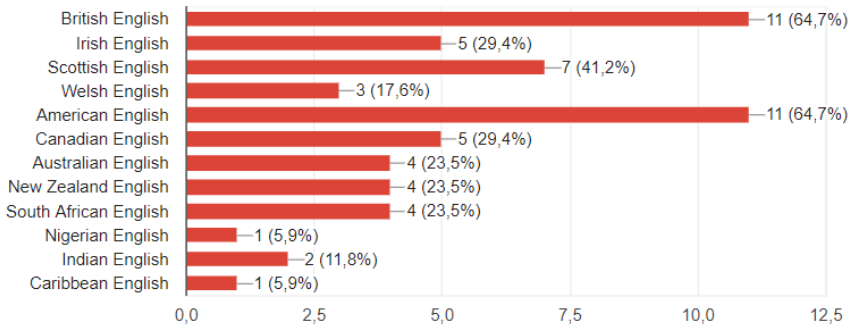
In order to try and ascertain what kind of training the participants had had in what pertains to the English language they would be teaching, they were asked to check all of the courses they had taken from a list provided to them. The results can be seen in Graph 4, pictured below.



Graph 4 - '*What classes, related to the English language, did you take throughout your studies?*' – Results.

As can be seen in the graph, the majority of the participants took English language courses (English B1 through C2), as well as several courses related to Linguistics (81.6%), Culture, mainly English (84.2%) and American (68.4%), and Literature, again, mainly English (81.6%) and American (65.8%). However, only nine of the respondents said that they have studied Varieties of English (23.7%).

The question that followed set out to determine which varieties had been approached in the courses taken by the participants, and despite the fact that only nine of them claimed to have taken a course on varieties of English, 17 of them (44.7%) answered the question '*If you took a class on Varieties of English, which one(s) did you study?*'. This leads me to think that, although there was no course specific to varieties of English in their respective study plans, some varieties were explored in the scope of other courses. The participants responses to the aforementioned question can be seen in Graph 5 below.

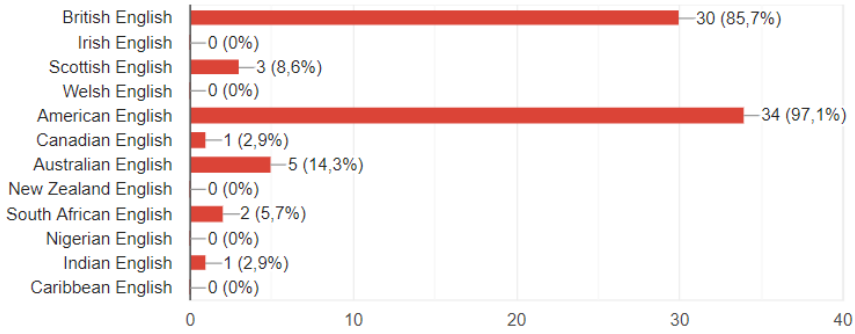


Graph 5 - '*If you took a class on Varieties of English, which one(s) did you study?*' – Results.

As evidenced in Graph 5, on page 106, most of the participants who claim to have studied varieties of English have checked British (64.7%), by which we understand England's English, and American English (64.7%), as they are often perceived as the ideal varieties for teaching due to their widespread and cultural significance (Tollefson, 2007). Some also said they have studied other varieties, such as Scottish English (41.2%), Irish English (29.4%), South African English (23.5%), Indian English (11.8), and even Caribbean English (5.9).

Although it is not evident to which extent these varieties were studied, it is still interesting to see that less known varieties have managed to mark their presence in teacher training courses. One could argue that if teachers are exposed to these varieties during their own studies, they will be more likely to want to bring what they have learned into their own classrooms and share it with their students. Once again, the goal of the introduction of this topic in early childhood education is not an in-depth understanding of the characteristics of each variety, but rather the realization that they exist. Teachers of English as a foreign language, who work in Portugal with native speakers of Portuguese, have a unique opportunity to raise awareness toward the variation of English, in the sense that they can draw examples from their students' native language which is also spoken differently in different parts of the world, something that the students are aware of.

Finally, to understand how their training translates into their practice, the participants were asked whether they approach the topic of varieties of English with their students or not. Of the 38 respondents, 21 claimed that they do approach this topic in class often (55.3%), 14 of them said they do it sometimes (36.8%), and the remaining three said they never talk about varieties of English in their lessons (7.9%). Based on this, and although the sample is small, one could argue that there is a space in which to do this. The following question served to determine which varieties the participants explored in their classrooms, and the results can be seen in Graph 6.



Graph 6 - '*If you answered yes, or sometimes, which varieties of English do you normally bring up?*' – Results.

The results shown above are hardly surprising, considering all that we have seen so far. Most textbooks used in primary schools in Portugal follow the rules of Standard British English, so, this variety is present in almost all classrooms. Of the 35 participants who claim to approach the topic of varieties of English in their practice, 30 say British English is one of them (85.7%), while all but one said that American English is present in their lessons (97.1%). Other varieties are mentioned, such as Scottish English (8.6%), Australian English (14.3%), or South African English (5.7%), but neither one of them to the extent of either British or American varieties.

Due to their prominence in the world of today, particularly that of American English, is comes as no surprise that these varieties form part of the students' curricula. However, I believe that the more varieties the students are exposed to at a young age, the better they will be equipped to understand not only the English language but the multitude of different cultures and peoples which share it.

Finally, the teachers were asked if they felt equipped to approach this topic in their classrooms. Of 38 respondents, three said they are prepared and feel comfortable doing so (7.9%), six said they do not feel they could approach this subject at all (15.8%), while the remaining 29 wish they had been better prepared for it (76.3%). Based on the analysis of study plans from some Portuguese institutions, and the teachers' own perceptions of the matter, it can be concluded that there is not enough thought put into this subject, which I believe is an important aspect of the English language. The purpose of language is communication, and we learn new languages so that we can communicate with other people, different people.

If the teaching of English is limited to one or two generalized standard varieties of English, the students will not be getting the most out of their learning experience, as nowadays we can no longer speak of one single English, but rather an English family of languages. In this sense, based on the study plans examined and the teachers' own perception of their preparedness to approach language variation in the classroom, teacher training programs seem to be lacking. Considering that concepts such as "new Englishes" (Crystal, 1986), a language family of Englishes (McArthur, 1998), bilingualism within the English language (McArthur, 2001), and a world of Englishes (Siemund, et. al, 2012) have been studied and discussed for quite some time, I believe it is time for teacher training programs to

incorporate language variation courses, in order to provide future teachers of English with the skills they will undoubtedly need to help their students in the future.

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS: OVERVIEW, LIMITATIONS AND POTENCIAL AVENUES FOR FURTHER DEVELOPMENT

The goal set for this study was the exploration of new educational practices for the teaching of English in primary schools, looking to understand current practices and striving to improve upon them. This was done through a plurilingual and intercultural approach, which featured the inclusion of not only foreign languages other than English, but also of different varieties of English.

The focus of this report was on the diatopic variation of the English language, i.e. the different varieties of English that are spoken around the world (Crystal, 1986; Crystal, 2003; Kachru, 1992). Furthermore, this study tries to understand how English can be a conduit for the development of a plurilingual and an intercultural competences (Byram et. al, 2013) which, allied with Hymes' communicative competence (1966) make for an intercultural communicative competence (Cruz, 2011), which is essential for the establishment of successful communicative situations in the plurilingual and pluricultural society of the 21st century. Finally, this study looks to gather teachers' perceptions on the subject of varieties of English, namely their role in primary school education, and their own preparedness to approach this subject in their practices.

At this time, I will try to offer plausible answers to the research questions raised in chapter 1 of Part II, which are recalled as follows:

1. How can English, as a language and a primary school subject, contribute to the development of a plurilingual and intercultural competence?
2. What role can, or should, different varieties of English, play in Primary School English teaching?
3. Are teachers prepared to approach the topic of English variation in the classroom?

In order to try to answer these questions, it was crucial to mobilize the concepts necessary to do so. The theoretical framework, found in Part I of this report, allowed for the further understanding of relevant and important concepts and ideas related to the subject of this research. In practice, the search for these answers was done through the documental analysis of relevant literature, as well as the content analysis of data obtained throughout the course of this traineeship.

In looking to answer the first presented question, how can English as a compulsory subject in primary schools aid in the development of a plurilingual and intercultural competence, I looked at previous studies on plurilingual approaches in early childhood education (Andrade, Lourenço & Sá, 2010; Andrade & Martins, 2009; Cruz & Cruz, 2006; Cruz & Medeiros, 2009), mobilizing concepts such as: plurilingualism, interculturality and intercomprehension. Considering the current linguistic and cultural scenery found in Europe and the world (Ramos, 2009), it is important that the students are aware of it and prepared to face it in the future.

Having said that, some conclusions were drawn on this matter, through the process of observation: a) the English classroom is a prime arena for the introduction of different foreign languages, seen as students are already in contact with a different language and culture, and this feels like a natural extension; b) the English language, as, in most cases, the first foreign language students contact with, can aid in the development of a plurilingual competence by acting as a "crutch" between the native language and the new, unfamiliar target language; c) given that the goal is not the achievement of

proficiency in these languages, the students can be exposed to several different ones throughout the school year thus broadening their horizons and their knowledge and understanding of the diversity existent in the world; and d) the more languages they are exposed to, the more intrigued and curious they become to learn about different ones.

Regarding the second question, of what role the different varieties of English can, or should, play in the teaching of the English language, I first tried to understand the full extent of the variation of which we speak. To do this, I looked at the different dimensions of language variation, focusing particularly on the diatopic dimension, and the history of English to try and comprehend how this variation came to be. Sociolinguistics and language variation have been the subject of study for many years, and so I studied some literature pertaining to this (Crystal, 1986; Crystal, 2003; McArthur, 2003; Yule, 2006; Meyers, 2009) in an attempt to build up my own knowledge on the topic. Adding to that, I collected some perceptions from primary school English teachers and their habits of tackling varieties of English in their practice.

With this in mind, some conclusions were drawn, firstly, based on the observation of the group: a) the students understand that English is spoken all around the world, and are easily made aware of differences between how the language is used in different countries and/or regions; b) they are able to establish parallels between English language variation and that found in their own native language, which the teacher can make use of to explore the theme further; c) the students find these differences, more than interesting, amusing at times, which gives the teacher the ability to keep them engaged and focused on the task at hand; d) once presented with variation between certain countries, the students become curious and show willingness to learn about different territories; and secondly, based on information gathered from primary school English teachers: e) in order for this topic to be tackled at this educational stage, teachers need to understand its importance in the overall learning process and be willing to explore it; and f) many teachers do not, themselves, contact with many varieties besides British English and American English, which could explain why they don't believe the students should be exposed to them.

In what pertains to the third question, regarding varieties of English in teacher training, I chose five higher education institutions from Northern Portugal which offer training in the teaching of English in primary school and examined their current study plans for the presence of any mention of varieties of English. Furthermore, teachers were asked about their own training and their perceived preparedness to tackle the subject of language variation in their practice.

Based on the data collected from the aforementioned tools, I was able to draw the following conclusions: a) English language variation has not, for the most part, been thought of as a necessary subject for the training of future English teachers; b) many practicing teachers do not consider themselves prepared to approach this topic in their lessons, as they, themselves, do not feel they are knowledgeable enough to do so; c) the lack of training in this subject appears to be hindering some teachers' willingness to explore this matter further, as some say they do believe this to be beneficial to their students.

Considering that this study, as previously stated, has the characteristics of an action research study, and this entails the reflection over one's practice (Alarcão, 2001), it is also important to note the obstacles, or limitations, that I came across throughout this journey. Based on the reflective analysis of my practice, the following limitations were identified: a) the lack of experience in what concerns both the act of teaching and research studies, in the sense that it proved difficult to manage both simultaneously; b) the short period of time which was made available to develop this study in, I feel, prevented me from studying the subject as in-depth as had been anticipated; and c) some continuous struggles in terms of time management outside of the classroom, resulting in an unequal division of the time invested in lesson planning and research practices.

Nevertheless, these limitations played an important role in both my professional and personal development, having created opportunities for learning and growth. It was through the beneficial and the less-than optimal conditions in which I found myself at different times during this process, that I was able to learn and understand what it means to be a teacher, to seek to understand the issues found in the classroom, and look to better one's practice to meet the needs of the students and overcome said issues.

Finally, I would like to present some potential avenues for development upon this study, and the further development of the subject matter herein. Personally, I would like to continue to study the topics presented in this report in my own practices going forward, as a means to not only expand my own knowledge, but also to try to ascertain whether these practices are sustainable in the context of primary school English teaching in a context different than that in which this study was develop.

Firstly, and considering an English family of languages (McArthur, 1998), I believe further study should be conducted on the topic of English varieties in primary schools. Having available a longer period of time, and a larger student sample, more varieties should be introduced by way of contact with authentic English-language material (books, movies, songs, etc.) from different countries and regions of the world. This should be done in a structured and sensible way, never forgetting that language is a product of culture (Laraia, 2001) and, as such, cannot be taught separately from the culture of the peoples who speak it. This implies the teaching of English varieties allied with the cultural aspects referent to the territories the teacher chooses to tackle.

Secondly, I find a study pertaining to teacher training, in particular the lack of mention of English varieties, carried out on a larger scale could result in the better understanding of why this happens. Given that the notion of bilingualism within the English language (McArthur, 2001) and the prediction of a World Standard Spoken English (Crystal, 2003) arising in the future have been discussed since the beginning of the 21st century, it seems odd that not many educators appear to be taking an interesting. A more detailed study on why this is still the case seems, to me, to be a natural next step.

Taking into account all that we have read about in this report, these two subject matters seem to stand out as those that have not been considered enough, and, as such, I find myself impelled to promote the study of language variation, with particular focus on its role in education.

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