



Universidad
Zaragoza

Trabajo Fin de Grado

TOWARDS EFFECTIVE ENGLISH TEACHING

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Año 2013/2014

ABSTRACT

In view of the increasing need for learning English in a more and more demanding society, the present study aims to evaluate the effectiveness of the teaching of English in Spanish schools. The investigation has been carried out in four schools which follow two different teaching methodologies. This has enabled us to analyze how the use of a certain teaching methodology or strategy influences the communicative competence in English and the ease with which the language is spoken. The analysis of the data gathered has led us to the proposal of improvements to make the teaching of English more effective.

Keywords: Primary Education; Communicative Competence; English; Improvements; Communicative Approach; Effective Teaching.

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1. INTRODUCTION

English has become the most taught foreign language in European schools. This is the case of Spain, where it has gained strength in the last years with the implementation of Bilingualism in many schools of the country. However, it is difficult to deliver a good Modern Foreign Language (MFL) lesson. In order to make them effective, foreign language teaching needs well qualified teachers. Besides relevant qualifications, they also need sufficient and appropriate teaching resources, as well as clear teaching guidelines (Key data on Teaching Languages at School in Europe, 2012).

In addition to teachers, much research has pointed out that motivation is a key factor in successful learning due to the fact that, as Brehm and Self (1989) suggest, effort is a consequence of motivation. Pupils' perception of the usefulness of the languages they learn can clearly contribute to increasing their motivation. That is the reason why teachers have to provide students with opportunities to use the second language in meaningful situations and give them the chance to negotiate meaning and interact (Long, 1985).

It has also been proven that high exposure to the target language facilitates second language acquisition (SLA) (Krashen, 1982). One way to increase pupils' exposure to foreign languages is to make sure that the target language is used during language lessons both by teachers and pupils.

However, creating opportunities to improve students' motivation and increasing the amount of exposure to the target language can be challenging both for teachers and students.

The aim of this research is to observe English as second language lessons carried out in different Spanish schools in order to evaluate them in view of the literature written about SLA theories in order to propose ways in which the teaching of English as a second language is capable of improvement.

This research includes the study of the main Second Language Acquisition (SLA) theories that have appeared throughout history, as theoretical knowledge is essential in order to be able to judge the areas capable of improvement and put the research into practice.

In addition, with the objective of providing the reader with an overview of the evolution of MFL teaching in Spain, the importance that has been given to MFL through history will be described, as well as the changes MFL teaching has undergone with successive educational reforms.

Observation sheets have been specifically designed to conduct this research. Steps followed to design observations will also be covered in this study, as well as the context in which they have been carried out and the results produced as a consequence of the analysis of the data.

Finally, conclusions about EFL teaching in Spain will be provided in addition to specific innovation items to make English teaching more effective.

2. AIMS

As detailed above, this research expects to answer three questions:

Question 1: According to research in SLA, what are the principles that underlie effective EFL teaching?

Question 2: Which of these principles are reflected in everyday teaching of English in Aragon?

Question 3: According to what has been observed in the classrooms and the research carried out, what could it be done in order to make the teaching more effective?

The main aims of this study are the following. Firstly, to observe English as a second language lessons carried out in different Spanish schools which are Bilingual and to evaluate them in view of the literature written about the principles that have to prevail while teaching a foreign language. Observations have been carried out at schools which are different in nature: some of them follow Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) methodology while others develop their curriculums according to the British Council. Furthermore, there is a difference between the amount of time they have been working with these methodologies as some of them have started this year and others have been working with this methodology for over 10 years.

After having carried out observations and having evaluated them, the next aim is to propose ways of innovation in the field that is capable of improvement according to literature related to teaching foreign languages.

3. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

In order to understand current development and principles in second language teaching, it is helpful to retrace the recent history of second language research. Thus, the aim of this section is to explore the theoretical foundations of today's principles of SLA.

In the 1950s and early 1960s, teaching experts and reformers based their research on the dominant learning theory in mainstream psychology, behaviourism (Howatt, 1988). This theory postulates that language learning is like any other kind of learning, so language is acquired through the formation of habits (Skinner, 1957). Behaviourism theory sees the learning of any kind of behaviour as a process based on stimulus and response. Following this theory, as human beings are exposed to a lot of stimuli in their environment, they give a response to these stimuli that will be reinforced if the aim of the stimuli is reached. As a

consequence of repeated reinforcement, some stimulus will always elicit the same response. This fact will make the response become a habit.

This process is seen as a simple one when learning a first language as we just have to learn a set of habits. Nonetheless, when learning a second language, first-language habits interfere with this process. Learning will take place easily if structures in the second language are similar to those in the first due to the fact that these interferences will help learning, while learning will be difficult if structures are realized in a different way (Lado, 1957). In the view of this theory, effective teaching is based on areas of differences between languages. This perception was termed Contrastive Analysis (CA). According to this theory, the comparison between two languages is fundamental to facilitate SLA. For this reason, one of the items that are included in the observation sheet is the use of the target language and the mother tongue. After gathering data related to the use teachers make of the two languages, the reasons why they use them and in which situations each of the languages is used will be analyzed.

However, behaviourist theories were challenged by Chomsky (1959), the main representative of the innatist and mentalist theory. Mentalist theory argues that the acquisition of a language involves mental abilities and processes. In addition, the innatist position defends that language acquisition is possible thanks to an innate capacity which all human possess. As a consequence of these theories, Chomsky states that children are biologically programmed to develop language so they do not need to be trained due to the fact that the environment provides them with the language exposure they need.

In order to explain children's ability to discover the rules of the language for themselves, Chomsky (1965), at first, refers to this innate mechanism as the Language Acquisition Device (LAD). This device provides children with the capacity to formulate hypotheses about what the rules of the languages are. Later, this capacity was defined as a

universal set of principles that allows children to consider what is grammatically correct and was given the name of Universal Grammar.

According to Chomsky, these hypotheses children create may be wrong, but they are able to refine them without correction, making up their own individual grammar, also called internal grammar. For this reason, errors are seen as an inevitable part of the learning process.

For the LAD to allow children to discover the rules of the language, they need to be exposed to natural language. Furthermore, children follow a clear development sequence in their order of acquisition regardless of the environment where they are raised. Although this Chomsky's theory was not applicable to teaching, it influenced theories such as Cognitive theory. In addition, it was supported by Lenneberg (1967), who argued that the LAD work only if it is stimulated during a specific limited time, "the critical period". However, critical period hypothesis does not establish what the duration of this period is. Following this theory, errors are very important to facilitate language acquisition due to the fact that learners acquire language by testing hypothesis they make about rules and structures of the language without any necessity to be corrected. However, according to Brown (1988), feedback has to allow learners to experience the effects of their productions as a guide to make their future efforts more effective. In other words, feedback has to be actually responsive. This importance of feedback is due to the fact that the information provided with it is crucial to the learner's process. This means that feedback must point out the main features of the language and provide information that plays the role of guidance in the discovery of rules and principles of the language (Zamel, 1981).

Hence, the observation sheet must contain criteria to analyze the way in which errors and feedback are managed as well as the reasons why teachers manage them in this way.

Whereas “mental grammar” was used to refer to the system that children use when acquiring an L1, with reference to an L2, this system related to the independent language created by learners was named Interlanguage (Selinker, 1972). The origin of this term is connected with the process that the mind uses to acquire a second language. According to this theory, the learner speaks an interlanguage that can be given at any point between L1 and L2 and which is different to both of them (Figure 1).

Figure 1. The Interlanguage continuum. Selinker (1972)



Selinker suggests that most L2 learners never reach the target competence, creating a phenomenon called fossilization. This phenomenon is the point at which interlanguage stops developing and cannot be changed by further instruction. In view of this theory, there is a point in which learners cannot learn anymore so, following this suggestion, there are some structures and items of the language that learners will not be able to acquire. For this reason, one of the items that has to be taken into account is the use of the language teachers make. In other words, it has to be considered whether teachers' use of language is adapted to learner's level of knowledge or not.

During the 70's, as a consequence of the development in first language acquisition research and the lack of evidence of the predictions made by CA, Corder (1967) focused on the importance of studying learner's error, causing the origin of Error Analysis. This theory

argues that the origin of learners' errors must be internal, so the aim of research was to understand learner-internal errors and the whole character of second language system. According to Corder, making errors is a way of testing hypotheses that learners make about language, so they are important to understand the L2 learning process.

Following research into second language acquisition, Krashen (1982) developed a series of five hypotheses.

The first one, *the acquisition-learning hypotheses* states that adults have two different and independent ways of developing a second language. Thus, while language acquisition is a subconscious process, that is, acquirers are not aware that they are acquiring language; language learning refers to a conscious knowledge. This term has been related to formal knowledge of language or explicit learning. Acquisition-learning theory postulates that both children and adults can access the same natural LAD. This theory has inspired a section in the observation sheet about the use of the language by students. Gathering data about the amount of target language used and the way it is used, will allow us to analyze if teacher methodology has led to acquisition or to learning of the second language.

The following theory developed by Krashen is the *natural order hypothesis*, which states that the acquisition of structures proceeds in a predictable order. This order of acquisition is different for second language and for the first language. In order to know what this order is and if all students follow it and acquire at the same simultaneously, observations have been carried out in several schools and with students of the same grade (first grade). In other words, the purpose of establishing these conditions to carry out observation is to prove if same-aged learners have reached the same competence in the target language, as this theory suggests that learners have the same acquisition order.

The third theory is *the monitor hypothesis*. It posits that acquisition and learning are used in specific ways. Thus, acquisition is responsible for our fluency in a second language, whereas learning makes changes in the form of our utterances. In other words, language acts as a monitor. Furthermore, language performers can use conscious rules where there are three conditions: time, focus on form (Dulay and Burt, 1978) and knowledge of the rule. This research aims to evaluate if these requirements established in the monitor hypotheses are fulfilled in the primary classroom.

The most important theory developed by Krashen is *the input hypotheses*, which is an attempt to explain how we acquire language. The main claim of this hypothesis is that the acquisition of a second language is a consequence of learners' understanding the target language in real communication situations. According to Krashen, the input that learners must receive should contain grammatical structures that are a bit beyond the acquirer's current level. Learners will be able to understand this input using context and their knowledge of the world. According to this theory, learners acquire language as a consequence of exposure to input. For this reason, we are going to pay attention to the amount and quality of input they are exposed to, as well as to the level of this input due to the fact that Krashen claims that it should be comprehensible and just beyond learners' current level.

Krashen's fifth hypothesis, *the affective filter hypothesis*, connects affective factors with SLA process. This hypothesis was based on research that confirms that a variety of affective variables such as motivation, self-confidence and anxiety are related to success in SLA (Dulay and Burt, 1977). These variables can act impeding or facilitating the delivery of input to the language acquisition device. As this theory postulates, the teacher's role is not only to teach children, but also to educate them. For this reason, it is important to create a respectful environment in the class so that learners feel comfortable and are not afraid of risk taking while learning (Brown, 2000). In view of this theory, it has to be taken into account the

way teachers manage the class in order to evaluate what effects the class environment produces on learners.

After having revised Krashen's theories, we are going to turn our attention to those theories that explain the role that interaction plays in language learning. For these theories, comprehensible input is also necessary for SLA. However, they consider interaction as the crucial element of language acquisition process (Long, 1985). Long's Interaction hypothesis is an extension of Krashen's Input hypothesis. This hypothesis states that, when learners engage with interlocutors in negotiation of meanings, the input might be changed. In other words, the more the input is recycled in order to increase its comprehensibility, the more effective impact it will have as input since it will be adapted to the particular developmental needs of the learner. In order to solve communicative problems, speakers make use of tactics such as repetitions, confirmation checks, comprehension checks or clarification requests.

In addition, although Krashen's Input Hypothesis claimed that exposure to input was the most important factor to SLA, Swain (1985) added that only second language production forces learners to undertake grammatical processing completely.

As a consequence of the fact that interaction plays a crucial role in SLA, this project also aims to gather data about the opportunities that students are given to interact. In order to be able to reach this aim, an important part of the observation process is constituted by analyzing how questions are used by the teacher. Throughout the methodology used to carry out this research, theoretical support for the key items of questions we have to pay attention to will be stated.

In addition, different ways in which students are grouped will be also taken into account to evaluate which of these groups facilitates interaction in a more efficient way.

To conclude the overview of the main SLA theories, we have to take into account cognitive theories. These theories aim to bring principles of cognitive psychology to SLA. They postulate, just like behaviorism theories, that language learning is similar to learning any other type of knowledge. Thus, they conceive SLA as the acquisition of a complex cognitive skill and their main purpose is to explain how human brain process new information related to language.

Much research in this field leads to three main theories. The first one, known as “Perceptual Saliency”, argues that human beings are programmed to receive and organize information related to language in a certain way, so some language forms are learnt before others (Slobin, 1985).

Another important theory inside cognitive theories is called “Connectionism”. This theory, suggested by Ellis (1995), claims that human brain works as a computer, establishing complex groups of links between information nodes. The process that the brain follows is explained in that, where a repeated activation occurs, the brain forms strengthened patterns, leading to learning.

The third cognitive theory related to SLA is “Information Processing”. The aim of this theory is to discover mental processes involved when we acquire, store and recover knowledge. It is based on three key aspects. Information Processing establishes two types of memories which it classifies as long-term memory, defined as an unlimited-capacity memory and that stores declarative knowledge, and working memory that is limited. In addition, two types of knowledge related to language use are established. Attending to this criterion, we can distinguish between declarative knowledge that involves internalized rules and requires attention (Schneider and Schiffrin, 1977) and procedural knowledge, defined as the ability to perform a particular skill and which is automatic.

Furthermore, O'Malley and Chamot (1990) explain the three stages that are necessary for declarative knowledge to become procedural. Thus, while cognitive stage requires conscious attention to the structure, associative stage starts to use declarative knowledge without conscious attention. Finally, autonomous stage is the stage at which there is an automatic use. In other words, it is similar to native language proficiency.

With reference to cognitive theories, as they establish that students make links between information they receive and they also focus their attention on how we process information, in order to propose improvements when teaching a foreign language, elements such as assessment of learners' knowledge or cross-curricular links established between areas will be analyzed. Doing that, we will be able to find out what kind of assessment is used by teachers and what the aims of those assessments are.

To conclude this overview of the main SLA theories, the perception that cognitive theories have about the previous theories should be considered. Hence, while they emphasized exposure to input (Krashen, 1982) and communicative interaction (Long, 1985), cognitive theory argues that attention to form is necessary due to the limited capacity for processing of learners. This limited capacity restricts the learner in that if he focuses on meaning, he will have little capacity available to focus on form. With reference to formal instruction, cognitive view defends that recently memorized material can be used in communication and become acquired (Stevick, 1979). Furthermore, controlled knowledge is seen as the preceding stage to reach automatism use of language (McLaughling (1978). For these reasons, formal instruction is conceived as necessary. This topic is strongly linked to this research in which there are many different approaches related to teaching, and it is quite important to know where our students focus their attention on in order to choose the approach which best fits our purposes.

After having presented this brief overview of SLA theories, it is recommendable to turn our attention to the treatment MFL teaching has received in Spain and in Aragon. Throughout history too many legislative changes in the Spanish Education System have affected the teaching of the second language. Until the late nineteenth century French was generally the language taught in schools. It was during the late seventies that French was progressively replaced by English. Over the years, with the LOGSE and the subsequent education laws, the importance of the teaching-learning process of foreign languages has been enhanced. English has become the undisputed reference not only in society, but also in educational contexts. That is why specific didactics were developed in order to meet the growing demand of learning English. When the LOE law took effect, the English learning was promoted to be taught at an early age. What initially started as experiences and volunteer programmes for the majority of the schools has become one of the most important aspects of education.

English Learning programmes, such as Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) or the British Programme (a programme developed by the British Council, together with the Spanish Ministry of Education) were implemented for the first time during the academic year 1996-1997 in Spain. It was with the Organic Law (LOE) 2/2006, of 3rd May, that the L2 learning would become compulsory at the second stage of Infant Education. Pupils had to acquire basic communicative competence at least in one foreign language.

In recent years, a new educational approach in the field of teaching methodology has caused the change of the teaching of English. The establishment of bilingual programmes has been a serious investment of the Aragonese Government since 1999, when it assumed Educational competences.

The 18th of February, 2013, in *Boletín oficial de Aragón* (BOA), it was published the Order of the 14th of February (2013) by the Education, University, Culture and Sport Ministry of the Aragonese Government. This order regulates the Integral Programme of Bilingualism in Foreign Languages in Aragón (*Programa Integral de Bilingüismo en Lenguas Extranjeras en Aragón*- PLIBEA). From this moment onward, a new period in teaching and learning foreign languages started in Aragón. However, the continuity of existing bilingual programmes has been guaranteed and every single school has been given the opportunity to take part in this announcement.

4. METHODOLOGY

In order to be able to analyze English lessons, I have designed two observation sheets which contain the main features of the teaching of a second language according to SLA research. These observation sheets give me the opportunity to gather an extensive amount of data so that results reflected in them are representative of the reality in Spain and the proposal of improvement I will design can be, indeed, carried out at Spanish schools.

The first observation sheet I have designed (Appendix I) has the purpose of evaluating different sorts of methodology used by teachers. The first section of this sheet is related to the structure of the lesson. Presentation- Practice-Production (PPP) model has been the most used methodology when teaching a foreign language traditionally. The first stage is usually focused on an item of language which is presented either explicitly or implicitly in a clear context in order to maximize the opportunities for students to understand and internalize underlying rules and to get across its meaning. Thus, its main purpose is the development of declarative knowledge (Shekan, 1998). Later, in the second stage, under teacher's control, learners focus on accuracy. The main purpose of this stage is to convert declarative into procedural knowledge and to help students to become more comfortable with language and

teachers' control is gradually loosened while learners move to production stage. At this point, learners are given opportunities to produce target language in communicative situations.

The main reason why PPP structure is going to be analyzed is due to the fact that this kind of structure that has been used traditionally is being replaced by a Task- Based Learning approach (TBL) (Willis, 1996). As the aim of this project is to propose improvements that will increase the effectiveness of English teaching, it is completely necessary to evaluate what results in term of language acquisition the PPP structure produces in order to have criteria to judge what structure, PPP or TBL, would be more recommendable to choose to make our teaching more effective.

This research is also going to consider the use of the mother tongue and of the target language teachers make. Much research has led us to the conclusion that one of the key elements in the successful learning of a second or foreign language is the input learners receive in the target language (Krashen 1982). Hence, second language learning has to be based on the exposure of input in authentic communication instead of the teaching of grammar structures (Curriculum of Aragón, 2007).

This claim sparked off a deep debate. It has been widely discussed whether using L1 while teaching L2 reports benefits to children. Most authors suggest that, in order to make positive and rewarding children's first encounter with a foreign language, they need to have a sense of real achievement and success. To reach that aim, teachers need to immerse the class in the new language (Driscoll and Frost, 1999).

Using L1 in foreign language classrooms is discouraged by advocates of the L2-only position (Chaudron, 1988). These advocates contend that students must be exposed to a significant amount of L2 input if they want to develop better proficiency, so using L1 in the classroom deprives students of that valuable input. SLA research has also agreed the value of

using the language in a meaningful way through negotiated interaction with their teachers and classmates (Long, 1985).

Over the last decades many theories have been generated suggesting that students also have to use the language beyond that receiving second language input. Following these ideas, Swain's (1985) 'comprehensible output' hypothesis highlights the importance of using the language actively in the classroom apart from just receiving quality input due to the fact that second language acquisition is best favoured when using language for real communication (Nunan, 1987).

However, total removal of the mother tongue from the language classroom is not the consensus among all researchers. Many admit the mother tongue has a role to play. In other words, in contrast to the only L2 position, many authors defend that, while foreign language teachers should maximize their use of the second language, there is indeed a place for the teacher to use the students' L1 in their pedagogy. To maintain this position, much research has been focused on the advantages of using the mother tongue in second language classrooms.

One of the advantages that have been reported is that permitting students to use their mother tongue allows them to express themselves clearly and effectively (Atkinson, 1987).

Moreover, using the mother tongue has also been regarded as a time-saving device (Moon, 2000).

Several studies have also confirmed that the first language can be used as a cognitive tool that aids in second language learning. These scholars claim that, by using the mother tongue as a frame of reference, second language can be more easily processed, facilitating that input moves to intake (Turnbull, 2001). It has also been pointed out the value of code-

switching as an effective teaching strategy when it is used as a reference point to help construct knowledge in second language (Cook, 2001).

Due to the fact that code-switching is evident in second language contexts, many scholars justify the use of the mother tongue in situations such as eliciting language, assessing comprehension or giving instructions (Atkinson, 1987; Cook, 2001; Turnbull, 2001; Van Lier, 1995).

To conclude, Moon (2000) establishes other situations in which the mother tongue could be used by either students or children. These situations include showing knowledge of the answer of a question by students if they do not know how to say it in the second language or using the mother tongue to assist language learning in case students do not have sufficient level of language.

For all these reasons, these criteria will be analyzed in order to conclude if teachers in Spain make an appropriate use of languages and how this use could be improved and made more effective.

Another strategy that will be taken into account is Total Physical Response (TPR). It reflects a grammar-base view of language (Asher, 1969). It is based on the suggestion that speech directed to children consists on commands. The answer children give to these commands is physical before they produce verbal responses. This methodology is based on three learning hypotheses.

The first one is known as the bio-program, and it considers that learners are biologically programmed to acquire language in a particular sequence which consists on listening before speaking.

The second hypothesis in which TPR is based on is brain lateralization that defines different learning functions depending on the hemisphere of the brain learning is directed to.

To conclude, this theory postulates that it is necessary for learning to success the absence of stress. As Asher claims, second language learning often causes stress and anxiety so it is important to establish a stress-free environment in order to facilitate learning.

The main objective of this methodology is to teach oral proficiency. In the view of TPR, comprehension is a means to reach basic speaking skills. Teachers must play the role of providing students with the best sort of exposure to language.

With the objective of evaluating the usefulness of TPR, this study will discuss whether its use leads to an improvement in second language acquisition or not.

Much research has also studied the role of games in SLA. There has been a deep debate among scholars between those who claim that the use of games for language learning is appropriate and those who see games as time-fillers.

Nowadays, almost most authors agree that the use of games has several advantages that facilitate second language learning. Among many other reasons that will be analyzed later, scholars argue that games create situations of meaningful and useful use of language (Wright, Betteridge and Buckby, 1984). Moreover, they encourage learners to sustain their interest. However, there are researchers such as Richard-Amato (1988), who warn against overlooking the pedagogical value of games.

As a consequence of this debate, this research is an attempt to analyze the suitability of the use of games by Spanish teachers in terms of the effectiveness that their use produces.

Storytelling is another strategy whose educational value is unanimously recognised among scholars (Ellis & Brewster 2002). Much research has pointed out the convenience of

using storytelling stating that it provides children with motivation, imagination and link fantasy with children's real world, among other advantages.

However, some teachers still show resistance to use it as a consequence of a variety of reasons such as lack of confidence in their skills or the feeling that language in storybooks is too difficult for learners to understand it.

Hence, this research aims to analyze the use teachers make of storytelling and compare this use with the literature related to storytelling in order to propose some ways of improving its use.

Another issue that has to be studied in order to analyze the effectiveness of methodologies carried out by teachers is the way in which they group students.

Extensive research suggests that cooperative learning has positive outcomes such as improved relationships, academic gains and improved social and affective development (Kagan, 1994). This social development has a huge importance in learning as it provides the children with opportunities to interact and use language in real context (Long, 1985).

Furthermore, cooperative learning must follow some principles such as positive interdependence, individual accountability, equal participation, and simultaneous interaction (Kagan, 1994).

As we can see, the way in which learners are grouped can play a crucial role on children's second language acquisition. Thus, it is essential turning our attention to these groupings with the objective of enhancing second language acquisition.

Visual aids are another issue that must be taken into account. They are usually used to present new forms of vocabulary and to promote practice of language skills. Their widely use

is explained by Nunan (1989) as a consequence of the non verbal link that visual aids establish between language used and an idea or concept expressed.

These resources can be used for a big range of purposes but, as Pachler and Field (2001) warn, MFL teachers need to develop some skills in order to make their use of visual aids more effective.

For these reasons, we are going to focus our attention on the situations in which visual aids are used and we are going to propose some improvements to make this use more complete and helpful in order to facilitate acquisition.

As far as the time devoted to each skill during the lesson is concerned, it is important to focus on whether there is a balance between oracy (listening and speaking) and literacy (reading and writing) or some skills are paid more attention than others. To provide a context for this question, it would be appropriate to say that, while it has been usual for many years to focus second language lessons on literacy, recently it is increasing the popularity of oral language instruction in the second language classroom with the appearance of methodologies such as the Audio-lingual Method, the Direct Approach, the Natural Approach or the TPR (Walqui, 2010). These methodologies advocate oral language instruction as a bridge to literacy (Williams and Roberts, 2011).

As a consequence of this new tendency, this research aims to evaluate how these skills are worked in Spanish classrooms in order to be able to propose a way of teaching that can compensate them in the most effective way to promote second language acquisition.

Following this analysis, most scholars agree that establishing cross curricular links in second language lessons is a great resource to facilitate learning. They postulate that primary classroom lends themselves perfectly to this kind of teaching as teachers can either integrate the curriculum meeting with students' needs or work in a cooperative way with other teachers

in the creation of links between areas (Jones and Coffey, 2012). The main purpose of these links is to promote globalized learning.

However, there are some obstacles that will be analyzed in this research such as the lack of bilingual teachers or the pressure under which teachers are due to the fact that they have to achieve curriculum requirements.

Thus, it is important to assess the amount of cross curricular links present in second language classrooms to see if they are established in an effective way according to revised literature.

To conclude the overview of the different items that have been taken into account to design this observation sheet, assessment is one of the most important elements of the learning process. As Moon (2000) suggests, there are many kinds of assessment attending to different criteria.

For example, we can distinguish between formative or summative assessment depending on the moment when it is carried out. Furthermore, there are a big range of purposes which assessment can be directed to. Hence, it is a very important point in order to make assessment more effective to choose the appropriate kind of assessment according to the purposes that have been established.

The second observation sheet that has been designed has the aim of evaluating different strategies carried out by teachers in order to manage the classroom and interact with students (Appendix II).

As has been exposed earlier, communicative language teaching requires the teacher to use appropriate materials in order to encourage the use of communicative language (Nunan,

1987). In doing that, teachers must manage communicative skills to be able to establish a code of conduct, routines and procedures.

Among these skills, Robert (1989) identifies some that have reported benefits in that they facilitate communication and contribute to the development of positive relationships between teacher and students.

These skills include issues such as body language, eye contact and the correct use of the voice depending on the situation and the form of the language that has to be remarked. In addition, there are some skills that are not intrinsic to the teacher but that have to be managed in a proper way if we want to reach these aims. For example, teacher has to be able to make an appropriate use of materials and groupings taking into account learners' needs as well as the nature of the task in which they are involved.

Hence, this research is going to study the way in which teachers cope with all these features that are essential in the effectiveness of a second language lesson. After having studying them, some aspects capable of improvement will be exposed with the aim of making their use more adequate to what literature considers a communicative language teaching.

Another important section that has been analyzed is the use of language made by teachers. More concretely, the use of questions is going to be studied. Questions constitute one of the main components of second language acquisition (SLA) methodology. Thus, a lot of authors have investigated the way in which they are used in the classroom. In an attempt to explain it, Sinclair and Coulthard (1975) found that questions are one of the commonest types of utterances in the discourse of classrooms.

Much research has focused on the importance of teacher's questions in second language classrooms. One of the most frequent issues that have been analyzed is the role questions play in SLA. Questions have a key importance to allow teachers discover learners'

previous knowledge. Another argument that has been given to explain their importance is that after asking a question, learners are required to give a response, so they are pushed to contribute to the interaction, which is required for SLA (Long, 1985). Furthermore, learners' answers provide the teacher with information about the student's acquisition of specific structures (Ellis, 1992), their background knowledge on a topic and allow him to check understanding (Nunan and Lamb, 1996).

Much research has also noted the pedagogic power of questions in that they are used to scaffold learning. Scaffolding postulates that what children can do on their own is less important than what they can do with the guidance of the teacher. This requires a facilitating role played by the teacher to involve pupils actively in the creation of shared knowledge. In other words, teacher should make students work within the zone of proximal development (ZPD) which is defined as the distance between the actual developmental level and the level of potential development under adult guidance (Vygotsky, 1978).

This research has focused its attention on the kind of question. Following Long and Sato (1983), questions can be either display or referential questions. Display questions are those which teacher knows the answer while referential are information seeking. Although this is the main item reflected on the checklist, further analysis of those questions will lead us to aspects such as the interaction they imply or the cognitive skills students have to activate to answer them.

The purpose of this analysis about questions is to evaluate the kind of questions used in the classroom, as well as the interaction function of these questions and their cognitive nature, in order to optimize their use and make it more effective.

To continue this research, as has been exposed earlier, the use of the mother tongue will also have a key role in our analysis. Due to the fact that the use of the mother tongue has

strong links with the use of the target language in the classroom, conditions in which the two languages must be used have been counted previously. Thus, improvements in these two aspects will be interrelated too.

Research has also noted the value of giving instructions. According to Scrivener (1994), instructions must be kept as simple, short and clear as possible. A clear voice, appropriate body language, good eye contact, creating silences, and the use of visual aids all help instruction-giving.

As mentioned earlier, to issue clear and understandable instructions is one of the crucial aspects of teacher's profession (Nunan and Lamb, 1996). They also claim that without clear instructions a success of tasks and activities is very uncertain.

Byrne (1991) points out the importance of the moment when instructions are given, defending that teacher must make sure that learners know what they are supposed to do before starting the activity in order to avoid mistakes.

As a consequence of these ideas, criteria such as eye contact, the complexity of language used, or the clarity of instructions will be examined so that the use of instructions can be improved and contribute to facilitating language acquisition.

The last section of these observation sheets is the use of feedback made by teachers. As exposed earlier, feedback is essential for language acquisition in the view of some scholars. According to Brown (1988), feedback has to allow learners to experience the effects of their productions as a guide to make their future efforts more effective. In other words, feedback has to be actually responsive. This importance of feedback is due to the fact that the information provided with it is crucial to the learner's process. This means that feedback must point out the main features of the language and provide information that plays the role of guidance in the discovery of rules and principles of the language (Zamel, 1981).

There are several kinds of feedback. Research shows that recasting is the type of feedback most widely used (Lyster and Ranta, 1997). This type of feedback consists of saying an incorrect utterance in a correct way but maintaining the original meaning (Philp, 1991). However, it has been proven that, in many situations, students do not incorporate to their language domain the information given through recasting.

In addition, feedback must be different depending on the skill in which we are working and the error made by the student.

For those reasons, this project also aims to consider the way of managing errors, the quantity of feedback given and the situations in which each kind of feedback is used.

5. RESEARCH

5.1 STEPS

Taking into account all these features of what an effective second language lesson should be based on, I conducted this research in four different Spanish schools with the aim of analyzing how second language lessons are carried out there and trying to propose some ways of improvement. All the observations were carried out in first-grade classrooms.

Furthermore, as observations are going to be based on one lesson in each school, observation sheets are accompanied by interviews to teachers (Appendix III). This is because there are some sections of the observation sheets that can be usually worked but, if the day of the observation they are not worked, it could seem that they have less importance than they really have. If that happened, results and improvements would not be as effective as they are supposed to be.

The first school where I carried out an observation is a state school located in a middle-high class district of Zaragoza. This year a bilingual program has been implemented.

Concretely, they are working with a CILE 1 model. This model implies that this school delivers 20% of the school hours in English, which means that one subject is delivered in the foreign language. As it is the first year, this program is only running in first grade of Primary education.

Another school where this research was conducted is a state school located in the city centre of Zaragoza. This school has been working with an integrated English- Spanish curriculum and has been supported by the British Council for 18 years.

The third participating school is mainly of middle-class families, and is situated in the city centre of Zaragoza. This religious and private school, in the same way that the first school, has implemented a CILE 1 program this year. Hence, this school also delivers up to 20% of the school hours in English in one subject. It has to be noted that two observations were carried out in this school.

Finally, the fourth school also has an integrated English-Spanish curriculum supported by the British Council so that 50% of the school hours are delivered in each language. This school has been working with this curriculum for over 10 years.

5.2 OUTCOMES

The main results that have led to the conclusions and improvements in the way of teaching are going to be detailed in this section. The results we are going to refer to throughout this section are attached in the appendix I, II and III.

Results produced by observations and interviews carried out present similarities but there are also differences in many sections. That is the reason why results are going to be detailed thoroughly with the objective of making the main features of the teaching of English

in Spain clear so that improvements that will be proposed in this research reflect accurately the fields in which teaching should be more effective.

With reference to the structure of the lesson employed by teachers, 3 out of 5 teachers opt for the Presentation-Practice-Production (PPP) structure. Regarding each of the three stages of this structure, we can see that, in the first stage, all students are engaged. As far as the way in which vocabulary is presented, only one of the teachers provides children with the written form of the items learnt. In the practice stage, all of them choose a strategy based on drilling through activities and group work, while again only one of them resorts to both games and activities to drill. As far as the production stage in all three teachers is concerned, the fact that language is not used for a purpose has to be noted, so learners have a de-contextualized use of language.

The other two teachers that have been observed in this study say that they do not have a set structure they use frequently. On the contrary, their lessons are often different depending on the topic and the purpose of the lesson.

Regarding the use of the target language in the classroom, none of the five teachers is a native speaker. All of them use the target language with accuracy and have target language items displayed in the classroom. However, students only use it frequently in one of the classrooms, while the extent of the mother tongue is excessive in most of them. For instance, target language is used for organizational matters only in one of the classrooms.

With reference to Total Physical Response (TPR), it is used only by one teacher. This teacher uses TPR accompanied with mimes and gestures and makes sure students have understood by asking them to do actions that show this understanding.

Games are used by most of the teachers, concretely 4 out of 5 use them. However, their use does not necessarily imply situations where language is used in real situations, with a

purpose. In addition, games do not develop fluency in many cases as the output produced by students while games are used consists usually of the repetition of short sentences. To conclude the results regarding games, it has to be noted that they often attract children's attention and motivate them.

With regard to storytelling, although observation sheets show that only 2 out of 5 teachers use this strategy, teachers' interviews reflect that all of them try to use storytelling frequently, pointing out their value as it motivates children and enhances the establishment of cross curricular links with other areas. Focusing on the teachers that used storytelling in the observed classrooms, all of them read the story using visual aids such as gestures and pictures, while there is no classroom where children are those who read the story.

In the matter of visual aids, most of the classes use flashcards and gestures to accompany instructions or explanations, as well as audiovisual aids to play videos or work on listening skills.

As for the balance between oracy and literacy, while all the lessons work on literacy, only 3 of them work on oracy. Furthermore, there are also differences in the way of working on them. Thus, literacy is practiced by reading words and writing words or sentences learned by heart, without using them in context. However, oracy is worked mainly by repeating chunks of words or concrete sentences after displaying flashcards or listening to a recording.

Regarding cross-curricular links, there are 3 out of 5 classes where they are established. In addition, these links are mainly due to the fact that all these schools are immersed in bilingual programs in which science is taught in English so there are some topics or tasks that are delivered at the same time in both subjects.

With reference to assessment, all the teachers coincide with the fact that the learning process is assessed during the lesson by means of exercises. In addition, in all cases

assessment is carried out by teachers and most of them assess also previous knowledge and what they have learnt in other lessons.

As for the class management, all the teachers have a similar style in that they use different equipment and materials throughout the lesson and deal with occasional problems. Furthermore, all of them are punctual and create a friendly environment in the classroom, as well as an effective use of body language and gestures. In addition, although learners are involved in the lesson, only one of the teachers uses meaningful communication. In other words, children do not use the language in similar situations to those that they are going to face in real life. It is also appropriate to remark that most teachers make an adequate use of tone and volume of voice.

As far as questions are concerned, only 1 out of 5 teachers make use of referential questions, while all the rest of the teachers use display as the dominant type of question asked. In relation to the selection of the student who has to answer, there are many different strategies used. For instance, there is the same number of teachers that call for volunteers, call students name directly or allow student to select when to answer.

The use of the mother tongue is an aspect which produces interesting results that are capable of improvement. As has been noted earlier, most of the teachers make an excessive use of the mother tongue. The main reasons why it is used are student's ignorance of the answer, the will of sharing real experiences or the introduction of new content. Furthermore, 2 out of 5 teachers use the mother tongue to check understanding and to address affective or emotional needs.

With reference to giving instructions and its relation with the way in which teachers group students and organize the activities, all the teachers coincide with the fact that they make gestures while giving instructions, create a silence beforehand, make eye contact with as

many students as possible and check understanding and make use of a simple language. In addition, it has to be taken into consideration that the majority of the teachers offers a model before students have to do the task. It is also striking that only one of the teachers repeats instructions in a different way if students do not understand. Moreover, there is only one classroom where children know what the purpose of the task is. Finally, the most common way of doing the tasks is a pupil-pupil interaction without the intervention of the teacher.

To conclude this overview of the results produced by these observations, we have to make reference to the feedback. The first thing we have to consider is that feedback provided by teachers is mainly oral; concretely it is directed to correct pronunciation and structures. In addition, most of the teachers give a model of what a good performance is and encourage positive beliefs. Repetition with the aim of reinforcing language is another strategy used by all the teachers. As far as written feedback is concerned, only 1 out of 5 teachers uses this kind of feedback. The commonest ways in which this feedback is used are the correction of common grammatical errors and the explanation to individual learners of their errors.

5. PROPOSAL OF IMPROVEMENT IN THE TEACHING OF ENGLISH

After having detailed the results produced by observations and interviews, the following paragraphs are going to focus on the proposal of some improvements with the aim of making the way in which English is taught in Spanish schools more effective. These improvements will be based on existing theories. This review of the literature related to this topic has been possible due to the attention that research has paid to the issue of teaching foreign languages.

The first field capable of improvement is the structure of the lesson used by teachers. PPP structure is the commonest structure used by teachers. However, research has noted that this structure has some disadvantages. One of them is that, although students seem to be

comfortable with the new language as they are producing it accurately, they cannot produce language correctly on their own. In addition, as they will be trained in the repetition of some structures, their use of the language will be unnatural (British Council, 2004).

In order to make the teaching of English more effective, teachers should choose a task-based approach. This kind of lesson implies that the teacher does not plan the language that is going to be studied. On the contrary, studied language is defined by what is going on in the lesson and what is required by the task (Dave and Willis, 2007).

According to Willis (1996) a task-based lesson follows some steps. The pre task introduces the topic and the task to the class with the objective of activating language related with this task. With reference to the cycle task, it contains three stages. The task provides students with opportunities to use the language they already know with the aim of carrying out the task, usually in pairs or groups. The role of the teacher here is to monitor and encourage children. Afterwards, students prepare a report to tell the class what has happened during the task and practice it, while the teacher is willing to clear up students' questions. Once they have finished the practice of the report, they tell it to the class and they are given feedback by the teacher.

The last stage of this approach is the language focus. After this exposition of the report, the class analyze both the use of the language made by students and the main features of the text. Finally, teachers select areas capable of improvement based on students' needs, so that they can practice to increase their confidence and use the language in real context.

Much research has reported the advantages of using this approach as a facilitating tool to language acquisition. Many authors point out that, following this approach, students must use all the language resources they have rather than just practising one topic. Furthermore, language is used in a relevant context to children (Long, 1985). With TBL approach, students

are exposed to a varied language input (Krashen, 1982). In addition, this input arises from the students' needs while the PPP structure is more teacher-centred. An example of a TBL lesson has been attached to this research (Appendix IV).

Another improvement that would make the teaching of English in Spain more effective is related to the use of the mother tongue that teachers make.

As we can appreciate in the results produced by observations, there is an excessive extent of the mother tongue in English classrooms. Furthermore, we can observe that teachers use the mother tongue to give instructions and teach grammar. This can be explained due to the fact that students can focus on and notice the key structural differences between L1 and L2 by translating into their mother tongue (Atkinson, 1987).

In addition, following Atkinson (1987), it can be appropriate to use the mother tongue to give instructions at very low levels. It is the case of these classes as they are first-grade students, so teachers probably think that using the mother tongue they are providing students with real communication which facilitates understanding.

However, teachers usually use the mother tongue without trying to communicate with the second language, or just after saying something once in the target language. Thus, following "Interaction Hypotheses" (Long, 1985), they had better recycle and paraphrase the input to improve its comprehensibility, making it become better-targeted to the needs of learners.

With reference to students, they usually use the mother tongue in situations where they know the answer to a question but they do not dare to say it in the second language. To solve this problem, it would be a good idea to create a respectful environment of learning to promote risk taking as risk taking is crucial in a communicative language classroom and an important feature for a language learner to acquire second language (Brown, 2000).

Furthermore, the value of risk taking has been pointed out due to the fact that it is a key element to build an affective framework to overcome students' anxiety of learning the second language (Dufeu, 1994).

To sum up, although the use of the mother tongue is justified in many situations, this use must be limited and judicious. Thus, as the teachers we are analyzing make the mother tongue the main means of communication in the classroom, it could be said that they had better use the second language as the primary vehicle of communication and should give students opportunities to process the second language, as well as let them produce and negotiate meaning in real situations of language use (Long, 1985).

Only one of the classrooms observed used English exclusively to communicate. For these reasons, the improvement I propose is to make an effort and try to use the target language as many times as possible. If children realize that we are speaking English all the time, they will be more engaged and they will try to speak in the foreign language as well. In addition, as I observed in one of the classrooms analyzed, every time a child spoke in Spanish, the teacher translated it to English. Following this improvement, it would be easier to avoid that children usually resort to Spanish if they struggle and it would be easier as well to make it clear to students that English is the main way of communication in the foreign language classrooms. Moreover, with the aim of encouraging children to speak English as well, an improvement I propose is to provide children with easy structures they can use at first, in order to give them confidence so that they can progressively be ready to use the language on their own. In other words, we can guide them initially to help them to develop the necessary self-esteem to use English as a way of communication. That is what Vygotsky (1978) refers to as scaffolding.

The next improvement that could be suggested has to do with the use of questions. In analyzing this use, the strong link questions have with interaction has to be noted. Observation shows that display questions are the most frequent questions used in these classrooms. Decades of research on teachers' questions show that of all kinds, display questions are by far the most common (Nunan and Lamb 1996). Display questions test the learner by eliciting or recalling already-known information related to particular structures or vocabulary (Ellis, 1993). Although some authors, for example Van Lier (1988) point out that the choice of question should depend on the objective of the lesson, suggesting that both display and referential are critical to the management of the learning process, it has been proved by research that display questions are less likely to contribute to an acquisition-rich environment rather than referential questions (Ellis, 1992), due to the fact that they do not resemble real communication and are pedagogically purposeless (Nunan, 1987). Thus, they strongly recommend that teachers' talk aspires to using as many referential questions as possible in the classroom. Following those ideas, Swain (2000) claims that teachers questions need to create opportunities for students to develop linguistic and conceptual knowledge and practice their English skills in meaningful learning contexts.

Most of the display questions teachers formulate lead the children to a knowledge recall. As Bloom (1956) suggests, knowledge questions belong to "lower order" questions which their main feature is that learners usually are unaware of using thinking skills. Furthermore, display questions gathered in this observation do not have interactional function. In other words, these questions do not encourage children to get involved in interaction so they are not provided with opportunities to produce output (Swain, 2000), which is a key factor in second language acquisition.

Following the evaluation of these data, we can appreciate that referential questions are hardly ever formulated and, in the case they are used, they do not have a clear interactional

purpose beyond the comprehension of the output produced by children, but as we can see, they usually refer to management issues of the classroom, not to something that has to be learnt.

For all these reasons, teachers should try to set up referential questions, which have been proved to have a positive relation with students' production of target language (Brock, 1986). Moreover, teachers have to try to direct questions to learners that promote the development of thinking skills, which Bloom (1956) relates to "higher order" questions and that are more likely to promote the learning of complex judgmental skills such as critical thinking and problem solving as they require more complex cognitive skills.

To conclude this analysis, observed teachers can also be regarded as non-interaction promoting teachers. Thus, they had better formulate questions with a familiar context to children which provides them with real use of language (Krashen, 1982) and give them opportunities to interact and negotiate meaning (Long, 1985) as those are aspects needed for second language acquisition.

The improvement I propose regarding teachers' questions is related to engaging children, so that they feel comfortable and encouraged to answer them. Thus, as I could observe in one of the classrooms, the questions asked by the teacher should be referential questions, as they promote that children develop some skills that would not be developed if they usually use display questions. Language acquisition is the aim we want to achieve, so we should avoid the use of questions which have short answers as its main response, and opt for questions that promote thinking and interactional skills. A concrete example of this improvement would be: if a teacher asks questions about a text, instead of saying just: "Is it true that Frank studies medicine?" he or she had better ask: "After having reading the text, why do you think Frank chose to study medicine? Why you think it is important to continue

studying after secondary school?”. With this kind of questions, the teacher is pushing the student to produce an output in a meaningful way instead of only answering by repeating chunks of words or factual events.

The following improvement I am going to propose is related to the frequency of setting pair and group work activities. Results of the interviews show that most of the teachers try to set these activities once a week, while other teachers only use this strategy when they think that it is adequate according to the task. However, much research has pointed out the value of these kinds of tasks due to the fact that they increase the amount of students' practice and encourages cooperation between students as they have to work together in order to complete the task, which is important in order to develop a motivating atmosphere in class (Harmer, 1991). Among many other advantages, Watcyn- Jones (2002) argues that pair and group work activities are student-centred rather than teacher-centred so students are given the possibility of communicating in the target language. In addition, language used is more natural and authentic, which makes it much closer to real language used outside the classroom (Byrne, 1991). Furthermore, these activities give them a sense of success when they reach the aim of the task.

However, many teachers claim that pair and group activities have a negative effect on the class due to the noise and behaviour problems they imply. Moreover, they say that students speaking to other students make more mistakes because they know that the teacher is not hearing them. In order to solve this problem it is necessary to combine effective classroom management (Kagan, 1988) with close monitoring of the students. For this reason, pair and group activities and classroom management are strongly linked.

As we can see, the results of the observations show that teachers have a good management of the class as they use adequate materials, make students be involved in the

lesson, are respectful with students and deal with occasional problems. The only mistake they make is that they do not promote meaningful communication. Nevertheless, this use of meaningful communication has been discussed earlier in this research and previous proposals of improvement of this research deal with this problem as well. Thus, the lack of use of meaningful communication does not constitute a problem to the setting of pair and group activities. In fact, pair and group work will help promote it.

Considering all these reasons, my improvement consists of setting pair and group work activities systematically as they favour successful communication rather than an accurate use of items of language (Scrivener, 1994). In doing so, we can adapt daily tasks which are usually done individually and make them pair or group activities. For example, if we are going to read a text, we can ask them to discuss what the text is going to be about just by reading the title. Another example is to check their answers with their peers after doing an exercise before the teacher states the right answers.

Regarding TPR, only one of the teachers uses it in the classroom. Much research has noted the value of TPR as it helps students to remember phrases or words and it works with mixed-ability classes due to the fact that all the students are able to understand the language through physical actions (British Council, 2004). However, many disadvantages have also been pointed out. One of them is that it is more effective for beginner levels even though it can be adapted to other levels. In addition, not all the items of the language can be taught and, if used a lot, it can become repetitive.

Taking into consideration all these arguments, the improvement I propose is to use TPR in association with other methods. In other words, we can neither use it every day nor refuse to use it. Thus, I propose to use it to teach very concrete things. For example, we can

use it to introduce new vocabulary connected with actions such as smile, walk, stand up or clap.

The following improvement I am going to propose is related to the use of games. Observations reflect that teachers use a lot of games but without achieving the objective of creating situations of real use of language, which is one of the main reasons why games should be used (Wright, Betteridge and Buckby, 1984). Among other reasons to use games, much research has claimed that games are enjoyable so they encourage high level of motivation to learn more as well as demand the full personal engagement of the learner (Sharpe, 2001).

For all these benefits that the use of games provides to learning, we have to avoid seeing this use as time-filling activities or mere warm-up activities. Thus, my proposal of improvement is to use them at all stages of the lesson as long as they are suitable and carefully chosen according to the purpose of the task and create a meaningful environment. For example, if we want to practice conversation, we can ask the students to create a short story in groups. Then, we write parts of the story in several slips of paper and give each student a slip. Afterwards, we hand out other slips with questions whose answers are written in the story slips, so that students have to ask their partners in order to find where the answer is. When all the pairs are matched, students put the story back together and read it.

As far as storytelling is concerned, results show that all teachers use this resource frequently establishing cross-curricular links with other areas. Some advantages of using storytelling in the classroom have been noted previously in the research. Much research has also pointed out its value due to the fact that it provides the children with optimal input (Krashen, 1981). Furthermore, storytelling develops learning strategies such as listening for

general meaning or hypothesizing using audiovisual clues or their prior knowledge of how language works (Ellis and Brewster, 2002).

One example of this effective use of storytelling on the part of teachers was carried out in one of the classrooms observed. In this classroom, the teacher used the puppet of a stork. The story was about the different places where the stork migrated during the year so that there was a link with science, where they were studying birds and their main features.

With regard to cross-curricular links, results of this research show that most of the teachers establish them in their lessons. Much research has highlighted their importance in that they help children make sense of their learning by reinforcing and supporting learning in different subjects (Hayes, 2010). In addition, cross-curricular links help children develop thinking skills because they not only apply knowledge and skills, but also synthesize information and ideas (Barnes, 2011). These links have to be made explicit as it should not be assumed that knowledge will be transferred to a different context (Pritchard, 2005).

An example of this use of cross curricular links by teachers has been detailed above with the storytelling exemplification.

With reference to the use of visual aids in the classroom, most of the teachers use them. Visual aids can be used to avoid translation as they link words and concepts (Nunan, 1989). As the use of visual aids usually implies that pupils are required to speak publicly, teachers must create a non-threatening and supportive atmosphere (Kyriacou, 1991).

Results of this research show that literacy is more worked on than oracy in observed classrooms. Moreover, the classes where oracy is worked on do not provide learners with meaningful communication. Although recent research points towards the need for increased oral language practice, some factors such as teacher training, student variable or school's priorities affect the time teachers dedicate to the teaching of oral language (Williams and

Roberts, 2011). Research has also shown that students with opportunities for oral rehearsal are more equipped to reach higher levels of written discourse due to the fact that oral language proficiency forms the foundation of written language.

Due to this importance of the teaching of oral practice, an improvement I propose is to give students opportunities to use language in a real context and take responsibility for their learning by practicing. One example of this improvement is to pair students and give them a picture. Students have to talk about the picture as long as possible. At the end of the activity, students have to share some statements that their partner said.

Regarding assessment, all of the teachers observed use on-going assessment. On-going assessment is the most important kind of assessment as information gained allows teachers to provide the children with specific help. In this way, pupils benefit immediately from the results (Moon, 2000). However, overall assessment gives information about a completed process so the benefits are not immediate. Following the *Currículo Aragonés*, (2007) on-going assessment is the most suitable method of assessment.

Feedback is strongly linked with assessment. Research has widely turned its attention to this aspect of teaching. As a consequence of this research, many scholars have suggested some principles that good feedback has to meet. According to these scholars, feedback must facilitate the development of reflection on learning and self-assessment and provide opportunities to close the gap between current and desired performance (Alastair, 2007). Zamel (1981) adds that effective feedback must point out the main features of the language, reduce ambiguity of choice and give valuable information that allows the children to discover rules and structures on their own.

There are several kinds of feedback. Research shows that recasting is the type of feedback most widely used (Lyster and Ranta, 1997). This type of feedback consists of saying

an incorrect utterance in a correct way but maintaining the original meaning (Philp, 1991). However, it has been proven that, in many situations, students do not incorporate to their language domain the information given through recasting. For example, recasting is an appropriate resource to respond to grammatical and phonological errors, while lexical errors are more effectively corrected with some kind of negotiation such as clarification request (Lyster, 1997).

The results show that recasting is the commonest kind of feedback used by teachers. The improvement I propose related to feedback is that teachers should give adequate feedback according to the kind of error made by students. For example, in one of the observed classrooms, the teacher only gave feedback when there was a pronunciation mistake. Nevertheless, when a student said a wrong answer or made a grammar mistake, the teacher asked other students the same questions without giving feedback. Thus, following this improvement, teachers should correct these errors through some kind of negotiation of meaning.

To conclude the proposals put forward to improve the teaching of English, we have to make reference to instructions. Giving instructions is extremely important when teaching, especially when teaching a foreign language. As detailed in previous sections of this research, instructions must be kept as simple, short and clear as possible (Scrivener, 1994). Furthermore, these instructions must be accompanied by an appropriate body language, eye contact and an effective use of visual aids.

As we can appreciate by looking at the results of the observations, teachers generally give instructions in an effective way. An example of this effectiveness was observed in one of the lessons. Students had to look at a photo to guess what they thought was going to happen in the text. Afterwards, they had to read the text. To finish the task, learners had to answer a few

questions about the text. The teacher gave instructions in an effective way because, instead of saying all they had to do at the same time, she gave one instruction after another. In other words, she waited until they had finished one part of the task to explain the following. Furthermore, instructions were very clear and were stated in a very simple language.

However, results also show that teachers tend to use the mother tongue when giving instructions. Concretely, they give instructions in the target language but say them in the mother tongue if students do not understand. In this respect, an improvement I would like to propose is to reformulate instructions in a different way before resorting to the mother tongue. For example, if we want a child to stand up and go to the blackboard and he or she does not understand what to do, we must reformulate the instructions with other words or just repeat it but accompany it with gestures.

7. CONCLUSIONS

The aim of this research was to propose some improvements to make the teaching of English more effective. After having carried out the observations and interviews, analyzed the data and proposed some improvements, my main objective is to be able to put all these proposals into practice.

Although these improvements are supposed to make the teaching of English more effective, I also have to be aware of the fact that some of these improvements cannot be put into practice exactly in the same way they have been proposed. Thus, paying attention to the context where I am teaching, as well as to the specific needs of my students will be essential to modify my teaching methodology in order to make it more adequate to them.

As a consequence of this research and my reflections on it, I have drawn my own conclusions. This project will have a huge importance in my future career as it will help me to become a good English teacher. For example, I have learnt the importance of basing our way of teaching on a communicative approach. From my experience as a learner, the teaching of English has always been focused on grammar and vocabulary, without paying attention to the development of speaking activities. Thus, conducting this research has made me realize the importance of providing students with opportunities to communicate. Furthermore, as important as giving opportunities to communicate is creating meaningful context where use of language can be similar to real use of language. In other words, I have learnt the importance of teaching English to communicate, not only to know lists of words and structures without being able to use them.

This project has also equipped me with the knowledge of the reasons why different resources and methodologies have to be used, as well as the situations in which their use is more suitable. For all these reasons, I strongly believe that this research is the first step on my way to becoming an effective English teacher.

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APPENDIX I- OBSERVATION SHEETS 1**CHECKLIST 1**

LESSON STRUCTURE	
PPP STRUCTURE	
If so, PRESENTATION	
- Most students are engaged	X
- The written form is given	X
PRACTICE	
- Drilling is practiced through games	
- Drilling is practiced through activities	X
- Pupils practice in group	X
PRODUCTION	
- Most of the pupils are involved	
- Use of the language for a purpose	X
- Work is based on tasks	
TEACHER METHODS	
USE OF TARGET LANGUAGE	
If so, - Teacher is a native speaker	
- Teacher uses the target language during the lesson	X
- Students use the target language during the lesson	X
- Target language is accurate	X
- Target language is displayed in the classroom	X
- Target language is the dominant means of communication in the lesson	X
- Target language is only used where appropriate	

- Target language is used for organizational matters	X
- Excessive extent of the mother tongue (see section “The use of the mother tongue”)	
TOTAL PHYSICAL RESPONSE (TPR)	
- Use of mimes and gestures	X
- Teacher provides language and asks learners to perform related actions	X
- Teacher uses actions to check understanding	X
GAMES APPROACH	X
- Create situations of real language use	X
- Engage the whole attention of children	
- Develop confidence	X
- Develop fluency	X
- Motivate children	X
STORYTELLING	
- Has cross curricular links between story and content	
- Teacher reads the story	
If so, do children have visual aids of the story? Which ones?	
- Children read the story	
- Teachers uses audio resources to play the story	
RESOURCES AND MATERIALS	
PAIR AND GROUP WORK ACTIVITIES	

- Preliminary demonstration teacher- pupil (MODELLING)	X
- Pupil-pupil interaction without the intervention of the teacher	X
- Pupil-pupil interaction with the intervention of the teacher	
- Children know the objective of the task	X
- Clear presentation and instructions	X
- Pupils select own partners	X
- Random selection	
- Pre-select pupils but makes it appear random	
- Set groups or teams that are used for a period of time	
VISUAL AIDS	
- Uses flashcards	
- Uses gestures and mimes	
- Uses audiovisuals aids (interactive whiteboard, computer,...)	
If so, which one and how is it used?	
CONTENTS	
ORACY-LITERACY	
- Emphasis on listening and responding over reading and writing	X
- Oracy is worked on the lesson	X
If so, how is it worked?	
There is an assembly at the beginning of the lesson.	

- Literacy is worked on the lesson	X
If so, how?	
• Writing in the air	
• Writing letter patterns	
• Writing a few words learned by heart	X
• Reading the words	X
• Phonics (which method?)	
CROSS CURRICULAR LINKS	
- There are cross curricular links with other areas	X
If so, which are these areas?	
Science, Arts	
How are cross curricular links worked?	
Delivering contents at the same time in several areas.	
ASSESSMENT	
- Learning is assessed during the lesson	X
If so, when and how is it assessed?	
After finishing each exercise.	
- The assessment is carried out by the teacher	X
- The assessment is carried out by classmates	
- There are links with other lessons (background knowledge is used as starting point)	X

CHECKLIST 2

LESSON STRUCTURE	
PPP STRUCTURE	
If so, PRESENTATION	
- Most students are engaged	
- The written form is given	
PRACTICE	
- Drilling is practiced through games	
- Drilling is practiced through activities	
- Pupils practice in group	
PRODUCTION	
- Most of the pupils are involved	
- Use of the language for a purpose	
- Work is based on tasks	
TEACHER METHODS	
USE OF TARGET LANGUAGE	
If so, - Teacher is a native speaker	
- Teacher uses the target language during the lesson	x
- Students use the target language during the lesson	
- Target language is accurate	x
- Target language is displayed in the classroom	x
- Target language is the dominant means of communication in the lesson	
- Target language is only used where appropriate	x
- Target language is used for organizational matters	

- Excessive extent of the mother tongue (see section “The use of the mother tongue”)	X
TOTAL PHYSICAL RESPONSE (TPR)	X
- Use of mimes and gestures	X
- Teacher provides language and asks learners to perform related actions	X
- Teacher uses actions to check understanding	X
GAMES APPROACH	
- Create situations of real language use	
- Engage the whole attention of children	
- Develop confidence	
- Develop fluency	
- Motivate children	
STORYTELLING	
- Has cross curricular links between story and content	
- Teacher reads the story	
If so, do children have visual aids of the story? Which ones?	
- Children read the story	
- Teachers uses audio resources to play the story	
RESOURCES AND MATERIALS	
PAIR AND GROUP WORK ACTIVITIES	
- Preliminary demonstration teacher- pupil (MODELLING)	

- Pupil-pupil interaction without the intervention of the teacher	
- Pupil-pupil interaction with the intervention of the teacher	X
- Children know the objective of the task	
- Clear presentation and instructions	
- Pupils select own partners	
- Random selection	
- Pre-select pupils but makes it appear random	
- Set groups or teams that are used for a period of time	X
VISUAL AIDS	
- Uses flashcards	X
- Uses gestures and mimes	X
- Uses audiovisuals aids (interactive whiteboard, computer,...)	
If so, which one and how is it used?	
CONTENTS	
ORACY-LITERACY	
- Emphasis on listening and responding over reading and writing	
- Oracy is worked on the lesson	
If so, how is it worked?	
- Literacy is worked on the lesson	X
If so, how?	

• Writing in the air	
• Writing letter patterns	
• Writing a few words learned by heart	X
• Reading the words	
• Phonics (which method?)	
CROSS CURRICULAR LINKS	
- There are cross curricular links with other areas	
If so, which are these areas?	
How are cross curricular links worked?	
ASSESSMENT	
- Learning is assessed during the lesson	X
If so, when and how is it assessed?	
- The assessment is carried out by the teacher	X
- The assessment is carried out by classmates	
- There are links with other lessons (background knowledge is used as starting point)	

CHECKLIST 3

LESSON STRUCTURE	
PPP STRUCTURE	X
If so, PRESENTATION	
- Most students are engaged	X
- The written form is given	
PRACTICE	
- Drilling is practiced through games	X
- Drilling is practiced through activities	X
- Pupils practice in group	X
PRODUCTION	
- Most of the pupils are involved	X
- Use of the language for a purpose	
- Work is based on tasks	
TEACHER METHODS	
USE OF TARGET LANGUAGE	
If so, - Teacher is a native speaker	
- Teacher uses the target language during the lesson	X
- Students use the target language during the lesson	
- Target language is accurate	X
- Target language is displayed in the classroom	X
- Target language is the dominant means of communication in the lesson	X
- Target language is only used where appropriate	
- Target language is used for organizational matters	

- Excessive extent of the mother tongue (see section “The use of the mother tongue”)	x
TOTAL PHYSICAL RESPONSE (TPR)	
- Use of mimes and gestures	
- Teacher provides language and asks learners to perform related actions	
- Teacher uses actions to check understanding	
GAMES APPROACH	x
- Create situations of real language use	
- Engage the whole attention of children	
- Develop confidence	x
- Develop fluency	x
- Motivate children	x
STORYTELLING	x
- Has cross curricular links between story and content	x
- Teacher reads the story	x
<p>If so, do children have visual aids of the story? Which ones?</p> <p>Yes, they have flascards.</p>	
- Children read the story	
- Teachers uses audio resources to play the story	x
RESOURCES AND MATERIALS	
PAIR AND GROUP WORK ACTIVITIES	
- Preliminary demonstration teacher- pupil (MODELLING)	

- Pupil-pupil interaction without the intervention of the teacher	X
- Pupil-pupil interaction with the intervention of the teacher	X
- Children know the objective of the task	
- Clear presentation and instructions	X
- Pupils select own partners	
- Random selection	
- Pre-select pupils but makes it appear random	
- Set groups or teams that are used for a period of time	X
VISUAL AIDS	
- Uses flashcards	X
- Uses gestures and mimes	X
- Uses audiovisuals aids (interactive whiteboard, computer,...)	
If so, which one and how is it used?	
CONTENTS	
ORACY-LITERACY	
- Emphasis on listening and responding over reading and writing	
- Oracy is worked on the lesson	X
If so, how is it worked?	
Students repeat sentences of the story after the teacher has said them.	
- Literacy is worked on the lesson	X
If so, how?	

• Writing in the air	
• Writing letter patterns	
• Writing a few words learned by heart	X
• Reading the words	X
• Phonics (which method?)	
CROSS CURRICULAR LINKS	X
- There are cross curricular links with other areas	X
If so, which are these areas?	
Science.	
How are cross curricular links worked?	
“Animal portfolio”	
ASSESSMENT	
- Learning is assessed during the lesson	X
If so, when and how is it assessed?	
- The assessment is carried out by the teacher	X
- The assessment is carried out by classmates	
- There are links with other lessons (background knowledge is used as starting point)	X

CHECKLIST 4

LESSON STRUCTURE	
PPP STRUCTURE	
If so, PRESENTATION	
- Most students are engaged	
- The written form is given	
PRACTICE	
- Drilling is practiced through games	
- Drilling is practiced through activities	
- Pupils practice in group	
PRODUCTION	
- Most of the pupils are involved	
- Use of the language for a purpose	
- Work is based on tasks	
TEACHER METHODS	
USE OF TARGET LANGUAGE	
If so, - Teacher is a native speaker	
- Teacher uses the target language during the lesson	x
- Students use the target language during the lesson	
- Target language is accurate	x
- Target language is displayed in the classroom	x
- Target language is the dominant means of communication in the lesson	
- Target language is only used where appropriate	
- Target language is used for organizational matters	

- Excessive extent of the mother tongue (see section “The use of the mother tongue”)	x
TOTAL PHYSICAL RESPONSE (TPR)	
- Use of mimes and gestures	
- Teacher provides language and asks learners to perform related actions	
- Teacher uses actions to check understanding	
GAMES APPROACH	x
- Create situations of real language use	
- Engage the whole attention of children	x
- Develop confidence	x
- Develop fluency	
- Motivate children	x
STORYTELLING	x
- Has cross curricular links between story and content	x
- Teacher reads the story	x
If so, do children have visual aids of the story? Which ones?	
Interactive whiteboard.	
- Children read the story	
- Teachers uses audio resources to play the story	
RESOURCES AND MATERIALS	
PAIR AND GROUP WORK ACTIVITIES	
- Preliminary demonstration teacher- pupil (MODELLING)	
- Pupil-pupil interaction without the intervention of the teacher	x
- Pupil-pupil interaction with the intervention of the teacher	

- Children know the objective of the task	
- Clear presentation and instructions	X
- Pupils select own partners	
- Random selection	
- Pre-select pupils but makes it appear random	
- Set groups or teams that are used for a period of time	X
VISUAL AIDS	
- Uses flashcards	
- Uses gestures and mimes	
- Uses audiovisuals aids (interactive whiteboard, computer,...)	X
If so, which one and how is it used?	
Interactive whiteboard while telling the story.	
CONTENTS	
ORACY-LITERACY	
- Emphasis on listening and responding over reading and writing	
- Oracy is worked on the lesson	
If so, how is it worked?	
- Literacy is worked on the lesson	X
If so, how?	
• Writing in the air	

• Writing letter patterns	
• Writing a few words learned by heart	
• Reading the words	X
• Phonics (which method?)	
CROSS CURRICULAR LINKS	
- There are cross curricular links with other areas	X
If so, which are these areas?	
Science, Arts	
How are cross curricular links worked?	
Through a story.	
ASSESSMENT	
- Learning is assessed during the lesson	X
If so, when and how is it assessed?	
Exercises.	
- The assessment is carried out by the teacher	X
- The assessment is carried out by classmates	
- There are links with other lessons (background knowledge is used as starting point)	X

CHECKLIST 5

LESSON STRUCTURE	
PPP STRUCTURE	X
If so, PRESENTATION	
- Most students are engaged	X
- The written form is given	
PRACTICE	
- Drilling is practiced through games	
- Drilling is practiced through activities	X
- Pupils practice in group	X
PRODUCTION	
- Most of the pupils are involved	X
- Use of the language for a purpose	
- Work is based on tasks	
TEACHER METHODS	
USE OF TARGET LANGUAGE	
If so, - Teacher is a native speaker	
- Teacher uses the target language during the lesson	X
- Students use the target language during the lesson	
- Target language is accurate	X
- Target language is displayed in the classroom	X
- Target language is the dominant means of communication in the lesson	
- Target language is only used where appropriate	
- Target language is used for organizational matters	

- Excessive extent of the mother tongue (see section “The use of the mother tongue”)	x
TOTAL PHYSICAL RESPONSE (TPR)	
- Use of mimes and gestures	
- Teacher provides language and asks learners to perform related actions	
- Teacher uses actions to check understanding	
GAMES APPROACH	x
- Create situations of real language use	
- Engage the whole attention of children	x
- Develop confidence	
- Develop fluency	
- Motivate children	x
STORYTELLING	
- Has cross curricular links between story and content	
- Teacher reads the story	
If so, do children have visual aids of the story? Which ones?	
- Children read the story	
- Teachers uses audio resources to play the story	
RESOURCES AND MATERIALS	
PAIR AND GROUP WORK ACTIVITIES	
- Preliminary demonstration teacher- pupil (MODELLING)	

- Pupil-pupil interaction without the intervention of the teacher	
- Pupil-pupil interaction with the intervention of the teacher	X
- Children know the objective of the task	
- Clear presentation and instructions	X
- Pupils select own partners	
- Random selection	
- Pre-select pupils but makes it appear random	
- Set groups or teams that are used for a period of time	X
VISUAL AIDS	
- Uses flashcards	X
- Uses gestures and mimes	X
- Uses audiovisuals aids (interactive whiteboard, computer,...)	
If so, which one and how is it used?	
CONTENTS	
ORACY-LITERACY	
- Emphasis on listening and responding over reading and writing	
- Oracy is worked on the lesson	X
If so, how is it worked?	
Repeat displayed flashcards.	
- Literacy is worked on the lesson	X
If so, how?	

• Writing in the air	
• Writing letter patterns	
• Writing a few words learned by heart	X
• Reading the words	X
• Phonics (which method?)	
CROSS CURRICULAR LINKS	
- There are cross curricular links with other areas	
If so, which are these areas?	
How are cross curricular links worked?	
ASSESSMENT	
- Learning is assessed during the lesson	X
If so, when and how is it assessed? Sheets are checked after having done them.	
- The assessment is carried out by the teacher	X
- The assessment is carried out by classmates	
- There are links with other lessons (background knowledge is used as starting point)	

APPENDIX II- OBSERVATION SHEETS 2**CHECKLIST 1**

TEACHING	
- Use of teaching techniques according to the objectives (e.g. error correction, instructions, explanations,...)	
- Use and promotion of meaningful communication	x
- Learner actively involved in the class	x
CLASS MANAGEMENT	
- Students grouped according to activities	
- Use of equipment for the class (e.g. neat and organized use of the board)	
- Use of materials needed for the class	x
- Pace and time management in the development of the class	x
- Ability to deal with occasional classroom management problems	x
- Punctuality	x
- Friendly and respectful with students	x
- Use of body language, gesture and teaching space as needed	x
LANGUAGE USE	
- According to student's level	x
- Tone and volume of voice as needed	x
QUESTIONING STRATEGIES	
<i>TYPES OF QUESTIONS ASKED</i>	
- Factual teacher asks a question that students can answer by looking for factual answers	
- Opinion: teacher asks a question that students can answer by using their own	x

language	
<i>TYPES OF RESPONSES REQUIRED</i>	
- Display: student must provide teacher's required answer	
- Referential: student must provide answer that involves own thought and reasoning	x
<i>SELECTION OF STUDENT</i>	
- Calls students name directly before asking questions	
- Calls students name directly after asking questions	x
- Calls for students volunteers after asking questions	
- Allows students to self-select when to answer	x
- Comes back to students with wrong answer or no answer	x
<i>THE USE OF THE MOTHER TONGUE</i>	
- Child is upset	
- Child knows the answer but doesn't know how to say it in English	
- Child wants to share experience or real information	x
- Teacher or pupil wants to joke	
- Teacher wants to introduce a new game/instruction/content	
- Teacher doesn't know if the children have understood	
<i>GIVING INSTRUCTIONS</i>	
- Says things that are visible or obvious	
- Gives instructions that they don't need to know at this point	
- Creates a silence before hand	x
- Makes eye contact with as many students as possible	x
- Finds an authoritative tone and makes sure they are listening before starting	

- Uses silence and gestures to pace the instructions and clarifies their meaning	x
- Demonstrates rather than explains wherever possible	x
- Checks understanding	X
- Uses simple language	X
- Uses short sentences	X
- Repeats instructions in a different way	X
- Models instructions for children	X
ERROR CORRECTION FOR ORAL PRACTICE AND WRITTEN FEEDBACK	
- The information is supported by other messages	x
If so, which ones? (e.g. gestures, visuals...)	
Gestures.	
- The message reduces ambiguity	x
- Gets over the problem of poor pronunciation by providing intelligible versions for the whole class	x
- Provides learners with the repetition needed for reinforcement of language	x
- Facilitates the development of self-assessment in learning and learning to learn	x
- Encourages teacher and peer dialogue around learning	x
- Helps to clarify what good performance is	x
- Provides opportunities to close gap between current and desired performance	x
- Delivers high quality information to students about their learning	x
- Encourages positive, motivational beliefs and self-esteem	x
- Feedback given is mainly oral	
If so, why?	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To correct pronunciation 	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To correct structures 	
- Written feedback (if applicable)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teacher writes symbols such as “SP” for spelling and “T” for tense near the error to tell students the error types 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teacher explains orally student’s common grammatical error in class 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teacher writes down the correct form of the error after it is identified 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teacher writes down grammatical explanations 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teacher explains orally to individual students 	x
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teacher rewrites the sentences completely 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teacher only underlines or strikes off the grammatical error 	x

CHECKLIST 2

TEACHING	
- Use of teaching techniques according to the objectives (e.g. error correction, instructions, explanations,...)	
- Use and promotion of meaningful communication	
- Learner actively involved in the class	x
CLASS MANAGEMENT	
- Students grouped according to activities	x
- Use of equipment for the class (e.g. neat and organized use of the board)	x
- Use of materials needed for the class	x
- Pace and time management in the development of the class	x
- Ability to deal with occasional classroom management problems	x
- Punctuality	x
- Friendly and respectful with students	x
- Use of body language, gesture and teaching space as needed	x
LANGUAGE USE	
- According to student's level	
- Tone and volume of voice as needed	
QUESTIONING STRATEGIES	
<i>TYPES OF QUESTIONS ASKED</i>	
- Factual teacher asks a question that students can answer by looking for factual answers	x
- Opinion: teacher asks a question that students can answer by using their own language	

<i>TYPES OF RESPONSES REQUIRED</i>	
- Display: student must provide teacher's required answer	x
- Referential: student must provide answer that involves own thought and reasoning	
<i>SELECTION OF STUDENT</i>	
- Calls students name directly before asking questions	x
- Calls students name directly after asking questions	
- Calls for students volunteers after asking questions	
- Allows students to self-select when to answer	
- Comes back to students with wrong answer or no answer	
THE USE OF THE MOTHER TONGUE	
- Child is upset	x
- Child knows the answer but doesn't know how to say it in English	x
- Child wants to share experience or real information	x
- Teacher or pupil wants to joke	
- Teacher wants to introduce a new game/instruction/content	x
- Teacher doesn't know if the children have understood	x
GIVING INSTRUCTIONS	
- Says things that are visible or obvious	x
- Gives instructions that they don't need to know at this point	x
- Creates a silence before hand	x
- Makes eye contact with as many students as possible	x
- Finds an authoritative tone and makes sure they are listening before starting	x
- Uses silence and gestures to pace the instructions and clarifies their meaning	

- Demonstrates rather than explains wherever possible	
- Checks understanding	X
- Uses simple language	X
- Uses short sentences	X
- Repeats instructions in a different way	
- Models instructions for children	
ERROR CORRECTION FOR ORAL PRACTICE AND WRITTEN FEEDBACK	
- The information is supported by other messages	
If so, which ones? (e.g. gestures, visuals...)	
- The message reduces ambiguity	
- Gets over the problem of poor pronunciation by providing intelligible versions for the whole class	
- Provides learners with the repetition needed for reinforcement of language	x
- Facilitates the development of self-assessment in learning and learning to learn	
- Encourages teacher and peer dialogue around learning	
- Helps to clarify what good performance is	
- Provides opportunities to close gap between current and desired performance	
- Delivers high quality information to students about their learning	
- Encourages positive, motivational beliefs and self-esteem	x
- Feedback given is mainly oral	
If so, why?	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To correct pronunciation 	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To correct structures 	
- Written feedback (if applicable)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teacher writes symbols such as “SP” for spelling and “T” for tense near the error to tell students the error types 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teacher explains orally student’s common grammatical error in class 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teacher writes down the correct form of the error after it is identified 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teacher writes down grammatical explanations 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teacher explains orally to individual students 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teacher rewrites the sentences completely 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teacher only underlines or strikes off the grammatical error 	

CHECKLIST 3

TEACHING	
- Use of teaching techniques according to the objectives (e.g. error correction, instructions, explanations,...)	x
- Use and promotion of meaningful communication	
- Learner actively involved in the class	x
CLASS MANAGEMENT	
- Students grouped according to activities	x
- Use of equipment for the class (e.g. neat and organized use of the board)	x
- Use of materials needed for the class	x
- Pace and time management in the development of the class	x
- Ability to deal with occasional classroom management problems	x
- Punctuality	x
- Friendly and respectful with students	x
- Use of body language, gesture and teaching space as needed	x
LANGUAGE USE	
- According to student's level	x
- Tone and volume of voice as needed	x
QUESTIONING STRATEGIES	
<i>TYPES OF QUESTIONS ASKED</i>	
- Factual teacher asks a question that students can answer by looking for factual answers	x
- Opinion: teacher asks a question that students can answer by using their own language	

<i>TYPES OF RESPONSES REQUIRED</i>	
- Display: student must provide teacher's required answer	X
- Referential: student must provide answer that involves own thought and reasoning	
<i>SELECTION OF STUDENT</i>	
- Calls students name directly before asking questions	
- Calls students name directly after asking questions	
- Calls for students volunteers after asking questions	
- Allows students to self-select when to answer	X
- Comes back to students with wrong answer or no answer	
THE USE OF THE MOTHER TONGUE	
- Child is upset	
- Child knows the answer but doesn't know how to say it in English	X
- Child wants to share experience or real information	X
- Teacher or pupil wants to joke	
- Teacher wants to introduce a new game/instruction/content	X
- Teacher doesn't know if the children have understood	X
GIVING INSTRUCTIONS	
- Says things that are visible or obvious	
- Gives instructions that they don't need to know at this point	
- Creates a silence before hand	X
- Makes eye contact with as many students as possible	X
- Finds an authoritative tone and makes sure they are listening before starting	X
- Uses silence and gestures to pace the instructions and clarifies their meaning	X

- Demonstrates rather than explains wherever possible	x
- Checks understanding	X
- Uses simple language	X
- Uses short sentences	X
- Repeats instructions in a different way	
- Models instructions for children	x
ERROR CORRECTION FOR ORAL PRACTICE AND WRITTEN FEEDBACK	
- The information is supported by other messages	x
If so, which ones? (e.g. gestures, visuals...)	
Blackboard and visuals.	
- The message reduces ambiguity	x
- Gets over the problem of poor pronunciation by providing intelligible versions for the whole class	x
- Provides learners with the repetition needed for reinforcement of language	x
- Facilitates the development of self-assessment in learning and learning to learn	
- Encourages teacher and peer dialogue around learning	x
- Helps to clarify what good performance is	x
- Provides opportunities to close gap between current and desired performance	
- Delivers high quality information to students about their learning	
- Encourages positive, motivational beliefs and self-esteem	x
- Feedback given is mainly oral	x
If so, why?	
• To correct pronunciation	x
• To correct structures	x

- Written feedback (if applicable)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teacher writes symbols such as “SP” for spelling and “T” for tense near the error to tell students the error types 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teacher explains orally student’s common grammatical error in class 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teacher writes down the correct form of the error after it is identified 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teacher writes down grammatical explanations 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teacher explains orally to individual students 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teacher rewrites the sentences completely 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teacher only underlines or strikes off the grammatical error 	

CHECKLIST 4

TEACHING	
- Use of teaching techniques according to the objectives (e.g. error correction, instructions, explanations,...)	x
- Use and promotion of meaningful communication	
- Learner actively involved in the class	x
CLASS MANAGEMENT	
- Students grouped according to activities	x
- Use of equipment for the class (e.g. neat and organized use of the board)	x
- Use of materials needed for the class	x
- Pace and time management in the development of the class	x
- Ability to deal with occasional classroom management problems	x
- Punctuality	x
- Friendly and respectful with students	x
- Use of body language, gesture and teaching space as needed	x
LANGUAGE USE	
- According to student's level	
- Tone and volume of voice as needed	x
QUESTIONING STRATEGIES	
<i>TYPES OF QUESTIONS ASKED</i>	
- Factual teacher asks a question that students can answer by looking for factual answers	x
- Opinion: teacher asks a question that students can answer by using their own language	

<i>TYPES OF RESPONSES REQUIRED</i>	
- Display: student must provide teacher's required answer	X
- Referential: student must provide answer that involves own thought and reasoning	
<i>SELECTION OF STUDENT</i>	
- Calls students name directly before asking questions	
- Calls students name directly after asking questions	
- Calls for students volunteers after asking questions	X
- Allows students to self-select when to answer	X
- Comes back to students with wrong answer or no answer	
THE USE OF THE MOTHER TONGUE	
- Child is upset	
- Child knows the answer but doesn't know how to say it in English	X
- Child wants to share experience or real information	X
- Teacher or pupil wants to joke	
- Teacher wants to introduce a new game/instruction/content	X
- Teacher doesn't know if the children have understood	X
GIVING INSTRUCTIONS	
- Says things that are visible or obvious	
- Gives instructions that they don't need to know at this point	
- Creates a silence before hand	X
- Makes eye contact with as many students as possible	X
- Finds an authoritative tone and makes sure they are listening before starting	
- Uses silence and gestures to pace the instructions and clarifies their meaning	X

- Demonstrates rather than explains wherever possible	x
- Checks understanding	X
- Uses simple language	X
- Uses short sentences	X
- Repeats instructions in a different way	
- Models instructions for children	X
ERROR CORRECTION FOR ORAL PRACTICE AND WRITTEN FEEDBACK	
- The information is supported by other messages	
If so, which ones? (e.g. gestures, visuals...)	
- The message reduces ambiguity	
- Gets over the problem of poor pronunciation by providing intelligible versions for the whole class	
- Provides learners with the repetition needed for reinforcement of language	x
- Facilitates the development of self-assessment in learning and learning to learn	
- Encourages teacher and peer dialogue around learning	x
- Helps to clarify what good performance is	x
- Provides opportunities to close gap between current and desired performance	
- Delivers high quality information to students about their learning	
- Encourages positive, motivational beliefs and self-esteem	x
- Feedback given is mainly oral	x
If so, why?	
• To correct pronunciation	x

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To correct structures 	x
- Written feedback (if applicable)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teacher writes symbols such as “SP” for spelling and “T” for tense near the error to tell students the error types 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teacher explains orally student’s common grammatical error in class 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teacher writes down the correct form of the error after it is identified 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teacher writes down grammatical explanations 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teacher explains orally to individual students 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teacher rewrites the sentences completely 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teacher only underlines or strikes off the grammatical error 	

CHECKLIST 5

TEACHING	
- Use of teaching techniques according to the objectives (e.g. error correction, instructions, explanations,...)	x
- Use and promotion of meaningful communication	
- Learner actively involved in the class	x
CLASS MANAGEMENT	
- Students grouped according to activities	x
- Use of equipment for the class (e.g. neat and organized use of the board)	x
- Use of materials needed for the class	x
- Pace and time management in the development of the class	x
- Ability to deal with occasional classroom management problems	x
- Punctuality	x
- Friendly and respectful with students	x
- Use of body language, gesture and teaching space as needed	x
LANGUAGE USE	
- According to student's level	x
- Tone and volume of voice as needed	x
QUESTIONING STRATEGIES	
<i>TYPES OF QUESTIONS ASKED</i>	
- Factual teacher asks a question that students can answer by looking for factual answers	x
- Opinion: teacher asks a question that students can answer by using their own language	

<i>TYPES OF RESPONSES REQUIRED</i>	
- Display: student must provide teacher's required answer	x
- Referential: student must provide answer that involves own thought and reasoning	
<i>SELECTION OF STUDENT</i>	
- Calls students name directly before asking questions	
- Calls students name directly after asking questions	x
- Calls for students volunteers after asking questions	
- Allows students to self-select when to answer	
- Comes back to students with wrong answer or no answer	
THE USE OF THE MOTHER TONGUE	
- Child is upset	
- Child knows the answer but doesn't know how to say it in English	x
- Child wants to share experience or real information	x
- Teacher or pupil wants to joke	
- Teacher wants to introduce a new game/instruction/content	x
- Teacher doesn't know if the children have understood	x
GIVING INSTRUCTIONS	
- Says things that are visible or obvious	x
- Gives instructions that they don't need to know at this point	x
- Creates a silence before hand	
- Makes eye contact with as many students as possible	x
- Finds an authoritative tone and makes sure they are listening before starting	
- Uses silence and gestures to pace the instructions and clarifies their meaning	x

- Demonstrates rather than explains wherever possible	
- Checks understanding	X
- Uses simple language	X
- Uses short sentences	X
- Repeats instructions in a different way	
- Models instructions for children	X
ERROR CORRECTION FOR ORAL PRACTICE AND WRITTEN FEEDBACK	
- The information is supported by other messages	x
If so, which ones? (e.g. gestures, visuals...)	
Gestures.	
- The message reduces ambiguity	x
- Gets over the problem of poor pronunciation by providing intelligible versions for the whole class	
- Provides learners with the repetition needed for reinforcement of language	x
- Facilitates the development of self-assessment in learning and learning to learn	
- Encourages teacher and peer dialogue around learning	
- Helps to clarify what good performance is	x
- Provides opportunities to close gap between current and desired performance	
- Delivers high quality information to students about their learning	
- Encourages positive, motivational beliefs and self-esteem	x
- Feedback given is mainly oral	x
If so, why?	
• To correct pronunciation	x
• To correct structures	

- Written feedback (if applicable)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teacher writes symbols such as “SP” for spelling and “T” for tense near the error to tell students the error types 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teacher explains orally student’s common grammatical error in class 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teacher writes down the correct form of the error after it is identified 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teacher writes down grammatical explanations 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teacher explains orally to individual students 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teacher rewrites the sentences completely 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teacher only underlines or strikes off the grammatical error 	

APPENDIX III- TEACHER'S INTERVIEWS**INTERVIEW 1****TEACHING METHODS**

- What lesson structure do you usually carry out? Why?

I usually follow the PPP structure because it is good for practising and for developing students' confidence.

- How often do you use storytelling?

As often as I can, teaching science, it's a little bit more difficult, but there are still many storybooks to illustrate and help out science topics. For example, Billy and the monster is good for parts of the body and parts of the house, Ketchup on your cornflakes? Is good for healthy and unhealthy food...

-How frequently do you set up pair and group work activities?

I try to set up pair work at least once a week. Sometimes it is to do very detailed and structured activities, but some other times it is just to let them share answers of questions I ask the class as a whole or to revise vocabulary. For example, if we are learning about landscapes, I set them into pairs, show them a photograph and give them a couple of minutes to tell each other which elements they can see. When we do that, I walk around the class checking that everybody is on task. At some other points, we organise activities, where they perform experiments in a group work situation

LESSON PREPARATION

-Are lesson plans adapted to the number of students and needs of the students?

Lesson plans are just a guide, things might change unexpectedly, and you, as a teacher, need to adapt to the new situation. Lesson plans need to be valid for everybody in the class, so it's worth spending some time thinking and writing down how you can adapt a topic or an activity for your students.

-Do you have clear and specific objectives for each lesson?

We always need to have a clear objective for the lesson and it is very important we share it with the students so that they know what we are looking for. It is not efficient to have lots of different objectives in one class, it is much better to have few but very clear ones.

-Do you select the equipment and materials according to the objectives of the lesson?

Depending on the objectives and contents of the lesson I will select different materials. If we are learning about plants, it will be a good idea to present students with a real plant and get them to experiment planting their own seeds.

-Do you prepare the time according to the objectives of the lesson and the activities presented.

Although the three parts of my lesson have different timings, I devote more or less time to different activities. Also, there are some activities to be done in a short lesson when students are more tired and other activities that will be done in longer lessons when students are more able to concentrate.

INTERVIEW 2

TEACHING METHODS

- What lesson structure do you usually carry out? Why?

I do not have a structure on which I base my lessons. Depending on the topic and the students I choose one structure or another.

- How often do you use storytelling?

I try to use storytelling frequently because it motivates children and has contents of other subjects.

-How frequently do you set up pair and group work activities?

I set up pair and group work when it is required by the task. I do not have a specific day when I set up these kinds of activities.

LESSON PREPARATION

-Are lesson plans adapted to the number of students and needs of the students?

They are not as adapted as they should because we use lesson plans from text books so we usually have to adapt them according to our students.

-Do you have clear and specific objectives for each lesson?

Not always.

-Do you select the equipment and materials according to the objectives of the lesson?

Yes I do, but sometimes I select the equipment and materials and then I adapt the lesson.

-Do you prepare the time according to the objectives of the lesson and the activities presented.

I try to do that but I often have to change this preparation during the lesson.

INTERVIEW 3

TEACHING METHODS

- What lesson structure do you usually carry out? Why?

I use a PPP structure because students are used to it and I feel more comfortable carrying out this structure.

- How often do you use storytelling?

As many times as possible because it allows me work at the same time different areas.

-How frequently do you set up pair and group work activities?

I try to set up these kinds of activities usually once a week. This is because we have the lesson in the afternoon and they are less concentrated so they need to be given extra motivation.

LESSON PREPARATION

-Are lesson plans adapted to the number of students and needs of the students?

Yes they are.

-Do you have clear and specific objectives for each lesson?

Not for each lesson but for each unit.

-Do you select the equipment and materials according to the objectives of the lesson?

Yes, I try to provide the children with different materials.

-Do you prepare the time according to the objectives of the lesson and the activities presented.

I often plan what I want to do but the time I spend working each activity depends on the students.

INTERVIEW 4TEACHING METHODS

- What lesson structure do you usually carry out? Why?

It depends on the contents because I think we have to adapt our lessons to what we are going to teach.

- How often do you use storytelling?

I usually use storytelling twice a unit.

-How frequently do you set up pair and group work activities?

It also depends on the task. I try to set up these activities but I do not force their use.

LESSON PREPARATION

-Are lesson plans adapted to the number of students and needs of the students?

They are not adapted because we use the same plans every year so each teacher decides how to adapt the lesson plan to his or her class.

-Do you have clear and specific objectives for each lesson?

Yes, I have. I have very few but specific aims I want to achieve each lesson.

-Do you select the equipment and materials according to the objectives of the lesson?

As all units have the same structure, I use the same materials in the same section of all units.

-Do you prepare the time according to the objectives of the lesson and the activities presented.

I try to devote more or less the same time to each activity.

INTERVIEW 5

TEACHING METHODS

- What lesson structure do you usually carry out? Why?

PPP structure because children have time to get used to the new vocabulary, and they have opportunities to practice as well.

- How often do you use storytelling?

Every week because children are motivated when I use this resource so they are more willing to learn.

-How frequently do you set up pair and group work activities?

I also set up group activities every week because they motivate children too and it is also important that they have collaborate and work together while doing these activities.

LESSON PREPARATION

-Are lesson plans adapted to the number of students and needs of the students?

They are planned for 25 children, which is the number of students that this school usually has in per class.

-Do you have clear and specific objectives for each lesson?

Sometimes but it is more frequent to have objectives for each unit.

-Do you select the equipment and materials according to the objectives of the lesson?

Depending on the activity pupils collaborate with me in the elaboration of materials.

-Do you prepare the time according to the objectives of the lesson and the activities presented.

No, I do not. I usually devote the same time for each stage of the PPP structure.

APPENDIX IV- LESSON PLAN TBL

This is a speaking lesson on the theme of planning a holiday trip that uses a listening exercise to provide language input.

Preparation and materials: A recording of two people planning a holiday trip.

Pre-task (15-20min). The aim is to introduce the topic and to give the class exposure to language related to it.

Firstly, teacher shows pictures of two friends in a bar and asks students where they go to have fun on holidays. Afterwards, there is a brainstorm of words and phrases related to the topic that is written on the board. Finally, teacher plays the listening of the two people and writes different options on the board (village/beach/mountain). The aim of the listening is to select from those options and to note down some language related to it. As a preparation for the task, teacher tells them that they are going to plan a trip and give a few minutes to think.

Task (10min)

Learners do the task in pairs and then they are joined with other pair to compare their plans.

Planning (10min)

Each pair trains for the presentation while the teacher helps them in case there is any doubt.

Report (20 min)

Class listens to the plans with the objective of choosing one of them. After all the pairs have finished their presentations, teacher gives feedback and students vote one plan.

Language Focus (15 min)

Teacher writes on the board three good phrases that students have used and three incorrect sentences. Students have to discuss the meaning and correct the sentences.

Then, the teacher highlights any language that he wants to draw attention.