Universidad Zaragoza

1542

THE TEACHING-LEARNING PROCESS OF ENGLISH FROM A DIFFERENT APPROACH

TRABAJO FIN DE MÁSTER (MODALIDAD A)

Carolina Valero Monreal (523311)

Tutora: Mª Pilar Navarro Errasti

Máster en Profesorado de Educación Secundaria Obligatoria, Bachillerato, Formación Profesional y Enseñanzas de Idiomas, Artísticas y Deportivas

Especialidad: Lenguas Extranjeras (Inglés)

Universidad de Zaragoza

Curso 2011/2012

INDEX

1. INTRODUCTION

I still remember my first English lesson. I was six years old and from that moment on I knew that I would be an English teacher when I got older. There are several reasons why I am taking this Master's Degree in Secondary Education. First of all, as I have just mentioned it is something vocational, when I was a child I already knew that I wanted to be an English Teacher. Secondly, I really love languages and especially English, I think that they are necessary for our training and they give us many opportunities for working in the future. Finally, I am very keen on education. I believe that education is one of the pillars of society and it is essential to have well formed people if we want to have a worthwhile country in the future. I think that this Master is what will help me to combine both, my interest in languages and education, and what is also really important to teach me how I can transmit my knowledge to people who are willing to learn, because a good English teacher is not only a person who has a great command in English, but also a person who is able to communicate, to transmit knowledge and to work with their partners and students as a team.

While I have been studying my degree and master I had been working as an English private teacher. I worked for three years in an Academy and there I realised that being a teacher was a rewarding job and then I learnt what type of teacher I would like to be. I do not want to be a teacher who punishes students when they make mistakes; I want to be a teacher who has clear that the classes must be learner-centred. That is the students are the focus of the teaching-learning process and the teacher must guide and help them to achieve the learning goals. What I really want is to share the knowledge I have acquired for many years with people willing to learn and teach me many things, since teachers must bear in mind that students can teach us many interesting things day by day.

This Master entails between 60 and 120 CTS structured in two phases: the first semester and the second one. Each of these is divided into different modules and three practicum periods.

The course started on September 26, 2011 and it is finished on June 7, 2012. The first semester lasted until February 6, 2012. During this time, we had a two-week practicum period (November 21- December 2) when we came into contact with the Educational Centre and its documents. The second semester started on February 13, and finished on June, 6. During this period, we were in our School Placements for six weeks (March 12- April 27), a period which was useful training for us as future teachers, since we led the learning process in classroom lessons while our mentors taught us how to improve our teaching skills. After finishing this semester we had a period in which the final Master essay would be presented.

The modules that compose the Master can be divided into two groups. During the first semester all the students who enrolled in the programme attended the same subjects. They were taught in Spanish and the modules were: *Interacción y Convivencia en el Aula, Diseño Curricular de Lenguas Extranjeras, Procesos de Enseñanza-Aprendizaje,*

Fundamentos de Diseño Instruccional y Metodologías de Aprendizaje en la Especialidad de Lenguas Extranjeras and *Contexto de la Actividad Docente*. Besides, we had to choose one of the following optional subjects out of which I chose the last one: *La Igualdad desde una Perspectiva de Género, Prevención y Resolución de Conflictos, Habilidades del Pensamiento, Educación Emocional en el Profesorado* and *Atención a los Alumnos con Necesidad Específica de Apoyo Educativo*.

On the other hand, the modules in the second semester are more specialised and correspond to what we will be teaching in the future. Due to the fact that I am specialising in teaching the English Language, I had the following subjects: *La Comunicación Oral en Lengua Inglesa, Diseño, Organización y Desarrollo de Actividades para el Aprendizaje del Inglés, Evaluación e Innovación Docente e Investigación Educativa en Inglés*. However, the optional subjects are common for all branches, so they are taught in Spanish. These subjects are *Contenidos Disciplinares para la Materia de…, Diseño de Materiales para la Educación a Distancia, Educación Secundaria para Personas Adultas, TIC para el Aprendizaje, Recursos Didácticos para la Enseñanza de Materias en Lengua Extranjera (Inglés y Francés)* and the one I have taken is *Enseñanza del Español como Lengua de Aprendizaje para el Alumnado Inmigrante.*

After having finished this degree, I have realised that I have learnt many new things which will be really useful for my future job, especially in those subjects where I have been taught many ways to design activities to make the learning of a language effective and fun.

2. JUSTIFICATION

Throughout this academic year, I have researched and written many essays and projects related to the teaching of English. Some of them have been really interesting and they have made me reflect on many aspects I had never thought of before and I think they are likely to be a great help for me as a future English teacher, especially those related to methodology and activities which can be used in my future lessons. Therefore, since I have decided to choose two of them among all I have written in the last nine months, throughout this final report I will try to show and explain the connection between them and how they have contributed to my training: an English Learning Unit of Work, entitled *The World of Work* and an innovation and research project entitled *Is there a Place in the Spanish Education System for Whole Brain Teaching?*

The first of the essays under analysis is a didactic unit designed for the subject *Diseño, organización y desarrollo de actividades para el aprendizaje del inglés.* It is aimed to a group of fourth year of diversification in the Secondary School where I did my school placement during six weeks in March and April. This unit of work is intended to be really communicative since it is a group with special needs and they really need to be pushed to take part during the lessons, and throughout this unit they have many opportunities to participate in class. Moreover, I think that the topic of the unit is very close to them. We have to bear in mind that they are in the last year of their compulsory education. Some of them will continue their studies with vocational training and some of them will start working, but all of them have something in common, they have to think about their future to choose the right vocational training or the right profession. For this reason, this learning unit of work will provide them a lot of vocabulary related to the working field and they will even learn how to write an application letter in English so that if they wanted, they could use it in a future, maybe they will even end up working abroad.

On the other hand, the second of the essays I would like to analyse is my innovation and research project which I was asked to write for the subject *Evaluación e innovación docente e investigación educativa en inglés*. This project could be done in groups and I did it with my two classmates Ángela Mañas Andrés and Sara Tomás Hombría. The research project is about *Whole Brain Teaching*, a quasi new methodology which started in the United States in 1999, and which has spread to different educational systems around the world. None of the members of my group, including me, had heard about this new approach in the educational field, but when our teacher for *Diseño, organización y desarrollo de actividades para el aprendizaje del ingles,* introduced it in class, we were so surprised and interested that we did not have any doubt that our innovation project would deal with *Whole Brain Teaching*. This new methodology not only means a new way of drawing students' attention but also a new way of learning and teaching, since this approach implies working in groups, teaching and learning from their peers and learning the concepts in a different way.

If I have chosen these two projects for my final essay it is because I have found many relationships between them. In the first place, both are based on my school placement I took three months ago, and there I could reflect upon the strengths and weaknesses of the Spanish Education System. I think that this new approach, which we have studied a little bit, could be a great help for class management. We all we know that in the past few years, there have been many behavioural problems in High Schools, and discipline and classroom management are issues that concern teachers. Perhaps one of the reasons behind this misbehaviour and rebelliousness is that teenaged students get really bored during lessons and as future teachers, we must think of something to make them have fun in class while they are learning. If we have chosen this topic for our research project it is because we think that *Whole Brain Teaching* could be the solution. It proposes routines which serve to keep students on task, give them a chance to participate and feel as if they are all an important part of their learning process.

Furthermore, part of the Learning Unit of Work was taught during these six weeks with the group I was in charge of. When I taught them, I realised that what they really needed was to be communicative in English, for them grammar had no point because they were not able to relate concepts in L2 with L1, so they had to learn the new language without realising it. That is why I decided to design the activities to be done orally in the beginning. So, all of them had the chance to participate in class and this would be taken into account in the final mark. They were working with a book planned for 4th year ESO, but from my point of view, the book was quite formal and I decided to adapt or modify some of the activities for them to make the tasks more communicative and adapted to their specific needs and interests.

I have said that *Whole Brain Teaching* implies working in groups. From my view, the unit which I have designed for this group has a lot of cooperative work in it because students will participate a lot during lessons and they will be both, teachers and learners at the same time. Besides, I am talking about a group of fourth year diversification. As all we know this is a group with students with special needs who cannot study the ordinary final stage of the Secondary school. For them, this implies having a negative label, and for this reason they often have low self-esteem. It is absolutely necessary to encourage them to learn new things and to make them aware of their great abilities. I think that *Whole Brain Teaching* can help the teacher to achieve these goals. First, lessons will be much more fun and as a consequence they will feel more motivated in learning English (because it is my case). As they feel worse than other students because they think they are not intelligent (something which I realised is completely false), teachers need to celebrate their success when they do things right, so that they know that they can do things just as well as anybody else. This new methodology tries to reward them when things are done well, as I will explain later on in this final essay.

In the introduction section, I have said the type of teacher I would like to be. The main point is that I want to be a teacher whose classes are learner-centred. In the appendix, where I have included my learning unit, in the methodology section, it can be seen that all has been designed bearing in mind that students are the centre of lessons. It is said

that everything can be adapted according to their needs, interests and motivation. This is that my lessons are aimed to be learners-centred. The methodology we have analysed in the project, Whole Brain Teaching, force teachers to make a change in their lessons, it obliges teachers to make their lessons completely centred on students, since they are the protagonists of their learning process and take part in lessons every single minute.

I have tried to clarify why I have chosen these two projects to be analysed in this essay. But I would like to summarize my ideas by highlighting that both projects are quite related to my school placement, a period which can be considered as training for my future job, and which was really useful for me. Both, the didactic unit and whole brain teaching can be easily put into practice in order to achieve effective learning and excellent results in the teaching-learning process.

3. CRITICAL REFLECTION

The Learning Unit of Work and the Research and Innovation Project I have chosen to analyse throughout this final essay were done during the last months at the same time, and were based on my School Placement in the Secondary School Pilar Lorengar. Perhaps, only by reading the titles of the projects it may seem that there are no connections between them, but if a deep analysis is done, we can find that both are quite related. In every lesson (and therefore in every unit) classroom management is really important. It is so important that the success or the failure of a learning unit and its activities not only depends on the teacher's and students' attitude towards it, but also on class management. For that reason, any teacher must have as many tools as possible for class management, and that is the reason why my classmates and I decided to choose Whole Brain Teaching for our research project, since this new trend is really useful to draw students' attention, but also to keep them on task. So, from my point of view this is especially why these two projects are closely tied to each other.

My didactic unit was titled '*World of Work*' and was designed following the main points we were explained during our lessons in the master. The learning unit was most of the final mark for the subject *Diseño, Organización y Desarrollo de Actividades para el Aprendizaje del Inglés* and I realize that it has been really useful for me, since it has given me many ideas to implement in my future as a teacher. I completely agree that the Spanish Education System is quite antiquated, since teachers are used to teaching in the traditional way rather than in the new communicate approach, which we have learnt is rather interesting and effective when teaching a language. So, while designing my didactic unit, I tried to apply some of the tools and devices we were taught in the subject I have just mentioned. Vicky, our teacher, introduced many interesting ideas to be used during our lessons, always from a communicative approach point of view. However, as I have been educated in the traditional way, sometimes I had problems to get rid of some traditional activities when I was designing my lesson plans. That is why, it has been a great challenge for me to design, organise and plan a quite innovative, student-centred and communicative unit of work.

Moreover, if we have a look at text books used in the educational centres, we will see that all of them revolve around the traditional way of teaching and learning grammar and vocabulary. We all know, and I have seen during my practicum periods, that students are really fed up with this kind of teaching and they get really bored spending their time doing fill in the gap exercises.

During the period of my school placement, I had the chance to choose a group to be in charge of, since our mentor made us go with him to all of his lessons. He was teaching different levels: 1st year ESO ANS[1], 3rd year ESO, 4th year Diversification ESO and 2nd year Bachillerato. After a while, and after having watched the different groups more

---

[1] ANS refers to *adaptaciones no significativas.* In this Secondary School, there are two levels of this program and it is Ahmed for those students who had special needs due to different reasons and if they were in their ordinary class, they would be completely lost.

than once, I decided to teach 4th year ESO diversification, since it could be a bigger challenge for me, since they are supposed to be students with special needs.

The topic of a unit is very important to make the learning unit motivating to students. Therefore, this unit is intended to motivate students by getting them to speak about familiar issues, like jobs. In the group I decided to design my didactic unit for, all of them are 18 years old and they have to decide what they want to be in a future, either they want to leave studies to work or to keep on with their studies.

When I was designing my unit, I knew that it would be a learner-centred learning unit. I followed Smith's principles (1994) about effective teaching. The fact that it is a learner-centred unit does not mean that students decide what to learn or not, but what it is true is that they are involved in the teaching- learning process. During my school placement, I saw how my mentor made students self-assess everyday, and I kept on with this routine because I found it really interesting. Moreover, I allowed them to work in groups and use cooperative learning, or perform real tasks such us a discussion about a story they learnt previously or write an application letter they could use for their future.

According to the constructivist theory, it is very important to encourage students to create knowledge, reflect on what they are doing and how they understand things in different ways. Also, it is very important to make them aware of what they really know. For that reason, I consider that to reactivate their knowledge at the very beginning of each activity or each lesson is very important. I designed seven lessons to cover my didactic unit, and all of them start with a warm up or brainstorming activity. These activities allow students to relate their previous knowledge with the aims of each lesson or with what they are supposed to learn as something new. I think that while doing these starting activities, it is suitable for students to have visual support as a slide or pictures to contextualise what they are learning. This can be seen in the appendix, where I have included my learning unit, particularly inside the learning unit, appendix 1. These activities which must be highly communicative allow the teacher to see what the level of students is concerning the topic to be learnt and establish the basis to start the teaching-learning process and adjust the activities to their level.

As I have said before, I have tried to follow the principles of communicative approach. So, it is important to bear in mind some typical characteristics of communication. Communication means to be unpredictable and creative, since the teacher must be aware of the fact that students are likely to propose different utterances for the same activity. And the important thing is to be communicative; therefore every opinion or suggestion must have the same importance as others. For instance, when they are asked to write an application letter, although they have to follow a given structure to make the activity suitable for their level, their creativity and originality may emerge and there will be as many different letters as there are students.

On the other hand, the communicative approach fosters the use of real materials. It is important to give students articles, videos, songs and so on. By doing that, students realise that they are learning something really useful, something they can use in their

daily lives, to do simple things such as understand a song they love. It is true, that this implies a great challenge for teachers, since many times they need to adapt these materials to their group. Unfortunately, during my school placement I could only do what my mentor told me. He was quite traditional and he followed the class book, but I had loved teaching English from a song on fashion or a famous English-speaking TV series.

Above, I have mentioned that what students need to be is communicative. I think that we do not have to take accuracy much into account, if at the end they really communicate their aim. I remember, I was teaching a 4th year ESO Diversification group, and for them it was really hard to speak the Second Language, but I must say that they always tried their best and we altogether got great results. Of course, they made mistakes, but a teacher should never punish them. These mistakes must be a starting point for their improvement, since good feedback is essential for a successful learning process. In the same way, we, as teachers, should celebrate our students' success.

Before starting this master, I had no idea about methodology or the different approaches to teaching languages. I have studied English Studies for five years, but during my degree there was no subject related to the educational field. I think that this is a mistake, because most of the students who decide to study this, want to be English teachers in their future. So, I have found it pretty interesting during this master to know and learn about Task-Based Language and the Communicative Approach.

Communicative Language Teaching is the dominant methodology nowadays. This approach is based on the use of real English to give students the chance to use the language in class and build meaningful pieces of work (Mitchel 1994). I think that my learning unit has been mainly based on this, since the grammatical aspects are not very important at all and when they are dealt with, they are included in texts and students have to learn or revise it from a deductive way. In fact, there was no point in explaining grammar without any context for the students I was teaching, since they find it very hard to establish connections with their L1 and with this age they need to establish some connections with the mother tongue to scaffold their understanding of L2 grammar. That is why, I think that it would be more useful for them to deduce how a specific grammar point is used, and avoid hard explanations.

On the other hand, Task Based Learning is a development of the communicative approach which especially focus on learners' actions and processes in the classroom. According to Peter Shekan (1998) a task is an activity where a real problem of communication is proposed which students have to solve. I must say that my group was taught by a quite traditional teacher, as I have said before, but in my learning unit there are some solving problem tasks. For instance, they have to invent and perform a dialogue in a post office whose aim is to send a letter. It is true that as it is a special group, they need some guidelines or structure to follow. If students are not used to doing this kind of activities, they are likely to need a period of adaptation from the traditional approach to the task-based one, but at the end, they thank the teacher because they find the activities much more motivating and enriching.

To design my activities I have followed Robert Manzano and his *Design Questions* (2007). It is not easy to design activities that suit the level of all students in a group. There are as many rhythms and learning styles as students in a group. That is why, a teacher must be able to cover all the necessities in a group. Sometimes, it is not necessary to design different kinds of activities; it is enough to address students in different ways to make it easier for them to understand what they have to do. However, a teacher must establish realistic goals when designing a learning unit of work. Sometimes this is very difficult for us, and especially because in six weeks it is impossible to know our students deeply. As I have said before, it is difficult to design activities for a class, since there usually are different levels. Nevertheless, in my group the level was quite homogenous although some finished things more quickly than others.

Evidently, when I was thinking about the tasks and activities students had to complete during the learning unit, it was essential to bear in mind their age and their interests, because we need to attract them if we want to have success with the unit. That is why I chose the topic of work and the final task I chose, since some of them were eager to apply for a job as soon as they finished school in June. The visual support a teacher uses must also be suitable for them. In fact, when I was designing my unit, I decided to take pictures from the internet to design a slide to work on vocabulary. I had chosen pictures with cartoons in them, but my mentor advised me to change them for real photos of people working, since it would be closer to them.

When I chose this group, 4th year ESO diversification, I saw that it would be a personal challenge. These students did not seem to show any interest at all in learning, and when you enter a secondary School and you meet diversification students, there is always a kind of refusal to treat them as the rest of students; unfortunately, they are always treated as the worst students in the school. That is what is known as Pygmalion Effect, and my challenge was to demonstrate to myself and to them that they would be able to do whatever they set out to do. The fact that teachers do not usually have any expectations for these students is often reflected on their final marks, because teachers do not give them the opportunity to demonstrate to others what they are good at and capable of doing. I think that it is vital to motivate them, to push them to participate and speak as much as possible, to show them they can do things even better than other partners in higher levels. These students, as they have a label, sometimes have quite low self-esteem, and it is necessary to assure them that they are not the worst in the school, they are the same as the others, neither better nor worse, they only need to work and learn as much as possible. For this reason, celebrating the success of their progress is very important and positive reinforcement is needed to make them feel at ease. If students feel comfortable during lessons, they feel confident to speak. What I really wanted was to attract students with my activities and involve them in the learning process.

I also think Cooperative Learning is an interesting approach. Before starting this master, I had already heard about cooperative learning, but I did not know what it really meant. If I remember when I was studying at High School, I always worked individually; it was rare to work in pairs or in groups. However, from the first day of the

master onwards, we were told about the advantages of working in groups or pairs. So, I tried to put this into practice in my learning unit. Every activity was designed to be first done orally in class. All the class participated as a group and therefore students learned from their peers and they acted as teachers and students at the same time. I think that they were not used to working in groups, but they liked it, since they felt free to express their knowledge. Moreover, according to Kagan (1995) cooperative learning helps students to develop some social skills which cannot be developed if they work on their own. I think that it is important for students to establish social relationships among themselves and even more nowadays since we find a wide variety of races and cultures. Working in groups can help them to know and respect each other. I consider it pretty important for my group, because there were at least five different nationalities. However, we must take into account that there are students who do not like working in groups, they prefer to do thing on their own and we, as teachers, must respect them and combine both ways of working. But I have to say that working as a team is much more motivating and enriching, since every member of the group contributes to success bringing their personal experiences and knowledge, getting a better product than they could do individually.

However, we are usually mistaken if we think that cooperative learning is easy to carry out. Students are not used to doing it in class, so first we have to teach them how to work in this way. Moreover, working in groups can lead the class to make much more noise which can bother the rest of the colleagues, the teacher needs tools to control these kinds of situations and train students to work cooperatively.

When designing my learning unit, I decided to organize it according to the different macro skills in language communication: reading, listening, writing and speaking. The main activity of each lesson was devoted to one of these skills although the rest were integrated in the lesson to a lesser or greater extent, since it is impossible to separate them. This supports Brewster's approach (1991) of language learning as an integrative process where the four skills are developed in parallel and practice in one of them reinforces the others. However, in the traditional way of learning and teaching skills were practiced in isolation. I mean if a lesson was devoted to listening, they only worked on listening and the activities were all about listening. I find it really interesting to combine the four skills or the five, if we take into account interaction, since we are talking about a language and learning a language involves the five skills practiced in parallel. This is something that I have learnt during this master. That is the reason why a reading activity in my learning unit is related (in fact it is the starting point) to a speaking activity, the debate. That is one of the advantages of teaching a language, to work with different skills at the same time.

On the other hand, I have planned the activities for all skills with the same structure. For each of these skills, I prepared a 'pre', 'while' and 'post' activity. I think that it is important to set the context of every activity a teacher wants to carry out in class, for this reason I decided to include 'pre' activities. In these activities the teacher can check the knowledge students have about the topic, since the previous knowledge students have is many times much more important to understand the meaning than the own text (Brown 1994). They can suggest what the activity is going to be about or key

words can be worked on to make it easier to understand the listening or the reading for example. Moreover, students' interest can rise from this activity. This can be seen in the didactic unit included as appendix of this final essay.

On the other hand, 'while' activities can have two structures. The designing of one or the other depends on what the teacher wants to focus on. First, it can be a global question, if the teachers want the readers to understand the whole or a major part of the text; or a specific question, where the important detail is more taken into account. Students are more used to answering specific questions, we all have witnessed during our practicum periods that they only want to understand every single word of a listening or a reading, and it is very hard to make them aware of the importance of understanding the message, the general idea. Finally, the 'post' activity, is that which is related (or not) to the listening, reading or whatever and usually a different skill is practiced. For example, in my didactic unit there is an activity which is a reading about three teenagers, as a post reading activity a *quiz-quiz-trade* is prepared. This is a game where students practice speaking and writing making questions at random.

It is obvious that reading and listening are very important to acquire a language. An English lesson is a listening activity all the time, since students are listening to the teacher and their peers speaking English. However, I do not feel that is completely necessary to speak in English the 50 minutes a lesson lasts. I consider it important to provide students L2 input, but sometimes, they do not have the level to understand certain points. In fact, since I was teaching a diversification group, sometimes they were quite lost when the teacher spoke in English all the time. The good point is to combine both languages during the lesson. It is necessary to give some instructions or clarifications in Spanish to avoid misunderstandings. But the teacher needs to be able to combine both languages, not just translating what has been said in L2 to L1, because if students realize that the teacher does this, they will only wait for the translation into Spanish and they will never listen to English. It is also important to mention that teachers must provide comprehensible but challenging input for students. Activities and input should be neither too difficult nor too easy. If the activities are too difficult for them they throw in the towel because they think that they are unable to do them, but if they are too easy, they may feel bored. Finding the midway point is the difficult task for a teacher.

During my lessons I had loved practicing both extensive and intensive listening as well as reading. However, as I have said before my mentor made me follow the class book and there the reading and listening activities are intensive. Students had to focus on text details in order to answer some questions given during the passage and in one case (regarding reading) deduce the comparative and superlative grammar rules. Something I am sure about is that if in the future I work as an English teacher, I will combine both types of listening and reading, since I think that students need extensive reading to see that listening to songs or film extracts as well as reading texts from authentic materials can be a source of pleasure. First, listening with visual support is a great help for students, since images, as we know, help them to understand better the messages since background and gestures of the participants are important to understand the meaning. Everybody knows that some meaning is only conveyed by

gestures and other visual clues (Harmer 2001, 1983). And, secondly, there is no need to understand every single word to understand a text, since as I have suggested before sometimes the important thing is to understand the global meaning.

On the other hand, in the same way that it is essential to find activities which are neither too difficult nor too easy, it is vital to propose texts, oral or written, which are neither too long nor too short. The teacher must adapt the text to the appropriate difficulty for his or her students but also to the appropriate length.

In every unit it is convenient to deal with a cultural aspect. Since one of the key competences the Aragonese Curriculum establishes is *cultural and artistic competence[2].* In my Learning Unit I decided to deal with the cultural aspect though a reading titled *Sixteen and Serious*. The text is about three 16-year-old teenagers who have already started working. The aim of this text is to make students reflect on these situations, if they would like have these teenagers' lives or on the contrary, whether they would prefer to keep on studying and complete their education. I think that dealing with cultural aspects is really important since it is a way to show an attitude of respect towards other countries and traditions. This is very important nowadays in society since we live in a multicultural country and students are in multicultural classes where many races and nationalities are mixed.

After having analysed listening and speaking, it comes time to analyse writing and speaking. These skills are as important as the others I have already analysed or even more, since producing output is harder than receiving input for students. Although both, speaking and writing are productive skills they are not the same at all. When we write several tools and devices are used that are not useful for speaking and the other way round.

In my learning unit, speaking is worked on throughout the unit, since every single activity is done orally first. Apart from that, there are other activities that are only devoted to speaking. For instance to introduce the topic, I prepared an activity called '*What do they do?*' Students had a projected slide with some pictures and phonetic symbols on it. People working appear in the pictures. Students had to guess the job, using the phonetic symbol provided as a clue. I mean they had to say a job containing the sound represented by the phonetic symbol. Then they had to say what these people did in their jobs. It was amazing because they had to change from the third person singular to plural and they did not make mistakes since they would add or not the –s without any problems. I could assure that they made fewer grammatical mistakes than other students in higher levels. While doing this activity I thought that it would be interesting to make them repeat what their preceding peer had just said. By doing that, they worked listening and speaking at the same time and they had to pay attention all the time to be able to repeat what had been said previously. This kept all

---

[2] Competence in linguistic communication, mathematical competence, competence in knowledge of and interaction with the physical world, competence in processing information and use of the ICT, competence in social skills and citizenship, cultural and artistic competence, learning to learn and autonomy and personal initiative

of the students on task so that not only the student in charge of answering was participating in the learning process.

Another warm up activity, was related to comparative adjectives. I prepared for them a slide with photos and adjectives in it. They were asked to make pairs by comparing the different jobs using the adjectives. To make this activity more complete and challenging I introduced the question *Do you agree?* They had to express their opinions towards what their partners had said.

The writing skill is also worked on along the unit. After doing the activities orally, they needed to do them in their notebooks. They needed to have evidence of what they had been working on. This kind of writing can be really easy for ordinary students in 4th year ESO, and in fact, it can have no point in doing it. But for this kind of students it can be quite challenging. They usually make mistakes when they write sentences down in their notebooks and they need to be really attentive and to make a great effort to write things properly. However, the final task was a writing activity. They were asked to write an application letter. These students need every kind of clue and guide to do creative activities; that is why I provided them with a structure they had to follow to complete the task. Moreover, as a pre-writing activity, a formal letter is shown to deduce and guess the formal aspects and the purpose of the letter, since they needed to have activities contextualised at all times. Furthermore, they knew they had to do their best in writing the letter, since once it was perfectly written, it would be uploaded to the class blog to be read by all their partners. They also had to write some dialogues during the unit. It implies reading a given dialogue, writing their own and speaking while performing it. [3]

What I found really difficult was to mark the writing and speaking activity. I think that I could improve my learning unit by including a rubric to assess these two skills. It is quite hard to establish the criteria to evaluate writing and speaking, but if a teacher has a rubric, students will know what they are asked to say and teachers have real evidence of their good performances and failures. And what is also important is that teachers can give useful feedback commenting on the students' performances. We know that feedback is essential to improve the learning process.

The last point I would like to deal with is the assessment of my learning unit. A final exam is included at the end of the unit, but it is only 25% of the final mark. The Spanish Education System is known for having a final exam at the end of the learning process. I think that the exam must have its fair value. It is not fair at all to give all the value to the final exam, since students only have a single opportunity to pass the subject. If I have included an exam it is because I think that if they go on studying, they will have to sit a lot of exams during their vocational training, and I think that they must be used to sitting exams.

However, the main point in assessment is everyday work and observation. I think that students' performance must be evaluated day by day. It is pretty relevant to make students aware of the importance of the work they do every day to achieve great

---

[3] All these activities can be seen in the appendix.

results in their learning. So participation, interaction in the foreign language and class work are taken into account for the final mark with an important value (40%). To make students achieve this 40% in this part of their mark, I think that what my mentor in the school placement did was quite useful. He wrote in every lesson these three sentences on the blackboard: *I have participated, I have worked* and *I have learnt*. Students at the end of the class had to mark these sentences from one to five to self assess their daily work. It was surprising but, they were completely sincere and their final marks were similar to those they had marked during the term. To carry out this day by day observation, that is as Robert Manzano says in *The Art and Science of Teaching* (2007) to track the progress, teachers must have evidence of students' work. Manzano suggests designing scales or rubrics to assess the attainment of goals as I have suggested before.

The other project I would like analyse in this final essay is the one I wrote together with my classmates Ángela Mañas and Sara Tomás for the subject *Evaluación e Innovación Docente e Investgación Educativa en el Ámbito de las Especialidad de Inglés.* The project was about *Whole Brain Teaching* and we decided to title it *'Is there a Place in the Spanish Education System for Whole Brain Teaching?'* since we took advantage of our school placements to check if this methodology could work properly in the Spanish System.

I had not heard about this new methodology until our teacher for the subject *Diseño, Organización y Desarrollo de Actividades para el Aprendizaje del Inglés,* introduced it to us during one lesson. My partners and I found it shocking but at the same time amazing, perhaps using Whole Brain Teaching methodology in class, teachers' bad mood due to students' behaviour and lack of attention were about to finish. Moreover, we wanted to investigate a real novelty for the education field, and we thought that almost none of our mentors would know about this new amazing methodology.

As a research and innovation project, it had to have a clear and organised structure to make the essay totally comprehensible for an external reader, all of it based on real evidence we took during our school placements in March and April. Therefore, to design our research we followed the steps proposed by Brown and Rodgers which divide the projects into five parts. The introduction was where we defined the project itself, as well as the justification of the research and the question we tried to answer along the project. Here, we also mentioned some theoretical and practical foundations about Whole Brain Teaching and Multiple Intelligences. The second part of the project was about the methods and the steps we followed for the research using the three Secondary Schools where we took our Practicum period as our objects of study. Afterwards, we analysed the data and the results. In the discussion part, we explained the different conclusions we had reached. The last part of this project is about our personal learning results and possible future actions.

Firstly, in the introduction and justification, the writer of a project must tell the readers why he or she has chosen one topic and not the other, why is important for them to investigate about it, and this is what we did, we tried to explain why we were so interested in *Whole Brain Teaching.* For us, classroom management is without any

hesitation one of the biggest challenges for teachers, in fact we all three agree that it can even mark the difference between a good teacher and an excellent teacher. This difference lies in how teachers cope with students' attitude during the class time. Therefore, since I am studying this master to be the best possible teacher we found it important to have tools to control our classes and make our students pay attention to us.

I always remember those teachers I had when I was studying who really impressed me while they were teaching because they never had problems with students' attitude and perhaps when I start giving lesson I will try to imitate them. However, at the same time, I also think that teenagers nowadays are pretty different from those who were sharing lessons with me, since their interests, motivations and attitudes are not the same at all; and what worked properly during lessons 10 years ago, is likely not to work nowadays. Therefore, a good teacher is the one who is able to adapt him or herself to these new situations and accepts the challenge to teach everyone, even the ones who are not interested in the subject.

Before starting this project, indeed before starting this master we had several questions related to class management: *What can we do to draw students' attention? What can we do with those students who are not motivated anymore? How can we make our lessons appealing to our students?* These three questions were the basis of this innovation and investigation project.

As I have mentioned before, during a session of this Master de Formación del Profesorado, we were introduced to a new approach dealing with class management and we were completely enthusiastic about that. This new approach is the Whole Brain Teaching approach and it will be explained in depth later on. This approach was developed in the United States in 1999 by some Californian teachers who were tired of the epidemic flagging student engagement and they decided to set up a radical change in approach. From that moment on, this method has revolutionized the education methodology in America, and some other parts of the world.

We took advantage of our practicum periods to survey teachers to know if they had ever heard about this methodology before, to introduce this method among teachers who were willing to learn and to put it into practice to demonstrate if it worked or not. The success, the obstacles and the results of this new approach were quite different in the three school placements where we have been doing our student teaching. Throughout the project we commented on all these results and evidence.

I would also like to point out what the objectives were for this research; that is what our aim was by doing this innovation project. We wanted to investigate about the Whole Brain Teaching as well as check if mentors and teachers in our school placements had ever heard about it and their opinions. But, what we considered the most important aim was to introduce this new methodology at school and check if this could work in our education system and where it could be more effective.

To carry out this project, we also tried to answer some questions we had proposed to ourselves in order to draw conclusions for this innovation project. The questions were the following:

- *How do teachers catch their students 'attention?*
- *How do teachers maintain silence in class?*
- *Have teachers heard about this new methodology called Whole Brain Teaching?*
- *Which are the strongest and weakest points of this methodology?*
- *How has this method worked in our school placements?*
- *Has it been a positive or a negative experience?*
- *How can this method be improved?*
- *Which possible actions can be done in the future?*
- *What have we learnt?*

As in any innovation and investigation research, it is necessary to include some theoretical and practical foundations. Unfortunately, since this methodology is quite new, there is no literature written about it apart from what we found on the internet. Therefore, our theoretical part was based on the web page [4]devoted to this new approach that Chris Biffle created and which consists of different articles and research about it and the theory of Multiple Intelligences since Howard Gardner's theory about Multiple Intelligences is closely related to this project.. There we could find some theory about when, where and by whom it was founded, some evidence of how our brain works when teachers use these rules in their lessons and the steps teachers must follow to carry it out during their lessons.

This amazing methodology was started in 1999 by three Californian teachers: Chris Biffle, working in a college; Jay Vanderfin and Chris Rekstad, in charge of children in an elementary school. They all agreed that all students at every level share the same difficulties. Students usually lack discipline, background knowledge and fundamental problem solving skills. Then they decided to invent or create a method for keeping their classrooms peaceful while at the same time they had fun. Surprisingly, they realised that students learnt more when they were having a nice time; therefore, humour and games were used to increase the number of times students repeat core information and practice basic skills. Here, I find it interesting to mention the idea of 'flow'. It was developed by Daniel Goleman in his book *Emotional Intelligence.* This idea has to do with the motivation towards the task they are doing. Related to this, Howard Gardner sees the concept of 'flow' as the best way to teach children, since motivating them from the inside rather than by threat or reward is the important thing (Read 1998). Therefore, this is what Whole Brain Teaching suggests, the idea of creating fully motivating lessons to engage students with no need of shouting, threatening or rewarding, they do what they are asked because they think it is interesting for them. Since these three teachers started to develop whole Brain Teaching, it became very successful and thousands of teachers have decided to join this method.

---

[4] The web page used was *http://www.wholebrainteaching.com/*

Furthermore, this new methodology does not need the teachers to make a big change in their methodologies, in fact they do not have to modify their class routines, however only by introducing some of the basis of this new approach, they will notice a big difference in their class management. For me, this is one of the most important and appealing points of Whole Brain Teaching. Some teachers we tried to introduce this new trend to in our School Placements were not very sure about it, in fact they were quite sceptical and some of them even refused to learn about it, but I think that until you try it, you cannot believe how easy it is to draw students' attention and how powerful this method can be.

The basis of Whole Brain Teaching makes clear that if teachers make their own rules to follow, students will be more likely to follow these rules; highly energetic students who usually lack attention, respond pretty well, rebel students become less rebellious when the teacher is eagerly supported by the rebel's allies and finally if classroom instruction engages the whole brain, students do not have any mental area left over to create challenging behaviour.

This new approach has six steps and they are clearly explained in the investigation project included as an appendix. The first of them is *class-yes*. This is one that Vicky Gil, our teacher in the master, uses with us when we were not attentive at all. It is a wonderful way to call our classes to get quiet. To get the students' attention the teacher must teach his students that when he or she says 'Class!', they must answer 'Yes!'. They have to say it in the way the teacher has just said 'Class!' I mean if the teacher says 'Class, Class, Class!', they would have to answer 'Yes, Yes, Yes!' with the same tone and intensity the teacher has used before. It is demonstrated that we can avoid starting lesson in a bad mood. The next steps are *hands and eyes, mirror (mirror and words), the scoreboard, teach-ok* and *switch.* Some of these steps are the ones which we have been working on with the teachers in our school placements and the main procedures which the surveys are about.

Our tools for research were surveys, interviews and the observation we carried out during the six weeks of Practicum II an III. We thought that it would be interesting to interview teachers before and after introducing them to this new methodology, so that we could check what their opinions were before and after and a comparative study was carried out.

We decided to interview the teachers for several reasons. First of all, they were supposed to have experience in class management, they have been teaching for several years and they know how to cope with students' attitudes, so their opinions are of great value. On the other hand, we thought that with an interview it would be easier to express feelings and opinions than with a questionnaire, and since we were doing an investigation about Whole Brain Teaching, we needed to know exactly what their feelings, opinions and experiences were. Therefore, the teachers who were involved in our school placements were interviewed.

When doing a research project it is very important to propose good questions in the interviews and in the questionnaires. For the interview, we wanted common open ended questions as McNamara (1999) proposed. These questions are the same for all the interviewees and they do not contain yes-no questions but open questions to provide a personal answer. Thanks to these interviews, we could establish a comparison of the results, of what they felt. The questions were related to students' behaviour, opinions and feelings, and of course, their opinion of Whole Brain Teaching, especially after presented with this new methodology. As we will see later, different conclusions were reached from these interviews since the teachers' opinions were pretty different.

Apart from teachers' opinions, we considered that students' feelings and beliefs were highly important, since they were to whom the methodology is addressed. To know their reactions toward this new method we designed another questionnaire. We decided to follow Foddy's ideas to create a complete and useful questionnaire. Foddy pointed out that questions must be short to be fully understood. We took into account that they were addressed towards students, with higher and lower levels of English, so we tried to avoid complexity and the questions were quite clear, avoiding long questions and two questions at the same time.

According to Foddy, there are some steps to follow while designing a questionnaire. First of all, the person designing the questionnaire must have a clear idea of what information he or she requires. Secondly, we have to be sure that the questions are adapted to students' level and they will be able to understand them. That is the reason why we included questions in Spanish, since we are talking about students of 2nd year ESO and 4th Diversification and their level of English was not good enough to produce accurate answers in English. Finally, since in some questions we included a scale, all their answers were easy to be compared. The last question of our questionnaire was an open one. They were asked if they would like to continue with the new rules established in class for the last lessons and their reasons. Students' opinions were really important for us, since they are the ones who establish the success or the failure of any methodology. However, the exams' results after applying Whole Brain Teaching were also of great value to us. As you can see in the appendix, where the research and innovation project is included, there was a great change in some students' grades after implementing this methodology in one of the Schools. The final aim of this new way of teaching is to make an improvement in students' marks.

I find it necessary to say that doing this Research Project has been a challenge for us. First of all, as I have suggested above it was a topic that fascinated us since we think that methodology is essential for the lesson's success and we want to be the best teachers possible. And on the other hand, we had never done a research project before, so we have made a great effort to do it as well as possible. Doing this research has been really gratifying but I would lie if I said that we have not faced any problems while doing the research. I have already mentioned that due to the fact that this methodology is quasi new, there is no literature written, so we have had to base our project on our own observation, teachers' experiences and the information we have

found on the web, apart from the valuable information, our teacher Vicky Gil gave us during our lessons.

However, I think that what most discouraged us was the refusal of some teachers to learn something new. The teachers in the three school placements reacted completely differently towards Whole Brain teaching. Some teachers really welcomed this methodology, whereas others were sceptical about it and others refused to learn about it. I think that some teachers did not listen to us when we wanted to explained this, because they thought that implementing this would be a way of complicating their class routines. On the other hand, I think that this new methodology is for teachers who do not feel embarrassed to try something new and this methodology is also for teachers who are very active, because Whole Brain Teaching leads lessons to be more dynamic.

In addition, we are conscious that no methodology is perfect. They all have their strengths and weaknesses. And although Whole Brain Teaching has a lot of benefits we are conscious that it has an expiration date. But we think that key words and instructions could be substituted when they do not work anymore. Moreover, sometimes a methodology is a kind of identification of a teacher, so these rules are likely to work well for a teacher but not necessarily for others.

As I have mentioned before, I did my school placement in the Secondary School Pilar Lorengar. During these six weeks of Practicum I entered different classes of different levels (1st year ANS[5], 3rd year ESO, 4th year ESO Diversification and 2nd year Bachillerato) by I was mainly in charge of 4th year ESO Diversification, and with them my University mentor's observation took place.

During the school placement I observed how my mentor managed to keep his students in silence. From my view, he never had problems of behavior in his classes; in fact, his students remained almost all the class in silence. My tutor was quite traditional in the way he coped with the class management. He used different techniques to try to keep his students attentive. According to him, it was very important to deal with topics close to their experience, since if the students are interested in it, they are really attentive. Furthermore, he was always asking questions about their previous knowledge at random; so all students in class were 'forced' to listen to him to be able to answer the question properly. But, in my opinion, the most effective tool he used to get his students to pay attention was the way he made them self-assess, as I have commented previously when analyzing the didactic unit. Moreover, the tutor was always pushing the students who had not participated to raise their mark in this aspect.

Another of the pillars of Whole Brain Teaching is cooperative Learning. I think that they work quite cooperatively without realising it. They were quite used to working as a team, in fact they always helped their peers when they did not know something, and I

---

[5] ANS refers to *adaptaciones no significativas.* In this Secondary School, there are two levels of this program and it is aimed to those students who had special needs due to different reasons and if they were in their ordinary class, they would be completely lost.

can assure that this provides a great atmosphere to work in. Whole Brain Teaching provides students a completely different way of learning. They are students and teachers at the same time, and this is something I tried to do. For example, in the activities they had to repeat what they had previously said, what they had to repeat is what their partners had taught them, and if any of them did not know how to follow when speaking, they helped each other. Moreover, this activity makes them all be on task, another useful device to make them be attentive.

When the lessons began, they always did everything aloud, and at the end of the lesson they had time to do everything in their notebooks. If students had been attentive, they did the exercises properly and they got a great mark at the end, if not, they did not get this mark, which was important for the final mark, since participation and everyday work were pretty important to pass the subject.

After a while, I told my tutor about the Whole Brain Teaching approach to keep his students in silence and make the lessons more dynamic and active and more important, to draw his students attention. He had never heard about this new approach, but he told me that he was very proud of the way he coped with the class management and for him he achieved excellent results. He also told me that experience was the most important tool to carry out a lesson properly. He pointed out that it was a mistake to shout at students if they are not keeping silence or paying attention. For him, approaching them and talking to them individually was much more effective.

I think that due to the fact that my mentor never had discipline problems during his lessons, he was quite skeptical and reluctant to introduce new methods in his classes. I am sure that for him this method is quite childish and it could be only put into practice at nursery or primary school. But perhaps, for that reason if I had introduced it in one of these programs for students with special needs, such as ANS. I think it would have been a great success, because if students in 4th year diversification were participative and loved dynamic lessons, much more so for those in their 1st year of ANS.

I would have loved to introduce these innovative tools in class, but I had to follow what my mentor said. Fortunately, my classmate Ángela was allowed to introduce it and it had amazing results, especially among those students whose marks were quite low. On the other hand, Sara's mentor was also quite skeptical to introduce novelties in their lessons, and we have agreed that usually when a teacher has no problems in class management (due to his or her experience, the respect students have towards them, or whatever), he or she feels that everything works properly in this and that it can last forever.

However, I think that our job as teachers also involves innovation, since as I have mentioned before we can distinguish an ordinary teacher from an excellent teacher by the way he or she copes with students. We know that there are some teachers at Miguel de Molinos Secondary School who are using this methodology in their lessons. They are shocked by the effect it is having on the students' attitude and behaviour. They told us that they have put into practice the scoreboard game and when she

forgets it, students tell her, "Hey! You have forgotten to give us an extra point!". So we are really proud of having decided to investigate or to introduce (not in my case, because I couldn't) this amazing and great approach which can perhaps help in some way to improve the old-fashioned Spanish Education System.

If we want to be excellent teachers and do our best while working, we have to learn continuously. This is a profession that involves reinventing ourselves along all our professional lives. Students feel bored when their classes are routine-like and we do not have to reject any novelty just because it implies changing our way of teaching. We have to bear in mind that we are teachers, but student or learners at the same time, and we want to have a job where we will learn every day something new. Books are a great source to learn, but our partners at work and our students are a never-ending source of knowledge that can provide us really useful development.

An important conclusion we drew from this research is that some teachers did not know anything about Whole Brain Teaching, because nobody has told them about it. We suggested in our research project that it would be a good idea to make some seminars and sessions in the courses that teachers take in the CPRs (Centro de Profesores y Recursos), because it would be a great opportunity for them to be introduced to this new approach.

As I have tried to capture during this final essay, my learning Unit and the research Project are highly tied to the Practicum II and III during those six week in March and April. First of all, because it was during that time when I carried out both projects and moreover, because all the knowledge we have acquired since the very beginning of this Master, and especially in the second semester have been put into practice in the designing of my Learning Unit and my Research Project.

I strongly believe that if I had been allowed to put into practice Whole Brain Teaching during my school placement with the group I was in charge of, it would have been a great success. These students were highly participative. They were always with their hands up to take part in all the activities planned for them. Whole Brain Teaching fosters participation in class. The problem was that although they were students who were willing to work during their lessons, sometimes they lost their attention, and with this new methodology, I think it would have been easier to keep their attention throughout the lessons.

4. CONCLUSIONS AND PROPOSALS FOR THE FUTURE

When I started the master I was quite sceptical about it. I thought that it was not fair at all to do a master whereas people who graduated years before did not need it to take the competitive exam to work as a teacher in a Secondary School. However, now, once I have finished it, I have realised that it has been quite useful to shape my education as a future teacher. I have no doubt that the best part of this master has been the Practicum Periods we have taken for two weeks in November but especially for six weeks in March and April. We all agree that the previous CAP[6] which was done up to three years ago as a previous step to be a teacher had a lot of weaknesses. People complaint that they were told a lot of theories that were not useful at all, they handed in a final essay and that was everything they did, but all of them concluded that they did not learn anything at all. Moreover, they did not have Practicum periods so they had to face a class without having ever been in touch with students and without any knowledge about how an Educational Centre works. Therefore, something was needed to improve these weak points of a course that did not prepare people for what they were going to find in their professional lives.

For all I have explained above, I thank this master for giving me the opportunity of taking a School Placement and being in contact with the reality in High Schools and students. We have been taught a lot of theory during this master and the aim was to put into practise what teachers had told us and to check if the devices and advice they gave worked with students or not. However, sometimes, what I saw during my school placement was very different from what we were told at University. I am completely sure that some teachers of this master have spent years of their career with teenagers at schools, but there are others who have never been in touch with them in an educational centre and they do not know very well how they work. For this reason, the theory sometimes did not coincide with the praxis.

I know that we need some theory, but perhaps this master should be much more practical. I strongly believe that it would be more useful to have longer school placements, since we did not have enough time to work with students and to put into practise everything we had learnt. Furthermore, as a future proposal I suggest moving the school placements towards the end of the academic year. From my point of view, there is no point in taking the practicum in the middle of a semester, since we were quite unmotivated to come back to theoretical lessons after six weeks working with teenagers, which is what we really like.

I would like to emphasize the fact that not all students are bad and rude students. We must avoid misconceptions. There are fantastic students in every class and the only

---

[6] Curso de Adaptación de Profesorado

thing we have to do is to get to know them. We cannot let ourselves be influenced by the pessimistic image the media show about schools because the reality has shown me that the majority of students are very polite and respectful if we treat them in the same way. In fact, during my practicum I met excellent students. As I have mentioned throughout the essay, I decided to work with 4th year diversification. It was a challenge for me, but I must say that it was a really rewarding experience. They taught me a lot of things while I was teaching them, but the most important thing I learnt was that labels are not fair at all. These students had a label due to the simple fact of attending lessons in diversification (we all know that they are considered the worst students at High schools), nobody trusts them, every teacher thinks that they are there to waste time. However, I realised that they were students willing to learn as much as possible, really polite and always pre-disposed to help their peers. All this provides such an excellent atmosphere in class that for me it was a prize to have the opportunity of working with them. They are people who only need to be pushed to work properly, since they sometimes have had problems which have made them have low self-esteem and they need to see and check that they are able to do whatever they propose. Therefore, I dare say that teachers must get rid of prejudices and give all their students the same opportunities, because sometimes they can surprise you.

Moreover, it is noteworthy to point out that teachers must bear in mind that education is a never ending source of growth and development. First, students need novelties to be introduced in their lessons to avoid routines and boredom. But teachers need to be always learning new things in order to make lessons challenging for their students day by day. That is why, as a future teacher, I am willing to learn as many things as possible, and I will never think that I already know everything, since it is essential to want to get more and more new knowledge related to the educational field, such as new methodologies, approaches, materials, activities and so on, which can make our lessons much more interesting for our future students.

Society is changing with the passing of time, therefore students are not the same as years ago, and teachers must also be different. What I have also learnt in this master is that teachers must adapt themselves to the society they are living, and in our lessons we must take into account students' interests and motivations. We have all witnessed how students get really bored during lessons, as can be seen in the appendix (in the research project), students go on mini-vacations due to several factors, but the subject and the teacher are two important factors. To avoid this, it is vital to deal with topics close to them and to try new methodologies such as Whole Brain Teaching, since novelties and surprises for students are important to make our subject appealing for them. Unfortunately, there are teachers who are reluctant to try new things out with students.

During this academic year, I have thought of throwing in the towel more than once. But now, I know that I made the right decision, since I have new knowledge that can be really useful to be put into practice with my students. I am aware of the hard moment we are living due to the economical crisis, in which we do not know when we will be able to work as teachers in a Secondary School, but I am really looking forward to trying all I have learnt during this master, because now, I have no doubt what I want for my future: I want to work as an English teacher to share my knowledge with my students.

5. REFERENCES

Bibliography

BREWSTER. 1991. *Six listening strategies and tasks for practice*.

BROWN H. D. 1994. *Teaching by principles: AN interactive approach to language pedagogy.* Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice Hall Regents.

BROWN, J. D. and RODGERS, T. S. 2002. *Doing Second Language Research*. Oxford: O.U.P.

DAY, R.R and BAMFORD J. 1998. *Extensive reading in the second language classroom*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

COVERY, STEPHEN R. *The 7 habits of highly effective people.* Franklin Covey Co.

FODDY, WILLIAM. 1993. *Constructing questions for interviews and questionnaires. Theory and practice in social research.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

HARMER, J. 2001. *The practice of English Language Teaching*. 3rdedition. Pearson Education Limited.

KAGAN. 1985. *Cooperative learning: Resources for teachers.* Riverside, CA: University of California

KRASHEN. 2000. *Sociocultural Theory and Second Language Learning.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

MCNAMARA, CARTER, PhD. *General Guidelines for Conducting Interviews*. Minnesota, 1999

MANZANO, ROBERT. 2007. *The Art and Science of Teaching*. Virginia: ASCD

MITCHELL, R. 1994. "The communicative approach to language teaching". *In Teaching Modern Languages*. A. Swarbick (ed.). London: Routledge.

NUNAN, DAVID. 1995 (1991). *Language Teaching Methodology*. Hemel Hempstead: Phoenix ELT.

SKEHAN, P. 1998. *A Cognitive Approach to Language Learning*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

SMITH, R. 1994. "What makes a good teacher?" In Moon, B and Shelton Mayes, A. teaching and learning in the Secondary School. London: Routledge.

Electronic Resources

http://www.hsc.nemetro.k12.mn.us/services/Staff%20Development%20Resource%20Library%20Catalog%202006.pdf (last visited on 14, June 2012)

http://www.wholebrainteaching.com (last visited on 16, June 2012)

http://marifa.hct.ac.ae/files/2011/06/The-Development-of-Young-Learners-Reading-Comprehension-Skills.pdf (last visited on 14, June 2012)

http://books.google.es/books?hl=es&lr=&id=6NCq3zyWkNsC&oi=fnd&pg=PR7&dq=constructivism+education&ots=57RQK97vwK&sig=u4jbltm4NBYVWV6Ph7Fw3Le_OTU#v=onepage&q=constructivism%20education&f=false (last visited don 15, June 2012)

http://xa.yimg.com/kq/groups/24019306/564129146/name/Interview+as+a+Method+for+QR.pdf (last visited on 16, June 2012)

Laws

Ley orgánica 6/2007, de 9 de mayo, Departamento de Educación, Cultura y Deporte, por la que se aprueba el currículo de la Educación secundaria obligatoria y se autoriza su aplicación en los centros docentes de la Comunidad autónoma de Aragón. *Boletín Oficial de Aragón*.