

# Second Language learning in Infant Education: Storytelling technique

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## Abstract

English language is not learned by studying the code system anymore, children find themselves in real atmospheres where they have to use the target language for a purpose or to complete certain task. That is said, we learn languages by using them. In this paper, it is explained how to create a shared atmospheres in order to contextualize language. Therefore, different activities are provided, starting from dramatisation towards the generalization of language.

**Keywords:** Didactics of Language, CLIL, language learning by use

**Título:** Aprendizaje de la segunda lengua en Educación Infantil: Técnica de cuentacuentos.

## Resumen

Los niños de Educación Infantil no aprenden la lengua inglesa mediante el estudio de su código, los niños se encuentran en atmósferas reales donde tienen que utilizar la lengua para conseguir cierto objetivo. Así, aprendemos la lengua extranjera mediante su uso. En este artículo se explicará cómo crear esta atmósfera compartida donde contextualizar el lenguaje. Asimismo, se proponen varias actividades, desde la dramatización de un cuento hasta la generalización de las estructuras lingüísticas.

**Palabras clave:** Didáctica de la lengua, CLIL, aprendizaje de la lengua mediante el uso.

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## INTRODUCTION

English language is not learned by studying the code system anymore, children find themselves in real atmospheres where they have to use the target language for a purpose or to complete certain task. That is said, we learn languages by using them.

Stephen Krashen says, learners need target language exposure for its right acquisition, but children can not make every language-meaning connection without any support.

This way, Jose Maria Artigal (1992) states that they can get the meaning if somebody else organises contexts that they all share and recognise. Young learners do not know the words but they do identify emotions and contexts. This way, they will infer the meaning and, little by little, internalize linguistic patterns.

## STORYTELLING TECHNIQUE

Stories provide a great context for immersing children in English and they create many opportunities for using the target language, as children perform and retell the stories.

All these stories share certain characteristics for children's better engagement:

1. They are related to children's real experiences.
2. They are made up of repetitive patterns and clear structure.
3. They encourage the use of extra-linguistic resources: gestures and body language.
4. They are fun and enjoyable for children.

The **collective dramatisation** of the stories will be the starting point for the didactic units. These stories have been adapted like plays with detailed gestures, mime and body positions. All these elements are needed to facilitate comprehension and engage pupils in the stories.

We will not use visual aids during the first collective dramatisation since, as Artigal says, showing pictures right from the beginning, children become passive spectators. We aim to create active engagement, this is why all the pupils take all the roles modeled by teachers. As the the story is repeated several times, the pupils start anticipating the action and the language structure that goes with it. Gradually, the protagonism passes from the teacher to the pupils and by interpreting all the roles at the same time, children are always actively engaged.

## ACTIVITY TYPES

When students have lived the stories, another set of activities will be used to reinforce the new language. These activities also contribute to the transference of this language to new contexts.

There are several types of main activities in our lessons:

1. Motivation activities: they activate previous knowledge.
2. Development activities: they promote the expansion of knowledge.
3. Consolidation activities:
4. Evaluation activities: specific activities to assess each aspect of our pupils learning. As instance, role-play activities might be used to evaluate oral production.

## Bibliografía

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