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Reflections upon my personal growth **as an English Teacher**

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1. Introduction

In this project, I am trying to do a critical and personal reflection on my own learning process during this year, my experience in the practical period in a school, and a global vision of the experience of studying this Master, and the expected outcomes it has caused in me.

This is the main structure of this work: firstly, in this introductory part, I will comment on the teaching profession, taking into account the theoretical framework and my experience during the Practicum period, analysing some remarkable elements that I want to highlight: work conditions, professional goals, organisation patterns, etc. Secondly, I will justify the selection of two projects (the year programming and the learning unit), giving reasons about the usefulness of them for my own learning process. Then, I will analyse these two projects in a deeper way, reflecting critically on the possible connections between them. I will give my opinion on what I consider I have learnt from these projects, making reference to different aspects and concepts learnt in different classes of the Masters, pointing out how the subjects have been helpful for me and for my future career as an English teacher. I will also explain some decisions I had to make when doing the projects, justifying the reasons why I finally made them, and not other ones. I will also try to make in this section an exercise of auto evaluation. As a teacher, I consider this aspect very important, since it is a useful tool to evaluate what I do, and this can help me to improve some aspects if they need it or to repeat them in the future if they are right. This auto evaluation process will be related to the competences and objectives I have reached thanks to this Masters and the activities I have developed on it. Finally, the last section of this work will be devoted to draw some general and specific conclusions about the learning process I have gone throughout this year: strategies, values, etc. I will also comment on my perception of the abilities I have now to be a teacher, my weakest and strongest points. From these conclusions, I will make a reflection on how I think all these aspects will influence on my future as an English teacher, setting some perspectives of the future.

First of all, I want to show my personal reasons why I decided to study this Master's degree and reflect on my personal learning process during my initial degree, and during this year. On the other hand, I want to explain why I decided to become an English teacher, and the different phases I had to face in order to do it.

When I finished high school, and after preparing the University Entrance Exam, I was aware of the importance of choosing a degree in which I could enjoy and which would allow me to find a job in which I could help other people. I have always felt a special connection with the English language and the Anglo-Saxon culture. This feeling started when I was a child, due to an English teacher I had at school, when I was 10 years old. Some years later, I could understand why English was so important for me: a teacher was able to establish a connection between this subject and me. I realized that teachers can really leave a mark on their students. Most of the contents they can teach their students would be forgotten in most of the cases, but if teachers are able to teach you "something" else, that is the most rewarding and important experience; what you, as a student or as a teacher, will never forget.

I cannot really say what the "ingredients" are to find a perfect teacher. There are some characteristics that I would consider essential, but they would not be effective for every person, or they are not useful for every student. One of the most important ideas I have

reached in this Master is that a teacher should be flexible, should be able to adapt him/herself to his/her students, to their needs, and to some concrete and specific objectives that will be set based on particular students and their characteristics.

We cannot deny that in the past, the teacher *was merely a mediator between knowledge and the students. His/her only role was to transmit contents without taking into account students' needs or feelings.* His/her main objective was to deposit some of his/her knowledge into the minds of his/her students. Nowadays, we know that that system was absolutely wrong, and that the results obtained were not successful at all.

Nowadays, teachers try to emphasize the ability to acquire and use knowledge (make it useful, applicable in real-life contexts) and to apply it in various situations in students' future lives. Therefore, the role of the teacher needs to change in order to help students in their process of development as citizens and as people in a society, introducing them to some bases which will help them to be able to think, plan, and act on their knowledge.

We cannot forget that our students will be in the future part of a society, and they need to learn some shared norms and to develop some strategies which will be useful for them, whatever career they choose.

One of the main characteristics teachers should have, in my opinion, is the ability to motivate their students because sometimes students can be lost in their learning process and see it as useless, so it is very important to help them to recognize the usefulness and the real purpose of this process. I think that motivating is a process of "opening students' eyes", letting them discover new things, helping them to illuminate a process that can be seen as dark and difficult for them.

These are the reasons why a teacher should be a guide, a helper for students. We cannot admit in this society the figure of an all-powerful teacher that imposes some knowledge on students. Even nowadays, sometimes the teacher figure is still as a manager: controlling students' performances. I really think that we need to make some changes in this concept: why do not we try to guide students in their process, instead of controlling or indoctrinating them? Society is changing continuously; education should follow this evolution at the same level.

During the Practicum period, I had the opportunity to see all these important aspects and analyse them in a deeper way, I could see the reality, I could reflect on what I expected to find there, and what I really found; and I could also reach some conclusions that I think will be useful for my future as a teacher. I want to explain and analyse here the most surprising elements I could see, and the conclusion I reached when reflecting on them. As I have mentioned before, the teacher's role is not only having specific knowledge on his/her subject. The process of education conveys a combination of many diverse elements. Teachers have to transmit some values to their students, because the teacher is the one responsible for preparing students to become adults, ready to integrate in society. In the Practicum period, I could observe in a deeper way how the teacher organizes his/her lessons, how the management of the classroom is carried out and in general, the atmosphere that was created every day, both by students and teachers. I could understand the importance of knowing the context of a school: the laws you have to follow, the organisation of the school, the resolution of some problems that affect students and the coexistence of different cultures, ways of thinking in the same classroom. This observation task was easier after studying in the Masters some basic aspects related to these main elements we can find in a school.

As a future English teacher, I also want to mention the importance of being aware of our role as foreign language teachers. All the teachers should share certain characteristics or features to succeed in their job. However, we cannot forget some specific requirements that a foreign language teacher should have. As Kumaravadivelu (2012:4) points out in an interview: “we must uncompromisingly forge a connection between the word and the world, and also unrelentingly help our learners see and benefit from that connection.” I think this sentence summarizes one of the most important principles for English/ foreign language teachers: the idea of connection between reality and classroom life, the transition of students to be part of a society.

Kumaravadivelu (2012:5) gives a key definition for what language teaching means:

Language teaching is much more than teaching language. It is not merely about transmitting phonological, syntactic, and pragmatic knowledge of language usage, but it is also about transforming cultural forms and interested knowledge so as to give meaning to the lived experiences of teachers and learners. (Kumaravadivelu 2012:5)

I completely agree with this idea, the necessity of integrating in the teaching of a language both “theoretical” contents and culture, because in the future, this combination is what our students will be able to remember, and they will understand the purpose and importance of learning a foreign language. I think that foreign language teachers have the responsibility of opening students’ minds towards different cultures, different ways of thinking, and different concepts for the same thing. The combination of all these elements will be the most helpful present we can give our students. At the same time, we can develop a sense of independence in our students taking into account all these concepts.

To conclude this introduction, I want to emphasize the impossibility of defining what a teacher is in one word. There are many elements to take into account, and most of them would be indispensable for some students but not for others; some of them can be more remarkable in some contexts, but not in others. Because of this, we tend to say that a teacher should be flexible.

After this discussion about what being a teacher means, according to my opinion and what I was able to see in my Practicum, I am going to present the two projects I have chosen to analyse in a deeper way from this Master’s, and I will give the reasons why I have decided to select them.

2. Justification

In this final Masters essay, I have decided to analyse in a deeper way two of the projects I had to do in two different subjects: a year planning or syllabus for “Diseño Curricular de Lenguas Extranjeras” and a learning unit for “Diseño, organización y desarrollo de actividades para el aprendizaje del inglés”. I want to present here the main reasons why I have chosen these two projects.

The main reason and the key word to explain this decision is development. Looking at these two projects I can really demonstrate what I have learnt throughout this year. The process of growth and learning is clearly defined by these two projects.

It was not difficult for me to make the decision of selecting these two projects. Although I obtained the maximum grade in other projects during the first semester, such as in the project done for “Fundamentos de diseño instruccional y metodologías en la especialidad de lenguas extranjeras”, I considered it more important to reflect in this essay on the process of evolution in my learning as a future teacher. If I want to become a teacher, what could be more important than the evaluation of my own learning process? Evaluating is also one of the key concepts I have learnt in this Masters. Evaluation is always a process and not only looking at the results or the final outcomes, as I thought before entering the Masters. Our role as teachers implies also being able to evaluate our students in an appropriate way, taking into account several factors and not only the results. I was able to learn from my year planning and my learning unit the importance of the process of evaluation, and come to the realisation that evaluation should be done not only for students, but also for teachers and for the teaching-learning process itself.

For all these reasons, the design of the syllabus helped me to understand many concepts which were completely new for me at that time, such as evaluation (in the wide sense), programming, objectives, methodology, etc. Moreover, this was the first time I read the Aragonese Curriculum and the European Framework, and I am sure that if I had tried to read them before it would have been impossible to understand and analyse them critically.

The syllabus was the first contact with some of the most important bases that a teacher should take into account when preparing his/her classes. The theoretical background analysed in class seemed to me at the beginning useless, but when the concepts were clearer and when starting to plan the syllabus, I could see the importance of having my own ideas about education and the teaching-learning process.

As I have said before, when I started the Masters, even when I was in the placement school, there were too many abstract concepts which I considered to be difficult to understand about education issues: the context, the political framework, laws, specific programmes, the organisation of a school, the different departments, the functions of the organisms in a school, the connections between departments and people who work in a school, etc. at the end of this course, I can say that now I am able to explain what these concepts mean in general, mainly because I had the opportunity of being in a school and I could observe and analyse them in a real, tangible context. One of the most important tools I have learnt to use in this Masters is the reflection on my own ideas, being critical with the reality, interpreting the Aragonese Curriculum and the European Framework,

paying attention to weaknesses and strengths of the system, and as a consequence, being able to find solutions and improvements to contribute to the general success.

The two projects I want to present here are an important part of this learning process. They have been the starting point to reflect on what I see, what I do and what I think. They have also demonstrated the essentiality of the practicum period: it is easier when you can see the reality of the classroom and apply there what you have learnt in the Masters. However, this reality is not always the same and sometimes it does not coincide with what you have learnt in class. But this is not negative, you can also learn from the differences; I could even affirm that I have learnt more from the differences than from the similarities, because when you face something different from what you previously knew, you have to wonder why it is like this. The syllabus is a good example of this fact, and that is why I have chosen it for this essay. This is an essential document for a teacher, but if we want it to be useful, it should be adapted to every teacher and every group. I had to face some problems when designing it because of the lack of knowledge of what the year planning was, what this was for and its concrete application in a real class.

Apart from these problems, I also had to face some problems related to the organisation and the management to obtain the final product. We have to take into account several factors: it was the first time I had to plan a syllabus for a class, this class did not really exist, it was the beginning of the Masters course and it was the first time I worked in groups to design this kind of project. Once again, the difficulties turned out to be a positive experience, since what I considered to be difficult to manage was also rewarding because I realized that this is what I had to learn as a future teacher: being able to work in groups and collaborate with my colleagues to reach a common outcome.

The evolution which I underwent between the design of the year planning and that of the learning unit is clear in my case: the project of the unit of work is much more mature. I was able to reflect on my own ideas, analyse concepts and I also had the experience of the three practicum periods so the experience along with the application of the theoretical concepts was more concrete. While in the year planning I did not understand what the objectives were for, in the learning unit, I did, and I could also plan some useful objectives according to my students' needs, setting achievable objectives. Generally speaking, I could learn from these two projects the importance of seeing and designing the planning as a whole, because in that way it will be useful for the students, who will be able to see the purpose of what they are doing and what is expected of them.

These two projects have also demonstrated the prejudices I used to have due to the system and my own learning experience, some ideas that you do not call into question when you are studying the initial degree. These preconceived ideas are reflected in our year planning: we still placed too much emphasis on the importance of grammar, most of the times presented out of context, using translation methods, focusing on a book as an essential element, etc.

My year planning will reflect a lack of knowledge, but as I have pointed out before, I do not consider it as a negative effect because I try to see and analyse the process I have gone through, and the evolution and results demonstrate the positivity of the experience, the ability to make the most of ourselves learning from our mistakes and from wrong

concepts. I considered the best option to compare these two projects to easily analyse this process of evolution and self-realisation. From the lack of knowledge and immaturity to the learning and progress towards finding a purpose and obtaining a mature product.

I studied English Philology and I could master the most important aspects of Anglo-Saxon culture and the English language. However, this degree is not focused on how to become an English teacher. I could not learn about methodology, objectives, etc. When I started the Masters, all these concepts were totally new for me. The different Masters' classes have helped me to focus on the most important bases to become a teacher. Having some knowledge about a language (grammar, vocabulary, expressions, etc.) is not enough. There is a necessity of some other factors to be taken into account such as planning, setting goals, analysing whether you have reached them or not, and taking into account students' interests, the environment and context.

Some of these concepts will be explored more in depth in connection to how they have been applied in my two projects, and the process of evolution they have undergone from my personal point of view. Two of these key concepts are Communicative Approach and Cooperative Learning.

This is a summary of the reasons why I decided to choose these two projects, and the secondary factors that influenced my decision. In the next section I am going to critically analyse the two projects (Syllabus and Learning unit) in order to reflect on the existing connections between them and how they have allowed me to grow professionally for my future as an English teacher.

3. Analysis

In this section, I am going to discuss two projects carried out during this year in two different subjects in the Masters, focusing on what I have learnt when designing them and making a comparative analysis of them. As I have said before in the introductory section, the main objective of this dissertation is to show the process of evolution which I have undergone throughout this year; and I think that these two projects will allow me to illustrate this in a clear way.

The two projects chosen here to analyse my personal evolution are the Syllabus and the design of a Unit Learning Plan. At first sight, they are closely related since the former is more general and the latter is more specific, but in rough outlines, the Unit Learning Plan is one part of the Syllabus. This could be one of the reasons to think that you have to face a process of evolution when you develop these two projects. This process could be positive or negative, but in my case it was very positive. If we take into account the conditions in which I did these two projects, we should consider the inexperience I had at the beginning of the Masters. This fact has been reflected in the syllabus, where there are many prejudices about certain issues, and generally speaking, a lack of connection between the different elements and sections in the work. As the Syllabus was the project done in the first semester, and the Learning Unit Plan in the second semester, I can affirm that clearly I grew personally as a teacher from one to the other thanks to all of the reflection and learning that took place from one term to the next.

Now, I know that cohesion is one of the most important factors that teachers have to take into account when programming their lessons because students need organisation, a given structure and a purpose in every single activity they are asked to do. All these objectives were reached in the learning unit, where I could learn from my previous mistakes (those I had made in the design of the syllabus) and I could also reflect in a deeper way on the main bases of the role of the teacher and his/her functions in a class.

3.1 Syllabus

First of all, the syllabus is an example of the importance of preparing in advance what a teacher is going to teach during a year, taking into account many aspects, which should be at the same time interconnected to each other, giving cohesion to the document and setting the bases for a guide for both students and teachers. As I have said before, I think that cohesion is the main element that a syllabus should have. To exemplify the lack of experience we had at the beginning of the year, our proposal did not have a title. When developing the project, we had some abstract concepts in our minds, some ideas and principles we wanted to put into practice and reflect in the syllabus, but we did not know how to connect them. Our syllabus was a very general document, but in fact, a plan for a full school year requires specific elements that are given by the needs of the students. This is one of the main reasons why it was so difficult for us to develop the syllabus properly, because we were unable to imagine the real context for this project. As a consequence, when I started the Practicum period I realized that my syllabus was not going to work in a real class with real students and their feelings, emotions and needs. In connection with this reality I found at the school, I want to make reference to **Krashen** (1982), one of the first authors we dealt with at the beginning of the Masters. He developed two important hypotheses about second language acquisition: the **input hypothesis** and the **affective filter hypothesis**. He argued that people learn or acquire

second languages only if they receive comprehensible input and if their affective filters let them receive such input. I think that the input hypothesis is important because we cannot forget that our students need to receive information in the target language, because this is the starting point to produce their own utterances. It is similar to the way we learn our mother tongue. At the beginning, we just receive information, and we listen to it, then we repeat words and phrases, and little by little, we are able to produce our own utterances. That is why the input that our students need must be useful for them, and as I will discuss later, we have to provide them with rich input that will help them in their learning process.

This hypothesis was criticized and it is not a clear issue within the theories on second language acquisition. However, nowadays, we know that the affective filter; or in other words, the learners' mood and the atmosphere in which they learn a language are very important factors and they have an essential role in the acquisition of languages (especially second languages). The teacher has an important role to help the students to feel comfortable instead of anxious when speaking English or interacting in class with their partners. This is even more important in Secondary education courses, since they are in a difficult stage in their lives, exposed to continuous changes that make them feel insecure. Teachers can create a more relaxed atmosphere for students and this will influence positively in their results and their acquisition.

In our syllabus, we also reflected some prejudices that we had resulting from our own personal experience as learners at school. When we were at school, the focus was mainly on the learning of grammar and vocabulary, and then some practice of writing and speaking skills, but these were left more in the background. I do not remember having learnt English using an integrative method of all the skills, just as separated competencies that were not related to each other. Some days were dedicated to practicing grammar, other days to practicing vocabulary, some others to writing compositions, and so on. Interaction was completely forgotten and showing a purpose and concrete objectives for what we were doing had no space in our lessons. As a student in a high school I was not aware of the way I was being taught English or even of how I was learning it. Nowadays, as a future English teacher, I think it is important to look backwards and reflect on these issues. Here we can realize the importance for a teacher of thinking of more concepts than just of English grammatical structures or vocabulary.

There is a debate within Linguistics about the focus on meaning or form. First of all I want to explain what I understand as focus on meaning and on form and then, I will give my opinion on the issue as relates to a real classroom situation. In this context, according to **Ellis (2001)**, focus on meaning makes reference to the idea of teaching and learning a second language taking into account the principles that concern a real act of communication. Teachers should provide opportunities for students to use language as a tool to communicate with the world, as this is what language is. Nobody argues the finality of a first language: to communicate. Why should we argue or think that the finality of a second language is not exactly the same? We do not learn a second language to know how to fill some words in gaps, for example. We learn it to communicate with other people, but in a different language that is not our mother tongue. That is why, in my opinion, teachers can help students to be exposed to real communicative situations. As we have seen in some Masters subjects, the task-based approach is a good way of setting a real context for students that are involved in the task

and who want to accomplish it in a successful and satisfactory way. These are some of the reasons argued by different authors why teachers should focus on meaning to help their students in the acquisition of a second language. McDougal in his article *English in the Community* (2008:6) makes reference to Ellis (2005) who deals with this issue:

Many theorists believe that (e.g. Prabhu 1987; Long 1996) , only when learners are engaged in decoding and encoding messages in the context of actual acts of communication are the conditions created for acquisition to take place. (McDougal 2008:6)

Taking this idea into account, our “mission” as teachers is to create opportunities in the classroom, providing students with some tools that will help them to be aware of the pragmatic meaning in the foreign language (in this case, English as a foreign language). As McDougal highlights in the article *English in the Community*, the activities which are focused on the creation and practice of pragmatic meaning are motivating for the students, who will be engaged in what they are doing. We could say that they will be aware of their own process of learning but at the same time, it will be a natural process, instead of a constrained one.

Ellis (2001) emphasizes the idea of not only providing learners with opportunities to create pragmatic meaning, but also to include such opportunities over an entire curriculum where they should be predominant. Fortunately, the Aragonese curriculum lets teachers select what they want to teach, setting some important bases like objectives, methodology, evaluation criteria for different stages; but at the same time, giving the opportunity to include the most relevant aspects considered by different teachers, for specific students with specific needs.

I really think that the Aragonese Curriculum is a good model that includes one of the most important aspects closely related to the pragmatic meaning we have been talking about before. This is the intercultural communicative competence. The intercultural competence is defined as the competence which includes the ability to relate students' own culture to a foreign culture, learning about different aspects about said culture and overcoming certain stereotypes. It highlights the importance of considering the foreign language as a tool for communication with people from other countries, respecting other values, norms and ways of organisation different from their own. I think the emphasis on language as a way of communication with people, whether from your country or any other country is a necessary component of the proposal. The Aragonese Curriculum points out the idea of personal enrichment when we try to keep in contact with people from other countries. This competence is closely related to the importance of teaching a foreign language contextualizing real life situations, looking for the pragmatic meaning of the studied elements. Students are asked to be able to maintain a conversation on different topics such as asking for information about addresses, products in a shop, talking to a friend about a normal, daily life topic, etc. all these aspects are connected and integrated in the methodology, the didactic orientations, the contents and the evaluation criteria in every stage of Secondary Education. Moreover, the methodology is defined as the main tool to develop and carry out the contents in the Curriculum, so it must be closely related to the general objectives. These guidelines in the inter-cultural competence will lead students towards a specific in their future: to be able to manage and get along successfully in their society, which will be characterized mainly by multiculturalism.

According to the previous information, it may seem that the focus on form has been forgotten, but some authors also emphasize the need to take it into account. **Schmidt** (1994), for example, has affirmed that there is no learning without conscious attention to form. **Ellis** (2008:2) highlights in his work *Principles of Instructed Second Language Acquisition*, Schmidt's (2001) ideas on this issue:

Schmidt, however, claims that attention to form refers to the noticing of specific linguistic items as they occur in the input to which learners are exposed, not to an awareness of the underlying grammatical rules. (Ellis 2008:2)

When we learn our mother tongue, we are not aware of the grammatical rules that take place in every utterance. Some speakers will be never aware of them, because we are able to develop an unconscious process, automatic to communicate to each other. This does not mean that grammatical rules can be discarded; in fact, they are essential because they offer an internal structure, always needed in any act of communication. However, it is not common for speakers to be always, in every situation, aware of these rules; but when learning a second or foreign language, speakers can identify some linguistic items and their forms and functions in some specific contexts, as a way of guiding their learning process, giving some specific structure to it.

There is no doubt that input is an essential element when dealing with learning a language (first or foreign) but many authors agree on the importance of output too. To learn a language it is important to be exposed to the target language, but then, practicing and producing is a further step that cannot be omitted. Output is defined as the learners' production in the learning process, sometimes opposed to input, although they are not opposing terms, but complementary. In this aspect, I do not agree with Krashen's emphasis on comprehensible input as the only element to acquire a language. It has been proven that output also plays an important part in acquisition. This will be one of the most important elements in my learning unit, to let students produce and speak freely. We have to provide students with opportunities to talk and express themselves, because input exposure is not enough for the learning process. This was a factor that I did not take into account when elaborating the syllabus, but in fact, it is one of the most important ones in a class based on communication.

Skehan (1998) drawing on **Swain** (1995) highlights some of the contributions that output can make: when speakers try to produce, their efforts generate some kind of feedback (an internal one, a kind of self-awareness of their production) that is enormously useful for them. This leads learners towards syntactic processing that is, obliging students to pay attention to grammar in an automatic and natural way. This process allows learners to check certain hypotheses they could have developed about the target language grammar (this aspect is closely related to the attention to form we have commented before). It also helps to automatize some existing knowledge, giving the learners the opportunity to find some specific formula or strategies to develop their fluency in the target language. **Ellis** (2003) points out another contribution of output: learners develop what is known as 'auto-input' (that is, the 'input' provided by their own productions).

So it seems that output is also an important part to be included in an official curriculum, specifying in some way how to help students develop it. It has been argued that controlled practice exercises do not lead to students' productions or interaction. It seems that they do not provide students with opportunities for the kind of output that some

theorists have described. **Allen et al.** (1990) highlighted that output is useful when the students interact in the classroom and as a consequence, they have to find their words to express what they want to say. According to **Richards** (2006), three different kinds of activities to carry out useful output practice can be described: the first type refers to “mechanical practice” (or drill), the second one is known as “meaningful practice” and the third one is “communicative practice”. These three stages should not be seen as separate and unconnected concepts, but as a process to follow. In the mechanical practice stage, students face a controlled practice activity, and there is no need to understand the language they are using, or to set a context. Students are asked to produce a response, repeating certain patterns to get used to them, to be familiarized with them. Then, they are required to go a step further, but still in controlled practice, but this time, understanding what they are producing. If students are not able to understand at this stage, they will be unable to produce correct answers, appropriate to the context and situation. Finally, in the communicative practice, the focus is on fluency and communication, so students are not required to be precise in their responses, but to be able to adjust themselves to a particular communicative situation, just as in real-life conversations.

In my Syllabus design project I did not really include activities that worked on these aspects, and I think that the main focus was on accuracy rather than fluency. As I revise my syllabus design now, after having learnt about effective teaching, I would have changed most of the activities that I include in my Syllabus, combining them with activities to develop students’ fluency and including more activities related to free practice (not only controlled practice). In the Syllabus project, we focused too much on mechanical practice or drills but we did not provide students with the opportunity to be creative and produce in a free way, using language in context and real life situations.

A term has come up in the description of the last kind of activities to develop output or production: fluency. As I have pointed out before, both the focus on form and on meaning are important for the acquisition of a foreign language. In the process of acquisition of a foreign language, these two approaches are necessary and we cannot discard either one of them, but rather combine them to succeed in the process. Fluency is sometimes opposed to accuracy, but they are not opposing terms. Fluency has been defined by **Richards** (2010:8) as:

[a]n important dimension in language development as it allows the learners to produce language with ease, to speak with a good but not necessarily perfect command of intonation, vocabulary, syntax and grammar, to express their ideas coherently, to produce continuous speech without causing comprehension difficulties, with minimum breakdowns and disruptions. (Richards 2010:8)

I now understand the importance of combining both fluency and accuracy in my syllabus, and I tried to reflect this specifically in my learning unit, when I was aware of the reasons why these two concepts were closely related. I will explain this more in depth when analysing my learning unit.

Once again, the lack of experience and misunderstanding of new terms for me were the main reasons for not integrating these concepts in an appropriate way in the syllabus. As a consequence, this syllabus focused too much on accuracy as I have pointed out before. I think that several activities could have been improved by means of letting students be free to express what they think and what they want in that moment. In the Syllabus, the focus is on controlled practice, and this leads to marking accuracy as the desired

outcome of the activity, correcting students' mistakes constantly. Most of the times this procedure makes students feel uncomfortable and prevents them from talking and participating in class. This is the main reason why I think that more fluency-focused activities should have been added in the Syllabus, and in fact, this is one of the improvements I tried to put into place when designing my Learning Unit in the second term.

Both input and output have something in common: they both occur in oral interaction and it seems that they are closely related to what we know as social interaction. In fact, they are part of the social interaction that characterizes human beings. As I have pointed out before, language is considered a tool for communicating with other people. The process of communication can be regarded as a way of achieving different purposes. Sometimes, we communicate to achieve or obtain something: if we go to the cinema, we use the language to ask for a ticket and buy it to obtain your goal (to watch a film). This is what is known as a transactional purpose. However, as we are human beings, sometimes, we use communication for the sole purpose of talking and having a good time, just for socialising, meeting people and making friends, to seem friendly. In fact, some authors point out that this is the starting point where acquisition takes place. As **Hatch** (1978b:404) highlighted 'one learns how to do conversation, one learns how to interact verbally, and out of the interaction syntactic structures are developed'. Moreover, we know that interacting is a way of creating new and different utterances, depending on what we want to express, the message we want to communicate.

Long (1996) makes reference to the Interaction Hypothesis, and he points out that interaction leads to learning when students have to negotiate for the meaning of their words and expressions. It seems that the process of communication should be seen, first of all, as a social process, that enables people to interact and create a relation with their environment. We can then assume that interaction and the social role of languages is essential, and it should be considered as a primary source of learning. I would like to emphasize this point because I think that it was the most important lesson I could learn from my learning unit. Before starting the Masters, I used to think that grammar, reading, listening and speaking were the most important skills in the learning process of English as a second language. If I had had to include interaction in some part, I would have chosen speaking. But now I know that we should make a distinction between speaking and interaction, since the latter demonstrates the importance of a language as a means of communication, as a socializing element that should be taught like this.

Another important issue I was able to learn from my year planning was the attention that must be paid to individual differences. This is one of the most frequent problems nowadays in education. When we have to teach in a group with 30 students, it is likely to find many different students with different needs. This problem does not really change if we analyse a smaller group, we are always going to find individual differences, different rhythms of learning and different strategies to learn. We cannot suppose that everybody learns in the same way. It is not easy to adapt our class to cover all these differences, but sometimes it is necessary to make distinctions, to take into account those students who catch things quickly and others who need more time to assimilate new knowledge. This is part of the teachers' role, the adaptation of the materials used in class to adjust to different people. Sometimes, language classes become a "waste" of time for students who are bored because their level is much higher

than the teacher's explanation, and for those students who cannot follow the teacher's explanations, they get lost, and they become more and more separated from the English lessons. That is why the adaptation of materials is essential in both cases, challenging those more brilliant students to learn more, and helping those students with difficulties to assimilate the contents taking into account their personal rhythms.

Connected to this issue of adapting materials and taking into account individual differences, I cannot avoid thinking of one of the most important concepts I have learnt in this Masters: motivation. Before starting the Masters, I had heard this word several times, but in a different sense. Nowadays, I understand the essential role of this element in education. Sometimes it is difficult to find it in a classroom, especially depending on the age of the students. However, in the Masters I also learnt to distinguish different types of motivation, and some of them can be enhanced by teachers and help students to make progress. This is the intrinsic motivation, that is, the kind of motivation that comes from inside an individual rather than from any external source, such as money or "prizes". Most of the students want to pass because they do not want to be punished by their parents or because they want to get something, such as a bike, a mobile phone, or just going out at the weekend. Extrinsic motivation exists, and sometimes it works, but to a certain extent, since it will be more and more difficult (and not always possible) to satisfy students' wishes. Intrinsic motivation comes from the pleasure that one gets from the task itself or from the sense of satisfaction in completing a task. Although it comes from inside, teachers can help students to feel this satisfaction in what they do, just presenting the task with enthusiasm and as a reachable objective and at the same time challenging for students. When students make an effort to get good marks or a specific grade, it can be thought to be intrinsic motivation, for the pleasure of having good marks and be happy for this reason, but it is indeed extrinsic, because the student is not motivated for the pleasure of the task he/she is doing, but just for the result of this task. However, intrinsic motivation does not mean that a person will never look for rewards. Students can look for rewards, but these are not the essential part of what they are doing. An intrinsically motivated student may want to get a good mark on an assignment, but if the assignment does not interest that student, the possibility of a good grade is not enough to maintain that student's motivation to put any effort into the project.

I was able to learn a lot about motivation in the first semester, in the subject "Procesos de Enseñanza- Aprendizaje" and I had the opportunity to put into practice some of the techniques learnt during my practicum teaching experience. It was not too difficult since I was teaching in the first course of Compulsory Secondary Education, but I could also have access to some students that had difficult personal situations, who were highly unmotivated. I was able to understand that this kind of student needs to feel that the teacher relies on them, trusts in their capacity to succeed just like any of the other classmates. This is what is known as "Pygmalion Effect". Teachers have the responsibility to create high expectations on their students, and if they do it, students' performances can have positive effects, feeling support and confidence in them and what they are able to do. I think that education has always had a close relationship with psychology, and specially when talking about the teaching of English as a second language. The Pygmalion Effect can be applied to many different disciplines, but in this case, I think it has an important role in education, especially in the acquisition of a foreign language. This can be due to the common anxiety felt by students who try to communicate in a foreign language (in a foreign country or not) and the result is usually

considered a failure for them, because of the inability to express what they want to say. This is a frustrating situation, and sometimes students do not feel support from the teacher. I think that teachers should create a relationship, establish a kind of link between them and their students. This link will be based on confidence that will also help with the creation of a friendly atmosphere, also required to decrease students' anxiety, as I have explained before. I think that the Pygmalion Effect can be especially needed in the acquisition of a foreign language, without distinction of the age of the students. When dealing with children, we usually face a low level of motivation, since they do not usually understand what they need English, Mathematics or Science for. This low level of motivation is even more remarkable when dealing with teenagers (the range of age that I would like to deal with in the future). That is why I consider this aspect to be so important in my career as an English teacher in Compulsory Secondary Education. We know the difficulties of this age, the tendency of rebellion they have and the insecurity they feel in their lives. This is the main reason why teachers should help them and show them a positive attitude and a sense of confidence that will push them to reach their goals. In my Syllabus, this aspect was not taken into account, maybe because sometimes we take it for granted. Nowadays I know and understand that this concept must be reflected on the Syllabus and the Learning Unit. A wide variety of activities can be planned to break the ice at the beginning, to get to know each other in the classroom, to strengthen the relationships and the sense of belonging to a group.

Generally speaking, adults present a higher level of motivation, at least, they usually find easily a reason to learn, a purpose for studying a foreign language. They are usually moved by work reasons, so this can be a strong motivation to continue and improve. However, I think that adults can easily feel themselves unmotivated in the middle of the process of acquisition, especially when they start, because it is a slow process, and sometimes they can feel anxious because they do not see the progress they are doing. If the teacher does not show confidence and does not try to cheer them up, adults may think of abandoning the process.

In conclusion, this first part of analysis has focused on my first experience in the Masters, working on the syllabus, paying special attention to one of the most important aspects I learnt from it: the socio-cultural context, which is the basic frame in which education takes place. This basis was consolidated in the Practicum I, where I was able to see first-hand the importance of all these aspects that sometimes are thought to be separated from the educative process.

The second part of this analysis will be focused on the second part of the Masters which was more specific and related to my subject: English as a foreign language. In this part of the analysis I want to reflect on my own process of learning and analyse in a deeper way some of the most important bases I learnt from the design of my learning unit. This was done individually and I think it is a reflection of all the concepts I have been assimilating and consolidating throughout this year, adapting them to my personal experience and to my character. I think that this is the main objective of this Masters: to study, analyse, understand and integrate some concepts related to education in general and to my subject specifically, and finally adapt them to my style and my personality, because every person is different and every person has to choose the best means for reaching different goals.

Some of the concepts explained in this section will reappear again in the unit of work, since both works are closely related and the unit of work is integrated into the syllabus. However, this time I will try to demonstrate the evolution in the comprehension of the concept from a different point of view, more specific to my teaching experience in the first course of Compulsory Secondary Education. As I have said at the beginning of this project, all these concepts were abstract when I started the Masters. I could really understand them and integrate them to my general knowledge only when I had the opportunity of seeing them from a real context, a real perspective. I really think that all these terms would not make sense if they were not useful for something and/or someone.

3.2 Learning Unit

The first part of this analysis is based on my learning unit and the effect it had on my teaching experience. This part is also focused on the second semester of the Masters, a period when the evolution, understanding, consolidation and integration of previous concepts and knowledge becomes most evident. As I have said before, some abstract concepts started to become clearer for me and more concrete and the most important thing, to be susceptible to being put into practice, applicable to real contexts, to real situations in a classroom.

One of the most important differences dealing with the second semester was the realisation and self-awareness of some aspects related to the teaching a foreign language and what that really means. I started to understand the importance of having some criteria and make some decisions about what kind of teacher I want to become, the different roles I want to play as a teacher and think about some important ideas to take into account as a teacher. I realized that teachers cannot be effective if they have not reflected upon what learning really is, the responsibilities he or she has, and the main issue, the methodology they want to follow with their students.

In the previous part, when facing the design of the syllabus, I have explained the difficulties I had with the integration of different concepts with reality, because I could not find the relationship between them. The methodology was perhaps the most difficult part to understand, or at least to apply in my personal situation. I did not know what methodology I should use, I could not imagine what kind of students I was going to have, and of course, it was impossible to know their necessities before starting the Practicum period. There is no doubt that experience in the classroom is what helps you understand all these things and gives you some tools to overcome difficulties and clear your doubts and fears.

I think that the learning unit demonstrated the knowledge acquired throughout this year and some important concepts which come to my mind immediately when thinking about teaching English effectively. That is the case of the **role of the students' mother tongue** in an English classroom; an issue that some months ago had no importance for me and I had never questioned myself about it. One of the first authors who made reference to this issue was Swan in 1985, as Atkinson (1987:241) points out in his article *The mother tongue in the classroom: a neglected resource?*, highlighting that "the mind of the learner as he or she enters the classroom is not a 'tabula rasa' ". He

refers in fact to all the communicative abilities and previous knowledge that all learners have, but he also introduces the topic of the role of the students' mother tongue when dealing with a second or foreign language.

In the last decades, the use of the mother tongue has been avoided since the Direct Method appeared, but now some authors affirm that it is possible to combine its use with the foreign language to learn. For example, David Atkinson (1987) in his article *The mother tongue in the classroom: a neglected resource?* highlights the importance of using it for specific purposes and at specific moments in the lessons. Atkinson identifies at least four reasons why the mother tongue is avoided in an EFL classroom. The first one is connected to the association of the grammar-translation method. However, Atkinson makes reference to the direct method to exemplify that the total rejection of translation is not as adequate as some used to think. Another reason is related in this article to the influence of certain authors such as Krashen and his associates in the 70's and 80's. They supported the ideas that learning (as opposed to acquisition) was not as important and the idea of transfer was considered to play a secondary role in the acquisition of a foreign language. Atkinson (1987) even affirms that "at early levels a ratio of about 5 per cent native language to about 95 per cent target language may be more profitable".

Atkinson (1987) presents some of the techniques and activities in which he put into practice the use of the mother tongue and which he considers obtain positive results. He affirms that at very low levels the explanation of an activity in the target language can be a difficult issue. He finally concludes explaining that he does not consider the mother tongue to be a suitable basis for a methodology, but it has several roles to play at all levels and that ignoring it is useless both for the students and teacher.

In the learning unit, at the beginning I did not really pay attention to this concept, assuming that the mother tongue should be completely disregarded in an English classroom. When I was in the practicum period, observing the methodology followed by my mentor, I could see some differences between different groups, and these differences were usually put into place by the teacher. In some groups, the teacher usually explained in English and in a few cases, the mother tongue (Spanish) appeared in the class. This was the procedure for the whole month I spent observing the routine in the group of first of Secondary Compulsory Education: Spanish hardly ever appeared, and when it appeared it was to clarify some concepts which had been misunderstood by students.

In contrast I observed the dynamics in a class in their fourth year of Secondary Compulsory Education. I was surprised because of the different methodology followed by the same teacher with a different group. At the beginning it was difficult for me to understand why this differentiation was taking place, especially because these students were older, and they were supposed to understand English better. However, upon reflection I concluded that this teacher was changed her methodology depending on the students' behaviour, and that she was greatly influenced by it. This teacher had a different mood depending on the group she was teaching. The students in fourth of Secondary Compulsory Education were highly demotivated and showed no interest in learning new things. This had a negative reaction upon the teacher's performance, since she thought that speaking in Spanish was helpful for her students, facilitating and making learning simpler for the class.

From this experience and this observation process, I had some ideas to use in my learning unit. I realized the importance of having some ideas before becoming a teacher, but then, the teacher has to be flexible to change them to a certain extent, accommodating to different situations, to different students and circumstances. I do not think that these changes should be as radical as they were in this example of the fourth of Secondary classroom, since students adapt to this situation and they do not make any effort to speak or understand in English. In my learning unit I did not really specify too much about this issue, but I believe that speaking in English is a must at all levels, although you can sometimes use the mother tongue because the comparative process between a language and the other is also important for students to understand syntactical and structural changes. It is common when learning a foreign language to say that the problem is that students do not “think” in the foreign language and that they are always translating word for word, both in written and spoken utterances. This is not as simple as it may appear when facing a foreign language, since it is true that many students consider translation to be a useful learning strategy for them, and to a certain extent, everybody who speaks a foreign language does this process. When people master a foreign language, the process of translation is more and more automatic, just as it is in our mother tongue.

In my teaching experience, when I had the opportunity to implement my learning unit, I tried to speak in English all the time and in all the groups, but sometimes I could feel the necessity to clarify and exemplify to ensure the understanding of some concepts or structures. When the students asked me for the meaning of a specific word, first of all, I always tried to use gestures, mimic or synonyms to explain the term. Sometimes these strategies were not effective, depending on the word, the students and several factors. In those cases, translation is the best and quickest method and cannot be avoided. Teachers should know the limits, and sometimes it is unavoidable and also important to use the mother tongue in an EFL classroom. Teachers’ experience sometimes is the best tool to know the different circumstances that require the use of the mother tongue.

As I have explained before, sometimes the use of the mother tongue is directly related to the teachers’ decisions based on their personal experiences, as is error correction in a classroom, especially, the way in which the teacher decides to correct his/her students’ errors and mistakes. These decisions are personal, there are no rules to follow, but sometimes we can make the difference using some techniques, influencing the atmosphere of the class and the students’ level of motivation and self-confidence.

Error correction was one of the concepts that I had to take into account when implementing my learning unit, although it was the first time I had to think about it. In fact, I had never thought about error correction before, assuming that one of the roles as a teacher was correcting students’ errors and mistakes, whatever the situation or the way to do it. As I have explained before, not all students learn in the same way, and it is very important to take into account the atmosphere in the classroom, and this is also something related to the correction of the students’ errors. We cannot forget that for most students learning a foreign language creates some kind of anxiety, and the teacher can be a positive element within the process or a negative one. There are many different ways of correcting students’ mistakes, and it is also essential to know when we should do it. We have to make a distinction between the exercises or tasks in which we are looking for fluency and those in which we focus mainly on accuracy. Only when we focus on accuracy is it necessary to correct the errors, but always in an indirect way, letting students recognize their mistakes and inviting them to correct themselves in a

relaxed atmosphere. The teacher can develop different strategies to help students to be aware of their mistakes, always avoiding embarrassment.

Some authors affirm that error correction in lower levels does not lead to the immediate acquisition of the rule or the correct form. Foster-Cohen (1999:116) pointed out that

Children generally respond poorly to direct correction except on small straightforward points such as particular morphological forms (e.g. irregular past tenses), and even then, correction rarely leads to immediate acquisition. (Foster-Cohen 1999:116)

I think that this is very common in first language acquisition, probably because the rule has not been internalized yet. I could see during my practicum period that this also happens in the acquisition of a foreign language, especially in some grammar points such as the use of the –s in the third person singular in the present simple.

I tried to reflect on this issue on my learning unit, although it is difficult to define how the teacher should be correcting their students' errors before knowing them. However, I think that it is very important to at least think about it and consider this issue before becoming a teacher. During the Practicum Period, as I had reflected on this issue before, I could check the different ways in which students can be corrected, and I realized that the most important thing is to maintain a good atmosphere, but also to let the students know that they have made a mistake, and help them to correct themselves, but in a very relaxed and comfortable way for them.

One of the most important concepts I have dealt with in my learning unit is the use of **authentic materials**. I believe there is an excessive reliance on textbooks, workbooks and other sources that usually present adapted materials, taking into account the “supposed” level of the students. The problem is that in a class, not every student has the same level, the same interests or the same needs. We can find in these books some interesting methodology that can be used in certain moments in a lesson, but not always. The overuse of a textbook will lead to routine and most of the times, to structures and vocabulary which is determined by the topic of the unit. Most of the texts and exercises that can be found are organized by the grammatical point that corresponds to this unit or that unit. This is not the way we learn in a natural, real context. When children are learning their mother tongue, they do not select the words or grammatical structures that are learning that day. I do not mean with this that students do not need an organisation, but I think that authentic materials and tasks give them more opportunities to learn and to prepare themselves for real life, to use a language for communication.

We know that a child learns to speak his/her mother tongue just listening to their parents and family in daily life situations. This is the only thing he/she does the first months of his/her life. This is the “authentic material” that lets him/her learn the mother tongue. Here I am not trying to compare the first language acquisition with a second or foreign language acquisition, because it does not occur at the same developmental age nor under the same conditions. However, I want to highlight the importance of receiving “real” input, which, in my opinion, is essential to understand the grammar, vocabulary and the pronunciation in a context, and specifically, in a real context. Textbooks, as I have said before, are useful in some situations, but most of the time they overused for specific objectives, which are not fulfilled at the end. The audios which can be found in a book are not authentic materials, but prepared dialogues that are read out and recorded for this or that specific book.

This is the reason why we find recordings that do not show real life characteristics. I am not talking about perfection, but about reality. In fact, real life is not perfect, and the communication between human beings is not perfect either. We make mistakes, we make pauses, we use strategies to convey the meaning we want, to express ourselves in different ways depending on the interlocutor, on the purpose of the conversation, on the situation we have, etc. plenty of things that are dismissed in most of the recorded “conversations” in the textbooks.

Some authors have pointed out several times the importance and the advantages of using authentic materials. Oura (2001) makes reference to some of them in the article *Authentic Task-Based Materials: Bringing the Real World Into the Classroom*. One of them is Brinton (1991), who points out that the use of authentic materials is a way of connecting the language classroom and the outside world, something that sometimes teachers forget about, that language is a way of communication, not only something that student will learn at school and then they will forget. This is an issue that I have seen when working with adults in academies. These students come to the academy to learn English, and sometimes they are confused and they do not understand why they have been studying English for years and why they are now unable to say a word in English. I think that the main problem is the lack of applicability a language has in a classroom, and teachers seem to support this idea. When doing my learning unit, I always tried to find the applicability of what I was teaching. In every activity and task I created, I always kept in mind why it was useful for my students, and I always tried to relate the task to the real world and its applicability to their future. Oura also makes reference to Gebhard (1996), who pointed out that authentic material is a way to “contextualize” language learning, and this is the idea I wanted to express when thinking about applicability and usefulness for my students.

Oura (2001) also points out Melvin and Stout’s (1987) ideas on the issue. They highlighted the importance of authentic materials as a way of motivating students. They explained that students were “invited” to spend a weekend in a foreign country through prepared task-based activities using authentic materials. Students were highly motivated and felt very comfortable preparing the tasks. They were asked to prepare the imaginary trip and book all the necessary elements to carry it out. The motivation is due to the satisfaction of doing a kind of project by themselves, and moreover, in a foreign language, demonstrating that they were able to do it and accomplish the task successfully. When designing my learning unit, I thought about preparing a task like this one, a kind of trip to London or other city, in which students would be in charge of preparing all the different elements that are necessary to achieve this objective. The problem was that this trip was not going to be real, as I was just in my Practicum Period, and my mentor did not agree with this idea. I think that this project can be good if you can really achieve the goal, that is, going on this trip, and this is difficult because it does not depend only on you, but on the whole centre, the headmaster, the parents, etc. Nevertheless, I think that it can be a very good project if you organize it appropriately and take into account different factors. There is no doubt that this is something I would like to prepare in my future career as a teacher.

We should not forget that the language to which students are exposed in class is completely different to the language that exists in the real world. The main reason is that teachers sometimes need to teach specific language points and textbooks offer them these concepts in an easier way, and most importantly, in a comfortable way. When thinking about this issue, I want to clarify that I do not think that teachers are the only

ones to blame for not using authentic materials in class. I understand that the preparation of materials takes a lot of time, and sometimes this is something difficult to manage. I think that an effort should be made both by teachers and publishers, offering a higher quality in the materials they prepare. Of course, this is a change that can be made little by little, and fostered by society's understanding of this issue.

Some other authors pointed out by Oura (2001) are Brosnan et al. (1984). They affirmed that using authentic materials is essential because language is natural. He highlighted that sometimes when using non-authentic materials, we are removing clues that are essential to understand the real meaning. Nunan (1999) affirms that in spite of the importance of using authentic materials, it is not realistic for teachers to use only authentic materials in the classroom. I was able to see when preparing my learning unit that sometimes it is very difficult to select the materials to use in a lesson; and that is why it is very important to organize yourself and prepare the lesson beforehand. In fact, improvisation is never helpful in this issue, since every step in the process must be prepared and organized; taking into account possible problems or unexpected events, and the expected solutions to them. Finally, in my learning unit, I tried to use authentic materials, and sometimes it was a problem for my mentor that was used to following the textbook. She told me that it was easier to use the texts from the book since it was appropriate for the students' level and this facilitated their comprehension. I suppose that this is what stops teachers from using authentic material: the amount of time you must spend looking for them, and the ease of having an adapted text that will make the work easier for both the teacher and the students. However, I have not changed my mind about the issue, and I still think that using authentic materials has more advantages than disadvantages.

To conclude with the issue of authentic materials, I think that it is very important to find the connection between this and task-based learning. This is a concept that I could not work on in my learning unit because a lot of time is required to prepare a good unit based on tasks and because the circumstances were not the best to do it in that moment, because I knew that I could not implement my whole unit of work in the school I was in. However, I think that this is a good idea to consider in the future. The most important advantage of this kind of learning is that the tasks are most of the times well connected to curricular goals. This means that students will enjoy preparing the tasks because they will find a purpose for what they are doing, and at the same time we can achieve the learning objectives required by the Curriculum and those objectives that we have fixed as teachers. I think that this combination can work perfectly and I would like to put into practice.

One of the most surprising aspects observed during my practicum period was the management of the classroom, and the organisation of tasks. I was surprised because of the way in which such an important element in the learning process is dismissed most of the times because it is considered to be a difficult issue, and a waste of time. In the Masters classes, I learnt about the advantages of choosing group work and pair work, since it is a motivating element for the students and it is essential to create a good atmosphere and relationships in the classroom. We have to take into account that children spend a lot of time at school, and it is very important to help them to create good relationships. One of the ways in which teachers can collaborate in this issue is emphasizing group work in class. Students will understand the importance of being able to share ideas, organise and take into account other students' opinions. Cooperative learning is one of the best options when teaching a language, because students can learn

together, and at the same time they are developing three of the most important competences that are indicated in the Aragonese Curriculum: learning to learn, social competence and students' autonomy and personal initiative. When the students work in a group, they will be more aware of the importance of learning and they will develop some strategies to organize the work. As a consequence, they will be more autonomous, and they will learn how to gain this competence by means of learning from their peers, their mistakes, their failures and their achievements. Finally, we cannot forget that students are at school not only for learning English but also to grow as future adult people. It is necessary to learn some values, like the social competence, because they are part of the society, and they have to know some rules and shared values to create relationships with other people.

I think that I tried to emphasise this methodology in my learning unit. Most of the activities were to be done in groups, and I had the opportunity to implement some of them, and I could observe that this methodology is helpful for students. Sometimes the groups can be chosen by the teacher, and the strongest students can help the weakest ones. I could not see any disadvantages in those activities done in groups. The management was not easy, because most students were not used to this kind of organisation. However, children responded in a positive way to the instructions and they understood the importance of working together, in an organized way and trying to speak in English all the time. I suppose that sometimes this process is difficult to carry out, that is why some teachers decide not to use this methodology. However, I think that several solutions can be proposed to make it work in different groups. This kind of organisation can really work if students are used to it and if we make them understand that this is helpful and important for them. The key is always adapting to the class in which you are teaching, knowing your students and thinking creatively about different options to reach your goal.

Closely related to group work and most of the theories and concepts presented here, is the Communicative Approach. This was one of the concepts that was very abstract at the beginning of the Masters, but once you start thinking about activities or tasks to prepare the learning unit, it is easy to understand what it is and when we can use it and why. The Communicative Approach is aimed at achieving students' Communicative Competence presenting pupils with not only authentic, contextualized, meaningful, sequenced, varied and rich foreign language input, but also the main characteristics of the target language community within an integrated context of communicative activities. This is what I have explained in this work in separate sections, but this approach is the compendium of all of them together, seen as a whole, well-integrated and applicable in a real class.

This approach promotes the development of Hymes' five subcompetences (grammatical, discourse, strategic, sociolinguistic, and sociocultural competence) by means of an active methodology in which children interact and cooperate to solve some meaningful and contextualized tasks aimed at attaining fluency and accuracy in the foreign language. In order to achieve this aim, the Communicative Approach promotes a relaxed classroom environment in which pupils develop their autonomous learning strategies aimed at developing their overall learning to learn capacity.

When helping students to feel comfortable and self-confident, I realised that it is essential for the teacher to feel before starting the lesson. This is something that it is learnt with experience, and I do not have too much, but in the first classes I had the

opportunity to teach, I started thinking about this issue. It is difficult to explain this idea, and how important it is for me. It is almost impossible to reflect it in a syllabus or a learning unit. This is one of the abstract concepts I have talked about, that remains abstract for me, but essential. What is easier to define is how to create or build this self-confidence in a teacher's daily life. I think that everything I have explained in this project is directly or indirectly related to it. Every step a teacher makes is contributing to strengthen the teachers' personality and capacity. The processes of organisation, creation of ideas, reflection on our performances, on our mistakes and achievements help us to demonstrate what we are, what we should change, what we are doing in the right way, what our students need, etc. And the compendium of all these elements is what builds our self-confidence, and as a consequence, our students self-confidence.

I have decided to talk about this concept at the end of this project because, for me, this is what best summarises my learning throughout this year, both in class and at school, and finally, what makes me feel like I have become a real teacher and helps me to work hard to achieve my objectives and my goals, and I think that in difficult moments, this will be the main reason for continuing and not giving up what I have started this year.

4. Conclusions and Proposals for my future as a Teacher

As a conclusion for this project, I want to express what I expect of myself as a teacher; in other words, what kind of teacher I want to become. This is not easy to express, especially because you never know how your future will be, but I am going to try to describe my proposals for my future as an English teacher.

Before starting the Masters, I used to think that being a teacher was mastering everything related to English literature, grammar, history, etc. this is the main reason why the Masters has made sense and has been helpful to organise and give shape to many ideas and concepts that were in my mind, but that were not consolidated as part of my training. Now I understand the importance of seeing the educative process from a psychological perspective, because education, or learning a second language as is the case, does not mean only transmitting or passing some knowledge on to our students, it also really matter “how” we do this, taking into account “who” we are dealing with and “why” they have specific needs and attitudes towards the learning process.

Above all, I want to be able to create a good atmosphere in my class, with my students, their parents and in general in the school, with my colleagues. I think this is essential to educate students and serve as a model for them. Being a teacher, as I have said during this project, is not only knowing a lot about English culture and grammar, but also having to teach some values that will help our students in their lives as adult people. If students feel tension in a class, if they do not feel protected, then, they will not contribute to creating a good atmosphere. This is also related to the concept of self-confidence that I have explained before. Firstly, the teacher himself/herself has to feel comfortable and confident in every performance he/she does. Students will perceive this feeling or emotion, and this will make a difference in terms of respect.

Moreover, I think that being a teacher is a mixture of many different concepts, ideas and feelings. Some of them are quite clear for me nowadays, but I am sure that some others will appear in my life through experience. Some of these concepts that I have clearly understood and integrated thanks to the Masters programme are: organisation, anticipation, reflection, adaptation, realistic goals, purpose, student-centered learning and flexibility.

Organisation is essential when facing a real class and real students. Teachers need to plan the lessons, because we need to know what we are preparing for our students, what they need, what we can offer them, and what we can do if something goes wrong. This is not possible if we try to improvise; and this has been proven several times, and students perceive when this happens. I know that because I have also been a student, and I was disappointed when some of my teachers tried to improvise a class; and most of the times, the result was a failure, because we (the students) did not learn anything, and the general feeling was that of chaos.

Anticipation is closely related to organisation. If you organise and plan a lesson, you can anticipate possible problems that can occur, and then, possible solutions to them. A class is a space where plenty of unexpected events can happen. We cannot prepare an activity in which some material is required if the material can be missing at the moment of the implementation. Then, we need a “Plan B”, and this is only possible if we have programmed that class previously and imagined the possible problems we could have, preparing solutions for them.

One of the most important aspects of being a teacher for me is reflection. It is not possible to improve if you do not reflect upon what you are doing wrong. I think that a good method to reflect on your performances as a teacher is creating a kind of journal to write down your feelings, emotions, and impressions about your classes. I think that this will be especially helpful during the first years of experience as a teacher. After this time, I suppose that reflection on your performance is an automatic process, and there is no need for a journal to keep track. Nevertheless, it is always important to reflect on what you do, revising what does not work, and try to find the reason why it does not work. Then, you can think of possible solutions for the problem and improvements. All of this will be so much easier if you have analysed the causes.

The adaptation of material and methodology should always be done, because every student is different, every group has different characteristics and of course, because we want our students to learn. Teachers are responsible for finding students' needs and trying to meet them. Sometimes materials will not be adequate, the amount of time spent on one activity or another is not enough or the emphasis placed on certain points is excessive. All these aspects must be taken into account, and here again, organisation and reflection play a crucial role. We can prepare in advance all these concepts before starting the class, and if some of them are forgotten or unexpected, the reflection upon the class afterwards will help us to understand what we need for the next class.

The process of learning I faced from the syllabus to the learning unit is clearly explained and described by the concept of goals and objectives. At the beginning it was really difficult for me to find goals and objectives. I did not understand what they were for, what they were based on, etc. I did not understand the finality and utility of them. When preparing the syllabus, I started writing objectives that were too general and often completely unrelated to my programming for the course and to my students. It was very difficult for me to understand the concept of goals and objectives; maybe it has been the hardest part of preparing a syllabus and a learning unit. But finally I realized that it was not as complex as I thought. It deals with thinking about what you want your students to achieve through the activities you plan for them. When I started thinking of the objectives and goals for my learning unit I realized that it was just about looking for realistic goals. A teacher knows what the students are able to do, and how they can reach their goals. It is useless to think and propose unreachable goals, and it is disappointing when you realize that they are impossible to reach. I think that the key is choosing goals that are achievable and realistic without implying that they should be too easy. A goal must always be a challenge, but a possible one. When students reach the goals the teacher should feel proud of them and motivate them to continue the learning process.

I have insisted a lot in this project on the idea of purpose. We need to find a purpose for everything we do in our life. Without a purpose, there is no motivation to move forward. The purpose of an activity or a task is what connects the necessary parts. Teachers are responsible for making it clear to students what the purpose of every activity done in class is. When students wonder why a particular activity is useful for them, teachers should have a good answer for them to convince them that this activity is going to be helpful now and in their future. Finding a purpose is even more important when dealing with a language. As I have said before, a language is a tool for communicating. We should always bear the communicative purpose in mind since for

our students English is a vehicle to express with which to express emotions, feelings, ideas, etc.

To finish this project, the last concept I would like to mention for my future career as a teacher is flexibility. I have realised during this year that this concept is really important if you want to succeed and if you want your students to learn. I think that flexibility refers to many different things in a class: students' rhythm, their interests, their attitudes, their needs, etc. a teacher must know that he/ she is going to find during his/her career many different groups, and he/she cannot "impose" what he/she thinks. We may think we know how young people are nowadays, what they like, what they think, but this is only in general terms. These concepts can be totally different in 20 years time, and I want to be ready for these changes and prepared to make the necessary innovations and adaptations of my teaching strategies, and then, I will be able to adapt myself to this new concept. History has demonstrated that we cannot cling to the past, it is very important to look for creative innovation and constant improvement.

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Year Plan 4th grade Secondary Education

English as a Foreign Language

[Academic year 2012/2013]

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Diseño Curricular de Lenguas Extranjeras

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Introduction

Teaching is based on indoctrinating children and youth with effective educational principles that may be applied to everyday life. To perform this, the teacher has a key role not only as a mediator in theoretical learning, but also as a guide for their students' education. In students' learning process, schools should be coordinated with families, since educational practice is carried out from both places and should go in the same direction. English teaching and learning process contributes to the acquisition of key competences and, therefore, to competently interact through language—understanding language as the basis of thought and knowledge—, to learn to analyze and solve problems, to make plans and to take decisions. Language skills help to make progress in personal initiative and also in regulating the activity itself. The subject contributes to digital competence and also to learning to communicate with others. So, it is very important that students achieve real communicative and literary competence at the end of Secondary Education.

The following year plan for the English subject is addressed to students of the fourth grade of Secondary School. It contains the fundamental aspects to be taken into account: contextualization, assuming that there are conditioning variables, a sociocultural context, characteristics of the school and, class and students' needs; as well as the development of the year plan, which contains the overall course objectives, contents, evaluation criteria, methodological principles, evaluation and attention to students with special educational needs. It also contains the didactic units.

I.Contextualization

A) Official documents: National Curriculum and Aragonese Curriculum

To elaborate this year plan we have considered the following legal provisions: Ley Orgánica 2/2006, de 3 de mayo, de Educación (*Spanish Institutional Act 2/2006, of May 3, of Education*) which regulates the current Spanish educational system. From this law we have taken the chapters concerning principles and purposes of education, compulsory Secondary education, students with special educational needs and also chapters concerning teachers, schools and participation, autonomy, authority and evaluation of the education system.

The Real Decreto 1631/2006, de 29 de diciembre (*Royal Decree 1631/2006, of December 29*), which establishes the minimum educational standard in compulsory Secondary education statewide: purposes and aims of compulsory Secondary education, organization of the fourth year, key competences, promotion, evaluation, response to diversity, certificate of compulsory Secondary education, tutoring and academic guidance. And, with regard to the English language, this subject contributes to the acquisition of key competences and general objectives of stage.

Orden de 9 de mayo de 2007 (*Order May 9, 2007*) approving the Secondary education curriculum for schools in the Autonomous Community of Aragon. From this Order we have taken the general provisions, organization of the curriculum, response to diversity, tutoring and academic guidance,

evaluation, promotion and qualification of the teaching process, pedagogical autonomy of schools, the appendix referred to key competences and all the paragraph referred to the English subject, 'contribution of the subject to the acquisition of key competences and objectives of the stage' and, finally, the paragraph referred to the fourth year of compulsory Secondary school.

B) School setting

The year plan is determined by three key variables:

a) The sociocultural context

Our school is located in Zaragoza, in one of its most well-known districts and with more education services demand. It is the most densely populated district and this is largely due to the immigrant population growth.

At first it was a vocational training school, but later, due to high demand, it expanded its educational offerings with the addition of Secondary Education, Bachillerato in modalities of Science and Technology, Humanities and also new specialties of vocational training. Due to the great amount of vocational training resources offered by the school, it has excellent facilities. Thus, the school facilities include a music room, an art room, a technology workshop, a science lab, a language lab, audiovisual media, computer rooms, a gym, a library, an auditorium, local radio and a photo lab.

With regard to the organization, and according to the Orden de 7 de julio de 2005 (*Order of July 7, 2005*) which regulates the organization and operation of the public schools of Secondary Education in the autonomous community of Aragon, schools are granted with new regulatory tools. In this way, the incorporation of audiovisual media to learning and teaching process is regulated, as well as the regime of the teachers' working days. Our school management team consists of a principal, a head teacher, a school secretary, a head teacher for vocational training, a head teacher for higher Secondary education and a head teacher for compulsory Secondary education. Likewise, the school board is formed by the principal, the head teacher, the secretary, several teachers and students, several parents of students, non-teaching staff of the school and a town hall representative.

b) Characteristics of the school

The school is located, as already mentioned, in one of the most densely populated districts of the city and, many of the population is immigrant. Therefore, we are talking about an urban environment. The district has abundant services, a public library, a nearby shopping center and several shops, which is something that helps to foster the students' commercial demands. There are also several parks near the school and it is close to a public sports center, increasing the areas for relax and leisure of students, etc.

With regard to transport, it does not have a good bus connection with the rest of the city and only

two bus lines have access to the vicinity of the city center. This means a more difficult access to school for the rest of the city inhabitants, so most of our students live in the area and come to school on foot. The proximity to the city center is an advantage in terms of English learning since it increases the possibility to make cultural visits to theaters to see plays in the English language, as well as cinemas, exhibition halls, etc.

The school is registered in several programs of interest to our subject. For several years, the school has taken part in several exchange programs with various English-speaking countries as USA or England. It has also developed a variety of programs in which the main objective is to promote the use of English in several practical aspects of life.

c) The students: characteristics and needs

Our syllabus is aimed at 4th grade students of Secondary school, that is, students between 15 and 16 years old. We have twenty-five students in the classroom, three of whom have a different mother tongue. There are two Asians and one Romanian student, so their culture is also different from the rest. On the other hand, in the classroom there is a student with severe eating disorders, she has anorexia; and another one is repeating the school year. One of the principal affective features that stand out at this age is the group of friends, having great importance for the social integration of the student. That is, the core group of friends together with social relations constitutes the most important thing in the process of adolescence. By contrast, family relationships tend to deteriorate given the exhaustive critique of behavior made by parents. Along this educational stage, teenagers create their own personality. Thus, their own ideas and value judgments begin to emerge. In this stage of education, language plays a key role as regulator of thought and behavior, and in turn, knowledge of other languages can lead them to learn about other cultures, and ultimately, to open their minds, which will be something very helpful in his adult life. That is why we attach great importance to the subject of English language for students' intellectual and social development.

On a psychological level, we wish to emphasize some characteristics that may have an effect on the class. Thereby, fourth-grade students of compulsory Secondary Education are clear and organized on the exhibition of their ideas and works. Furthermore, they are concerned with aesthetics considerations. All this, facilitates the realization of research works and clearer writing tasks. During this stage of adolescence students develop their own personality, which is something that we can see reflected in an ardent defense of ideals, an emotion sharing, a search for social meaning, etc. These features can be very useful in the English lessons, because students could experiment the texts worked with in everyday class, in a way nearer and closer to his emotional world. In the same way, they will participate and present their ideas during the different debates and critical situations arising in class.

II. Syllabus Design and Development

A) Contribution of the subjects 'Foreign Languages' to the key competences.

Key competences are a set of cognitive, procedural and attitudinal skills that can and should be reached during compulsory education by most students. In our methodological challenge, key competencies are determined by the organization and operation of the school, the characteristics of the fourth grade of Secondary School students, the resources used and the those programs in which the school is involved.

At the end of the course, students should achieve the following key competences:

- Linguistic communication competence (L1 and foreign languages), is the main competence on which the subject acts. It helps to understand and identify the different English grammatical structures.

- Interpersonal and civic competence is one of the priorities of the school along with linguistic communication and digital competence. As students from different cultures and nationalities coexist in the city center, the school has been registered in a European program which is based on improving social harmony and educating students to be tolerant in a multicultural society.

- Knowledge and interaction with the physical world competence (science and technology). This competence is associated with the contents that enable students to understand the society and the world in which it operates. This competence makes students to do more than simply accumulate information and allows them interpreting and taking over the knowledge about facts and processes. Knowledge and interaction with the physical world is an interdisciplinary competence, as it involves skills to achieve a proper development with autonomy and personal initiative in diverse spheres of life and knowledge (health, productive activity, consumption, science, technological processes, etc.). It also involves skills to interpret the world, something which requires the application of concepts and basic principles that, from the different fields of knowledge involved, allow the analysis of the different phenomena. From our field, we promote this competence by means of learning a different culture and language, which will facilitate students the access to the real world (in order to not being stuck in their own reality and keep an open mind to know different worlds).

- Digital competence. It involves a guided use of Internet as a method for finding information with the aim of reinforcing the content covered in class. Students will be able to search information for oral presentations, for dramatic performances or dialogues, etc. This allows them to reinforce the different skills: writing, listening, etc. The school is equipped with several computer labs and many secondary classrooms also have digital whiteboards, so many classroom activities can be prepared there, catching the eye and holding the interest of the students. This makes them very actively involved in the class.

- Autonomy and personal initiative. This competence will be demonstrated by students in their own daily tasks, while writing compositions, in their study of the subject and also in debates that will

take place in class—where they will share their opinions. Pleasure of reading also favors this competence, if they take an interest in English literature (with books adapted/suited to their level) and even promotes the autonomous use of dictionaries.

- Cultural and artistic competence. The proximity to the city center contributes to this competence, allowing us to make more cultural visits without the difficulty of displacement. This also allows us an easy access to the public library in case they need to find literature for some of their researches.

- Learning to learn competence. Group works contribute to this competence and to its development because they involve collecting, organizing and analyzing information from different sources. Students will do at least one assessment of those characteristics throughout the course.

B) Objectives of the subject for the students of fourth grade of Secondary Education

The general objectives for fourth grade of Secondary Education are based on the key competencies listed above, as well as on the specific competences of the subject. Therefore and when our students finish the course, they are able to:

1. Listen and understand general and specific information of oral texts in a variety of communicative situations, adopting an attitude of respect and cooperation.
2. Express their ideas and interact orally in common communicative situations and in a comprehensible and appropriate way with some level of autonomy.
3. To read and understand different texts in an appropriate level according to the students' abilities and interests, in order to extract general and specific information; and use reading as a source of leisure and personal enrichment.
4. To write simple texts for different purposes and on different topics by using adequate resources of cohesion and coherence.
5. Use property and correctly the phonological, lexical, grammatical, functional, discursive, sociolinguistic and strategic basic components in real communicative contexts.
6. To develop the learning autonomy through the active involvement on planning and control the process itself.
7. To develop attitudes, work habits and strategies for the acquisition of a foreign language by using all available means, such as collaboration with others while achieving their learning objectives; or to use different resources, especially those technologies information and communication resources, in order to obtain, select and present oral and written information.
8. To appreciate the foreign language as an access tool to information and as a tool for learning different contents.
9. To acquire, through contact with the foreign language, a broader view of the cultural and linguistic environment to which they belong. This helps them to appreciate the contribution of learning to their personal development and to their relationships with other languages speakers and to avoid any kind of discrimination or linguistic and cultural stereotypes.

10. To show a receptive and self-confidence attitude in the ability to learn and use a foreign language.

C) Contents (see appendix I)

For the organization of the contents we have followed a classification in content blocks just as in the curriculum because it is the criteria that best responds to the development of communication skills.

Content block N°1: Listening, speaking and conversation

- Understanding of lectures about issues related to the experience of the students.
- Understanding and spontaneous production of messages in face-to-face communications about issues related to the students experience and interests.
- General understanding of the most relevant data of oral texts issued by multiple sources and appropriate to their ability and experience.
- Use of comprehension strategies of oral messages, such as the use of verbal and nonverbal context, prior knowledge about the situation and the identification of key words, among others.
- Production of oral descriptions, narratives and explanations about experiences and events as well as different contents.
- Involvement in spontaneous communicative situations in the classroom and in conversations on everyday issues and topics of personal interest, with different communication purposes, by using the conventions of conversation.
- Use of communication strategies to overcome difficulties during communicative interaction and to initiate, sustain and conclude communicative exchanges.

Content block N°2: Reading and writing

- General comprehension and identification of specific information in real texts of different types, on both paper and digital support, about topics of their interest, of general interest or related to content of other subjects of the curriculum, appropriate to their age and competence.
- Autonomous reading of more extensive texts related to their interests.
- Use of different sources, on paper, digital or multimedia support, in order to solve information problems related to their personal interests, to their language learning or to other subjects.
- Consolidation and expansion of a variety of reading strategies.
- Identification of the message sender intention through verbal and nonverbal elements.
- Use of the appropriate register to the target reader (formal and informal register).
- Composition of different texts responding to specific communicative situations; use of appropriate vocabulary according to the subject and context; cohesion, which is necessary to mark clearly the relationship between ideas and; use of basic strategies in the writing process (planning, drafting

and revision).

- Personal communication with target language speakers via postal correspondence or by e-mail.
- Correct use of spelling and different punctuation marks.
- Interest in the careful presentations of written texts, on both paper and digital support.

Content block N°3: Language awareness and reflections on learning

Reflection on language in communication

- Understanding and use of common expressions, idioms and vocabulary on topics of personal and general interest, everyday topics and topics related to content of other subjects of the curriculum.
- Use of their knowledge concerning antonyms, "false friends" and word formation (compounds, prefixes, suffixes) in the messages interpretation and production.
- Understanding and use of structures and functions, appropriate to different situations.
- Recognition and production of basic patterns of words and phrases rhythm, intonation and stress in the communication.
- Recognition and application of basic sociolinguistic keys of communication concerning aspects as the formality or courtesy degree, among others.
- Recognition and use in communicating the basic elements of discourse structuring and control depending on the type of text.
- Recognition and use of the basics of structure and control of the speech, depending on the type of text.

Reflection on learning

- Application of strategies for the organization, acquisition, recollection and use of vocabulary.
- Organization and use of learning resources, such as dictionaries, reference books, libraries or information and communication technologies.
- Analysis and reflection on the use and meaning of different parts of speech through different means, including comparison and contrast with the languages the student already knows.
- Involvement in the evaluation process, shared assessment, evaluation of their own learning and use of self-correction strategies.
- Acceptance of the error as part of the learning process and positive attitude to overcome it.
- Organization of personal work as strategy for the learning progress.
- Interest in taking advantage of the opportunities created within the classroom and beyond.
- Development of attitudes, procedures and strategies that enable teamwork.
- Confidence and initiative for public speaking and writing.
- Reflect on the way they learn and on the job options more suited with it.
- Reflect on their learning needs in connection with the targets set by the curriculum.

Content block N°4: Sociocultural aspects and intercultural awareness

- Assessment of the importance of language in international relations.

- Identification of the most significant features of the society customs, norms, attitudes and values whose language is studied, and also respect for different cultural patterns.
- Appropriate use of linguistic formulas associated with/related to specific communicative situations: courtesy, agreement, disagreement...
- Knowledge of relevant cultural elements of the foreign language countries, obtaining information through different means, including the Internet and other information and communication technologies.
- Interest and initiative in carrying out communicative exchanges with speakers or learners of a foreign language, on both paper and digital support.
- Assessment of personal enrichment as consequence of the relationship with people from other cultures.

D) Methodology guidelines

Methodological principles, which govern the year plan, have been established by the LOE (Spanish Organic Law of Education). In Article 26, it promotes teamwork, learn by themselves and it fosters the ability to learn. In the same way, the Orden del 9 de mayo del currículo de Aragón (*Order of May 9, of the Aragonese curriculum*), Article 12, is based on these principles and it widens them highlighting the active role of students, learning functionality, significant groups of contents, ICT, to promote a positive atmosphere in the classroom, etc..

For our methodological commitment, information and communication technologies are of great interest, as our school is involved in several English training programs via ICT. In the same way, it will be relevant to achieve an atmosphere which fosters peaceful relations between the communities, because as we already know, the school is located in a neighborhood with a large influx of immigrants and the school itself is part of a program to promote coexistence and tolerance among students. Finally, the classroom has cultural diversity students, two Eastern students and a Romanian student, so the teaching and learning processes will be progressively adjusted to the students characteristics.

There are several strategies involved in methodological guidance. Sometimes, they vary depending on the school or students characteristics. The master class is a good way to explain theories, facts, etc. but it is always part of other strategies, so it should not be used alone, as a single method. The teacher takes into account the age of the students, their interests, the school characteristics, etc.

METHODOLOGICAL PRINCIPLES TO WORK ON COMPETENCES

There are some principles that can be used as reference to work by competences in the teaching and learning process.

- Meaningful learning

In the field of English, meaningful learning starts from the students' previous knowledge; that is, new contents to be learned are related meaningfully to the student's prior knowledge. A good example of this is the initial assessment, which precedes the start of the teaching units and where students demonstrate the knowledge they held the previous academic year. We also engage the use of conceptual maps to facilitate meaningful learning when learning lexical fields or English rote concepts. Learning contributes to autonomy and personal initiative and also to learning to learn competence.

Start from situations-problems with contextualized learning.

The reality of the students, the authentic context is the best reference point so that they understand the contents transmitted. When they have to develop a critical and reflexive attitude to, the reference will be those issues that are of interest to the students: conflicts concerning young people, latest news, etc. This criterion will be used when choosing texts to practice the reading skill, always trying to pick up texts which are close to the students and their interests, so that they enjoy reading them and can therefore provide their own ideas and opinions. This contributes to developing the autonomy and personal initiative, the linguistic communication competence, the interpersonal and civic competence and the learning to learn competence.

- Special characteristics of each student.

Neither all students are alike, nor do they learn the same way. Thus, in our classroom there are two Asians and one Romanian student, as well as another one who is repeating the school year. Therefore we will adapt the curriculum with some activities to reinforce the essential contents in each didactic unit, as well as with adapted explanations, using graphs, drawings, etc., to attain a better learning. This contributes to the linguistic communication competence, the learning to learn competence and the autonomy and personal initiative.

- Comprehensive approach

This approach tries to connect what students learn in different subjects. The Languages department works closely with the department of Spanish Language and Literature and broadly with the departments of the other subjects included in the bilingual section of the department, so that the students can work on oral presentations about topics related with the academic field or with current news which could also be useful for other subjects, such as History. The aim is for the students to develop the adequate oral skills in their presentations. This principle supports the linguistic communication competence, the learning to learn competence and the autonomy and personal initiative.

- Promote students' awareness of their own learning process.

In class, students have to be told about all the possibilities they can have and the objectives they can accomplish, since raising the students' awareness of them will reinforce their self-esteem. In the reading part, they should be able to understand a simple text and also to write a coherent

essay about any everyday topic. The best way of raising students' awareness of their own knowledge is by performing activities with a direct practical application: reading and comprehension activities, summaries to show their summarizing abilities, etc. Thus, the linguistic communication competence, the learning to learn competence and the autonomy and personal initiative are promoted.

- Promote an atmosphere of mutual acceptance and co-operation at school and flexible groupings and collaborative work.

In class, all kinds of inter-personal communication shall be encouraged: student-student, student-teacher. This can be achieved by creating an atmosphere based on mutual respect. This principle will be taught through debates, oral presentations, reading exercises and also every time students give their personal opinions. This attitude will be supported through the program for the co-existence and tolerance promoted by the school. Besides, in our subject we also deal with it in activities involving group work or work in pairs. This contributes especially to the linguistic communication competence and to the interpersonal and civic competence.

There will be various student groups in order to raise interest: big group, in debates where the whole class takes part; in pairs, for different speaking or listening activities; in teams, to do oral presentations or research works; individual work, for personal reading of books in English, etc. The school library and the computers room are alternative spaces to the classroom, key to do group or pair work. The tables' layout in the classroom will be adequate to the kind of activity carried out: in U shape for collaborative activities, in rows for individual activities or teacher explanations. This principle promotes the linguistic communication competence, the interpersonal and civic competence, the learning to learn competence and the autonomy and personal initiative.

- Promote reading comprehension.

This principle is put into practice in collaboration with the other departments, especially with the department of Spanish Language and Literature. We intend to stress this principle, since one of the main problems of Secondary education students is that they find it difficult to understand what they are reading. This is a frequent problem in their native language; consequently, this also tends to be the case in foreign languages. In order to face this issue, we will work with different readings in order to reach a reading habit which facilitates comprehension.

This principle promotes the linguistic communication competence, the cultural and artistic competence and the autonomy and personal initiative.

- Use of different sources of information (ICT)

Because of the incursion of ICT in our everyday life, it becomes essential to teach a responsible use of these sources, in addition to how to make the best out of their many advantages in the teaching-learning process. In our plan, information and communication technology (ICT) is present in writing activities in the digital format, as well as in readings of news from foreign newspapers

and in the use of some websites which can be accessed to obtain some help or to reinforce and complement the activities carried out in class. Students will be encouraged to make a responsible use of ICTs and to consider them as a helpful tool to develop the four skills. ICT also provides students with immediate communication with the teacher out of school hours, with the possibility of creating a blog for doubts where all students can take part and where debates about literature in English and news related to the Anglo-Saxon culture could be carried out. This contributes to the linguistic communication competence, the social and civic competence and the digital competence.

- Prioritize reflection and critical thinking of students, as well as applied knowledge against rote learning.

This principle is related to guidance about significant learning and contextualized learning. In some kinds of activities (vocabulary compositions, etc.) students will be evaluated via a final test. Students shall apply their knowledge to different situations and contexts. This way, students' motivation is promoted, as they find a tangible reality that corresponds to what the teacher explained in class. This promotes the learning to learn competence and the autonomy and personal initiative.

- The evaluation as a key element in the learning process.

We will evaluate the students' work and the teaching practice via different evaluation tools: observing the students in a precise moment, paying attention to each of the students in the class – whether they work or not in class; analysis of their daily tasks, doing homework which helps to consolidate the contents explained in class; evaluation of the participation in debates, presentations, comments of readings, etc; quality of the inputs and suggestions in group tasks, oral and written presentations, etc. This contributes to the learning to learn competence and to the autonomy and personal initiative.

- DESIGN OF ACTIVITIES

First of all, when a school year starts, we conduct a series of activities in order to evaluate the students' previous knowledge and which serve as a base for this new year: Present Simple and Continuous, Past Simple, How to make questions, The distinction between countable and uncountable nouns, the use of *a, an, the, some, any*, quantifiers, adjectives: comparative and superlative forms, the Future: will, be going to, Present continuous, Modals and Semi modals, Present Perfect simple and introduction to the Passive form.

At the beginning of each didactic unit there are several introductory-motivating activities aimed at capturing interest in their content: readings from the mass media, motivating sentences, questions about the students' personal lives, etc.

Some reinforcement activities, previously classified by different degrees of difficulty, are conducted in each didactic unit for those students having learning difficulties. Furthermore, some extension activities will be used for those students who have properly attained the knowledge of the unit:

these activities are more difficult in order to go in depth in the contents. At the end of each didactic unit there are some activities called “Self-evaluation”, where the students check by themselves the knowledge attained.

- Complementary activities (Appendix II)

Here, we must outline some programs that we mentioned above, such as the use of the English blog and everything related to this subject and the use of ICT.

Another of the main complementary activities in the plan is a competition of short stories in English. All students will hand in a copy of their short stories to the teacher, who will evaluate them as a written expression exercise. It is an individual activity. The teacher will grant some time in class to solve expression doubts about the stories, but the stories will be written by the students out of school hours.

- Extracurricular activities.

Attend a dramatic play in English. The play lasts for two hours approximately; there is an only play on Saturday, at 18pm. Attendance to this play will be positively evaluated by the teacher. Go to see a film in the original version. The duration will be of approximately two hours. The hour will be chosen by voting in class, although it will take place out of school hours. This activity will take place at the cinema in the shopping centre Aragonia.

• GROUPS AND TIMING

The contents that must be worked with the students will determine the kind of group chosen in each case. Individual work is used for personal reading of books in English, writing summaries, doing grammar exercises, etc. Group work requires using social skills, interaction, collaborative skills, respect, etc. For groups of three to five students, the activities are: research activities, writing a review of a text or a film, oral presentations, etc. Finally, the students will work in the big group in debates where all of them will participate, in the correction of exercises, solving doubts, doing reading exercises in class, doing listening exercises, etc. The timing is determined by sequencing the teaching units.

RESOURCES (See Appendix VI)

E) Evaluation

We consider evaluation not only as a grading method, but also as an important tool to motivate students. Evaluation is the re-orientation and improvement of the teaching action and the students' learning process.

We have taken the following legal provisions as a reference to establish the evaluation of our plan: the Ley Orgánica 2/2006, de 3 de mayo, de Educación (Art. 28) (*Spanish Institutional Act 2/2006, of May 3, of Education, Section 28*), and the Orden EC/1845/2007 de 19 de junio por la que se establecen los elementos de los documentos básicos de evaluación de la educación básica regulada por la Ley Orgánica 2/2006 de 3 de mayo de Educación así como los requisitos formales

derivados del proceso de evaluación que son precisos para garantizar la movilidad del alumnado (*European Order EC/1845/2007, of June 19, which establishes the elements of the basic documents of evaluation of the basic education, regulated by the Spanish Institutional Act 2/2006, of May 3, of Education, as well as the formal requirements derived from the evaluation process, which are necessary to guarantee the mobility of the students*). From the regulations for Education set by the Aragonese Government, we have used the Orden 9 de mayo de 2007 (apartado IV) (*Aragonese Order of May 9, 2007, section IV*), la Orden 26 de noviembre de 2007 del Departamento de Educación, Cultura y Deporte sobre evaluación en Educación Secundaria Obligatoria en los centros docentes de la Comunidad Autónoma de Aragón (*Aragonese Order of November 26, 2007, of the Regional Department of Education, Culture and Sports on the evaluation in Compulsory Secondary Education at schools in the Autonomous Community of Aragon*), and the Instrucciones de la Dirección General de Política Educativa para la aplicación de lo dispuesto en la Orden de 26 de noviembre de 2007, del Departamento de Educación, Cultura y Deporte, sobre evaluación en Educación Secundaria Obligatoria en los centros docentes de la Comunidad Autónoma de Aragón (*Instructions of the General Directorate of Education Policy of Aragon for the application of the disposals of the Order of November 26, 2007, of the Aragonese Regional Department of Education, Culture and Sports, on the evaluation in Compulsory Secondary Education at schools in the Autonomous Region of Aragon*).

When talking about evaluation, we refer to the teaching-learning process, that is to say, to the evaluation of students' learning and the evaluation of the different processes and the own teaching practice of the teacher.

- Students' evaluation

The evaluation criteria are the set of abilities mentioned in the objectives and they refer to the kind and degree of learning expected from the students. For our English subject and our group of fourth grade of Compulsory Secondary Education, the evaluation criteria is:

1. Understanding general or specific information, the main idea and the most relevant details in oral texts.

This criterion is intended to measure the ability to understand speeches, news and presentations appropriated to their competence, issued by the audiovisual media.

2. Taking part in conversations by using adequate strategies to start, keep and finish the communication. This criterion is used to evaluate the ability to get along in conversations with different communicative intentions.

3. Understanding the general and specific information from diverse written texts of different length, identifying data, opinions, arguments, implied information and the communicative intention of the author.

This criterion will be used to evaluate students' ability to understand the most customary and useful texts of written communication, as well as literary texts or dissemination.

This criterion also assesses the ability to read longer texts in order to consult or search information.

4. Writing different texts with a logical structure, using the basic standards of each gender and communicative situation, a vocabulary suitable for the context and the necessary elements for cohesion and coherence, so that the texts can be easily understood by the reader.

This criterion is used to assess the ability of communicating in the written form in an organized way, with a suitable structure and paying special attention to the planning of the writing process.

5. Using the acquired knowledge about the functioning of the foreign language in varied contexts of communication, as self-correction tools and as tools to evaluate the own oral and written outputs and to understand other people's outputs.

This criterion is used to assess the ability to reflect on and apply the knowledge about the functioning of the language in the improvement (correctness, accuracy, fluency...) and evaluation of their oral and written outputs and in order to understand other people's outputs.

6. Showing initiative and interest in learning and in getting integrated in the classroom processes.

This criterion is intended to evaluate the degree of autonomy developed by the student.

7. Using ICT with certain autonomy to search information, produce texts, and establish oral and written personal relationships.

This criterion is intended to evaluate the ability of using ICTs as communication and learning tools, in order to establish oral and written personal relationships.

8. Showing interest in knowing the foreign language and its culture, establishing comparisons among different features of the foreign culture and the own one, perceiving how they are translated in communication in order to apply this knowledge to the interaction with speakers of the foreign language.

This criterion evaluates if students consider the foreign language and culture, apart from as a study subject, as a useful tool to interact in a wider background.

Depending on the moment when the evaluation is carried out, it can be classified as: initial evaluation, continuous evaluation and final evaluation. An overall initial evaluation on the contents attained in previous years takes place at the beginning of the year. A continuous evaluation is carried out throughout the teaching-learning process and is used to re-structure the process.

At the end of each didactic unit the students do a final evaluation about it and will carry out a self-evaluation.

The evaluation tools are very different depending on what we are assessing. We will use observation through some student follow-up worksheets (appendix III). They are used to evaluate the basic competences via some indicators: attitude of the student, learning or coexistence difficulties, behavior, study habits and motivation to learn.

- Evaluation of the teaching practice

Not only the abilities acquired by the students are evaluated, but the teaching process has to be assessed, too. The tools that we use to evaluate the teaching practice are: observation, through

observation and follow-up worksheets and teacher's self-reflection, by means of a personal diary. The teacher will write down in his personal diary all perceptions which attract his attention in class, so that he can later work on them and reach a reflection process. (Appendix V) The observation and follow-up worksheets are filled in after doing the different activities that we want to evaluate. In our plan, the teacher will evaluate: the use of ICT and its application in the contents worked in class and the atmosphere in class: the students should think about the keys to reach an optimal atmosphere and try to explain why it is necessary. (Appendix VI) These tools will provide us with the required tools for the teacher to improve his teaching, as necessary.

F) Attention to diversity

We take as reference the Ley Orgánica 2/2006, de 3 de mayo, de Educación (Art. 22.4) (*Spanish Institutional Act 2/2006, of May 3, of Education, Section 22.4*) and the Orden de 9 de mayo de 2007, del Departamento de Educación, Cultura y Deporte, por la que se aprueba el currículo en la Educación Secundaria (Art. 14) (*Aragonese Order of May 9, 2007, of the Regional Department of Education, Culture and Sports, which approves the curriculum for Secondary Education, Section 14*), which specifically refers to our Autonomous Community, in order to deal with attention to diversity.

In our classroom we have students with the specific need of educational support, more specifically two Asians students and one Romanian student with special education needs, as their level of knowledge of the language is very low and they have accessed the Spanish educative system late. Besides, there is a student who is repeating the fourth grade of Secondary Education and who shows no interest in learning the subject, he is not motivated and has a low performance level. The measures we will take will be non-significant adaptations of the curriculum, as we will not deviate significantly from it, but we will personalize the teaching-learning process with these students. The measures we will take will have an impact on the methodology, content and evaluation of the didactic units. The education process will be reinforced by the teacher and little changes will be executed, such as flexible grouping of students, different levels of difficulty and depth of the activities and their variety; revision of previous contents before presenting the new ones (significant learning), a balance between the explanations and students work, relating the activities with the everyday life of students (functional learning) and using different materials to work: student's book, workbook, the internet, etc.

III. Didactic units

Unit 0 - (Welcome Unit)- Let's Get it Started

1. Introduction and Justification

This title makes reference to a famous song of the group "Black Eyed Peas". It is chosen to call students' attention and to introduce our subject this year.

2. Contribution to the key competences

In this didactic unit, we are working mainly with four key competences: linguistic communication, learning to learn, cultural and artistic and interpersonal and civic competence. We will try to apply them in the warm-up activities we have prepared for the first three lessons.

3. Competences in the foreign languages

Linguistic communication competence is very important in this first didactic unit, because students are asked to express themselves in a natural way, giving their opinions about the song, participating in the warm-up activities. Students are also learning to learn, because they are working in group in this didactic unit, and they will be conscious of the importance of English as a foreign language, even to be able to understand the music they like. In this unit, maybe the most important competence is the cultural and artistic one. Students are asked to be creative and to explore the song and the meaning of it. Finally, we are also working with the interpersonal and civic competence, because they will be able to reach different cultures and they will learn to respect all of them. Group work involvement and cooperative learning are very important in this unit.

4. Learning objectives

- To understand and produce oral messages contained in the song of this didactic unit.
- To increase the active vocabulary in this didactic unit (vocabulary related to parties and music, colloquial expressions)
- To practise the phonetic contents: intonation, rhythm in a modern song.
- To participate in all kind of activities in the English class, especially in the warm-up activities where they are asked to work in groups.
- To understand and respect the socio-cultural aspects, in this case, American culture and the intercultural society they have.
- To deduce the meaning of the words by the context in the song.
- To promote memorizing some parts of the song, so they can sing together, and at the same time understand what it means.
- To educate towards tolerance and respect, being able to understand other cultures and working in a collaborative way.
- To make students be conscious of their progress, using other songs with similar characteristics to “Let’s Get it Started” and they will realize that now they are able to understand more vocabulary than before.
- To respect traditions and habits in the English speaking countries, since they will understand them in the song.
- To be aware of the importance of speaking a foreign language correctly, because through this song, they will realize that English can be also useful to understand things they are interested in (music, TV series, etc.)

5. Contents

- Understanding and identification of the vocabulary of the song and the most common features of colloquial or informal language used in songs.
- Ability to express orally their opinions about topics in which they are interested in: music, American culture.
- Acquisition of fluency in speaking and listening.
- Involvement in group activities, collaboration with all the members in a group to complete an activity.
- Awareness of previous knowledge in English.

6. Methodology

- Meaningful learning: students will learn vocabulary and expressions from a song, and they will be interested in this topic (parties, music, dancing), so it will be easier to them to understand the concepts.
- Encouragement of an atmosphere of acceptance and respect through group work.
- Flexible groupings and collaborative work.
- Use of different information resources to prepare their activities.
- Initial evaluation as an important element in the learning process, since students will be aware of the previous knowledge they have, and the aspects they need to revise.

7. Evaluation criteria

- Initial evaluation - test with basic contents in 3rd of Secondary, to identify different levels in the class, to create adapted materials for specific students.
- Appropriate understanding of the chosen song, identifying the main vocabulary and expressions.
- Introduction to group work, showing a collaborative attitude with their classmates.
- Participation in class discussion about music, giving their opinions and trying to use the previous knowledge they have about grammatical aspects and vocabulary.
- Appropriate use of different resources to complete their task.

8. Materials and resources

- CD with the song.
- Several American magazines of music
- Worksheets with instructions of group-warm up activities.
- Lyrics of the song
- Computers (one hour in the computer room)

9. Approximate timing: it is the initial didactic unit, so it is shorter than the next ones. Its duration will be three sessions, about three hours of class (the first week of the year course).

Unit 1- Who knows you better?

1. Introduction and Justification

In this unit, we are dealing with family and friends issues, with relationships. Students will give their opinion about people that surround them. They are invited to think about themselves, their personality, their interests, and then try to decide who knows them better (their family or their friends) and explain why they think that.

2. Contribution to the key competences

In this didactic unit, we are working mainly with five key competences: linguistic communication, learning to learn, personal initiative and autonomy, knowledge and interaction with the physical world competence and interpersonal and civic competence. We will try to apply them through this first didactic unit, encouraging students to give their opinion and reflect on their lives.

3. Competences in the foreign languages

Linguistic communication competence is very important in this first didactic unit, because students are asked to express themselves in a natural way, giving their opinions about the topic (their family and friends, the relationships with them), participating in all the activities proposed by the teacher (especially in speaking, where they should give their opinion). Students are also learning to learn, because they are thinking about themselves; it is important to know who you are and how the world that surrounds you is, so we are also dealing with knowledge and interaction with the physical world competence. They are not only reflecting on who they are, but also they are analysing their relationships that exist with their families and friends, so we are working on interpersonal and civic competence. Finally, we are also dealing with personal initiative and autonomy competence, since students will learn how to express themselves, give their own opinions and they will acquire some strategies to develop their own personality.

4. Learning objectives

- To understand and produce oral messages about students' personality, family and friends; to give their opinion and reflect on their lives.
- To increase the active vocabulary in this didactic unit (vocabulary related to family, friends, personal relationships, personality)
- To participate in all kind of activities in the English class, especially in the discussions about relationships.
- To understand and respect other students' opinions, realizing there are different lifestyles and ways to relate to other people.
- To deduce the meaning of the words by the context in the proposed text.

- To educate towards tolerance and respect, being able to understand other lifestyles, understanding that relationships are complex and they are very different depending on the person, but it does not mean they are “good” or “bad”.
- To make students be conscious of their progress, their ability to express their ideas, opinions, etc. To emphasize the importance of being independent, of developing an autonomy and a personal opinion about the world.

5. Contents:

- Ability to describe, both orally and writing, someone they know well (a member of their family or a friend).
- Expression of habitual situations and actions in progress.
- Ability to express students’ opinion, agreement or disagreement with other students’ opinions.
- Acquisition of some strategies to defend their points of view, and at the same time showing respect to their classmates’ judgments.
- Understanding and identification of the vocabulary of the text.
- Acquisition of fluency in speaking and listening.
- Involvement in group activities, in debates or discussions.
- Awareness of previous knowledge in English.

6. Methodology

- Autonomous learning
- Encouragement of an atmosphere of acceptance and respect through groupwork and debates.
- Flexible groupings and collaborative work.
- Use of different information resources to prepare their activities.
- References to real life, things they know and they have experienced.
- Participative and active methodology:
- Use of authentic materials.

7. Evaluation criteria

- Elaboration of a composition, describing someone they know well, emphasizing his/her main features.
- Appropriate understanding of the article, identifying the main vocabulary and expressions related to personal relationships.
- Introduction to formal debate, participating in an active way and trying to give reasons for their opinions.
- Participation in class discussion about relationships, giving their opinions and trying to use the previous knowledge they have about grammatical aspects and vocabulary.

8. Materials and resources:

- Students' book, workbook.
- Article in a magazine about problems with your family and friends.
- Index to carry out a debate in class about the title question: Who knows you better, your family or friends?

9. Approximate timing: About 10 sessions of 50 minutes each one. About 2 weeks and a half.

Unit 2 - Night Monsters

1. Introduction and Justification

In this unit, we are introducing Halloween festivity, since it is an American tradition and students are interested in celebrating it.

2. Contribution to the key competences

In this didactic unit, we are working mainly with four key competences: linguistic communication, learning to learn, cultural and artistic competence and interpersonal and civic competence. We will try to apply them through this second didactic unit, encouraging students to participate in class and in group work.

3. Competences in the foreign languages

Linguistic communication competence is very important in this didactic unit, because students are asked to give their opinion about Halloween tradition, participating in all the activities proposed by the teacher (especially in a theatre play they have to represent). Students are also learning to learn, because they will develop some activities in their own. They need to work in a collaborative way with their classmates to get successful goals (for example, a good theatre play), so we are working on interpersonal and civic competence. We are also dealing with cultural and artistic competence, since students need their artistic abilities and their imagination to create original stories and plays to amuse their classmates.

4. Learning objectives

- To understand and produce oral messages about Halloween festivity and the issues related to it.
- To increase the active vocabulary in this didactic unit (vocabulary related to Halloween: monsters, witches, "creepy" issues)
- To participate in all kind of activities in the English class, especially in the theatre play they are going to represent.
- To understand and respect other students' tasks.
- To deduce the meaning of the words by the context in the proposed text and to interpret the meaning of words in a correct way.
- To understand and respect different cultures and traditions.

5. Contents

- Ability to express themselves orally in a theatre play where they will represent a “terrific” story.
- Expression (oral and written) of habitual situations in the past (using Past simple, Past Continuous, “used to”)
- Acquisition of some strategies to interpret an English play.
- Understanding and identification of the vocabulary of the text.
- Acquisition of fluency in speaking and reading and comprehension.
- Involvement in group activities to create a theatre play.
- Awareness of previous knowledge in English.

6. Methodology

- Autonomous learning
- Encouragement of an atmosphere of acceptance and respect through groupwork.
- Flexible groupings and collaborative work.
- Use of different information resources to prepare their activities.
- Participative and active methodology:
- Use of authentic materials.

7. Evaluation criteria

- Elaboration of a brief script to interpret a play following the “Halloween” topic, using the vocabulary and grammar points of past actions.
- Appropriate understanding of the brief stories they are asked to read in the website chose by the teacher, and show this understanding when representing the play.
- Improvement and development of fluency in speaking (through the play) and reading and comprehension (through the stories and its representation).

8. Materials and resources

- http://www.halloweenishere.com/ghost_stories.html > Ghost Stories
- Students’ book, workbook.
- Computers (one hour in computer’s room) to read the short stories.

9. Approximate timing: About 10 sessions of 50 minutes each one. About 2 weeks and a half.

Unit 3 - The Olympic Games

1. Introduction and Justification

We have chosen this title because in this unit students will work with new vocabulary concerning to sports. From that point on, they are going to learn how to use adjectives, so that they will be able to describe sports as well as to compare different sports. They will also take the role of a coach to practice how to give instructions.

2. Contribution to the key competences

In this didactic unit, we are working with all the key competences: linguistic communication, personal initiative and autonomy, knowledge and interaction with the physical world competence, data processing and digital competence, interpersonal and civic competence and cultural and artistic competence.

3. Competences in the foreign languages

Linguistic communication is the main competence to achieve in this didactic unit, because students are asked to express both writing and orally, participating in all the activities proposed by the teacher. In order to achieve this goal, we propose previous exercises to work with some grammar aspects (adjectival endings, suffixes, prefixes, participial adjectives and comparison of adjectives) and pre teach some vocabulary.. Students are going to work with data processing and digital competence and personal initiative and autonomy competence at the same time, because they are asked to look for information about the topic in an autonomous way. The learning to learn and interpersonal competences are also enhanced through group works. Finally, the cultural competence is worked too since the Olympic Games and sports in general are cultural events and learning about them, students acquire a broader view of the cultural to which they belong.

4. Learning objectives

- To understand and produce oral and written messages about sports (descriptions, comparisons and giving instructions.as coaches)
- To increase the active vocabulary in this didactic unit (vocabulary related to sports and descriptive adjectives).
- To participate in all kind of activities in the English class: discussions, presentations, grammar exercises...
- To respect other students' speaking time.
- To be able to access to reliable information on the Internet.
- To deduce the meaning of the words by the context in the proposed text.
- To make students be conscious of their progress, their ability to express their ideas, opinions, etc. To emphasize the importance of understanding and appreciating differences through the comparison.

5. Contents

- Ability to describe, both orally and writing, a sport.
- Acquisition of some grammar strategies to make comparisons.
- Ability to give simple instructions on how to play a sport.
- Understanding and identification of the vocabulary of the text.
- Acquisition of fluency in speaking and listening.
- Involvement in group activities, in debates or discussions.

- Awareness of previous knowledge in English.

6. Methodology

- Autonomous learning
- Encouragement of an atmosphere of acceptance and respect through groupwork and debates.
- Flexible groupings and collaborative work.
- Use of different information resources to prepare their activities.
- References to real life, things they know and they have experienced.
- Participative and active methodology:
- Use of authentic materials.

7. Evaluation criteria

- Elaboration of a composition, comparing two different sports.
- Appropriate understanding of the newspaper article, identifying the main vocabulary and expressions related to sports.
- In groups, representation of a simple role play where a coach explains a new players how to play the sport.
- Participation in class discussion about The Olympic Games, trying to use the previous knowledge they have about grammatical aspects and vocabulary.

8. Materials and resources

- Students' book, workbook.
- Article about the Olympic Games, its history and relevance (London 2012: Olympic Games flame lit in Greece by Claire Heald. Available online from the following link: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-18002760>)
- Computers will be needed for a session with internet access to search for information about some sports (reserve a computer room)

9. Approximate timing: About 7 sessions of 50 minutes each one (2 weeks more or less).

Unit 4 - Dear Friend

1. Introduction and justification

We have chosen this title because it is a famous writing tradition when it comes to write a letter to a friend. This is useful because in this unit students are asked to write a letter to a friend.

2. Contribution to the key competences

In this didactic unit we are working the competence in linguistic communication, interpersonal and civic competence, Data processing and digital competence.

3. Competences in the foreign languages

In this didactic unit we will mainly work the competence in linguistic communication because students will be asked to carry out some "fill the gap" exercises, which imply the understanding of the grammatical rules and the different in use of these two verb tenses. Students will also be asked to read a text and to identify and underline sentences using the present perfect simple and sentences using the present perfect continuous. In addition, students will be asked to be grouped in pairs and individually write an informal letter to one another, expressing their opinion about a topic of their choice. Then, they have to change exchange the letters and correct their classmate's mistakes, using the textbook, dictionaries or any other source of information. Learning to learn competence is dealt with since students mutually correct their mistakes. Finally, each member has to express her /his opinion about a topic chosen by both of them. So, Interpersonal and civic competence will also be dealt with in this task since this task involves work in pairs, which improve coexistence and fellowship.

4. Learning objectives

- To be able to distinguish the difference in use of the present perfect simple and the present perfect continuous.
- To read and understand a real text written in English .
- To identify the present perfect simple and the present perfect continuous structure.
- To know in which situation it should be used the present perfect simple or the present perfect continuous.
- To write in an understanding way an informal letter.
- To develop the proper use of English writings traditions.
- To express their opinion and interact orally in common communicative situations and in a comprehensible and appropriate way with some level of autonomy
- To develop the learning autonomy through the active involvement on the correction of a letter.
- To give the student the possibility of co-evaluation.
- To develop attitudes, work habits and strategies for the acquisition of a foreign language by using all available means, such as collaboration with others.
- To understand and respect different opinions.
- To practice good manners in oral communications, respecting speech turns.

5. Contents

- Written exercises about when to use the present perfect simple and the present perfect continuous.
- The application of English grammars rules.
- Reading and general understanding of a text about life experiences in which the present perfect simple and the present perfect continuous are used.
- Consolidation and expansion of diverse reading strategies

- Identification of the structure of the present perfect simple and the present perfect continuous in such text.
- Production of a written letter about their own life experience.
- Use of the appropriate register to the target speaker.
- Correct use of spelling and different punctuation marks.
- Interest in the careful presentations of the written dialogue.
- The reading aloud of such dialogue.
- Interest in the pronunciation and intonation.
- Involvement in the evaluation process, each pair mutually correcting their mistakes.

6. Methodology

- The promotion of autonomy in the carrying out of grammar exercises.
- The promotion of an understanding reading of a text.
- The promotion of an atmosphere of acceptance and respect through the work in pairs
- The promotion of the knowledge the student have of her/his own learning process, through the hand in of a written letter to be returned to the student corrected by the teacher.

7. Evaluation criteria

- The Understanding of the different use of the present perfect simple and the present perfect continuous.
- The identification of the structure of the present perfect simple and the present perfect continuous.
- Good choice in the type of register in the composition of a letter.
- The realization of a comprehensible, coherent written text, with orthography and good disposition of the space.
- The good adequation to English writing traditions.
- The production of an understanding, clear and orderly oral message expressing their own opinion about a topic.
- Good pronunciation and intonation.
- Work in pairs: showing a collaborative attitude with their classmates.

8. Materials and resources:

Grammar exercise: <http://www.ego4u.com/en/cram-up/grammar/prepersim-preperpro/exercises>
(exercise 1)

Reading text: <http://www.ego4u.com/en/cram-up/grammar/prepersim-preperpro/exercises>
(exercise 10)

9. Approximate timing: The duration, this didactic unit is ten sessions of fifty minutes each. This is about two and a half weeks of class.

Unit 5 - What a weird day!!

1. Introduction and justification

We have chosen this title because in this unit students are asked to write a composition about an important event that took place in their town and afterwards, they have to explain in front of all their classmates what they were doing that day when the event took place.

2. Contribution to the key competences

In this didactic unit we are dealing with the competence in linguistic communication, personal initiative and autonomy, cultural and artistic competence and digital competence.

3 Competences in the foreign languages

In this unit we deal with the competence in linguistic communication since students are asked to carry out some exercises about indirect and direct objects in which they will have to circle the direct objects and underline the indirect objects, and there is also a translation exercise about sentences using direct and indirect objects. This implies the understanding of grammatical rules about objects. Personal initiative and autonomy and cultural and artistic competence are also dealt with since students are asked to write a report about an event that happened in their town. To get information of the event, students can search in the Internet. So, data processing and digital competence is also dealt with as there is a guided use of Internet as a method for finding information. Then, students are asked to be grouped in groups of 4 or 5 members and explain what they were doing the day the event took place. With this task, civic competence will also be dealt with since this task involves work in pairs, which improve coexistence and fellowship.

4. Learning objectives

- To know whether a direct or indirect object should be used.
- To translate objects in a proper way, not to confused indirect with direct or vice versa.
- To produce a composition about a past event in an understanding way.
- To understand general information of written on-line texts.
- To develop attitudes, work habits and strategies for the acquisition of a foreign language by using all available means, such as the to use different resources, especially those technologies information and communication resources, in order to obtain, select and present written information.
- To develop the proper use of English writing traditions.
- To produce in an understanding way oral messages about past events.
- To talk in public in an understanding way, being able to draw the audience's attention.

5. Contents

- Written exercises about when to use direct or indirect objects.

- The application of English grammars rules.
- Consolidation and expansion of diverse translating strategies.
- Development of writings skills to produce a report about an important event.
- Correct use of spelling and different punctuation marks.
- Interest in the careful presentations of the written reports.
- Development of skills to produce an oral report about an important event.
- Use of the appropriate register to the target audience.
- Interest in the pronunciation and intonation.
- Interest in the careful of oral proceedings.
- Use of communication strategies to overcome difficulties and draw audience's attention.
- Involvement in the evaluation process, each group can self-correct their mistakes.

6. Methodology

- The promotion of autonomy, through the carrying out of a grammar exercises.
- The promotion of writing techniques to report past events.
- Use of different sources of information (ICT)
- The promotion of oral skills through an oral proceeding in front of a group of classmates.
- The promotion of an atmosphere of acceptance and respect through classmates interaction.
- The promotion of the knowledge the student have of her/his own learning process, through the hand in of a written composition of a past event to be returned to the student corrected by the teacher.

7. Evaluation criteria

- The correct use of direct and indirect objects, distinguishing when they have to use each.
- Proper translation of objects, without confusion between direct and indirect.
- The realization of comprehensible, coherence written text, with orthography and good disposition of the space.
- The understanding of general information of written on-line texts
- The proper use of technologies information and communication resources, the good procurement and selection of information.
- The good adequation to English writing traditions.
- The production of an understanding, clear and orderly oral message about past events.
- The capacity to make an oral speech interesting, in such a way that it draws the audience's attention.

8. Materials and resources: <http://www.easyenglish.com/lesson.asp?him.txt> and computers.

9. Approximate timing

The duration, this didactic unit is ten sessions of fifty minutes each. This is about two and a half weeks of class.

Unit 6 - Who? What? When? Where?

1. Introduction and justification

We have chosen this title because most of the relatives' pronouns are wh- words, that is, they start by the letters "wh" (such as who, which, whose...). This is a good way for students to remember which one are the relatives pronouns.

2. Contribution to the key competences

In this didactic unit we are dealing with competence in linguistic communication, Personal initiative and autonomy, Knowledge and interaction with the physical world.

3. Competences in the foreign languages

In this didactic unit we are dealing with competence in linguistic communication since students are asked to carry out some exercises about relative clauses, so they need to understand and identify the English grammatical rules about relative clauses and its uses. Personal initiative and autonomy is also dealt with since they are asked to individually write a description of a place they have visited. They are also asked to read an article of a newspaper. Then, they have to exchange the descriptions and correct their classmate's mistakes, using the textbook, dictionaries or any other source of information. Besides, learning to learn competence is also dealt with since students mutually correct their mistakes. Finally, this unit also deals with the competence knowledge and interaction with the physical world because students have to work in pairs and describe to their classmate a photo about a foreign country, so in this way they have to interpret the real world (not get stuck in their reality) and learn some aspects of a different culture (be open-minded to know different worlds). This task also deals with interpersonal and civic competence since work in pairs is involved, which improves coexistence and fellowship.

4. Learning objectives

- To know how relative clauses work in English.
- To distinguish when a relative pronoun is compulsory or not.
- To develop the writing skills required to describe a place.
- To develop the learning autonomy through the active involvement on the correction of a description.
- To give the student the possibility of co-evaluation.
- To read and understand a real text written in English.
- To develop attitudes, work habits and strategies for the acquisition of a foreign language by using all available means, such as collaboration with others.

- To develop the proper use of English writings traditions.
- To develop the oral skills required to describe a place.
- To orally describe in an understanding way a picture.
- To educate towards tolerance and respect towards foreign cultures.
- To practice good manners in oral communications, respecting speech turns.

5. Contents

- Written exercises about relative clauses.
- The application of English grammars rules.
- Development of writings skills to describe a place they have visited.
- Correct use of spelling and different punctuation marks.
- Interest in the careful presentations of the written descriptions.
- Development of skills to produce a description.
- Use of the appropriate register to the target audience.
- Development of reading skills.
- Interest in the pronunciation and intonation.
- Interest in the careful of oral proceedings.
- Involvement in the evaluation process, each pair mutually correcting their mistakes.

6. Methodology

- The promotion of autonomy, through the carrying out of a grammar exercises.
- The promotion of writing techniques to describe places.
- The promotion of oral skills through an oral interaction with a classmate
- The promotion of an atmosphere of acceptance and respect through the work in pairs.
- The promotion of the knowledge the student have of her/his own learning process, through the hand in of a written description to be returned to the student corrected by the teacher.

7. Evaluation criteria

- Understanding of the different use of the different relative pronouns.
- Good choice in the type of register.
- Good pronunciation, intonation.
- The realization of comprehensible, coherent written text, with orthography and good disposition of the space.
- The good adequation to English writing traditions.
- The production of an understanding, clear and orderly oral message about a description of a place.
- Work in pairs: showing a collaborative attitude with their classmates.
- To read and understand a real text written in English

8. Materials and resources

- Grammar exercise: <http://www.vivquarry.com/wkshts/relative1q.html> different pictures of people from different cultures.
- Newspaper article: <http://www.guardian.co.uk/football/blog/2013/jan/07/lionel-messi-ballon-dor>

9. Approximate timing: The duration of this didactic unit is ten sessions of fifty minutes each. This is about two and a half weeks of class.

Unit 7 - What will you be doing in 15 years time?

1. Introduction and Justification

We have chosen this title because it refers to the initial speech the teacher has to do in this didactic unit about his personal plans and hopes, for students to become familiar with future forms, discussing his future plans as well as his thoughts about the future.

2. Contribution to the key competences

In this didactic unit, the most important competences are: linguistic communication, knowledge and interaction with the physical world, learning to learn and interpersonal and civic competence.

3. Competences in the foreign languages

Linguistic communication competence has a very important role in this didactic unit since students are required to express themselves naturally in the English language, making predictions and talking about future plans. The activities designed for this unit contributes to the development of knowledge and interaction with the physical world competence, as they learn to draw conclusions in order to make decisions for the future. Students are required to make a writing task about how are they going to live in 15 years. So, we are also working with the learning to learn competence, because students have to think in their real lives, in their future plans, which is something motivating for them. We finally work with the interpersonal and civic competence, because in the classroom discussion they have to demonstrate that they know how to express themselves in different contexts, stating their own ideas while respecting those of others.

4. Learning objectives

- To understand and produce oral predictions as well as written messages expressing their opinion about their future plans and the weather forecast contained in this didactic unit.
- To increase the active vocabulary in this didactic unit (vocabulary related to the weather, predictions, future plans, etc.): temperature, degrees, climate, time expressions, connectors, etc.
- To understand and practice the grammar points of this didactic unit: the future (will, be going to, future continuous, time clauses with future meaning and the use of present simple and present continuous to talk about the future).
- To practice the phonetic contents: pronunciation, stress, etc.

- To participate in all kind of activities in the English class, especially in the classroom discussion about 'what the future holds' expressing their opinions and giving answers to some questions introduced by the teacher as 'Will a new age of peace break upon us?' 'Will the global economic climate improve?' The teacher can also approach to this topic through some humor.
- To understand and respect the opinions of all classmates.
- To deduce the meaning of the words by the context in the different texts, questionnaires, etc.
- To make the students be conscious of their progress, as they can carry out a discussion in the classroom and speak fluently when expressing their ideas making a correct use of grammar.

5. Contents

- Understanding and spontaneous production of opinions in face-to-face communications about future events related to the students ideas, thoughts and interests.
- General comprehension and understanding of the most relevant data of the different texts and activities issued by the teacher and appropriate to their ability and experience.
- Production of oral predictions, possible situations, suggestions and opinions by the use of 'will', 'going to' and other time clauses with future meaning.
- Involvement in the classroom discussion about topics related to weather as well as other topics of their interest, with the purpose of using the grammar points of this unit: Future tenses, making predictions and the weather.
- Use of appropriate vocabulary, expressions and sentences; cohesion, which is necessary to mark clearly the relationship between ideas and; use of basic strategies in the oral process.
- Correct use of spelling and different punctuation marks.
- Use of their knowledge concerning verb tenses and word formation (compounds, prefixes, suffixes) in the messages interpretation and production.
- Confidence and initiative for public speaking.

6. Methodology

- Meaningful learning starts from the students' previous knowledge (present and past tenses); so choosing when to introduce the future with 'will' and 'going to' carefully can make all the difference in comprehension. We have chosen to introduce these forms when students were comfortable with the present simple and present continuous, as well as the past simple and continuous. This ensures that students are comfortable with the idea of a variety of auxiliary verbs and will be able to switch between these two future tenses with more ease.
- Encouragement of an atmosphere of acceptance and respect by means of a classroom discussion.
- Use of different information sources of information to prepare their activities. The teacher will access to some websites to obtain some help to reinforce and complement the grammar activities carried out in class.

- Promote students' awareness of their own learning process, by giving them examples of good websites where they can reinforce their language skills.
- Promote reading comprehension. Students can check if they have understood the text by answering a few questions about it.

7. Evaluation criteria

- Appropriate understanding of the texts, identifying the main vocabulary and expressions.
- Participation in class discussion about different future plans and weather predictions, giving their ideas and trying to use the previous knowledge they have about grammatical aspects and vocabulary.
- Appropriate use of different resources to complete their tasks.
- Development of coherent texts.
- Correct use of spelling and different punctuation marks.
- Contribution of new ideas and originality when expressing them.

8. Materials and resources

- Brief assessment criteria with the objectives the students must achieve in this unit.
- Three stories of people talking about what they want to do in life, and some questions of those texts. We can find them in Headway student's book, Pre-intermediate; John & Liz Soars (Oxford University Press).
- Lesson Plan of What the future holds, which could be a support for the teacher in the classroom discussion (optional) [<http://esl.about.com/od/popularculturelessons/a/2012-Lesson-Plan.htm>]
- Reading comprehension of the weather
http://esl.about.com/od/beginningreadingskills/a/d_weatherf.htm], some questions to check if they have understood the vocabulary.
- Exercises to practice and reinforce the future tenses, found in Headway student's book, Pre-intermediate; John & Liz Soars (Oxford University Press).
- Quizzes asking to choose between future with 'will' or 'going to' found in Headway student's book, Pre-intermediate; John & Liz Soars (Oxford University Press).

9. Approximate timing: The length of this didactic unit is: ten lessons of fifty minutes each one (approximately two weeks and a half).

Unit 8 – 'World hunger'

1. Introduction and Justification

We have chosen this title, 'Ending world hunger is possible – so why hasn't it been done?' for being the title of the introductory text that will be offered to students at the beginning of this didactic

unit. Students should read the text so they will take ideas from it to undertake a small classroom debate.

2. Contribution to the key competences

In this didactic unit, we work with the following competences: linguistic communication, interpersonal and civic, knowledge and interaction with the physical world, learning to learn and autonomy and personal initiative competence.

3. Competences in the foreign languages

The activities included in this didactic unit, as the realization of a classroom debate, promote the development of linguistic communication competence, since communicate and converse are actions that require abilities to establish links and build constructive relationships with others. The classroom will be divided into two groups and the objective is to persuade the other group. Thus, this activity contributes to the development of interpersonal and civic competence. Moreover, it contributes to the development of knowledge and interaction with the physical world competence, since the use of conditionals in this activity helps students to represent information and raise hypothesis in order to answer the different questions; and also to learning to learn competence, because students have to prepare the debate in work groups. To meet their objectives, they should develop strategies to help them, something which is also a motivation for students. So, it increases the autonomy and personal initiative.

4. Learning objectives

- To understand and produce oral and written messages contained in the text of this didactic unit: 'Ending world hunger is possible – so why hasn't it been done?'
- To increase the active vocabulary in this didactic unit (vocabulary related to conditional sentences: supposing, as long as, provided, if, would, etc. as well as vocabulary of the text)
- To understand and practice the grammar points of this didactic unit: zero, first, second and third conditional, wish clauses.
- To participate in all kind of activities in the English class, especially when performing the classroom debate.
- To understand and respect the socio-cultural aspects, in this case, different ways of life.
- To deduce the meaning of the words by the context in the text and the subsequent questionnaire.
- To read in a comprehensive way.
- To improve students' speech, by carrying out a classroom debate.
- To educate towards tolerance and respect, being able to work in a collaborative way.
- To make the students be conscious of their progress, as they can carry out a debate and speak fluently when expressing their ideas; and also using a correct grammar.
- To be aware of the importance of speaking a foreign language correctly.

5. Contents

- General comprehension and understanding of the most relevant data of the text issued by the teacher and appropriate to their ability and experience.
- Production of oral hypothesis, possible situations, suggestions and opinions by the use of if clauses, wish clauses, conditional questions, etc.
- Involvement in the classroom debate about hunger and other topics of their interest, with the purpose of using the grammar points of this unit: 1st, 2nd and 3rd, conditional—talking about hypothetical situations.
- Elaboration of several questions, statements and arguments that will help them during the debate; use of appropriate vocabulary, expressions and sentences; cohesion, which is necessary to mark clearly the relationship between ideas and; use of basic strategies in the oral process (previous notes, development of the activity and conclusion).
- Recognition and use of the basics of structure and control of the speech, according to the text.
- Use of their knowledge concerning antonyms, "false friends" and word formation (compounds, prefixes, suffixes) in the messages interpretation and production.
- Confidence and initiative for public speaking.

6. Methodology

- Meaningful learning: for being an original and new activity (they also have to reorganize the classroom space) and, for being concepts they have to put into practice in a real situation, it will be easier to them to understand and remember the new contents, also reinforced with a famous song.
- Encouragement of an atmosphere of acceptance and respect through group work.
- Use of different information resources to prepare their activities.
- Students should be able to understand the ideas of the text 'Ending world hunger is possible – so why hasn't it been done?', as well as the grammar points studied. They should also be able to prepare and carry out a classroom debate in groups, so they become aware of what they have learned, having the possibility to demonstrate their capacity to speak in English in an appropriate way.

7. Evaluation criteria

- Appropriate understanding of the text and the song, identifying the main vocabulary and expressions.
- Group work in order to carry out a debate, showing a collaborative attitude with their classmates.
- Participation in class discussion about the hunger in the world, giving their opinions and trying to persuade their partners with their ideas by the use of correct conditional sentences.
- Appropriate use of different resources to complete their task.
- Correct use of spelling and different punctuation marks.
- Contribution of new ideas and originality when expressing them.

8. Materials and resources

- A written text given by the teacher and called 'Ending world hunger is possible – so why hasn't it been done?' taken from the webpage

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/2012/feb/15/ending-world-hunger>.

- Exercises of 1st, 2nd and 3rd conditional and vocabulary related, found in Hotline Secundaria student's book, Pre-intermediate; Tom Hutchinson (Oxford University Press).

- Computers (one hour in the computer room) to listen 'If I were a rich man', a famous song of Charles Chaplin and answer the subsequent questions:

http://www.eslvideo.com/esl_video_quiz_high_intermediate.php?id=7429

9. Approximate timing: The length of this didactic unit is: ten lessons of fifty minutes each one (approximately two weeks and a half).

Unit 9 – All you need is love

1. Introduction and Justification

This title makes reference to a famous Beatles song, written by John Lennon. The purpose is to call attention of students, since the short stories included in this didactic unit share a common topic, which is love.

2. Contribution to the key competences

In this didactic unit we are working with almost all the competences: linguistic communication, personal initiative and autonomy, learning to learn, digital, knowledge and interaction with the physical world and cultural and artistic competence. We will apply them in the several activities, short love stories, questionnaires, interviews and dialogues we have prepared for this didactic unit.

3. Competences in the foreign languages

The knowledge, skills and attitudes proper to this unit contributes to the development of the linguistic communication competence, because allow students to express thoughts, experiences, opinions, as well as to make dialogues, etc..., which also contributes to the development of personal initiative and autonomy. It also comes into play learning to learn competence, because students are asked to look for information autonomously according to the objectives: to write the biography of a famous person they admire; establishing strategies they deem necessary to carry out this task. In the same way, digital competence is also important here, as they must have skills to search, collect and process information to transform it into knowledge. Students are asked to interpret a dialogue produced by them, in groups or in pairs, in which they must use the verb tenses studied in this unit. This allows the development of knowledge and interaction with the physical world, as it helps them to participate adequately and also demonstrate a critical sense of

the reality. Furthermore, creativity and expression of feelings through dialogues contribute to the development of cultural and artistic competence.

4. Learning objectives

- To read several stories and biographies in a comprehensive and autonomous way so as to get to varied information sources and as a possibility to know different cultures and different ways of life.
- To understand and produce written messages contained in different stories and interviews included in this didactic unit.
- To increase the active vocabulary in this didactic unit (vocabulary related to books: author, biography, novel, romance, story, writer, etc.)
- To understand and practice the grammar points of this didactic unit: past perfect simple and past perfect continuous.
- To participate and express their opinion in all kind of activities in the English class.
- To deduce the meaning of the words by the context in the different love stories, interviews with writers, etc.
- To read in a comprehensive way.
- To encourage the student towards graded reading books.
- To educate towards tolerance and respect, being able to understand other cultures and working in a collaborative way.
- To make the students be conscious of their progress, bringing to the classroom an English book, be it well known, so that they can read a fragment together.

5. Contents

- Understanding and spontaneous production of opinions in face-to-face communications about past events related to the students experience and interests.
- Production of oral descriptions, narratives and explanations about experiences and events as well as different contents.
- General comprehension and understanding of the most relevant data of the different short love stories issued by multiple sources and appropriate to their ability and experience.
- Involvement in spontaneous communicative situations in the classroom sharing their opinions and in conversations on past events of their interest, with the purpose of using the past perfect simple and the past perfect continuous tenses.
- Use of communication strategies to overcome difficulties during communicative interaction and to initiate, keep and conclude communicative exchanges in the classroom.
- Autonomous reading of more extensive texts related to their favorite famous persons.
- Composition of a famous person biography; use of appropriate vocabulary; cohesion, which is necessary to mark clearly the relationship between ideas and; use of basic strategies in the writing process (planning, drafting and revision).

- Organization and use of learning resources, such as dictionaries, encyclopedias, reference books, libraries, etc.

6. Methodology

- Meaningful learning starts from the students' previous knowledge; that is, new verb tenses to be learned are related meaningfully to the student's prior knowledge of verb tenses.
- When using the short love stories to improve the reading skills, teacher will always choose those ones closer to the students' level and to their interests, so they can enjoy reading them being able to contribute their ideas and opinions.
- Students should be able to understand short love stories as well as interviews with writers and, at the same time, they should be able to write a biography about a famous person, so they become aware of what they have learned, having the possibility to demonstrate their synthesis capacity.
- With those activities we promote the use of the Internet, as they are asked to look for new information.
- Use of different information resources to prepare their activities.
- Flexible groupings and collaborative work.

7. Evaluation criteria

- Appropriate understanding of the texts, identifying the main vocabulary and expressions.
- Group work in order to interpret a dialogue, showing a collaborative attitude with their classmates.
- Participation in class discussion about different writers' stories, giving their opinions and trying to use the previous knowledge they have about grammatical aspects and vocabulary.
- Appropriate use of different resources to complete their task
- Development of coherent texts.

8. Materials and resources

- Several short love stories, reports... about past events, found in Headway student's book, Pre-intermediate; John & Liz Soars (Oxford University Press).
- CD with a listening of an interview with Celia Young, the writer of *Hot Lips*, found in Headway student's book, Pre-intermediate; John & Liz Soars (Oxford University Press).
- Past perfect simple and past perfect continuous exercises, found in Hotline Secundaria student's book, Pre-intermediate; Tom Hutchinson (Oxford University Press).
- Different websites useful to the students for their redactions, i.e. Stories About People (Biographies) [<http://www.manythings.org/voa/people/>], which also have the audio file of the texts; or Famous People Lessons [<http://famouspeoplelessons.com/>], which also have exercises for students after each biography.
- Brief instructions and assessment criteria of the dialogues they have to interpret.
- Computers.

9. Approximate timing: The length of this didactic unit is: ten lessons of fifty minutes each one (approximately two weeks and a half).

Unit 10- The news

1. Introduction and Justification

We are going to review the passive voice in this unit through the organization of a news broadcast in the classroom. The students should learn to write informative paragraphs to elaborate the script. In the same way, they should learn to express their opinions and preferences, processes and changes as well as disappointment, to make an editorial. The class is organized in teams of five members each one and each group should choose a current topic to try and comment on.

2. Contribution to the key competences

In this unit, we are working with almost all the competences. Of course, as in every unit, we focus on the competence of linguistic communication. Knowledge and interaction with the physical world, social competence, data processing and personal initiative and autonomy are key competences largely covered in this unit.

3. Competences in the foreign languages

The knowledge, skills and attitudes proper to this unit contributes to the development of the linguistic communication competence because, among other things, it allows students to express opinions and preferences and to write informative paragraphs.

It also contributes to the development of personal initiative and autonomy because the student has to make some individual exercises at the beginning of the unit, to review the use of the passive voice. Learning to learn competence is worked because students are asked to establish strategies needed to carry out the task (as, for example, to determine how the group is going to organize: this is also related to social competence). Data processing and interaction with the physical world appear since they must have skills to search, collect and process information of the physical world and express an opinion about it. Furthermore, they are asked to apply the grammar they learn in the unit to the task (writing the script and presenting the news orally).

4. Learning objectives

- To read several informative paragraphs and simple editorials in a comprehensive and autonomous way so as to get to varied information sources and to learn the structure of this kind of texts.
- To produce written informative paragraphs.
- To understand and practice the grammar point of this didactic unit: review and expansion of the passive voice.
- To participate in the elaboration of a news broadcast in the class.

- To understand and respect the different points of view of the other members of the team and the rest of the students in the class.
- To promote teamwork.
- To encourage the student towards topical subjects.
- To educate towards tolerance and respect, being able to work in a collaborative way.

5. Contents

- General comprehension and understanding of the world trending topics.
- Involvement in the teamwork, sharing their opinions with the members of the team and trying to reach consensus.
- Use of the passive voice to produce informative paragraphs.
- Autonomous reading of texts related to the topic the team is going to comment on.
- Use of basic strategies in the writing process (planning, drafting and revision) to elaborate the script.
- Expression of opinion in the editorial.
- Expression of disappointment in the editorial.
- Organization and use of different sources to search information.
- Organization of teamwork as strategy for the learning progress.

6. Methodology

- Meaningful learning starts from the students' previous knowledge about the different topics they are going to talk about and about the use of the passive voice.
- The teacher can help the teams choosing the topics but he or she does make the election so that, the students can enjoy reading about a topic of their interest and sharing their ideas and opinions.
- Students should be able to understand informative paragraphs and, at the same time, they should be able to write their own, to demonstrate their synthesis capacity.
- With those activities we promote the use of the Internet, as they are asked to look for new information.
- Use of different information resources to prepare their activities.
- Flexible groupings and collaborative work.

7. Evaluation criteria

- Appropriate use of the passive voice in different grammar exercises.
- Group work in order to write the news broadcast script: some short informative paragraphs and an editorial.
- Participation in class discussion about the world trending topics, giving their opinions and trying to use the previous knowledge they have about grammatical aspects and vocabulary.
- Appropriate use of different resources to complete their task.
- Development of a coherent script.

- Presentation of the news broadcast recorded.

8. Materials and resources

- Textbook and workbook.
- Computer room use as requested by the students.
- Video cameras

9. Approximate timing: The length of this didactic unit is: ten lessons of fifty minutes each one (approximately two weeks and a half).

Unit 11- Hungry globetrotters

1. Introduction and Justification

In this unit, we are going to investigate about gastronomic customs around the world. Furthermore, we will learn how to order in a restaurant and to write a recipe using the modals and semi modals in its passive voice.

2. Contribution to the key competences

In this didactic unit, we are working mainly with four key competences: linguistic communication, learning to learn and cultural competence.

3. Competences in the foreign languages

Linguistic communication competence is very important in this didactic unit, because students are asked to learn to express orally to compare customs (for example; “Asians use chopsticks while Europeans use cutlery”).and to order food in a restaurant Moreover, they will apply the grammar learnt (modals and semi modals in its passive voice) to write a good recipe. Students are also learning to learn, because they will work in an autonomous way. We are also dealing with cultural and artistic competence, since students will learn about different cultures. The rest of the competences will also appear across the unit.

4. Learning objectives

- To understand and produce oral messages about gastronomic customs around the world.
- To understand and produce written messages about gastronomic customs around the world.
- To increase the active vocabulary in this didactic unit: (basic vocabulary related to gastronomy and cooking— for example, the verbs add, pour, stir, mix, chop, etc...)
- To participate in all kind of activities in the English class, especially in the role playing of a world restaurant they are going to perform.
- To understand and respect other students’ tasks.
- To understand and respect different cultures and traditions.

- To apply the grammar about the passive voice of modals and semi modals and the new vocabulary to write a recipe.

5. Contents

- Ability to express themselves orally in a role playing they are going to represent in groups (Each group will perform the scene of a restaurant located in a different continent).
- Ability to express themselves orally in a discussion comparing different gastronomic customs around the world.
- Acquisition of some strategies to interpret a play in English.
- Understanding and identification of vocabulary related to food and gastronomy in the sample recipes.
- Acquisition of fluency in speaking, reading and comprehension.
- Involvement in group activities to perform the role playing.
- Ability to use the passive voice of the modal and semi modal verbs to compose a recipe.
- Awareness of previous knowledge in English.

6. Methodology

- Autonomous learning (to write the recipe, to do the grammar exercises)
- Encouragement of an atmosphere of acceptance and respect through teamwork (role playing).
- Flexible groupings and collaborative work (role playing).
- Use of different information resources to prepare their activities.
- Participative and active methodology:
- Use of authentic materials (simple recipes shown as a model).

7. Evaluation criteria

- Elaboration of a brief script to interpret a role playing ordering food in a restaurant. As said before, each group will perform the scene of a restaurant located in a different continent
- Oral performance of the said role playing.
- Appropriate use of the grammar points of modal and semi modal verbs to write a recipe.

8. Materials and resources

- Students' book, workbook.
- Blank recipe sheet (name of dish, ingredients, directions) to fill out on their own and some simple recipe samples.

9. Approximate timing: About 8 sessions of 50 minutes each one (about two weeks).

IV. Legal provisions

A) References to official state documents

The official state documents consulted to elaborate this teaching plan have been:

- Ley Orgánica 2/2006, de 3 de mayo, de Educación (*Spanish Institutional Act 2/2006, of May 3, of Education*)
- Real Decreto 1631/2006, de 29 de diciembre por el que se establecen las enseñanzas mínimas correspondientes a la Educación Secundaria Obligatoria (*Spanish Royal Decree 1631/2006, of December 29, which establishes the minimum curriculum to be taught at Compulsory Secondary Education*).

B) References to official regional documents

The official regional documents consulted to elaborate this teaching plan have been:

- Orden de 9 de mayo de 2007, del Departamento de Educación, Cultura y Deporte, por la que se aprueba el currículo en Educación Secundaria Obligatoria y se autoriza su aplicación en los centros docentes de la Comunidad Autónoma de Aragón (*Aragonese Order of May 9, 2007, of the Regional Department of Education, Culture and Sports, which approves the curriculum for Compulsory Secondary Education and authorises its application at schools of the Autonomous Community of Aragon*).
- Orden de 7 de julio de 2005 que regula la organización y el funcionamiento de los Centros Docentes Públicos de Educación Secundaria en la Comunidad Autónoma de Aragón (*Aragonese Order of July 7, 2005, which regulates the organisation and functioning of State Educational Centres of Compulsory Secondary Education in the Autonomous Community of Aragon*).

V. References

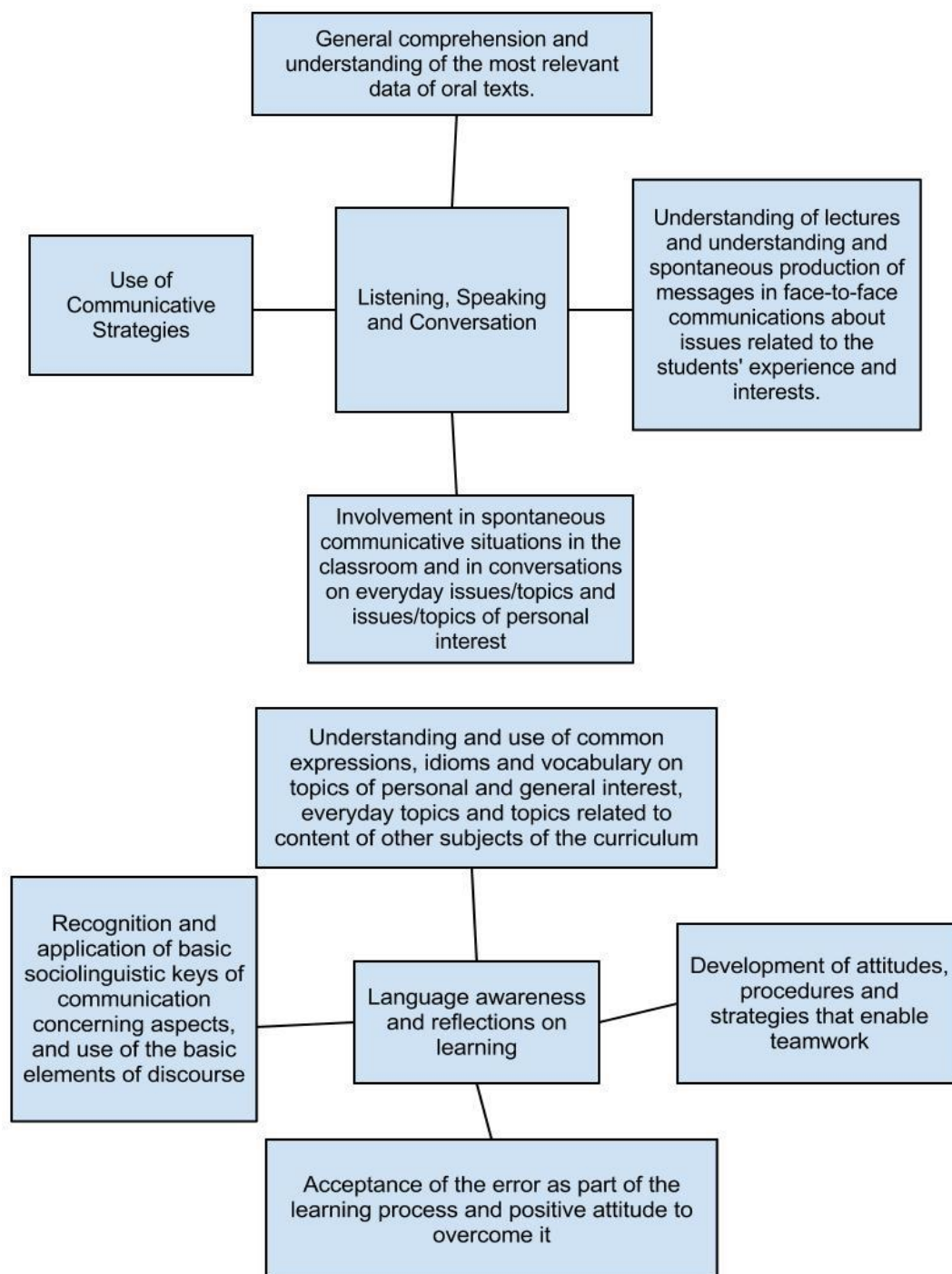
- Educara.org; Departamento de Educación, Universidad, Cultura y Deporte (Gobierno de Aragón).
- Salaberri, M.S. et al (2004): Aspectos didácticos de Inglés. 9, ICE, Universidad de Zaragoza, Zaragoza.

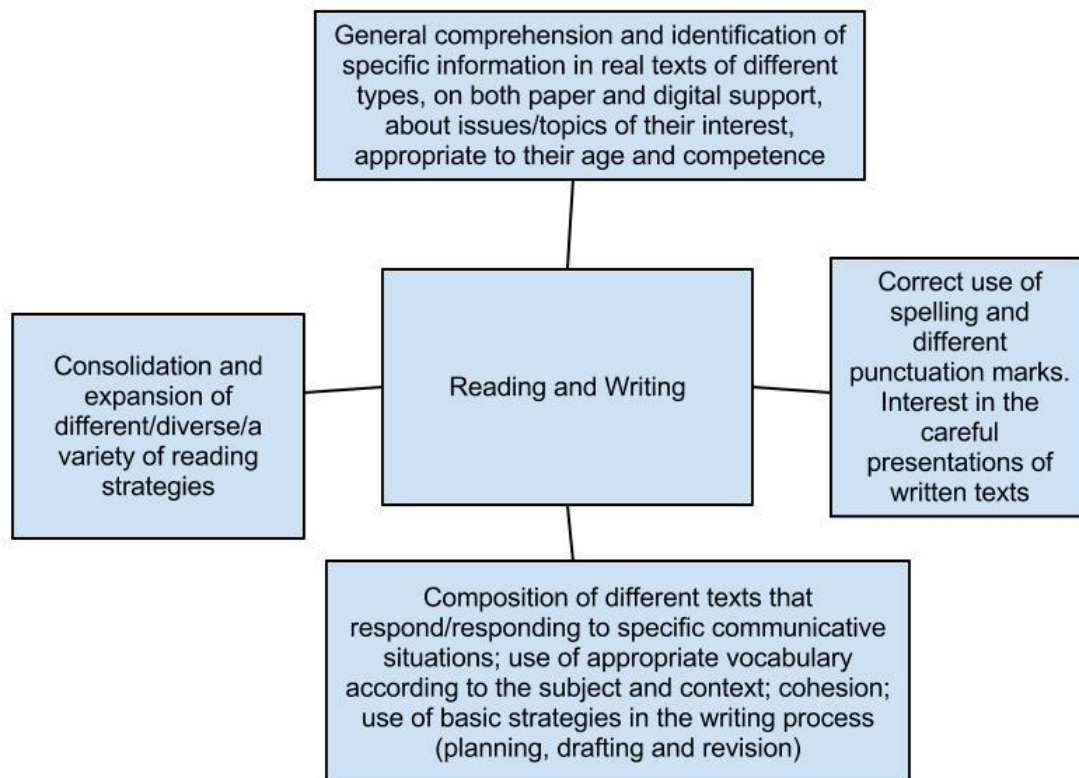
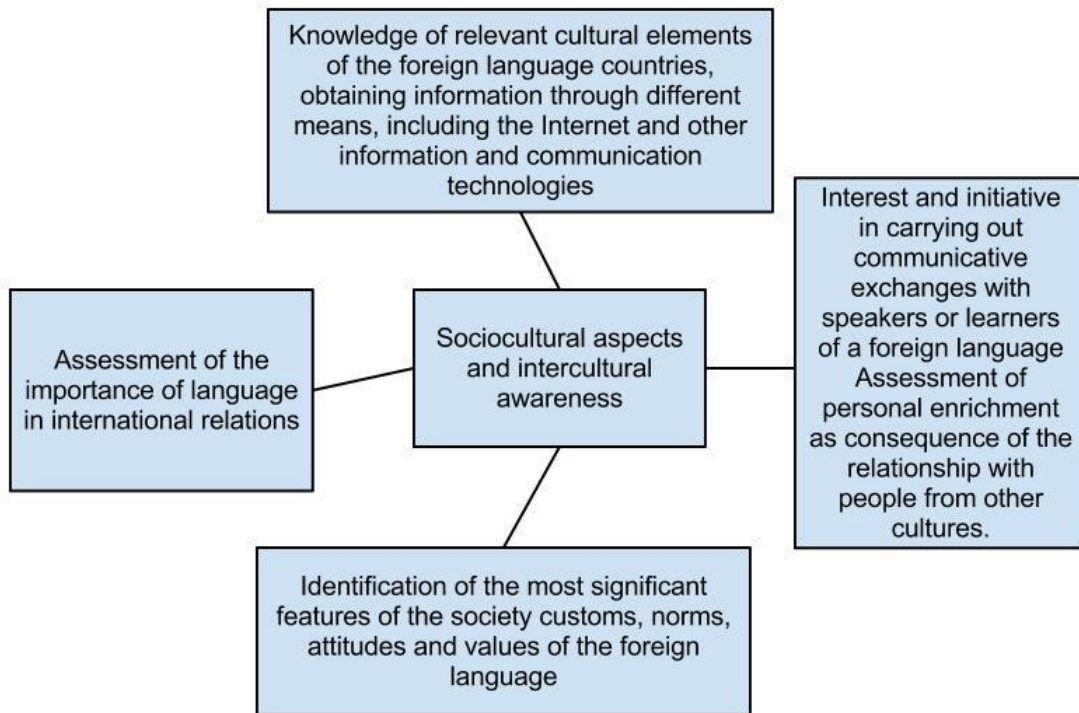
Conclusion

As a conclusion we want to point out the main goals we have tried to define in this year plan. Our main aim is to transmit students an interest in the Anglo-Saxon culture, traditions, life-style, etc. We consider very important to create a good atmosphere in class and to do this, we need to respect each other (creating a good and respectful atmosphere between the teacher and the students). We also want to emphasize the importance of motivation, and our didactic units are focused on this factor. We also support the use of New Technologies in our lessons, always being monitored by the teacher and selecting the appropriate content, being the teacher a guide for students. Finally, we always try to keep in mind the diversity of the students and their needs.

APPENDIXES

Appendix I: Contents





Appendix II: Complementary Activities

Throughout the course, the English department has planned a series of activities, some of them in collaboration with other didactic departments. The department will try to carry out these activities during the English lessons, but also during the schedule of some other subjects. These complementary activities will be carried out throughout the school year.

Taking into account the appeal of the students for computers and technology in general and, taking advantage of this great motivation, we want to use computers as a tool for revision or extension of the contents seen during a course. To this end, an English blog will be carried out by the students. Each month, students will propose a topic to write about in the blog. Students will write in the blog text about that given subject. The first month, it should be written individually, the following month it will be carried out in groups, and so on. Besides writing a text, they will also have to upload videos to the blog videos in English. These videos can be trailers or video clips taken from the Internet or videos made by themselves, in which they are singing, acting, telling stories etc in English. At the end of the month students will vote, anonymously, for their favorite text/video.

The account of those votes will be reflected in the blog, through a ranking of the best texts and videos. The winners will be awarded with the opportunity of decorating the classroom as they please throughout the following month. In short this is a blog created by and for students. Apart from all this, the department is to promote the use of interactive whiteboards and it will work with students the use of educational websites. The key competences worked here are: Data processing and digital competence personal initiative and autonomy, learning to learn.

Taking into account the importance of writing and reading, another of the main complementary activities is a competition of short stories in English. In this activity we will collaborate with the department of Spanish language and literature. Each term, the Spanish language teacher will explain during his/her teaching hours, the characteristics and conventions of a particular type of novel (eg black novel, biographies etc). The English teacher will be informed by the Spanish teacher about the contents they have seen in class. With this information, the English teacher will asked his/her students to write a short story of the type seen in the Spanish class. All students will hand in a copy of their short stories to the teacher, who will evaluate them. The English teacher will grant some classes to solve expression doubts about the stories, but the stories will be written by the students out of school hours. The English teacher will correct these short stories and give them back to the students. The mark in this given story will be taken into account for the final mark. The key competences worked here are: personal initiative and autonomy.

To familiarize students with the Anglo-Saxon culture, an activity will take place about Halloween. In this activity, students should be grouped into groups of 4 or 5 people. Each group will be assigned an activity to develop. These activities will be developed during the schedule of all subjects. These activities will be carried out in English, and directed to elementary school children from the centre.

These activities will consist on the elaboration of different workshops about related to Halloween (a cooking workshop with typical food from Halloween, a make-up workshop about Halloween disguises, curious mathematical games etc.). Students will collaborate with other departments to prepare costumes and activities, and they can also use other sources, especially ICT. The aim of this activity is to able students to explain in English a set of instructions and information, and ensure that such instructions are understood by a particular audience. The key competences worked here are: learning to learn, data processing and digital competence, knowledge and interaction with the physical world, interpersonal and civic competence.

We have also planned to carry out conduct two sessions of English theater in the school hall. The department will hire a company of actors specialized in the performance of English plays for students of English as a foreign language. The main aim is for students to understand English dialogues between natives in such a way that they are able to follow the play's plot. The key competences worked here are: knowledge and Interaction with the physical world, cultural and artistic competence.

In addition to these activities, we will collaborate with other departments in the development of the following ones:

- Activities about important international topics which we consider of special interest to be worked with students in different departments (for example, the week against intolerance).
- The possibility of cooperation in the elaboration of other activities that may be proposed by other departments, whenever we consider that they may directly or indirectly benefit our students.

These activities may vary if required by circumstances.

Appendix IV: Teacher's Diary

Day of the week	Guidelines:	Promotion and Enrichment of different learning styles	Use of different methodology	Promotion of a critical and reflexive attitude	Good command of the contents	Good classroom atmosphere	More developed characteristics	Less developed characteristics	Identified problems

We value the first five items:

High degree of achievement	A
Medium degree of achievement	B
Low degree of achievement	C

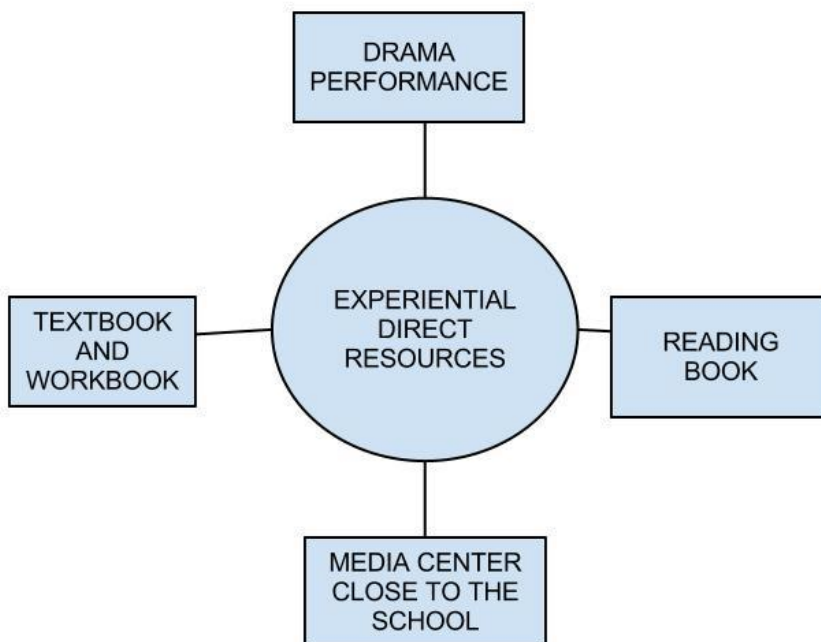
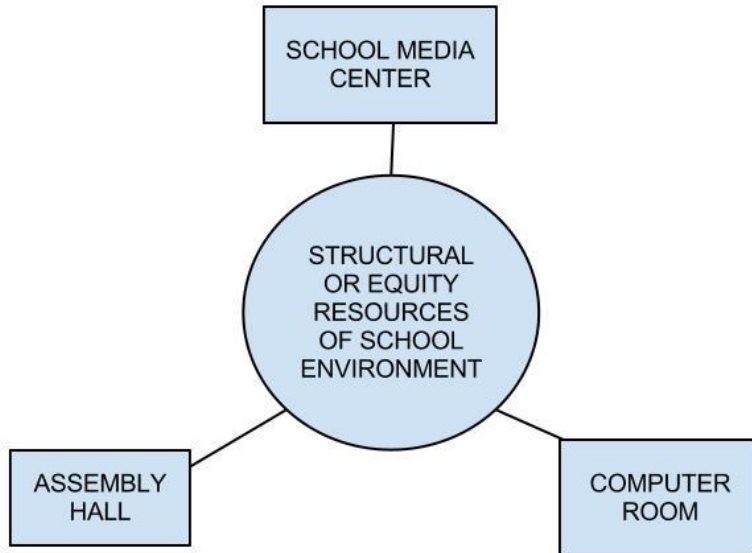
The teacher should comment freely the last three items.

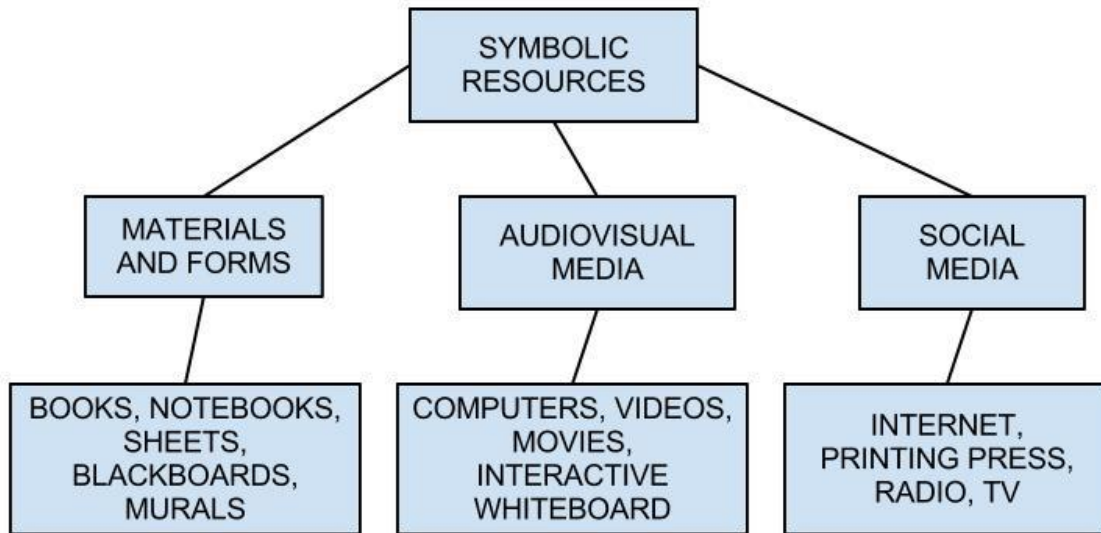
Appendix V: Teaching practice observation sheets

Use of the ICTs and its implementation as a tool for the promotion of reading.

1. Have the students understood the work method as well as its utility and purpose?
2. Students' general evaluation of the used sources (dictionaries, press, activities...)
3. Have all the students used the ICTs correctly? Why?
4. Suitability of the activities and schedule.
5. Has the purpose of the activity been achieved?
6. Problems of the activity

Appendix VI: Resources





2013

Learning Unit of Work

The Adventure of Knowledge



Patricia Sánchez Parra

Prof. María José LuzónCurso

2012/2013Máster Profesorado-Lenguas

Extranjeras20/05/13

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Introduction

Justification

This document refers to the programming of a unit of work in the first year of Compulsory Secondary Education of the subject of English as a foreign language.

The topic of this my unit of work is contests. This is a global topic, something that students are interested in (they like watching TV and they think of contest a good way of learning and having fun at the same time).

I have chosen this topic because students enjoy watching contests on TV and I think that they need to show to some extent an attitude of competence, because this is what motivates them; and from my experience, I know that students of a foreign language like being competitive and demonstrating their knowledge and what they are learning.

This unit of work has been made mainly to be useful and to help both students and teachers to reach some goals that are going to be specific and concrete. Each unit is going to be related and connected to the previous one and the next one, so students will notice the progress they are doing, and they will also be able to find a real purpose on what they do. Contests topic can be useful for them to find a clear purpose: participating in a contest, being competitive, and demonstrating what they know, do their best of them.

In this document, we also emphasize the importance of encouraging students to reach a level of autonomy in their educational process, so the teacher is going to be a guide for students, and he/she is going to provide them with some tools that students can use in their future.

We also highlight in this document the importance of encouraging students' participation so they learn to work both independently and in a team, and again we emphasize the idea of "building" their own knowledge, learning to learn. This is mostly connected with one of the main goals in education: teachers not only teach English, Mathematics or Physics; but they also must teach some values that will influence students' lives and society in general. In a contest, there are rules, and they should show a competitive attitude but also respect to each other and work in a cooperative way.

It should not be forgotten that language is an instrument of representation of reality, a tool that can be used to bring closer different cultures and to explore new things, that is, learn. Moreover, this unit of work is based on “the Adventure of Knowledge”, and we understand that learning means knowing different countries, cultures and ways of thinking.

Contextualization

This Unit of Work has been designed for the school Sagrado Corazón de Jesús. This school is located in Zaragoza, in quite new area in the surrounding of the town. It is important to say that it is a private Catholic school, so we are not going to find too much diversity of cultures.

This unit of Work is going to be put into practice in a class of first year of Compulsory Secondary Education. There are 24 students, and we can affirm that in general there is a high level of motivation in students; they like English and they participate in class, so this is a good and the main reason for implementing many communicative activities to help them to develop their oral skills.

Organization of Learning Unit

This Unit of Work has been organized to be implemented almost at the end of the course (around mid-May and the beginning of June), since it is a revision of the main content which have been seen throughout the whole year and it will be used as a preparation for the final exam. The topics that are included here are just a revision of vocabulary and structures for students. The only “new” content that has been included is the comparatives and superlatives, and it has been perfectly integrated with the rest of the contents. In that way, students can revise their previous knowledge and at the same time they can integrate a new structure to it; and the result will be a good preparation for the final exam in which they will be evaluated with the content studied throughout the whole year.

In the first lesson, students are going to be introduced in the main topic: contests. They are said that they have to prepare themselves to participate in a contest, in which there are five main categories: language, animals, people, countries, and music. That is why students can revise all the topics they have seen throughout the year, and they can prepare the final exam

We are going to practice during the 6 sessions, the 5 different categories of topics that appear in the contest: animals, people, countries, music and languages. This initial lesson plan is going to be focused on presenting the common aspect of these 5 categories: comparatives and superlatives. This unit of work has been designed to revise six different topics (vocabulary) that students have already seen in class previously. So it is a revision of vocabulary and terms and at the same time is going to be mixed with a comparatives and superlatives structure, that has already been studied in previous years but students need to revise and practise it. They are going to see that these structures can be used in many different contexts, so they will find a purpose to learn and use it. The connection between the 6 lessons will be the participation in the contest, and student will understand the importance of working in a collaborative way. This first lesson is just an introduction to prepare students, a kind of warm-up to set the context that will encourage them to participate in every activity they will be asked.

	TITLE	GRAMMAR	VOCABULARY	SKILLS
LESSON 1	We want to win!	Use of Comparative and Superlative Structures, and some other that could appear throughout the Unit of Work, which students had seen before.	Contests/Rules Personal Details Languages/Nationalities	Listening Speaking Writing
LESSON 2	What do we use languages for?		Learning languages: expressions, skills, etc.	Reading Writing Speaking/ Interaction
LESSON 3	Man's best friends		Animals	Listening Speaking/ Interaction Writing
LESSON 4	Extraordinary people		Abilities Personal Details	Speaking Interaction
LESSON 5	The Kingdom of Far Far Away		Countries and characteristics related to them: food, weather, monuments.	Speaking Writing Interaction
LESSON 6	Music is in the air		Music, interests in general, music instruments	Listening Writing Interaction

Learning Unit of Work

Contribution to the key competences

Following this unit of work students should acquire the following key competences:

- **Competence in linguistic communication** is the main competence on which the subject acts. It helps to understand and identify the different English grammatical structures, in this case, comparatives and superlatives; but also helps students to integrate these structures in the different skills and sub-skills they develop.

- **Interpersonal and civic competence** is one of our main goals as teachers along with competence in linguistic communication and learning to learn competence. Although in this school, as we have said before, there is not too much cultural diversity, we cannot forget that we are also preparing students for their future, and it is very important for them to acquire this competence. As the topic of the unit of work is contests, students have to learn to respect other people's opinions (their classmates), and to understand and accept some general rules necessary for the coexistence in a society.

-Knowledge of and interaction with the physical world (science and technology).

This competence is associated with the contents that enable students to understand the society and the world in which it operates. This competence makes students do more than simply accumulate information and allows them interpreting the facts and processes. From our field, we promote this competence by means of learning a different culture and language, which will facilitate students the access to the real world (in order to not being stuck in their own reality, and take an open-minded attitude to know different cultures and contexts). In the contest we are planning, students have to work with some ideas that can be new for them, and they should show a respectful attitude towards different cultures, facts, etc.

- **Cultural and artistic competence.** English subject is also a good opportunity to reinforce this competence, since students can develop their creative skills, while doing compositions, talking in debates, etc.

- **Learning to learn (competence)**. Group works contribute to this competence and to its development because they involve collecting, organizing and analyzing information from different sources. It is very important for them to develop an autonomous attitude in their lives, since this will help them in their future to be independent and be able to work out and overcome some difficulties they could find.

Objectives

The main goal is:

- To help students revise a wide range of topics and vocabulary they have learnt and integrate them with a new structure and practice communicative skills.

Listening

- To listen to and understand general and specific information in oral texts in diverse communicative situations.

Speaking

- To express their ideas and interact in typical communication situations in a comprehensible, appropriate way and with a degree of autonomy.
- To use correctly basic phonetic, lexical, structural and functional components of the foreign language in real communication contexts.

Reading

- To read and understand diverse texts of a level appropriate to students' abilities and interests in order to extract general and specific information, and use reading as a source of pleasure and personal enrichment.

Writing

- To write simple texts with different aims about different themes using appropriate resources of cohesion and coherence.
- To use learning strategies to obtain, select and present information in writing.

Contents

Listening, speaking and conversation

- Understanding of oral texts about issues related to the experience of the students.
- Understanding and spontaneous production of messages in face-to-face communications about issues related to the students experience and interests.
- General understanding of the most relevant data of oral texts issued by multiple sources and appropriate to their ability and experience.

- Involvement in spontaneous communicative situations in the classroom and in conversations on everyday issues and topics of personal interest, with different communication purposes, by using the conventions of conversation.

Reading and writing

- General comprehension and identification of specific information in real texts of different types about topics of their interest appropriate to their age and competence.

- Identification of the message sender intention through verbal and nonverbal elements.
- Composition of different texts responding to specific communicative situations; use of appropriate vocabulary according to the subject and context; cohesion, which is necessary to mark clearly the relationship between ideas and; use of basic strategies in the writing process (planning, drafting and revision).

Language awareness and reflections on learning

- Understanding and use of common expressions, idioms and vocabulary on topics of personal and general interest, everyday topics
- Understanding and use of structures and functions, appropriate to different situations.
- Recognition and production of basic patterns of words and phrases rhythm, intonation and stress in the communication.

Socio-cultural aspects and intercultural awareness

- Assessment of the importance of language in international relations.
- Appropriate use of linguistic formulas associated with/related to specific communicative situations: agreement, disagreement, give their opinion, etc.

Methodology

In this learning unit, these are the main methodological approaches that have been developed:

- Use of authentic materials: but also appropriate for their level of English.
- Integrated skills: in this unit of work, in each lesson plan, all the different skills have been integrated and sequenced as a continuing task, and not as separated elements.
- Teaching of grammar integrated in a real and meaningful context: students understand the importance of learning the use of comparative and superlative forms in different contexts since they are participating in a context in which this grammar point is required; and students want to participate on it and win. Grammar is explained briefly and always put into practice. The explanation is not made explicitly, students make deductions and write the rules, extracting the information from the different exercises they have done before. This is also related to the next methodological approach.
- Autonomous learning: in this unit of work, the teacher is just a guide, the focus is on students and we emphasize on their own process of learning.
- Teaching of vocabulary integrated in a real and meaningful context: students have revised all the vocabulary they have studied throughout the year, but not separately, but as a set of tools that can help them in their real life. Vocabulary cannot be separated from the other skills, but as a reinforcement element to help students in their purpose.
- Group work and collaborative work: students are going to work in a collaborative way and whenever possible, in group work. These two concepts are not the same, but they should be connected. In this unit of work, we have

tried to get students together and teach them how to work together to obtain successful results.

Evaluation Criteria

The type of evaluation followed in this unit of work is continuous evaluation. Teacher takes into account the progress of the students, not only the evaluation of specific tasks. Homework is also considered important for evaluating the progress and the effort of every student.

These are the main evaluation instruments that have been used in this unit of work to evaluate students' progress:

- Teacher's observation for spoken interaction
- Teacher's daily notes (observing specific detail of all the students)
- Rubric for writing activities (see Lesson Plan 2)
- Teachers' feedback
- Peer Feedback

Lesson 1: We want to win!						
Teacher: Patricia Sánchez Parra		Length: 50'	Course: 1 st year of Compulsory Secondary Education			
Lesson type: Integrated skills						
Learning Objectives/Goals:						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To orally practice the comparative forms of adjectives, adverbs and verb phrases. - To understand specific information from a video of a British TV channel 						
Language to be taught and practised (language exponents)		Work on skills				
		Reading	Listening	Speaking	Writing	Interaction
In this lesson, students are revising vocabulary related to:			x	x	x	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - contests - personal details - adjectives related to learning languages - languages 	<p>Specify sub-skills SS will practise:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Inference of the role of the participants and their goals in the discourse. - skimming abilities (listening to obtain the gist of the spoken text)
	<p>How will you integrate the skills work and language work?</p> <p>In this lesson plan, a video will be used as an introduction of the topic and the unit of work (participating in a contest) and SS will understand and see the purpose of what they are going to be asked to do through this unit. Then SS can start practising the use of comparative and superlatives to see what they remember from previous years. Then, T will help them to infer the rules that will be useful for them to compete in the contest.</p>

TASK 1: Listening

Stage Aims	Procedure	Materials/ Resources	Timing	Interaction Patterns
PRE-TASK				
To introduce the topic: contests	T introduces the topic with a conversation task, the whole group; the teacher is a moderator of the conversation. SS are given a worksheet with some questions to discuss.	Worksheet with questions (Appendix 1)	5'	T - S
TASK				
To introduce the unit of work	T explains SS are going to watch a short video, in which they are going to see a British TV contest called "Eggheads". They have to pay attention to some details to answer some questions later. SS can read these questions before watching the video, and ask any question they could have.	Video "Eggheads" http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HzN6oihV3Ls	2'	T
To watch the video	T plays the video once. T gives some minutes to SS to	Video "Eggheads" http://www.yout		S

	copy the information. T plays the video again.	ube.com/watch?v=HzN6oihV3Ls Worksheet with questions (Appendix 1)	7'	
To answer the questions and correct them.	SS complete the questions and they correct them. T asks several students to say their answers.	Worksheet with questions (Appendix 1)	5'	T-S
POST-TASK				
To explain the purpose of this unit of work	T explains SS that they are going to participate in a TV contest similar to that they have watched before. In this contest, there are 5 different categories: animals, people, countries, music and languages; so they need to revise and practice different questions to win. T explains the activities are related to comparative and superlative forms and they have to use them to win the contest. T gives SS a form they have to complete with their names and interests to enter the contest. SS read the rules aloud.	Worksheet Instructions Contest (Appendix 1)	10'	T - S
TASK 2: Writing/Speaking				
PRE-TASK				

To set the context	T says to SS that it is time to start preparing and “training” their brains to participate in the contest. In this first task, SS have to practice the form and structure of comparatives.	Worksheet “How many combinations can you create?” (Appendix 1)	1’	T
To infer the rules	T reads the sentences that are done as examples for the next task. Before explaining the exercise, T asks SS to infer the rules of comparatives and superlatives from the examples they have. SS do it individually and then, the whole class helps the T to write in the blackboard a table with the rules they have written down. (SS are supposed to know how to form the comparative and superlative since they have appeared in previous texts, but they have never studied the rules).	Worksheet “How many combinations can you create?” Worksheet Rules (Appendix 1)	7’	T-S
TASK				
To give instructions	T explains they are working in pairs. T chooses the pairs. T explains they are going to create sentences using comparatives and superlatives with the words they have in the worksheet. They can match words from any column. They are asked to write these sentences in a piece of paper. The person who creates more correct sentences (which make sense) will be the winner. When a student cannot say/write any sentence, the turn passes to the other	Worksheet “How many combinations can you create?” (Appendix 1)	3’	T-S

	student.			
SS' production	SS start working in pairs. The person who is on the right starts. T monitors their productions, walking around the class.	Worksheet "How many combinations can you create?" (Appendix 1)	10'	S-S
POST-TASK				
Feedback	T asks 5 students to read their sentences aloud and gives them feedback. T asks SS to revise the rules exercise to check if they were right or wrong, and SS ask questions/doubts if necessary.	Worksheet "How many combinations can you create?"/ Worksheet Rules (Appendix 1)	5'	T-S
Assessment and Feedback				
Task 1		T's observations		
Task 2		T's observations		
Evaluation of Teaching and Learning Process				
<p>Teacher's Diary:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Have all the students participated in both tasks? There are always some students that participate less than others, but I tried to encourage all of them to participate equally. - Have you monitored SS' productions in an effective way? Students were involved in their tasks and I could take notes on their productions. - Have students been provided with useful feedback? At the end of both tasks, I tried to comment on their productions and students also help on this feedback, commenting some aspects of both activities (what they have liked and have not liked about them). 				
Homework				
<p>- SS have to fill in a card where they write some invented personal details about themselves: age, height, money they have got, how fast they can run, how many hours they study every day, what time they get up, how many brothers/sisters they have got and how much their coats are. (see Worksheet) (we will do this activity in lesson 4)</p>				

Lesson 2: What do we use languages for?

Teacher: Patricia Sánchez Parra	Length: 50'	Course: 1 st year of Compulsory Secondary Education			
Lesson type: Integrated skills					
Learning Objectives/Goals: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To understand the general idea from a news article (according to their level). - To scan to find specific information in a text. - To give their opinions by means of presenting arguments for and against. - To speak fluently in a debate in the topic of learning foreign languages. - To write an opinion article following a determined structure and being able to organize their main ideas. 					
Language to be taught and practised (language exponents)	Work on skills				
- Vocabulary related to how we learn languages, students' experiences, etc. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Different languages: Arabic, Chinese, German, Italian, French, English, etc. • Expressions: have an accent, make mistakes, speak fluently, imitate, correct, translate, look up a word in a dictionary, mean(ing), guess, communicate, mother tongue, second language/foreign language, pronounce, etc. • Skills: reading, listening, speaking, writing, interaction. (Grammar, pronunciation, vocabulary/lexis, etc.) 	Reading	Listening	Speaking	Writing	Interaction
	x		x	x	x
	Specify sub-skills SS will practise: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Identification of the topic, the text-type, the text purpose and distinction of the key information from less important information. - Use of markers in spoken discourse such as introducing and concluding an idea and clarifying a point already made. - Use of markers in written discourse such as introducing and concluding an idea, and developing an idea. Moreover, they will practise the process of writing, planning their ideas, drafting, revising and editing (with teacher's guidance). - Use of talk as an interaction, using some devices such as turn-taking, interrupting and reacting to others. 				
How will you integrate the skills work and language work? <p>In this lesson plan, speaking will be used as an introduction of the topic and SS will participate by means of a debate on the topic: how languages are learnt and what they use them for. SS must predict the situation of learning languages in the UK. Then, they will be asked to read a text and check if they were right in their opinions, by means of scanning the specific information. Finally, students will write a composition giving their opinion on this topic and the situation they know in Spain, telling their own experiences.</p>					
TASK 1: Speaking and Interaction					

Stage Aims	Procedure	Materials/ Resources	Timing	Interaction Patterns
PRE-TASK				
To set the context	SS are explained that in the contest they are participating, it is also necessary to give their opinion and arguments for and against in a debate on different topics. In this case, they are going to talk about the process of learning a second/foreign language (one of the categories in the contest).		2'	T
To give instructions	T divides the class into 2 groups (12 SS in each one). T explains that one group is going to give arguments FOR and the other group AGAINST the following topic: You will learn a foreign language easier if you live in a foreign country. T explains SS that they will have a worksheet with some guidelines to follow the debate. SS will talk in turns to defend their ideas; they can debate the other group's ideas but always in a structured, organized way and supporting their ideas.	Worksheet with guidelines to follow the debate (Appendix 2)	5'	T
To prepare SS for the debate	Because of the lack of experience of SS with this kind of activity, the pre-task consists on helping them to understand the rules of a debate and what they are asked to do. T asks SS to make a brain-storming in each group. T monitors this brain-storming but the focus is not on accuracy but in fluency. One student in each group is	Worksheet with guidelines to follow the debate (Appendix 2)	7'	SS

	in charge of writing these ideas.			
TASK				
To monitor SS' oral production	SS start the debate. T is the mediator, who establishes 2 minutes to each speaker to give their opinion. At the same time, T monitors SS' production, although the focus in this activity is on FLUENCY.	Worksheet with guidelines to follow the debate (Appendix 2)	15'	SS
POST-TASK				
To provide feedback and help students to reach conclusions	T asks SS some questions to reach conclusions about the debate. T wants to make SS aware of the fact that we do not need to find a winner in a debate; just we reach conclusions and see different points of view. The whole class comment some aspects they like about the activity and some others they did not like.		5'	T-S
TASK 2: Reading				
PRE-TASK				
To set the context	T shows SS a worksheet with some questions that will help SS to make predictions about the text. T explains that they are going to read a text about languages that children learn in UK. SS will answer to these questions in pairs. T monitors their productions, walking around the class.	Worksheet with predictions about the text. (Appendix 3)	8'	T-S
	T shows SS the worksheet with the text and the exercises they will complete at home. T	Worksheet with the text		T-S

To give instructions	explains they are going to read the text at home but they have to follow some steps to complete the activities: first, they will have to read the questions and then read the text looking for this specific information. T invites them to ask any question about vocabulary or if they do not understand the task.	and the exercises. (Appendix 3)	5'	
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TASK 3: Writing

PRE-TASK

To set the context	T explains that now they are going to be journalists and they have to write a news article making reference to this topic: Learning foreign languages in Spain		2'	T
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To give instructions	T shows SS how they have to plan their composition and the steps they have to follow to do it. T gives SS the worksheet with the indications and asks SS if they have any question. SS are required to write the composition at home (about 5-8 lines), following the instructions as in the worksheet and in the text they have read in class. T will correct the compositions using a rubric (see next page) and will provide SS with feedback (next session).	Worksheet with instructions to prepare the writing task (Appendix 3)	12'	T
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Assessment and Feedback

Task 1	T's observations
Task 2	SS' corrections next session
Task 3	Rubric to correct the composition / Feedback next session

Evaluation of Teaching and Learning Process

Teacher's Diary

- Have students understood clearly the method, the purpose and the goals of these three activities?

Students were informed about all these aspects and they understood what they were asked to do. If they had some questions, I always tried to help them.

- Has the teacher explained the tasks clearly? Have the instructions been given appropriately and been understood by students?

Yes, that was very important for me and for them. This was one of the most important objectives for myself: to explain clearly the activities.

-Has the teacher taken notes to observe students' attitudes and productions?

Yes, I tried to do it while students were doing the tasks, or immediately after the class.

- Has any kind of feedback been given to students? Has it been useful for students? Why?

Feedback was very useful for them, and they were interested on the mistakes they had, asking why they were wrong and trying to correct themselves.

Homework

- Reading task (except for predictions that are made in class)

- Writing task.

Rubric to correct the Writing Task

	4	3	2	1
Structure	Students have organized the information and their ideas following the given pattern. [2p.]	Students have followed a structure but there are some ideas unconnected to the rest [1,25p.]	Students have divided the article into the three main parts but the ideas have not been included appropriately in the corresponding sections. [0,75p.]	Students have not followed the given pattern and structure, there are unconnected ideas and the three main parts are not clearly distinguished [0p.]
Content	Students have followed the indications on the topic of the writing: learning foreign languages in Spain, following the guidelines in the worksheet (questions they should answer) [4p.]	Students have followed almost all the indications they have been given, except for some ideas they have added that are not related to this topic. [3p.]	Students have written about the proposed topic; however they have included information on a different topic. [2p.]	Students have written about a completely different topic. [0p.]

Use of Grammar	Students have used grammatical structures they know from previous lessons and they have been well integrated and used appropriately throughout the composition. [2p.]	Students have used some grammatical structures they already knew in an appropriate way, but some mistakes have been made. [1,25p.]	Students have incorporated grammatical structures from a very basic level, so the syntax is not adapted to their level. They have also made mistakes and have difficulties with simple structures. [0,75p.]	Grammatical structures have not been assimilated. Students misuse them, even those that are from a basic level. [0p.]
Use of Vocabulary	Students have used many words they have been studying in this lesson and in previous lessons. This vocabulary has been successfully integrated with grammar. [2p.]	Students have used some words seen in class, but they could have used more to demonstrate they know how and when to use them [1.25p.]	Students have integrated a few words from the new vocabulary learnt and sometimes these new words have been misused, or used in inappropriate contexts.[0,75p]	Students have not used any new words and the vocabulary used is poor, very basic for their level. [0p.]

Lesson 3: Man's best friends

Teacher: Patricia Sánchez Parra	Length: 50'	Course: 1 st year of Compulsory Secondary Education				
Lesson type: Integrated skills						
Learning Objectives/Goals:						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To understand and look for general information from a listening task - To understand the mistakes they make and correct them, learning from them 						
Language to be taught and practised (language exponents)		Work on skills				
		Reading	Listening	Speaking	Writing	Interaction
			x		x	X

<p>Vocabulary related to animals and their characteristics</p>	<p>Specify sub-skills SS will practise:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Recognition of key words in oral texts. - Inference of the role of the participants and their goals in an oral text. - Recognition of the communicative functions of utterances, according to different situations, participants and goals in oral texts. - Scanning: listening for specific details in spoken text. - Expressing grammatical relationships at the sentence level. - Turn-taking in using talk as interaction <p>How will you integrate the skills work and language work? This lesson plan will start connected to two previous tasks, from lesson plan 2. This is due to the necessity of providing student with feedback for the reading and the writing tasks, and time to do this is needed, so the best solution was starting this lesson plan completing these two previous tasks. The third task will help students to revise the vocabulary related to animals and their characteristics, in a listening task, based on a contest, in which students will also participate.</p>
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TASK 1: Feedback Reading task

Stage Aims	Procedure	Materials/ Resources	Timing	Interaction Patterns
POST-TASK				
To give peer feedback	T asks students to change their reading worksheets since they are going to correct their classmates' activities. The whole class will correct every activity aloud and at the same time they correct their classmates' activities. They should use a green pen. Students can add comments to help their classmates to understand their mistakes.	SS' reading task	12'	S-S

TASK 2: Feedback Writing Task

POST-TASK

To give feedback	T comments to the whole class the most typical mistakes they have made in their compositions and asks SS' to help her in correcting them and try to think why they have made them: if they are due to lack of study, misunderstandings, grammar problems, problems of structure, etc.	SS' compositions	12'	T-S
TASK 3: Listening				
PRE-TASK				
To set the context	T tells SS they are going to watch a video of a TV contest called the true-false show. The participants have to decide if the sentences they listen to are true or false. SS are going to do the same with 6 sentences they are going to be given. SS work in pairs in this exercise.	Worksheet listening & Interaction (Appendix 4)	3'	T-S S-S
To give instructions	T gives SS the worksheet with 6 sentences about animals. T reads them aloud. SS ask if they have any question about vocabulary.	Worksheet listening & Interaction (Appendix 4)	3'	T-S
SS' interaction	SS are going to decide in pairs if they are true or false. T monitors SS' responses and interaction between SS. T chooses 6 people to say aloud what they think about the sentences.	Worksheet listening & Interaction (Appendix 4)	5'	S-S
TASK				

To watch the video	T plays a video in which SS can listen to the contest (the presenter and the participants). SS have to find out the sentences that appear in the contest from the previous exercise, and then, T plays again the video, and SS have to write 3 different sentences (including comparatives/superlatives) that they have listened to in the record.	http://www.eslvideo.com/eslvideoquizwithintermediate.php?id=14528	16'	T-S
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POST-TASK

Feedback and Correction// Explain Homework (see below)	T chooses 8 students to read the 8 sentences that are said in the contest. T explain the task they have to do as homework		6'	T-S
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Assessment and Feedback

Task 1	T's observation on reading and comprehension and collaborative work looking at SS' peer feedback.
Task 2	Rubric in Lesson 2, T's notes on what every student needs to revise.
Task 3	T's observations on SS' listening skills

Evaluation of Teaching and Learning Process

-Has the teacher followed the rubric to correct compositions, and has he/she given feedback to every student, or at least, students know what they need to revise?
Students were very interested in knowing what their mistakes were and appropriate feedback was give to them.

- How has the teacher organized the class? Was it successful?
Making groupings was a difficult aspect, since students were not used to this type of work, but finally I manage to do it.

- Has the teacher given clear instruction to work on the video?
Students understood the objectives and the activity and they could work on the video.

Homework

- T assigns a role to every student (see Appendix 5): a presenter, 3 judges, 7 participants and 13 “scriptwriters”.
- The scriptwriters have to prepare one sentence each one (the most difficult, the better). They can use **comparatives** and **superlatives**, and the topics can be: **animals, people, countries or music**. The presenter will read the sentences next day, and will decide if the participant’s answers are right or wrong. The presenter will be helped by the judges to make these decisions. Finally, the participants will answer to the questions in turns.

Lesson 4: Extraordinary people

Teacher: Patricia Sánchez Parra	Length: 50'	Course: 1 st year of Compulsory Secondary Education			
Lesson type: Integrated skills					
Learning Objectives/Goals:					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To orally practice the comparative and superlative forms of adjectives, adverbs and verb phrases. - To creatively use comparatives and superlatives. - To use vocabulary related to different topics: animals, people, countries and music in different contest and with different purposes. 					
Language to be taught and practised (language exponents)	Work on skills				
	Reading	Listening	Speaking	Writing	Interaction
Vocabulary related to the categories in the contest: animals, people, countries			x		x

<p>and music.</p> <p>Vocabulary related to “super” abilities.</p> <p>Vocabulary related to personal details.</p>	<p>Specify sub-skills SS will practise:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Skills involved in using talk for transactions (in the contest simulation): asking for clarification, confirming information, clarifying understanding, making comparisons. - Skills involved in using talk as interaction: turn-taking, reacting to others. - Skills involved in using talk as performance: presenting information in an appropriate sequence, maintaining audience engagement.
	<p>How will you integrate the skills work and language work?</p> <p>In this lesson plan, students are going to work mainly in speaking and interaction skills. They will participate in a contest, similar to that one they listened to in the previous lesson. They are going to demonstrate what they have learnt so far, using the vocabulary and the comparative/superlative form, with which they have practised before. Then, students will also work with their own characteristics, and they will see the utility of comparative and superlative in real-life communication.</p>

TASK 1: Interaction/ Speaking

Stage Aims	Procedure	Materials/ Resources	Timing	Interaction Patterns
To organize the activity	T divides the class into 4 groups: the presenter, the 3 judges, the 7 participants and the 13 scriptwriters. The scriptwriters pass their sentences to the presenter. The presenter reads them for him/herself. The participants form a queue. The judges sit down next to the presenter. Then, the contest can start!		15'	T-S S-S
To run the contest	The presenter reads one of the sentences, and the first participant answers. If the answer is correct, he/she can continue answering questions; if the answer is wrong, he/she goes to the end of the queue, and the next participant starts his/her	SS' sentences	15'	S-S

	turn. One of the judges writes on the blackboard the number of right questions each participant gives. The other 2 judges decide if the participants' answers are right or wrong.			
TASK 2: Interaction ("I'm also an extraordinary person!")				
To set the context	T reminds SS about the activity they did in the first lesson as homework task. T tells them that today they are working with it, since not only superheroes are extraordinary people, but they are also, and they are going to confirm it with this activity.		2'	T-S
To give instructions	T explains the rules of the game to SS. First, T divides the class into group of 8 people (3 groups). SS have to compare their personal information cards and choose an item (for example: age). Each component of the group must have only one item and this must be different from their classmates'. Then, every student, in turns, tells about their groups characteristics. For example: In my group, Pepe is the oldest, Sara the youngest and I am 3 months younger than Lucía. Every student has to create at least 3 sentences as in the example.		12'	S-S
SS' production & Feedback	T comments SS' productions and asks SS if they think that all the groups have produced correct sentences or if there were some mistakes		10'	T-S

	using comparatives and superlatives.			
Assessment and Feedback				
Task 1	T's observations on SS' productions SS' sentences using comparatives/superlatives will be evaluated (accuracy): T's notes			
Task 2	T's observations on SS' productions SS' sentences using comparatives/superlatives will be evaluated (accuracy): T's notes			
Evaluation of Teaching and Learning Process				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Have all the students participated equally in both tasks? Yes, students have participated equally, if some students were trying not to participate, I encouraged them to do it, and little by little students felt more comfortable participating on the activities. - Have students understood the objectives in both tasks? Students were interested in participating in the tasks and they followed my instructions. - Has the teacher given clear instructions? Students understood what they were asked to do, and if they had some questions, they felt free to ask me. 				
Homework				
<p>- In groups of 4 people (SS can choose the groups but they have to give a list to the teacher with their names and the groups at the end of this lesson or at the beginning of the next one. The deadline to hand it out is in Lesson 6), complete this comic (Appendix 6), using at least 2 comparative forms and 2 superlative forms.</p>				

Lesson 5: The Kingdom of Far Far Away

Teacher: Patricia Sánchez Parra	Length: 50'	Course: 1 st year of Compulsory Secondary Education
Lesson type: Integrated skills		
Learning Objectives/Goals:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To orally practice the comparative forms of adjectives, adverbs and verb phrases. - To speak fluently about their countries. - To make decisions by presenting advantages and disadvantages 		

Language to be taught and practised (language exponents)	Work on skills				
Vocabulary related to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Countries and vocabulary related to some of their characteristics: weather, typical food, monuments, etc. 	Reading	Listening	Speaking	Writing	Interaction
			X	X	X
	Specify sub-skills SS will practise: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Writing process: planning, drafting, revising, editing - Use of markers in written discourse: introducing, developing, concluding ideas. - Use of markers in spoken discourse. - Expressing relationships between parts of a spoken utterance through cohesive devices. 				
How will you integrate the skills work and language work? In this lesson, students are going to develop their writing skills and also their speaking and interaction abilities, expressing some ideas about their own country/city. First of all, they are going to interview their classmates, so this activity will be an introduction on this issue. Then, students will work their writing abilities, specially the form of give their opinion and present advantages and disadvantages on an issue.					

TASK 1: Speaking/Interaction

Stage Aims	Procedure	Materials/ Resources	Timing	Interaction Patterns
To set the context	T explains that another category in the contest is “countries”, so SS have to be familiarised with this topic. They should be able to answer some questions related to countries and also be able to compare two countries and their main characteristics.		3'	T-S
To give instructions	T tells SS that firstly they are talking about their own country (in most cases it would be Spain), but they can also talk about some other countries they have visited or in which they have been living for a period of time. T gives SS the worksheet with the questions they are going to use to make	Worksheet Speaking (questions for the interview) (Appendix 7)	5'	T-S

	an interview to their classmates. SS works in pairs (T chooses the pairs). Student 1 interviews first to student 2, and then the other way round. They are asked to write their partners' answers. At the end of the activity, T will collect their interviews to correct and give them back next day.			
SS' productions-Interviews	SS start the interview. T goes around the class, monitoring SS' oral productions.	Worksheet Speaking (questions for the interview) (Appendix 7)	10'	S-S
Feedback	T collects SS' worksheets to correct them for next class and to give them an appropriate feedback on the activity.	Worksheet Speaking (questions for the interview) (Appendix 7)	2'	T

TASK 2: Writing & Speaking

PRE-TASK

To set the context	We continue practising countries topic, using comparatives and superlatives. SS are deciding which country is better to spend some time living with a family, to know a new culture and a new language. The options are New Zealand or Finland. They have to think of some advantages and disadvantages according to a table with information they have found of both countries. Finally, they will make their decision.		5'	T-S
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To give instructions	T explains that SS have to think of disadvantages and advantages of both countries and decide which one is the best to stay for a period of time. SS have to complete a table, and they can use the box with some information of both countries.	Worksheet writing and speaking (Appendix 7)	5'	T-S
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TASK

To write advantages and disadvantages for both countries.	SS start thinking and writing. T monitors and clarifies if some questions arise.	Worksheet writing and speaking (Appendix 7)	10'	S
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To orally explain which country they have decided to go and why.	T chooses 4 SS to explain which country they have decided to go and why (give reasons with the advantages they have found of this country, and comparing them with the disadvantages of the other country).	Worksheet writing and speaking (Appendix 7)	10'	T-S S-T
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Assessment and Feedback

Task 1	T's observations and rubric to correct the sentences
Task 2	T's observations

Evaluation of Teaching and Learning Process

Teacher's Diary:

- Has the teacher monitored SS' participation in the group conversation?
I tried to take notes on students' participation and I encouraged shy people to participate and comment their ideas.
- Have students received appropriate feedback?
Yes, I tried to do it, but not always is possible due to lack of time.
- Have students participated in the activities?
They showed a collaborative attitude in these tasks.
- Has the teacher chosen the pairs for the interviews correctly?
I tried to choose similar pairs. For this activity, it was better to choose students with a similar level of English. The focus was on fluency, so I could not choose a person who speaks a lot with another one who is shy and tries to pass unnoticed.

Homework

Lesson 6: Music is in the air

Teacher: Patricia Sánchez Parra	Length: 50'	Course: 1 st year of Compulsory Secondary Education
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Lesson type: Integrated skills

Learning Objectives/Goals:

- To aurally practice the comparative forms of adjectives, adverbs and verb phrases.
- To listen to a song in English, understanding the general meaning and looking for specific information.
- To participate in a role-play and use some strategies which are involved in talk for transactional purposes.
- To write a formal email, where students are required to explain their abilities and convince other people about their exceptional skills.

Language to be taught and practised (language exponents)	Work on skills				
	Reading	Listening	Speaking	Writing	Interaction
		X		X	X
Vocabulary related to music, interests in general, music instruments.	Specify sub-skills SS will practise: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Skills involved in using talk for transactions: explaining a need, describing something, asking questions, asking for clarification, confirming information, making suggestions, agreeing and disagreeing. - Skills for the specific type of text they are writing (email to participate in a programme): purpose, content, organisation, style, etc. - Scanning: listening for specific information. 				

	<p>How will you integrate the skills work and language work?</p> <p>In this unit of work, students are going to revise the category “music” for the contest. Some activities are given from previous units of work (comic activity should be handed out) (Interviews should be given to students with Teacher’s feedback and comments on them). The first task is a listening activity, a song, and students will be asked to listen to it for specific information, to fill in the gaps, but also to understand the general meaning of the song. Before this task, there will be a group conversation to introduce students on this topic.</p> <p>Then, students will watch a video, presenting a music TV programme, and they will have to write an email to participate on it.</p> <p>After this task, students will participate in a role-play, and the main objective is practising some formula for transactional purposes. At the same time, students will practise music instruments vocabulary.</p>
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TASK 1: Listening				
Stage Aims	Procedure	Materials/ Resources	Timing	Interaction Patterns
PRE-TASK				
To introduce SS in the topic: music	T asks SS some questions about their preferences on music. (whole group conversation)	Song Worksheet (Appendix 8)	6'	T-S
To give instructions	SS are going to listen to a song (probably well-known for them) and they have to complete the gaps while listening to the song.	Song Worksheet (Appendix 8)	2'	T-S
TASK				
To listen to the song and aurally discriminate the words that are missing	T plays the song and SS try to fill in the gaps and pay attention to the general meaning of the song	Song Worksheet (Appendix 8)	5'	S

POST-TASK				
Feedback	T asks SS the words they have understood, and the whole group talk about the meaning of the song.	Song Worksheet (Appendix 8)	5'	T-S S-S
TASK 2: Listening & Writing				
PRE-TASK				
To watch and introductory video of a music contest	T plays this video (authentic material from a real TV programme) just to introduce students in musical TV programmes (although they probably know some).	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JAlsW2vKEo	1'	T-S
TASK				
SS' written production	SS are required to write an email to participate in the program. They should not forget talking about: -their abilities as a singers/music players -Why should you be chosen instead of other participants? T monitors SS' productions and clarifies if they have doubts.		10'	S
POST-TASK				
SS' speaking production & T's feedback	T asks 5 different SS to read their emails in front of the class. T gives feedback at the end of each speech. The rest of SS have to participate by deciding which student (from these 5) should participate in the program according to their		15' (no real time for this)	T-S S-S

	compositions.			
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TASK 3: Interaction

PRE-TASK

To introduce SS' to role-play activities	T asks some questions to SS to introduce them in this kind of activity. (whole group conversation)	Pre-task Questions (Appendix 8)	5'	T-S S-S
To give instructions and organize the groupings	T explains SS they are going to do a role-play with a cards they are going to be given. They have to follow the instructions in those cards. T divides the class into pairs	Role-Play cards and picture (Appendix 8)	2'	T-S

TASK

SS' production & T's feedback	SS start doing the role play and T walks around observing their productions and making notes. This activity is focused on FLUENCY.	Role-Play cards and picture (Appendix 8)	10'	S-S
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Assessment and Feedback

Task 1	T's observations on SS' abilities in listening comprehension
Task 2	T's observations and feedback to 5 SS (making notes)
Task 3	T's observations and notes on SS' productions in the role-play task

Evaluation of Teaching and Learning Process

- Was there enough time to complete all these activities and provide SS with appropriate feedback?
No, there was not. The activities could be accomplished but too much time is needed to provide

SS with useful feedback for them.

- Has the teacher explained clearly the objectives of these three tasks and has she given clear instructions to be carried out?
- Yes, students were satisfied with the explanations of the activities.

Homework

Conclusions

I could reach some conclusion from this unit of work, although I could not put it into practice, just a few activities. However, I can affirm that I have learnt many things by designing it.

One of the most important ones is that it is essential to create a wide range of activities and integrate the different skills and sub-skills, because it does not make sense to learn things separately, because it does not happen like this in real-life.

It was also very important for me to find a purpose on this unit of work, and I think that it would be also important for my students to find this goal on what they are doing. I wanted them to feel they are not wasting their time learning a foreign language. The purpose of this unit of work was quite simple (contests), but it was just an excuse to motivate them and to help them to find a necessity of real communication.

When designing it, I could also realize that it is difficult to design your own activities, but it helps you, as a teacher, to feel comfortable and self-confident with what you are doing, with your job.

There was a clear contrast when I was teaching between the activities I had designed by myself and the activities I had to take from the book (fill in the gaps, drill exercises, etc.).

The first and main difference was students' attitude towards them and my own attitude. When we were doing activities from the course book, I could see students' routine attitude. They were really bored of this kind of activities. My activities were different, and I think they really enjoyed and they could also learn new things. My attitude was also completely different. I was not self-confident

when using book's activities. However, with my own activities, I really understood the objectives I wanted for my students.

There were also some "disadvantages" with my activities. These students were not used to work in groups, so it was difficult to manage classroom groupings. But I think this is also an issue related to habit and practice.

Time was also an important factor when implementing activities. I was aware of the lack of time to do all these activities, but it was surprising that some activities did not have enough time to be carried out because sometimes students require more explanations, instructions, they have doubts, etc.

The activities I could implement were in general quite successful, since my objectives were reached and students participate in the activities, having fun and learning new things.

Interaction and conversation activities were not difficult, since these students were used to do them frequently with their teacher. This was surprising for me, because I thought it would be a difficult aspect because of the students' age.

In general, I am satisfied with the results. I am satisfied with the variety of activities I have proposed, although I would change the distribution of time, since, as I have said before, there are always some changes in some activities due to students' questions or other things. I think it is important to take into account these factors.

In conclusion, I think that it was a useful experience to design my own unit and see how a real class works, and how my activities can work, and the feedback my students give me every day on what they are doing. A teacher should be always pay attention to the feedback he/she receives from his/her students, and this should be useful to improve and change things that do not work.

When designing this unit of work at the beginning, everything was abstract; when I started teaching in a real class, things were more concrete little by little, and you realize the importance of setting objectives, methodology, contents, etc. to form a unit of work that can be really useful for your students and that can be seen as a whole, not as separated and unconnected elements.

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Appendixes

APPENDIX 1

PRE-TASK: Questions to discuss (before watching the video)

- Do you know any similar contest in Spain? If so, which one?
- Do you like contests? Why?
- Would you like to participate in a contest?
- What are your favourite categories in a contest? Is there any category that is easier for because you know more things about it?
- The name of this contest is "Eggheads"? Do you know the meaning of this word? Is there a similar adjective in your mother tongue? Do you think they mean the same?

MAIN TASK

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HzN6oihV3Ls>

- How many participants are there in this contest? Do they participate in groups or individually?
- What do they do after the presenter reads the question?
- Who wins?

Instructions Contest



- Write also what you like doing in your free time.

Rules

1. There are 5 categories of questions: animals, people, countries, languages and music.
2. Show respect to your mates and a collaborative attitude.
3. The most comparatives and superlatives you use, the better.
4. Have fun!!!

How many combinations can you create using comparatives and superlatives?

Examples:

- I think that English is easier than German
- I think that German is more interesting than French
- I think that Italian is better than Spanish
- Spanish and French languages have more words than English language.
- Reading newspapers is less interesting than reading books.
- Studying vocabulary is as useful as studying grammar
- Speaking is the easiest skill in English.

What's the rule?

COMPARATIVE

To show superiority.....

- Short Adjectives (one syllable) // e.g. LONG > LONG__ THAN
- Adjectives ending in -y // e.g. EASY > EAS__ THAN
- Longer Adjectives (2 or more syllables) // e.g. IMPORTANT > _____ IMPORTANT THAN
- Irregular Adjectives // e.g. BAD > _____ THAN

To show inferiority.....

____ IMPORTANT/EASY/LONG/... THAN

To show equality.....

__ IMPORTANT/LONG/EASY/BAD/... __

SUPERLATIVE

____ LONG__ **IN** THE WORLD/CLASS

____ ____ IMPORTANT/INTERESTING **IN** THE WORLD/CLASS

English
French
German
Spanish
Italian

Difficult
Easy
Similar
Words

Pronunciation
Writing
Speaking
Vocabulary
grammar
Good
Difficult
Bad
Important
Boring
Fluently

Books
Films
Magazines
Newspapers
Interesting
Entertaining
Useful
Long

Your combinations:

-
-
-
-
-
-
-
-
-
-

-
-

Homework

AGE	HEIGHT	MONEY	I CAN RUN KM/H
I STUDY FOR HOURS	I GET UP AT	I'VE GOT BROTHERS/SISTERS	MY COAT COSTS EUROS

APPENDIX 2- WORKSHEET DEBATE:

You will learn a foreign language easier if you live in a foreign country.

FOR

- Think of the advantages you can take of studying in a foreign country: when you use the foreign language, what you use it for, how native people help you, the time you spend learning that language, etc.)
- Tell your classmates your own experience: if you have been in a foreign country on holidays, studying for a long time, staying for a short period of time (studying in an academy, doing a course, with your family, alone, with some friends, with your school), the good things you could do in those situations.

Remember!!!

- Use markers to introduce and conclude your ideas: first of all, then, moreover, however, in my opinion, from my point of view, I think that, I believe that, I mean, to conclude (this idea...), etc.
- Use markers to interrupt your classmates, to react to their ideas, to take your turn to speak: I see your point but..., I agree with you, however I think..., I do not agree with you because...

AGAINST

- Think of the disadvantages you can find when learning a foreign language far from your country: how native people/teachers help/do not help you, the difficulties you find when you do not understand what people is saying to you, your feelings of missing your family and friends,
- Tell your classmates your own experience: if you have been in a foreign country on holidays, studying for a long time, staying for a short period of time (studying in an academy, doing a course, with your family, alone, with some friends, with your school), all the bad things you found during this period and the problem you had.

Remember!!!

- Use markers to introduce and conclude your ideas: first of all, then, moreover, however, in my opinion, from my point of view, I think that, I believe that, I mean, to conclude (this idea...), etc.
- Use markers to interrupt your classmates, to react to their ideas, to take your turn to speak: I see your point but..., I agree with you, however I think..., I do not agree with you because...

APPENDIX 3

READING

Making predictions

- *Do you think British people are good at learning languages? Why/Why not?*
- *Which one do you think is British children's favourite language?*
- *Do you think that British students prefer studying Spanish or Chinese? Why? What about Spain? Do we prefer studying English or Chinese? Why?*

How many languages can you speak? British people are generally not very good language learners. In a recent survey, 62% of the population only speak English!

If you're reading this, then you're probably studying English. Maybe you speak a couple of other languages too. What are the British like when it comes to learning languages?

Statistics

Brits are famous for not speaking foreign languages. According to a survey published by the European Commission, this bad reputation is totally justified. The results of the survey state that the British are officially the worst language learners in Europe! Let's look at some statistics:

- 62% of people surveyed can't speak any other language apart from English.
- 38% of Britons speak at least one foreign language, 18% speak two and only 6% of the population speak three or more.
- The European Union average showed that 56% speak at least one foreign language, 28% speak at least two and 11% speak three or more. The survey confirmed that English was the most widely-spoken foreign language. 51% of EU citizens can have a conversation in English.

School

Learning a foreign language is not a popular option at school in Britain. In UK schools it is common for children to start studying a foreign language at the age of 11 and many students give up languages completely at 14. So why don't young people continue with languages at school? Research suggests that students think that it is more difficult to get good grades in languages than in other subjects such as science or history. The British government is now looking at different ways to improve language learning at school. One idea is to start much younger; there are plans to introduce foreign languages from the age of 5.

Which languages?

Another plan is to give school children more choice. The languages traditionally studied in British schools have been French, Spanish and German. Now the government is encouraging teachers to expand the range of languages taught to include Arabic, Mandarin and Urdu.

Mandarin Chinese is predicted to become the second most popular foreign language learned in UK schools. It is already studied by more children than German or Russian. Only French and Spanish are more popular. Gareth from Wales says 'I am learning Chinese, and find it fun.' Another student, Thomas from London, says 'Just telling people that I learn Mandarin impresses people. Even having a very basic level gives you an advantage.' Brighton College has become the first independent school to make Mandarin a compulsory foreign language. Its headmaster Richard Cairns said, 'One of my key tasks is to make sure pupils are equipped for the realities of the 21st century. One of those realities is that China has the fastest-growing economy in the world.'

It may be an ambitious task to change the Brits' attitude to learning languages but the government is determined to try!

Questions about the text

1.

- What are the most popular foreign languages in the UK schools?
- When do children start learning a foreign language in UK?
- What are the most traditional languages studied in British schools?

2. Underline in the text all the comparative forms you can find

3. New Vocabulary: Match the words from the text with their definitions.

- i. survey
- ii. statistics
- iii. give up
- iv. grades
- v. improve
- vi. determined to
- vii. fast-growing economy

- a) stop doing something
- b) become better
- c) collecting and analysing numerical data to obtain percentages.
- d) country whose economy is expanding very fast
- e) make a firm decision and being sure not to change it
- f) ask people questions to investigate their opinions about an issue and then analyze the results.
- g) marks

WRITING

Let's write an opinion article!: Learning foreign languages in Spain

Pre-Task

Structure to follow:

1. Introduction:

- What are you talking about? (one sentence) (related to the topic and the title)

2. Develop your idea(s)

- Languages that are usually taught in Spanish schools
- When do Spanish children start learning a foreign language? Which one is the most common?
- When do Spanish people stop studying a foreign language? Do they study when they are adults? If so, when and how?

3. Give your opinion/Tell your experience

- Do you think that Spanish people are good learners? Why?
- How long have you been studying a foreign language? Which one? Do you like it? Do you want to continue studying it after school?

4. Write a sentence to conclude the article

TASK

* Now you are going to be the journalist and you have to write an article talking about how Spanish speakers learn foreign languages in Spain. Follow the structure of the text we have seen in class, and follow these steps:

[5-8 lines]

1. Plan what you want to say.
2. Compose and draft: start writing a draft organizing the information and your ideas following the structure we have seen.

3. Revise and edit: revise the article to see if you have some mistakes and correct them. Read it again to see if it makes sense.

Foreign languages in Spain

APPENDIX 4

Listening & Interaction

1. Decide with your partner if these sentences are true or false:

- Elephants are lighter than rhinos.
- Mosquitoes are more dangerous than sharks.
- Ducks are bigger than parrots.
- Tigers are better swimmers than cats
- Dolphins are heavier than whales.
- Koalas are taller than ostrichs.

2. Watch the video and make a cross next to the sentences that appear in the contest from the sentences above.

3. Write 3 more sentences (with comparative forms) you have listened to in the contest.

APPENDIX 5

Contest Presenter	Scriptwriter Animals	Scriptwriter Animals	Scriptwriter Animals	Scriptwriter People	Scriptwriter People
Scriptwriter People	Scriptwriter Countries	Scriptwriter Countries	Scriptwriter Countries	Scriptwriter Countries	Scriptwriter Music
Scriptwriter Music	Scriptwriter Music	Participant	Participant	Participant	Participant
Participant	Participant	Participant	Judge	Judge	Judge

APPENDIX 6



APPENDIX 7

Speaking: Interview your classmates: How well do you know your country?

[ADD 2 more questions in each category]

- *Write your classmates' answers using full answers.*

Climate

STUDENT 1

1. What's/wet/place?

2. What's/hot/place?

STUDENT 2

3. What's/cold/place?

4. What's/windy/place?

Geography

STUDENT 1

1. What's/high/mountain?

2. What's/long/river?

STUDENT 2

3. What's/big/city?

4. What's/small/city?

Tourism

STUDENT 1

1. What's/beautiful/city?

2. What's/popular/place for tourists? Why?

3. What's/good/time of year to visit? Why?

4. What's/good/way to travel round the country?

STUDENT 2

5. What's dangerous/city?

6. Where's/beautiful/monument?

7. Where can you eat/good/food?

8. Where can you buy/nice/clothes?

Writing & Speaking

You are going to travel to a foreign country, and you are going to stay with a host family. You are deciding now what country you are going. The possible options are Finland or New Zealand. You have to create a list of advantages and disadvantages of each country to decide where you should go. Remember using comparatives and superlatives.

ADVANTAGES		DISADVANTAGES	
Finland	New Zealand	Finland	New Zealand

FINLAND	NEW ZEALAND
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Northern Europe - 5,262,930 inhabitants - Life Expectancy 79.410 years - \$36,700 US (gdp per capita) - 7.800% Unemployment Rate - Languages: Finnish 91.5% (official), Swedish 5.5% (official), other 3% (small Sami- and Russian-speaking minorities) - Area: 338,145 km sq - Maximum temperature: 8.5 degrees/ Minimum temperature: 1.4 degrees. - Rainy days: 206 per year 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Southeast of Australia - 4,327,944 inhabitants - Life Expectancy 80.710 years - \$28,000 US (gdp per capita) - 6.500% Unemployment Rate - Languages: English (official), Maori (official), Sign Language (official) - Area: 267,710 km sq - Maximum temperature: 18.6 degrees/ Minimum temperature: 12.2 degrees - Rainy days: 183

- Which country have you chosen finally? Why? Say to your classmates the advantages you have found of this country and compare them with the disadvantages you have found of the other country.

Example: Finally, I think I am going to travel to _____ because this country is bigger than _____, so I can visit more places and towns. In this country, the weather is better because it rains ___ days in a year and the minimum temperature is ____..... (Give more reasons and details)

APPENDIX 8

Questions about MUSIC

- What kind of music do you listen to?
- When do you usually listen to music?
- Do you know any song in English? Can you understand what it says?
- Do you know any American singer? Do you know Kelly Clarkson?

Complete the gaps listening to the song

SONG: KELLY CLARKSON- STRONGER

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Xn676-fLq7I>

You know the bed feels _____

Sleeping here alone

You know I dream in color

And do the things I want

You think you've got _____ of me

Think you've had enough the last laugh

Bet you think that everything good is gone

Think you left me broken down

Think that I'd come running back

Baby, you don't know me, 'cause you're dead wrong

Chorus: What doesn't kill you makes you _____

Stand a little _____

Doesn't mean I'm lonely when I'm alone

What doesn't kill you makes you _____

Footsteps even _____

Doesn't mean I'm over 'cause you're gone

Bridge: What doesn't kill you makes you _____, _____

Just me, myself and I

What doesn't kill you makes you _____

Stand a little _____

Doesn't mean I'm lonely when I'm alone

You heard that I was starting over with someone new

They told you I was moving on, over you

You didn't think that I'd come back I'd come back swinging

You tried to break me, but you see

Chorus

Bridge

Thanks to you I got a new thing started

Thanks to you I'm not the broken-hearted

Thanks to you I'm finally thinking 'bout me

You know in the end the day you left is just my beginning

In the end

[Repeat **chorus**][Repeat **bridge** x2]

I'm not alone

Pre-task Questions

- Have you ever been in a shop where you didn't really know what to buy?
- Have you ever been in a shop to buy a specific object but you didn't remember the name of that object, or you didn't know the name of the object?
- Look at the picture below; do you know the name of all these musical instruments? Don't worry...the shop assistant can help you... or maybe not.

ROLEPLAY

STUDENT 1

You are in a musical instruments shop. You want to buy an instrument for your father (it's his birthday) and...he loves music!! But.... You don't remember the name of his favourite instrument...

You may need some help from the shop assistant.... You have the picture.... but you can't show it to the shop assistant. Describe the picture and compare it with other instrument that you know better.

STUDENT 2

You work in a musical instruments shop. You are new on this business, and you don't really know too much about instruments...

A customer comes, and he/she doesn't know what instrument he/she wants! It's a present for his/her father... He/She is going to describe it and compare it with some other instruments.

Help him/her to buy the correct instrument.

You have a list of the instruments (and their names) you have in the shop.

Good luck!



Tuba, lyre, maracas, guitar, small drum, saxophone, triangle, harp, trumpet, violin, drum set, trombone, bandurria, electric guitar, balalaica