



Choose Your Role: How Choice and Autonomy Enhance Engagement in a Collaborative Task

Will Murphy and Renzo Forlin
Colegio Alpamayo, Lima, Peru

Further Information

This poster and further information is available at <http://www.theibsc.org/>

Researcher's Email:

wmurphy@alpamayo.edu.pe
rforlin@alpamayo.edu.pe

Introduction

We wanted to enhance the student engagement in class, supposing that if the boys felt competent in their specific task and a locus of control over choosing that task, they would become more motivated. We created an activity that would allow the boys to explore their strengths within a group and gave them the agency to make all of the decisions.

The students created stop-motion videos in a unit about story-telling. They created the roles needed and then filled those roles based on their perception of their abilities.

The Research Question

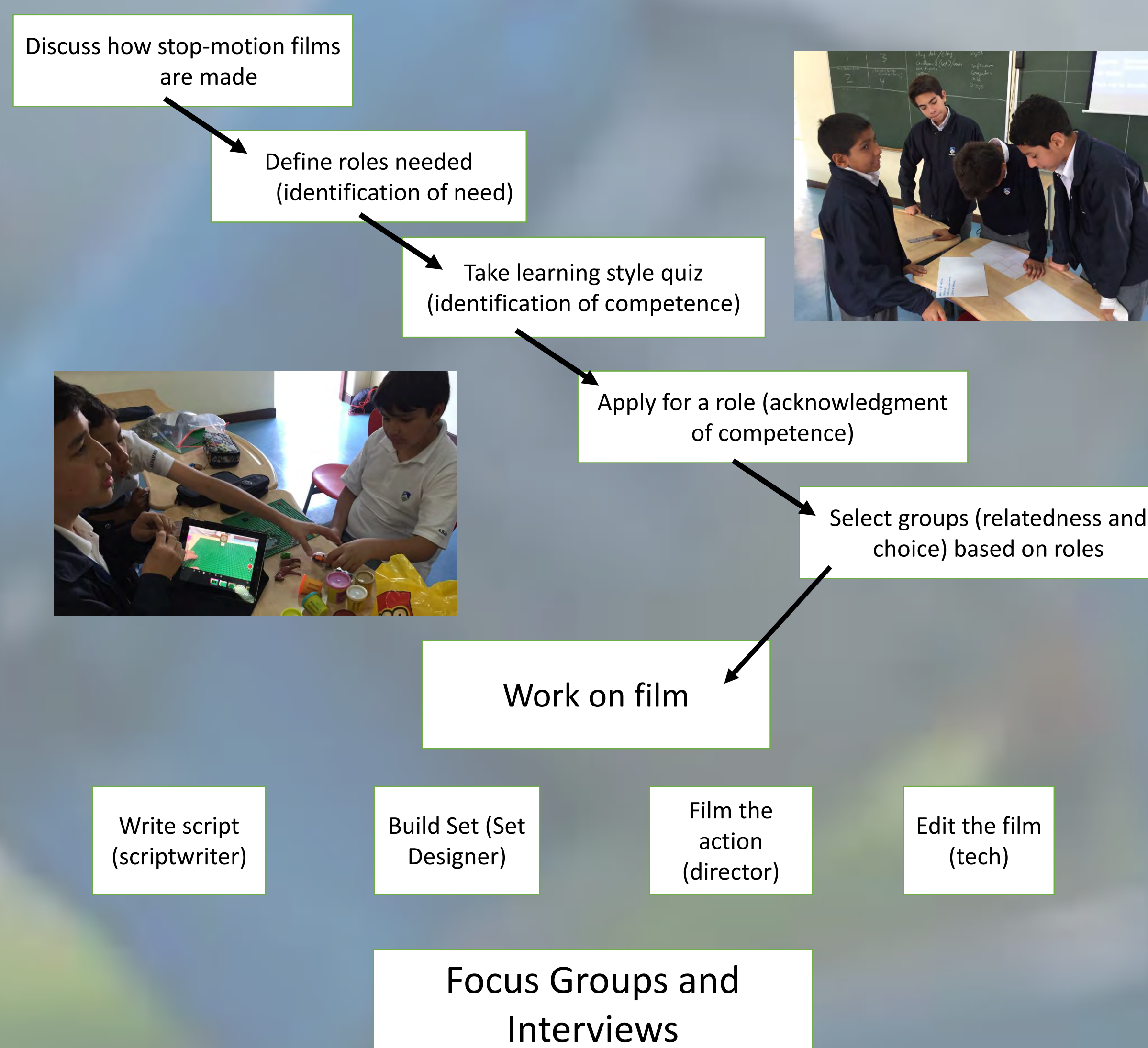
How can role selection within a collaborative assignment enhance grade 7 English boys' engagement?

Research Context and Participants

Colegio Alpamayo is a private, independent, bilingual day school for boys located in Lima, Peru. The grades range from Kindergarten to Eleven.

During the 2016 school year, 24 of our seventh graders took part in a stop-motion video project, trying to use a new medium to tell a story. These students, ranging from 11-13 years old, each chose a specific role within their group, either the scriptwriter, the builder, the tech, or the director, to create a movie together.

The Research Action



Data Collection and Analysis

Before

- Focus Groups
- Learning Style Questionnaire
- Class Discussion

During

- Exit Tickets
- Observation
- Role Applications

After

- Interviews
- Focus Groups
- Intrinsic Motivation Inventory

Key Findings and Discussion

Engagement: "It isn't hard when you like what you are doing ... It's really fun to work on this.... I like building."



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Problem resolution: "I like making the ideas of the story. Something that challenges us a group are the materials."

"I liked our ability to split work. It was challenging to coordinate how to do the movements of the Legos."



Importance of communication: "If we did it again, we would start with a meeting so that all of the problems would be solved."



"We needed to have a meeting."

Role fulfilment and group dynamics: Since each student self-identified as his role, they did not seem to struggle with the shifts in leadership. As one student observed, "(the director) and (the tech) are both doing tech because they both know how to do it, so they share the director and tech roles."

"Everyone is doing something. I am helping (set designer) right now because I don't have anything to edit."



Conclusions

- Choosing roles and groups sparked interest.
- Task itself allowed for autonomy, which lead to more engagement.
- Collaborative skills were needed to make groups work successfully.
- Acknowledging competence in a specific skill led to shifting group dynamics.
- If the goal is to finish the product, they would need more structure.



Key Readings

- Deci, E., Vallerand, R., Pelletier, L. & Ryan, R. (1991). Motivation and Education: The Self-Determination Perspective. *Educational Psychologist* (26).3, 325-46.
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- Strough, J., Berg c., & Meegan, S. (2001). Friendship And Gender Differences In Task And Social Interpretations Of Peer Collaborative Problem Solving. *Social Development* (10)1, 1-22.

