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ENGLISH LANGUAGE ACQUISITION AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE IN TWO PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN THE EUROPEAN CONTEXT

TRABAJO FIN DE GRADO
EN EDUCACIÓN PRIMARIA

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ABSTRACT

Learning of a second language is compulsory in almost every school in the European context. The best method or approach followed to communicate in English as a foreign language is nowadays a controversial issue in the educational field. There are a huge range of approaches used in the European schools to achieve this goal that goes from the more traditionalists to the latest trends. This Final Degree Project explores the relevance of English language acquisition in Europe and the method of teaching English in two concrete schools in the European context, a Dutch Dalton Primary School in Utrecht, The Netherlands and a Spanish Bilingual Primary School in Palencia, Spain. This study is based on observation of the teaching practice, surveys and interviews conducted with teachers from both schools.

Key words: teaching methods, language acquisition, European context, English as a second language, approach, ICT support, skills, Dutch students, Spanish students.

RESUMEN

El aprendizaje de una segunda lengua es obligatorio en casi todas las escuelas del contexto europeo. Hoy en día, el mejor método utilizado en la comunicación en Inglés como lengua extranjera es un tema controvertido en el campo educativo. Hay una gran variedad de métodos utilizados en las escuelas europeas para lograr este objetivo que va desde los más tradicionalistas a las últimas tendencias. Este Proyecto Fin de Carrera explora la relevancia de la adquisición de la lengua inglesa en Europa y el método de enseñanza del inglés empleado en dos escuelas concretas del contexto europeo, una escuela primaria holandesa basada en la metodología Dalton en Utrecht, Países Bajos y una escuela primaria española bilingüe en Palencia, España. Este estudio se basa en la observación de las prácticas de enseñanza, encuestas y entrevistas realizadas con los maestros de ambas escuelas.

Palabras clave: métodos de enseñanza, adquisición del lenguaje, contexto europeo, inglés como segundo idioma, TIC, competencias, alumnado holandés y español.

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1. INTRODUCTION

The consolidation of English as a global and European lingua franca is a basic assumption more than assumed globally. The dominance of English as a foreign language during schooling is formally proposed as a goal to achieve so that all citizens can fully benefit from the right to free movement, while contributing to a better mutual understanding between the people of Europe.

The current survey starts from a theoretical framework about languages acquisition and learning approaches throughout the history since the Century XX when all of this methods and approaches came up and got importance in the educational field. These theoretical foundations are followed by the place that foreign languages learning and acquisition represent in the European educative legislation and guidelines. As a result, learning English as a second language during the primary level, is on the curriculum of mostly all the European countries.

This Project is the product of the analysis made about how two schools located in the European context face teaching English as a second language. Both schools are the two educational contexts where I did my internship as a prospective English teacher. A Dutch school in Utrecht (The Netherlands), as I took part in an Erasmus mobility, and a Spanish Bilingual School in Palencia (Spain) as part of my training internship at my home university.

My interest to start doing research about this topic, began during my two teacher training periods. In the Dutch school the English acquisition is carry out in a specific way because of the demands of that concrete context. This approach seemed to me different and unusual compared with the learning techniques that I studied at my home university. Those ones are more future oriented and advocate to a bilingual approach. For these reason, when I started my internship in a Spanish bilingual school, I realised about the differences in both contexts. These two experiences encourage me to compare and analyse these two schools deal in terms of English as a second language.

Therefore, I will study the two different ways to acquire English as a foreign language in these two primary school, using participant observation, interviews and surveys taking into account the teachers' opinion in order to draw conclusions.

2. GOALS

This Final Degree Project study is carried out with the main aim to analyse and explore the approach or method of English teaching and the teachers' perspectives in two concrete schools in the European context. This study is intended to achieve the following general goals:

1. Being aware of the importance of learning foreign languages in our European context.
2. Relevance of English language acquisition in Europe.
3. Research about the different methods and approaches in terms of foreign language acquisition, specifically learning English as a foreign language.
4. Collect data through observation of the teachers' practice, surveys and interviews.
5. Analyse the data collected:
 - a. To investigate the method used in each school.
 - b. To investigate the type activities used for the learning of English.
 - c. To investigate the use of ICTs support in the English lessons.
 - d. To recognize the skills more developed during English lessons.
 - e. To present the teachers' thoughts about the quality of both methods.
6. Draw conclusions.

Moreover, this final degree project also involves the implementation of a wide range of skills, both general and specific, of those formulated in the *Artículo 16 de la Ley Orgánica 2/2006 de 3 de mayo, de Educación*, to provide educational Primary Education. By its accomplishment, I have demonstrated the achievement of the objectives set out in the Degree, as well as my ability to pursue the regulated profession of primary education.

3. JUSTIFICATION

Finding the more effective method on teaching English as a second language is one of the current questions that have come up to the mind of every English teacher at least once in his or her life. As a prospective English teacher I am also very interested about this issue. Having experienced two different ways of working in two different schools in also two different countries made me reflect on the reasons why those two schools follow two different approaches in English language acquisition.

For me it is very important to uncover the language teaching methods that guide the teaching action. Seeking to determine which principles of the methods are most (dis)harmonious with my own thinking will help me to uncover some of my implicit thoughts and beliefs about teaching which I have acquired during my formative years. This work has as its main objective to analyse and show how two primary schools in the European context to see the way of teaching English as a second language and how this is influenced by the context, students and teachers.

4. BACKGROUND AND THEORETICAL FOUNDATIONS

Teaching English as a second language is one of the most controversial issues in Education over the last twenty years. Nowadays, there is a growing awareness all over the world of the importance on testing the quality of the methods and the effectiveness of the practice in second language acquisition. Beside this, the truth is that there have come up very diverse approaches to teach English to children around the world.

At this point it is necessary to make a distinction between two concepts: *acquisition* and *learning*. Some theorists, like the American applied linguist Stephen Krashen in the 1980s, have suggested that we have two different ways of developing ability in another language: we can *acquire* language, and we can *learn* a language. According to S. Krashen in his book *Second Language Acquisition and Second Language Learning* (1988), second language acquisition is a subconscious and anxiety free process that arises from knowledge or wisdom of a language, while learning is a conscious result of knowledge about a language. For Krashen, acquire language it is more prosperous and lasting than learning it.

“Whereas the former is subconscious and anxiety free, learning is a conscious process where separate items from the language are studied and practised in turn” (Krashen, 1988). Harold Palmer made a similar distinction between *spontaneous* and *studial* capacities in his book *Principles of Language-Study* (1921). The discussion between the two terms becomes relevant when we think about what we should do in class with our students. According to Harmer (2010) we can go further and say that in order to create a rich classroom environment we would need both acquisition and learning because they have their part to play in language getting for students during primary education.

Teaching and learning a second language has three factors that influence the achievement of that process. These factors are the profile of the teacher, the student profile and the context. Teacher's behaviour strongly influences the students, and consequently affects the learning process. Therefore, teachers must know the motivations and interests of their students, respond to their demands and also play the role of guiding this process. The characteristics of students and their level of communicative competence also influence the acquisition of a second language. Group

interaction is essential to be able to communicate in a second language. The student must not only be prepared to work individually, but must intervene, participate and cooperate with peers in activities, generating some interdependence. In addition the teacher-student interaction is decisive, giving the student a special co-ownership, since it is the recipient of the information, process it, reflects their knowledge and solves or corrects their own mistakes.

The context becomes one of the fundamental factors in learning a foreign language at all levels: social, communicative, linguistic and cultural context.

According to Diane Larsen-Freeman *Techniques and Principles in Language Teaching* (2000), a method is a link between thoughts and actions and also connections between one thought-in-action link to another. "A method is a coherent set of such links in the sense that there should be some theoretical or philosophical compatibility among the links".

Jeremy Harmer (2010) suggests that the keys to successful teaching methods are some specific elements or characteristics. These elements are "engage", "study" and "activate". Activities and materials which engage students such as games, music, videos stimulating pictures, dramatic stories, amusing anecdotes; study activities "where the students are asked to focus on the construction of something"; and activate activities "which are designed to get students using language as freely and communicatively as they can".

On the other hand, throughout the history, there have been conformed different methods to teach foreign languages. There are significant differences between "traditional" vs. "current" approaches to language teaching for primary school students. Among the many ideas and techniques that have been offered in recent years, some trends have had - and still have - a significant impact on how languages are taught today. Due to the efforts to improve the effectiveness of language teaching, the methods are constantly changing and being updated.

- The Grammar-translation method

Appeared during the 80's, this method has the fundamental purpose of learning a foreign language to be able to read and appreciate literature written in the target language. The method introduced the idea of presenting students with short grammar rules and word lists, and then translation exercises in which they had to make use of the same rules and words.

According to Jeremy Harmer in his book *How to teach English (2007)*, “grammar-translation still has relevance today, though it is not practised as a method describing learning and teaching in the same way. But most language learners translate in their heads at various stages anyway, and they (and we) can learn a lot about a foreign language by comparing parts of it with parts of our own **mother tongue**. However, a total concentration on grammar translation stops students from getting the kind of natural language input that will help them acquire language (since they are always looking at LI equivalents), and it fails to give them opportunities to activate their language knowledge. If they are always translating the language, they are not using the L2 for communication. The danger with Grammar translation, in other words, is that it teaches people *about* language but doesn't really help them to communicate effectively with it.” (Harmer, 2007)

- The Direct Method

As Diane Larsen-Freeman, state in her book *Techniques and principals in Language Teaching (2000)*, this method has one very basic rule: no translation is allowed. This method receives its name from the fact that students associate meaning directly in the target language. In order to do this, when the teacher introduces a new target language word or phrase demonstrates its meaning through the use of realia, pictures or pantomime. As a result, students speak in the target language a great deal and communicate as if they were in real situations. In fact, the syllabus used in the Direct method is based upon situations. Grammar is taught inductively. The goal of this method is made students learn to think in the target language.

- The Audio-Lingual Method

This approach started in the 1940s in the context of army education. A few years later, during the 1950s was developed and improved by the appearance of the language laboratory in the 1960s. As J. Harmer suggested in his book *How to teach English* (2007) It made use of and took advantage of the description of the grammatical patterns of English, in order to make students repeat and learn them. In this **structural-situational** teaching, grammatical structures were given in simple situations exemplifying their usage. Gradually, students started learning first the easiest structures and later on, they moved onto things that were more complex.

- The Silent Way

The Silent Way is the name of a method of language teaching devised by Caleb Gattegno. It is based on the premise that the teacher should be silent as much as possible in the classroom but the learner should be encouraged to produce as much language as possible. This method belongs to a tradition that views learning as a problem-solving, creative, discovering activity, in which the learner is a principal actor rather than a bench-bound listener.

- Desuggestopedia

Desuggestopedia, also known as suggestopedia is a method developed by the Bulgarian psychiatrist-educator Georgi Lozanov. The method proposes to cut down the negative association that students have towards studying. Not to set up psychological barriers to learning, ie, make students believe that they are able to perform, that they won't be limited in their capacity to learn, that they will succeed. This author suggests that we do not use our full mental capacities, we use around fifty percent. So as to use a hundred percent of our mental capacity, the limitations students think they have, should be "desuggested".

Lozanov does not seem to be concerned with any particular assumptions regarding language acquisition elements. He has a view of language in which lexical translation is highlighted rather than contextualization. The emphasis is on memorization of vocabulary pairs with a target language item and its native translation.

- Communicative Language Teaching (CLT)

According to Diane Larsen Freeman (2000), Communicative Language Teaching aims broadly to apply the theoretical perspective of the Communicative Approach (Widdowson 1990) by making communicative competence the goal of language teaching and by acknowledging the interdependence of language and communication. What this looks like in the classroom may depend on how the tenets are interpreted and applied.

- Total Physical Response

Total physical response (TPR) is a language teaching method established between the connexion of speech and action; it tries to teach language through physical (motor) activity. Developed by James Asher, a professor of psychology at San Jose State University, California, it draws on several traditions, including developmental psychology, learning theory, and humanistic pedagogy, as well as on language teaching producers proposed by Harold and Dorothy Palmer in 1925. In a developmental sense, Asher sees successful adult second language learning as a parallel process to child first language acquisition. He states that speech directed to young learners consists firstly of commands which children respond to physically before they begin to produce verbal responses. Asher (1969) shares with the school of humanistic psychology a concern for the role of affective (emotional) factors in language learning. A method that is undemanding in terms of linguistic production and that involves game-like movements reduces learner stress, he believes, and creates a positive mood in the learner, which facilitates learning.

- Task-based learning

According to Jane Willis (1996), Task-based learning is not just about getting learners to do one task and then another task, and then another. For the task to promote constant learning and improvement, it should be seen as one more component in an extensive framework.

“The framework consists of three phases: pre-task, task cycle and language focus. The pre-task phase introduces the class to the topic and the task, activating topic-related words and phrases”. Jane Willis (1996)

The task cycle allow students to use the language they already know in order perform the task. Following teacher's guidance, they improve that language while planning their reports of the task. Feedback from the teacher is given at the planning stage, and after the report. Depending on the type of task, exposure to language in use can be provided at different moments. Both before and during the task cycle, students might listen to recordings of other people doing the task, or read a text connected with the task topic, and relate this to their own experience of doing the task. So the "TBL framework provides the three basic conditions for language learning – exposure, use and motivation. Within the framework, there is a natural progression from the holistic to the specific. The task cycle offers learners a holistic experience of language in use". Jane Willis (1996)

The last phase in the framework, language focus, offers a closer study of some of the specific features naturally occurring in the language used during the task cycle. By this point, students will have already worked with the language and processed it for meaning, so they are ready to focus on the specific language forms that carry that meaning. In this manner, the study of these forms is clearly contextualized through the task itself. This last phase includes analysis and practise components. It also accomplishes the fourth extra condition for learning- explicit study of language form.

A wide range of topics, texts and task types gives learners variety. A framework such as this, with its three distinct phases, also gives them a sense of security. Language learners need both variety and security.

In TBL lessons, the teacher is generally a 'facilitator', always keeping the key conditions for learning in mind. Facilitating learning involves balancing the amount of exposure and use of language, and ensuring they are both of suitable quality.

- Project work

The term "project" refers to an extensive in-detailed study or investigation of a certain topic. Project investigations are usually started by a whole class, with small groups within it working on particular subtopics. The main characteristic of a project is that it comes up from the pupil's interests and motivations. The

investigation includes a huge range of research processes and procedures that involve children in seeking answers to questions they have formulated individually as well as together and in cooperation with their teacher. The topics of projects can vary broadly, depend on the ages of the children and the context where they live. "The investigators share their hunches and guesses and predictions about what the answers to their questions might be. The investigators then come to agreement concerning what they want to find out and generate a list of questions about the topic. They then discuss what kinds of data they would need to obtain in order to be able to answer their questions and to check their predictions, as well as where and how they could obtain the needed data. They also share ideas about to whom to pose their questions, which experts to invite and to interview, and finally conclude the project by preparing detailed documentation that serves as a report of their findings". Lilian G. Katz, Sylvia C. Chard, Yvonne Kogan (2014)

Every project is different but the common characteristics of these projects are: the hard work and the personal experience for students, development of creativity and is a highly adaptable methodology for every level.

- CLIL

The acronym CLIL (Content and Language Integrated Learning) started to become the most widely used term for this kind of provision during the 1990s. CLIL is the platform for an innovative methodological approach of far broader scope than language teaching. Accordingly, its advocates stress how it seeks to develop proficiency in both the non-language subject and the language in which this is taught, attaching the same importance to each. Furthermore, achieving this twofold aim calls for the development of a special approach to teaching in that the non-language subject is not taught in a foreign language but with and through a foreign language. This implies a more integrated approach to both teaching and learning, requiring that teachers should devote special thought not just to how languages should be taught, but to the educational process in general.

Over and above these special considerations, CLIL and other forms of bilingual or immersion teaching share certain common features that many experts are fond of emphasising. In organisational terms, for example, CLIL enables languages to be taught on a relatively intensive basis without claiming an excessive share of the

school timetable. It is also inspired by important methodological principles established by research on foreign language teaching, such as the need for learners to be exposed to a situation calling for genuine communication. (Eurydice, 2006, p. 8). *Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) at School in Europe*

The overall goals of CLIL are really diverse but can include:

- Cultivate intercultural communication skills
- ICT literacy
- Get ready for internationalism
- Offer opportunities to study content through different perspectives
- Access subject-specific target language terminology
- Improve overall target language competence
- Improve oral communication skills
- Propose methods and diverse forms of classroom practice
- Increase student's motivation.

These are often expressed as the '4Cs', Meyer (2010):

- Content matter is not only about acquiring knowledge and skills, it is about the learners creating their own knowledge and understanding and developing skills (personalised learning);
- Content is related to learning and thinking (cognition). To enable the learners to create their own interpretation of content, it must be analysed for its linguistic demands; thinking processes (cognition) need to be analysed in terms of their linguistic demands;
- Communication: language needs to be learned through communication, reconstructing the content and its related cognitive processes. This language needs to be transparent and accessible; interaction in the learning context is fundamental to learning. This has implications when the learning context operates through the medium of a foreign language;
- Culture: the relationship between culture and languages is complex. Intercultural awareness is fundamental to CLIL. Its rightful place is at the core of CLIL.

Foreign Language Acquisition in the European Context

In the recent years, increasing communication skills in foreign languages has become one of the axes of educational policy throughout Europe. Since the year 2001, European Year of Languages, language learning and linguistic diversity is promoted in the EU and the Member States. In this year, the European Council for Cultural Cooperation, published the Common European Framework for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment. Since then, this document has been used as the policy of reference for all the European countries in the field of foreign languages learning.

Since 2009, language learning is a priority area linked to the strategic objective "Improving the quality and effectiveness of education and training" Strategic Framework for cooperation in the field of education and training, *Strategical Framework: Education and Training 2020 (ET2020)*.

In the field of education and vocational training, the EU Treaties assigned to the Union's work to support and complement the efforts of Member States aimed at developing the European dimension in education, particularly through the learning and dissemination of the languages of the Member States (Article 165, paragraph 2 TFEU) in full respect for their cultural and linguistic diversity (Article 165 paragraph 1 TFEU). *Articles 2 and 3 of the Treaty on European Union (TEU) and Articles 6 and 165 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU)*.

The language policy of the European Union (EU) has its efforts to promote mobility and intercultural understanding. The EU has designated language learning as an important priority and funds numerous programs and projects in this field. The guidelines in recent years from the European Union and the Council of Europe in education have agreed and repeatedly emphasized the importance of multilingualism as a factor in the competitiveness of the states that make up the European space. Indeed, the harmonious coexistence of many languages is a symbol that perfectly exemplifies one of the guiding principles of the Union: unity in diversity. However, this linguistic wealth also poses significant challenges, making it necessary to devise measures to overcome existing language barriers and facilitate communication between people of different countries. For this reason, the fact that every European citizen masters two other languages in

addition to their mother tongue has become one of the objectives within the European language policy.

The best way to achieve this is that children from an early age come into contact with two foreign languages. It has been shown that this not only accelerates the learning of languages, but also improves the skills in the mother tongue. The EU supports language teaching for the following reasons:

- improving language skills allows more people to study or work abroad and it improves their employment prospects
- speaking other languages helps to understand people of different cultures, which is essential in a multilingual and multicultural Europe
- to operate effectively across Europe businesses need multilingual staff
- the language industry-translation and interpretation, language teaching, language technologies, etc. is one of the branches of the economy growing faster.

Key Data on Teaching Languages at School in Europe 2012, shows that the tendency is that European students “start learning foreign languages at an increasingly early age generally between 6 and 9 years old”. Another finding of this study shows that “English is by far the dominating foreign language in Europe”. “In 2009/10, on average, 73 % of students enrolled in primary education in the EU were learning English.”

For many years now, language teaching has featured prominently in Community recommendations regarding education. In this context, the EU in the field of Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) has launched several initiatives. One of the latest initiatives to promote this methodological approach, was the deliberations of experts within the Group on Languages (set up under the ‘Education and Training’ Work Programme up to 2010), as well as the circulation of information on good practice in the field of CLIL in the Member States, will certainly contribute to its development.

The learning of foreign languages is included in the curriculum of compulsory education in all European countries. I am going to focus on foreign language learning in two educational systems of Europe: Spain and The Netherlands.

Spanish policies about foreign languages learning

According to the *Ley Orgánica 8/2013, de 9 de diciembre, para la Mejora de la Calidad Educativa, que regula la enseñanza primaria en España, el Real Decreto 126/2014, de 28 de febrero*, which establishes the curriculum of Basic Primary Education, this stage comprises six academic courses, which attend between six and twelve years old, and is organized in areas that will have a global and inclusive character.

Following the Article 8 Organization of the quoted Law, The students are required to take the following compulsory areas core subjects in each of the courses: Natural Sciences, Social Sciences, Spanish Language and Literature, Mathematics, First Foreign Language, Physical Education and Religion or Social Values and Civic, at the choice of parents or legal guardians. Depending on the regulatory and educational programming offer established by each education authority and, where appropriate, of supply centre teachers, at least one of the following areas of block specific subjects: Art Education and/or Second Foreign Language.

Regarding foreign language learning (Article 13), the Educational Administrations may provide that a part of the curriculum subjects are taught in foreign languages without involving modification of the basic aspects of the curriculum regulated by the mentioned Royal Decree. In this case, they shall ensure that throughout the stage students acquire the terminology of the subjects in both languages.

The institutions providing part of the curriculum subjects in foreign languages apply in any case, the criteria for admission of students established in the *Ley Orgánica 2/2006 de 3 de Mayo*. Such criteria shall not include linguistic requirements.

The Spanish language or the official language will only be used as a support in the process of learning a foreign language. Priority will be given to understanding and oral expression.

Measures and methodological alternatives will be established in the teaching and assessment of the foreign language for students with disabilities, especially for one who has difficulties in speaking. These adaptations in no case should be taken into account to lessen the grades obtained.

According to the Article 7 Primary Education Objectives, one of them state that (...)f) Acquire, in at least one foreign language, skills to enable them to express and understand simple messages and function in everyday situations.

First Foreign Language

Ley Orgánica 8/2013 advocates for the development of the acquisition of one or more foreign languages, placed among the goals in which is geared our current education system. It is obvious that in the long run, mastering a second language has a positive effect on the personal development of students by enabling THEM TO significantly expand their possibilities to continue studies or enter the labour market; it is necessary to draw attention also on the significant impact that can be derived FROM THE cognitive level of learning foreign languages at an early age. Indeed, numerous studies seem to confirm that the acquisition in the primary stage of communication skills in a language other than mother tongue is usually associated with improved outcomes in other fields such as mathematical competence, artistic expression or domain in reading and writing.

It has also been found that the study of other languages encourages the development of auditory memory and listening skills, contributing in this way significantly to the development of communication skills in all aspects. Finally, in a deeper level, there is a broad agreement in recognizing the beneficial effect that are implemented through the learning of other languages in the development of adequate awareness of the diversity of our society, the acceptance of differences as an enriching factor and in the development of understanding, tolerance and appreciation of other cultural identities.

The core curriculum for Primary Education is structured around language activities as they are described in the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: comprehension and production (expression and interaction) of oral and written texts.

At the stage of primary education should be taken into account that we start from a basic level of competence both on communicative interaction and understanding and production of texts. It is always essential to refer to familiar contexts for students of this age, so taking advantage of previously acquired knowledge and skills and experience the student possesses. Starting from this fact, a contextualized language use is encouraged, within the framework of own communicative situations in various areas

and allows the use of real and motivating language. The use games, especially in the early years, and performing joint tasks are not only essential elements to properly lay the foundation for language acquisition, but may also contribute to that matter. Far from being limited to be a mere object of study, it is also becoming an instrument of socialization to the group. As students advance in age will be gradually introduced more theoretical explanations, evolving from a first processing semantics essentially a more advanced syntactic processing.

Second Foreign Language

The study of a second foreign language involves developing valid strategies to learn many more, since the comparison and contrast between different linguistic codes involves further development of the ability to establish similarities and contrasts and infer or deduce general rules.

By integrating all these aspects, the core curriculum, as in the case of the First Foreign Language, is structured around language activities as they are described in the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: comprehension and production (expression and interaction) of oral and written texts. However, it is necessary to note that expectations regarding the level of competition to be achieved in the study of a second foreign language must be, at least initially lower than those set for the first, as reflected in the standards assessable expected learning. From this perspective it is significant the concept of partial competence, as described in the Framework, noting that it is not accepted in principle a restricted knowledge of a language, but to understand that within its limitation, a management however it limited it helps to extend the multilingual skills of students.

With respect to methodology, should apply the same principles expressed in relation to the study of the first foreign language, but should take into account the differences at the level of motivation. Always on the assumption that the basic competency level is very basic, so both communicative interaction and understanding and text production, will be always essential to refer to familiar contexts for students of this age and taking advantage of previously acquired knowledge and skills and experience he possesses.

Foreign language teaching Curriculum in Castilla y León

In this point, it is necessary to clarify that I mention foreign language teaching Curriculum in Castilla y León because one of the school of the study is regulated by the concretion of the national curriculum in the autonomous community of Castilla y León according to its legislation.

Regarding First Foreign Language, The Curriculum takes as a reference the Common European Framework for Languages. The core curriculum presented for the stage of Primary Education is structured around two main pillars such as comprehension and production (expression and interaction) of oral and written texts. Therefore, the curriculum is systematized around the following blocks:

- Block 1: Understanding oral texts.
- Block 2: Production of oral texts: expression and interaction.
- Block 3: Understanding written texts.
- Block 4: Production of written texts: expression and interaction.

METHODOLOGICAL GUIDELINES

The elements constituting the stage of primary education are aimed at achieving effective communication skills in various significant and covering a wide variety of oral and written discourse social contexts. Learning a foreign language is based on the development of the four language skills according to the European Framework for Languages: Listening, speaking, reading comprehension and writing.

The main objective of the area of foreign language is the active use of language in a communicative context. Teaching practice would not be understood if the teachers did not use the foreign language from the start. Lessons should be taught in English. It will be through the use of it when students feel the need to use the language in the classroom. The teacher will design tasks and communication projects, taking into account the elements of the curriculum and the needs of students.

The teacher will assume the role of mentor, promoter and facilitator in the student skills development, designing activities that must be solved, making appropriate use of different types of knowledge, skills, attitudes and values. One of the key elements in teaching competency is to awake and maintain the motivation to learn in students. This

approach involves the role of student, active and independent, conscious of being responsible for their own learning. Active methodologies are based on cooperative learning structures, so that, through the joint resolution of tasks, group members know the strategies used by peers and may apply to similar situations.

Learning a language is always linked to the acquisition of cultural content, therefore, sociocultural and sociolinguistic aspects go together. The use by the students to make it part of life and language in the classroom is encouraged. This allows the development of a series of implicit attitudes in teaching foreign languages that teachers also observe and assess the classroom work, such as showing curiosity, interest and respect towards other realities and cultures, identifying habits, stories, rhymes, traditional songs, games, customs and celebrations of other countries, expressing curiosity about communicating with children from other countries.

(...) The second language is not related to the advancement of information and communications technology as a teaching resource.

(...) To promote the integration of the four skills of language, while promoting other common skills such as creativity, entrepreneurship and effort can resort to the use of working in pairs, project work, learning based in trouble, the development of autonomous and collective projects, further enhancing interaction and collaboration among students.

Regarding teaching of a second foreign language, in the course 2014-2015 and 2015-16 authorized schools to provide a second foreign language in 5th and 6th grade of primary education, in accordance *ORDEN EDU / 1330/2009, de 19 de junio*, why the teaching of the second foreign language in the third cycle of primary education, in schools supported with public funds from the Community of *Castilla y Leon* is regulated, they may impart respecting the schedule weight of 1 hour per week per course provided in this order.

Dutch policies about foreign languages learning

According to the Dutch Education Policy, Primary Education aims to broadly educate children. Under the terms of Primary Education Act, eight subjects appear in the curriculum, where possible in an integrated form: (1) sensory coordination and physical education; (2) Dutch; (3) arithmetic and mathematics; (4) English; (5) a number of

factual subjects including geography, history, science; (6) social structures (including political studies) and religious and ideological movements; (7) expressive activities, including use of language, drawing, music, handicrafts, and play and movement, (8) social and live skills, including road safety, and (9) healthy living.

Although these subject areas are compulsory, schools are free to decide how much time they devote to each domain. The law as it stands makes Dutch and (in Friesland) Frisian the only permitted media of instruction in primary schools, with English a compulsory subject on the curriculum. Schools are also permitted to offer French and German as subjects.

Primary Education in the Netherlands goes from group 1 at the age of four-five years to the age of 12. This phase is organized in eight grades, called “groups”. In this country children can start primary school at the age of 4 years, but it is compulsory for them to start this period before their fifth birthday.

As the Netherlands’ government published on its website www.government.nl, the 1st August 2014, the first twelve pilot schools started to teach the Bilingual Primary Education (BPE) programme in groups 1 and 2 (children aged between four and six years old). They were joined by further six schools on 1 January 2015. One school is part of the network of trilingual primary schools in Friesland. The pilot was established for five years and it is the intention to start BPE in group 1 and to expand as children progress through the school.

From 1st August 2015, primary schools are permitted to set aside 15% of their classroom time using one of these languages as a medium of instruction. Pupils do not only learn English, for instance, as a subject on the curriculum; they will also take other subjects, such as history, biology or PE, through the medium of English. This Cabinet decision came in response to the aspiration of schools and parents to give children an education that is more international, more challenging, and less bound by rules.

Schools received the first document for the BPE curriculum in June 2014. It has the following three main features:

- The Dutch curriculum is the central and guiding point, ensuring that its core objectives are covered

- English language classes and activities are offered 30 to 50 % of school time
- Focus on internationalization.

The pilot starts in group 1 and 2. Students must attain the same skills and knowledge as their peers in regular primary education, at the end of the primary phase.

5. CONTENT

5.1 METHODOLOGY

In this study I have used data collection techniques that best suit the type of research and the topic that I want to investigate. I collected data through a qualitative and quantitative method.

The participants in the present study consist of:

- One group from year six and his teacher in a Spanish Bilingual Primary School.
- Two groups and their teachers in an Dutch Dalton Primary School.

In order to achieve the general goals of this work, I used three different resources to collect information: surveys ([attachment 1](#)), observation ([attachment 3](#)) and semi structured interviews ([attachment 2](#)).

From the observation I got information about the development of the English lessons (routines, steps they follow, timing...). I also gathered data from the teachers by asking them to fill in a survey about general questions of their English practice. In addition, I interview some of the teachers in order to collect more data. To make it easier to gather information, in the surveys and the interviews, I grouped the questions into 6 headings: general questions, teaching practice, skills more developed and how, use of ICT support, assessment and level of English. When analysing data I present the information in four sub-questions: Learning materials and type of activities, use of ICTs support, skills more developed and teachers' perspectives about each method.

5.2 TWO EDUCATIONAL CONTEXTS

Dutch Dalton Primary School

Talking about the school environment, it is a school in the centre of Utrecht, The Netherlands. The school is the oldest public school in the city and was founded in 1824. It is a one-line school.

It is a Dutch Dalton School. It means that they follow the Dalton principles and the language of instruction is Dutch. Dalton principles are the basis. The concepts of

responsibility, independence, collaboration, effectiveness and reflection are the ones on which the school is based.

Most children live in the vicinity of the school. A large part of the older population consists of highly trained, native parents.

In the school every class is divided into three different levels: basic, extra and those who need an extra challenge. Besides, the school is based on develop the 21th Century Skills. They focus on the social and emotional development of the children not only on the knowledge area.

Spanish Bilingual Primary School

This is a state school funded in whole by taxation. The school is located in the city of Palencia, Spain. It is a one-line school, and provides Early Years Education and Primary Education.

The school is adapted for the integration of students with motor disabilities. The 13% of students are considered as "acness" (special needs students).

The school is a bilingual section. At school the subjects of Natural Science and Arts and Crafts are taught in English. In addition French is taught as a second language in grades five and six. It is intended to expand this second language to the area of Physical Education in grades 5 and 6, with the aim of consolidating learning and use of French.

5.3 PRESENTING DATA RESULTS

INTRODUCTION:

Here, I present an analysis based on the information and data that I collected and gathered trough the different methods and techniques used. I have divided this analysis based on five points of interest: (1) the method of instruction, (2) the learning materials and type of activities, (3) the use of ICTs support, (4) skills more developed and (5) the teacher's perspective about the method.

Dutch Dalton Primary School

1st Method of instruction

English lessons are taught with a method called *Take it easy*. In this school, English is their second language and is not used for instructional purposes across the curriculum, nevertheless it is just foreign language taught as a subject in school.

The method was developed for the Dutch market and is based on immersion in British English. *Take it easy* helps and supports the teacher when giving English lessons. The method uses native speaking teachers that help Dutch teachers to facilitate their students to learn English correctly. In perfect English they present the lessons on the whiteboard. However, interaction with the native speaking teachers does not take place.

Take it easy is a method of teaching English with a continuous learning from group 1 to 8. It means that the level of requirement increases with the cognitive development of students. Every lesson starts from an existing online resource. For example, a video from YouTube or an English website. Kathleen Moore, author of *Take it easy*, developed assignments for these sources to. When selecting the sources, it was decided to offer besides the British English also English from other countries. This is to allow the pupils to introduce them there.

2nd Learning materials and type of activities

The English lessons have a fixed structure. The students are introduced to a theme through a film or song. Students learn some basic words needed for the other themes. With films, music clips and assignments the native-speaking co-teachers present the language in an original way and all through the digital board. *Take it easy* fitting provides listening and speaking assignments in the form of a dialogue, cartoon, game or total physical response activity. With anecdotes or jokes they keep the students on track. Through thematic films and music clips, *Take it easy* makes every lesson an experience. Young songwriters specially compose all songs. The songs contain words and phrases from the unit in question. With every song heard they watch an appealing video with young singers or teenager bands. *Take it easy* on the films come into contact with children exciting, funny or sensitive situations of everyday life.

All material *Take it easy* from year 3 to 6, is both on paper and digital formats. The teacher decides when she lets students work with books or workbooks. Teaching and learning materials are very diverse. A *workbook* is a training book that contains the explanation of the language rules and orders. The workbook is part of the interactive whiteboard software. Pupils use workbook on paper. The *answer book* is a workbook filled. So students can easily check their own work. The questions and answers will be expressed via the digital board so students can discuss their answers in class. The *group folder* contains everything teachers need for English classes. Besides the general introduction the group folder contains abstracts per unit and copy sheets.

Take it easy provides differentiation in pace, level and interests. In the workbook, each lesson includes commands for fast learners. The students that can handle more may make assignments in it. In addition, *Take it easy* offers in the form of copy sheets more differentiation:

- Vocabulary sheets and reinforcement sheets for students who present difficulties in learning English.
- Vocabulary sheets for students who can handle better English.
- Story sheets for students who love reading.
- Game sheets for students who like to playfully acquire the language.
- Exercises for students willing to do the lesson again or those lessons that they have missed.

To conclude, there is a huge range of activities in different formats that engage students to learn English. The learning materials are valued because they meet the needs of all students.

3rd Use of ICTs support

Teachers can find all the teaching material in a digital format. All lessons are taught with the support of the digital board. Smart board provides co-native speaking teachers, additional support for dyslexic students, all tasks visually and orally, exercises in the workbook, a listening test, the ability to work independently and 100% digital learning materials.

Take it easy books are also available in digital form but just the teacher has access to it. Students' materials are on paper. Students do not have access to tablets or laptops in order to perform the tasks required, so the use of ICT is just the digital board.

4th Skills more developed

According to the teachers, pupils can develop different skills during English classes. Regarding to 21st Century skills, pupils can achieve skills related to Digital Age Literacy: basic literacy, visual literacy, information literacy and multicultural literacy. About Inventive thinking students work on self-direction, curiosity and creativity. Working on effective communication, pupils develop their interpersonal skills, personal responsibility and interactive communication. Regarding language skills writing, listening, speaking and reading are all highlighted and develop during the lessons.

Teachers create a listening and speaking environment to put into practice what students learn through the digital support. They provide speaking opportunities for learners to experiment and try out what they know and what they learnt. They help pupils to build up their communicative competence. They provide learning opportunities to let pupils develop their accuracy and fluently on their tasks. In the students' learning process all different skills are linked speaking, reading, writing and listening, because all of them take place together in the real world. The role of the teachers is not instructing students, however they guide the pupils learning process.

5th Teacher's perspective about the method

Teachers' perceptions about the method are generally quite positive; they think this method is good enough. Both teachers agree that one of the benefits of this method is that you can work from anywhere. Through the *method at home* teachers have access to all materials and co-teachers of *Take it easy*. Teachers can quickly and easily prepare lessons anywhere they want: at school, at home or on the road: "*In my opinion it is an easy method and it doesn't imply too much work for teachers. It is also good for children because is easy for them*". ([Attachment 2](#))

Another advantage is that teachers have access to observation records for the grades 1 to 6. This lets them monitor the progress of their students. Students in grades 7 and 8 record what they learn and are aware of their progress in their language portfolio. Students can take their English Language Portfolio (ELP) to secondary education, so that the English teacher there gets a good picture of what the student has already mastered. This method provides a good preparation and connection to secondary education. At the end of the group 8 students' level ends up with about A1-A2 basic level.

Besides, teachers' English proficiency is not very high, so using native-speaking co-teachers to support their lessons is really beneficial for students. Teachers can decide if they want to present the lessons by themselves so that they just turn the co-teacher "off."

Moreover, another plus point is that it is cheap for the school. Paying a specialist English teacher or a native speaker is much more expensive than the *Take it easy* method.

On the other hand, teachers think that the main disadvantage is falling into a traditional teaching: *"The bad side of this method could be that sometimes could seem like that is quite traditional because the pupils are sitting in front of the board listening, but is more than that. The method doesn't substitute the teacher, just supports him/her. Therefore it is up to the teacher to make students interact and to share with their own learning process"*.

As a conclusion, teachers are satisfied about *Take it easy* and they would recommend it.

Spanish Bilingual Primary School

1st Method of instruction

As a bilingual school, the methodology used is based on the communicative approach and it is called CLIL (Content and Language Integrated Learning). This methodology aims to integrate teaching English language with the content of other curricular subjects such as Natural Sciences and Art and Crafts.

2nd Learning materials and type of activities

In this school the students start the bilingual education in year 1 and end in year 6.

Regarding Natural Science, the methodology implemented teaches scientific knowledge through the medium of English. The core curricular objectives of Natural Science are progressively introduced to achieve one main objective: to learn the specific natural science's contents through the English language at the same time they acquire the language.

Art and Crafts is taught through a School Project called "Entusiasarte". Its main aim is to provide learners a critical thinking in art. See students as artists and individual authors and as part of a creative group. Develop abilities and visual art skills through English as the language of instruction.

In the subject of English pupils learn about the English culture, cross-curricular themes, everyday language, pronunciation, grammar and vocabulary. All these oriented to learn how to communicate efficiency in this language. Grammar and vocabulary are progressively integrated. The methodology responds to all learning styles, including activities and tasks tailored to the needs of students who favour an active and communicative learning. Using songs, poems and chants for children to practice structure, vocabulary and new sounds; the use of tales and stories to work the vocabulary in a fun and motivating context; dramatizations and role-playing, games or searching for information are examples of activities that take place in the classroom.

In both subjects, Natural Science and English, the text book and the activity book are used as a tool. Teachers have consolidation or extension materials and activities depending on the needs of each group. The learning process is focused on doing rather than memorising. The methodology is focused on cooperative work and learning tasks, couples or groups, which promote both learning the contents of the subject as the communicative use of English. The objective of the task will be conducting a normally combined final product (final task) with an oral presentation and sharing of it. According to the teacher he does not use *a particular methodology or a concrete type or activities, but all the ones that allows me to reach the goals or achievements.*

3rd Use of ICTs support

Teachers can find their teaching materials of the subjects in a digital format or in paper. Text books are in digital format as well as further teacher's resources, which allow teachers to personalise the materials.

All lessons are taught with the support of the digital board. Teachers use online-resources to support their lessons. Students have their own laptops and they use them to perform some of the tasks asked by the teachers such as gathering information, creating oral presentation support, sending e-mails, doing test or interactive activities. This provide digital learning ensuring students to be digitally-literate and able to use digital tools in their learning process.

4th Skills more developed

Working with Literacy in Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) is fundamental nowadays because technology is part of our daily lives. ICT provides students opportunities to communicate more effectively and to develop literacy skills including skills in critical literacy.

The three subjects taught in English aim to promote the acquisition of key competences and some of the 21th Century Skills such as basic literacy, scientific literacy, technological literacy and global awareness, curiosity, personal responsibility, social and civic responsibility and the effective use of real tools. It also promotes the acquisition of basic skills, such as reading comprehension, speaking and listening rather than writing skills.

5th Teacher's perspectives about the method

The teacher I interviewed agrees that the way they teach English in the school is effective. Though the teacher thinks that being a bilingual teacher is a hard work because you do not only face highlighted learning problems of the students that they won't have in other subjects, but also because " *it requires from students to implement some other different learning strategies or skills that are not commonly found in a not bilingual classes (to build their own knowledge)*".

6. CONCLUSIONS

The main aim of this Final Degree Project was to analyse the way primary students learn English as a second language in two different European contexts. The results of this study suggested me to draw some conclusions and final considerations.

First of all, nowadays there is a current necessity of learning foreign languages for several factors such as globalization, multiculturalism and multilingualism, some of the features of our European context. European educational systems, following the guidelines set by the European Union and the Council of Europe, give response to this need from educative centres. The two studied schools are an evidence of this fact.

Secondly, it is proven that the best way for being competent on foreign languages is beginning its acquisition from early ages. Moreover, learning a foreign language improves the acquisition of the mother tongue among other advantages. Both studied schools, the Dutch and the Spanish one, provide learning of English as a foreign language from early ages: in the Netherlands it starts from four or five years old, when the Primary Education starts and in the Spanish School since the age of three at Infant Education and it continues all along Primary Education.

Thirdly, both schools follow dissimilar approaches for teaching English as a second language, but also they are suitable for its contexts and the educational regulations in each country.

Fourthly, according with the school teachers, at the end of Primary School students aged twelve years old end this stage with a level of English language acquisition as a “basic user” in both schools. Around A1-A2 (Common European Framework of Languages). In spite of this fact, none of the two schools has neither set an assessment to measure their level nor established a language portfolio following the European standards.

In the Dutch school, the main objective in the subject of English is that the students from last year be able to communicate competent in English as a foreign language. In the Spanish school this aim goes further because they not only aim to acquire the language but also, at the same time be able to learn specific Natural Science and Art contents.

Regarding methods used by the schools studied, the Dutch school' establish connections with the Communicative Language approach and with the Total Physical Response. This approach is based on communication and dialogue system, where the acquisition of vocabulary and a proper pronunciation is highlighted. Students learn English by role playing different situations of the daily lives. However through the method of instruction called, *Take it easy* it is really easy to fall into a traditional teaching. Moreover, this method does not fit with the Dalton principles of responsibility, independence, collaboration, effectiveness and reflection. Despite of that, *Take it easy* is a very important support for Dutch teachers because in the school there is not a specific English teacher for all groups. Besides it is cheap and it does not imply too much work for teachers. It is necessary to clarify that the method does not substitute the teacher, just support him/her. Consequently it is the task of the teacher to guide students, interact with them, let them interact with their peers and share their learning process.

In contrast, the Spanish school follows a CLIL (Content Language and Integrate Learning) methodology, recommended by educational institutions of the EU through which students acquire the English language at the same time they learn Natural Science and Art contents.

In sixth place, students' implication and participation in the Dutch school in English lessons is really high. They enjoy learning English and sometimes they ask teachers to do some kind of Project in English. This is partly because English is present in Dutch society: advertisements and films are in original version, computer games...even menus of restaurant are in English. They are really used to listen to English.

In seventh place, in both contexts learning English as a second language develops more competences besides the linguistic ones: (1) intercultural competences: global awareness, adequate knowledge of the diversity of our society, the acceptance of differences as an element of enrichment and development of understanding, tolerance and appreciation of other cultural identities; (2) effective communication: teaming and collaboration, interactive communication and personal responsibility; (3) ICT's competence: technological skills, visual literacy and effective use of real-world tools. However in the Dutch school this last competence the using of ICT is almost useless. Just the opposite happens in the Spanish school where every student has access to ICT support.

In eighth place, the teachers in both schools agreed that being an English teacher is quite demanding. Nevertheless, being a bilingual teacher has lots formative and professional requirements. It means an extra for the teacher because he/she not only need to have linguistic knowledge, but also specific natural science knowledge. And what it is more important, have the ability to decide which techniques are the more accurate for a certain context.

In ninth place, from the European Institutions, it is stressed the need to offer the teaching of a second foreign language from the stage of Primary Education. In the school of the Netherlands this does not happen, but in the Spanish one it does. They offer teaching French in the last two years of the primary stage, following the Spanish legislation.

Lastly, the European Commissions for Education issues suggest schools to get involved in European programs such as Comenius, partner schools or develop e-twinning projects with the main aim to break down borders between closer at the same time that students build up their multicultural competences, linguistic competences and ICT's skills. The Dutch school has a partner school in Czech Republic and the Spanish school took part in a Comenius programs in the last years too.

As a future teacher, having worked on both contexts and having in mind my experiences in both cases, I am aware of the importance of the educative context for the process of language learning acquisition. Depending on the freedom that schools have to organize themselves in the Netherlands and on the other hand, the accurate guidelines given by the educative laws in Spain, set up the methods implemented in both schools regarding language acquisition. Moreover, I keep on mind what are the tendency in which these two educational contexts are working to achieve is to provide a bilingual education. In the case of the Netherlands they are in the beginning, but Spain has been developed this education from lots of years. These approach provide a personalized learning in which students not only acquire knowledge and skills, they also build their own knowledge. Besides, learners are asked to do that through communication, interaction in the learning context is fundamental. As a result, students are motivated, develop oral and intercultural communication skills and prepare for internationalism.

To conclude, according to teacher's perspectives about the approaches used in both schools, they all agreed on the effectiveness of their own method. In the case of Dutch teachers, they agreed because of the concrete context and its features. In the case of the Spanish school because it has been demonstrated through different studies the benefits of Content learning and Integrate Language as an approach of language acquisition.

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6. ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1: Example of survey



Final Degree Project
Research
Estefanía Revilla González

Survey: "Teaching English as a second language in a **Dalton School**"

Name of the teacher: X 1 Group: Year 4 Primary Education

1. General questions

Do you follow Dalton principals during in English lessons?

- Yes
 No

Select the level of success that, in your opinion, has your methodology during English lessons:

(Select one)

- Highly effective
 Moderately effective
 Good enough
 Not very effective
 Not at all effective

Do students take lessons of another second language apart from English?

- Yes
 No

If yes, which one?

- German
 French
 Other: Type any other second language

2. Teaching practice

Select the level of difficulty that you find give English lessons:

- Extremely easy
- Very easy
- Reasonably easy
- Not very easy
- Not easy

Do you have any routines in the English lessons?

- Yes
- No

Do students have homework?

- Yes
- No

Which type of learning materials use learners of English? Select the ones they use:
(Select one or more)

- Text book
- Workbook
- Laptops/IPad
- Extra activities made by the teacher
- Others: Type any other resource or material they use

3. Skills more developed

What 21th Century skills are developed in English lessons? (Select the ones that can be achieved)

DIGITAL-AGE LITERACY

- Basic Literacy
- Scientific Literacy
- Economic literacy
- Technological Literacy
- Visual Literacy
- Information Literacy
- Multicultural Literacy
- Global awareness

INVENTIVE THINKING

- Adaptability and Managing Complexity
- Self-Direction
- Curiosity
- Creativity
- Risk taking
- Higher-Order Thinking and Sound Reasoning

EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION

- Teaming and collaboration
- Interpersonal skills
- Personal responsibility
- Social and civic responsibility
- Interactive communication

HIGH PRODUCTIVITY

- Prioritizing, planning, and managing for results
- Effective use of real-world tools
- The ability to produce relevant, high-quality products

What English skills are highlighted or focused? (Circle them)

- Writing
- Listening
- Speaking
- Reading

4. Use of ITC support

Do you use smart board or any digital support in your lessons?

- Yes
- No

Do students have the access of these computers during the lessons?

- Yes
- No

Do students use computers in order to perform their tasks or assignments?

- Yes
- No

5. Assessment

Are there any examinations or tests with its standards referred to the Common European Framework?

- Yes
- No

6. Level on English

Is the students' level of English similar in the whole class?

- Yes
- No

What is the average level?

- A1
- A2
- B1
- B2
- C1

Is there an average level for children at the end of primary school?

- No
- Yes

If yes, please select the level:

- A1
- A2
- B1
- B2
- C1

Is there a required level?

- No
- Yes

If yes, please circle it:

- A1
- A2
- B1
- B2
- C1

Does the assessment in English at the end of primary school provide a certificate?

- Yes
- No

Do parents send children to English learning clubs? (Select one)

- Never
- Sometimes
- Quite often
- Frequently
- Very often
- In almost all cases

Do parents send children to residential courses/camps in-country?

- Never
- Sometimes
- Quite often
- Frequently
- Very often
- In almost all cases

Do parents send children abroad?

- Never
- Sometimes
- Quite often
- Frequently
- Very often
- In almost all cases

How is the parent's implication in school and in the student's learning?

- Highly effective
- Moderately effective
- Good enough
- Not very effective
- Not at all effective

Survey: "Teaching English as a second language in a Dalton School"

Name of the teacher: X 2 Group/s: Year 6 Primary Education

1. General questions

Do you follow Dalton principals during in English lessons?

- Yes
- No

Select the level of success that, in your opinion, has your methodology during English lessons:

(Select one)

- Highly effective
- Moderately effective
- Good enough
- Not very effective
- Not at all effective

Do students take lessons of another second language apart from English?

- Yes
- No

If yes, which one?

- German
- French
- Other: Type any other second language

2. Teaching practice

Select the level of difficulty that you find give English lessons:

- Extremely easy
- Very easy
- Reasonably easy
- Not very easy
- Not easy

Do you have any routines in the English lessons?

- Yes
- No

Do students have homework?

- Yes
- No

Which type of learning materials use learners of English? Select the ones they use:
 (Select one or more)

- Text book
- Workbook
- Laptops/IPad
- Extra activities made by the teacher
- Others: Type any other resource or material they use

3. Skills more developed

What 21st Century skills are developed in English lessons? (Select the ones that can be achieved)

DIGITAL-AGE LITERACY

- Basic Literacy
- Scientific Literacy
- Economic literacy
- Technological Literacy
- Visual Literacy
- Information Literacy
- Multicultural Literacy
- Global awareness

INVENTIVE THINKING

- Adaptability and Managing Complexity
- Self-Direction
- Curiosity
- Creativity
- Risk taking
- Higher-Order Thinking and Sound Reasoning

EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION

- Teaming and collaboration
- Interpersonal skills
- Personal responsibility
- Social and civic responsibility
- Interactive communication

HIGH PRODUCTIVITY

- Prioritizing, planning, and managing for results
- Effective use of real-world tools
- The ability to produce relevant, high-quality products

What English skills are highlighted or focused? (Circle them)

- Writing
- Listening
- Speaking
- Reading

4. Use of ITC support

Do you use smart board or any digital support in your lessons?

- Yes
- No

Do students have the access of these computers during the lessons?

- Yes
- No

Do students use computers in order to perform their tasks or assignments?

- Yes
- No

5. Assessment

Are there any examinations or tests with its standards referred to the Common European Framework?

- Yes
- No

6. Level on English

Is the students' level of English similar in the whole class?

- Yes
- No

What is the average level?

- A1
- A2
- B1
- B2
- C1

Is there an average level for children at the end of primary school?

- No
- Yes

If yes, please select the level:

- A1
- A2
- B1
- B2
- C1

Is there a required level?

- No
- Yes

If yes, please circle it:

- A1
- A2
- B1
- B2
- C1

Does the assessment in English at the end of primary school provide a certificate?

- Yes
- No

Do parents send children to English learning clubs? (Select one)

- Never
- Sometimes
- Quite often
- Frequently
- Very often
- In almost all cases

Do parents send children to residential courses/camps in-country?

- Never
- Sometimes
- Quite often
- Frequently
- Very often
- In almost all cases

Do parents send children abroad?

- Never
- Sometimes
- Quite often
- Frequently
- Very often
- In almost all cases

How is the parent's implication in school and in the student's learning?

- Highly effective
- Moderately effective
- Good enough
- Not very effective
- Not at all effective

Survey: "Teaching English as a second language in a Spanish Bilingual School"

Name of the teacher: X 3 Group/s: 3 GROUPS, one 5TH Primary, two 6th Primary

1. General questions

Do you follow any certain approach or method during in English lessons?
(Select one or more)

- Task-based Language Teaching
- CLIL (Content and Language Integrated Learning)
- Communicative Language Teaching
- Other: NOT A PARTICULAR ONE, BUT ALL THE ONES THAT ALLOWS ME TO REACH THE GOALS OR ACHIEVEMENTS

List the subjects in which the language of instruction is English:
NATURAL SCIENCE, ARTS&CRAFTS

List the subjects that you give English lessons
NATURAL SCIENCE, ARTS&CRAFTS

Select the level of success that, in your opinion, has your methodology during English lessons:
(Select one)

- Highly effective
- Moderately effective
- Good enough
- Not very effective
- Not at all effective

Do students take lessons of another second language apart from English?

- YES
- NO

If yes, which one?

- German
- French
- Other: Type any other second language

Please, write down the year/s in which students learn another second language:
5TH & 6TH PRIMARY.

2. Teaching practice

As a bilingual teacher it is compulsory for you to give lessons with English as the language of instruction. Select the level of difficulty that you find give English lessons:

- Extremely easy
- Very easy
- Reasonably easy
- Not very easy
- Not easy

Do you have any routines in the English lessons?

- Yes
- No

Do students have homework?

- Yes
- No

Which type of learning materials use learners of English? Select the ones they use:
 (Select one or more)

- Text book
- Workbook
- Laptops/IPad
- Extra activities made by the teacher
- Others: ANY REAL LAB MATERIAL OR REAL OBJECTS WHEN POSSIBLE TO ENRICH THE TEXTS IN THE CLASS AND TO PERFORM SCIENTIFIC EXPERIMENTS AND MAKE SIGNIFICATIVE LEARNING HAPPEN

3. Skills more developed and how

What 21th Century skills are developed in English lessons? (Select the ones that can be achieved)

DIGITAL-AGE LITERACY

- Basic Literacy
- Scientific Literacy
- Economic literacy
- Technological Literacy
- Visual Literacy
- Information Literacy
- Multicultural Literacy
- Global awareness

INVENTIVE THINKING

- Adaptability and Managing Complexity
- Self-Direction
- Curiosity
- Creativity
- Risk taking
- Higher-Order Thinking and Sound Reasoning

EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION

- Teaming and collaboration
- Interpersonal skills
- Personal responsibility
- Social and civic responsibility
- Interactive communication

HIGH PRODUCTIVITY

- Prioritizing, planning, and managing for results
- Effective use of real-world tools
- The ability to produce relevant, high-quality products

What English skills are highlighted or focused? (Circle them)

- Writing
- Listening
- Speaking
- Reading

4. Use of ITC support

Do you use smart board or any digital support in your lessons?

- Yes
- No

Do students have the access of these computers during the lessons?

- Yes
- No

Do students use computers in order to perform their tasks or assignments?

- Yes
- No

5. Assessment

Are there any examinations or tests with its standards referred to the Common European Framework?

- Yes
 No

What English skills are assessed through evaluation? (Select one or more)

- Writing
 Listening
 Speaking
 Reading

6. Level on English

Is the students' level of English similar in the whole class?

- Yes
 No

What is the average level?

- A1
 A2
 B1
 B2
 C1

If not, why are there different levels in the same class? (Please explain why you think this happen)

Several reasons (I name them in order of importance under my point of view...); different personal skills and habilities, different likes and preferences, different family educative and social level, different personal expectations about their own education...

Is there an average level for children at the end of primary school?

- No
 Yes

If yes, please select the level:

- A1
 A2
 B1
 B2
 C1

Is there a required level?

- No
- Yes

If yes, please circle it:

- A1
- A2
- B1
- B2
- C1

Does the assessment in English at the end of primary school provide a certificate?

- Yes
- No

Do parents send children to English learning clubs? (Select one)

- Never
- Sometimes
- Quite often
- Frequently
- Very often
- In almost all cases

Do parents send children to residential courses/camps in-country?

- Never
- Sometimes
- Quite often
- Frequently
- Very often
- In almost all cases

Do parents send children abroad?

- Never
- Sometimes
- Quite often
- Frequently
- Very often
- In almost all cases

How is the parent's implication in school and in the student's learning?

- Highly effective
- Moderately effective
- Good enough
- Not very effective
- Not at all effective

Attachment 2: Example of interview (transcription)

Interview: "Teaching English as a second language in a Dutch School"

Interview. Name of the teacher: X2 Group: Year 6 Primary Education

1. General questions

- a. What does Dalton mean in the school?

It means that the school is based on Dalton principals. It means give children the independence, the freedom and responsibility to work together in their development of their learning process.

- b. What means for you teach the subject of English in this school?

For me it was different to use the digital board. Teachers are not native teachers so teach is sometimes difficult. We don't follow specifically the Dalton plan in English lessons. We have a method called "Take it easy" to support us as teachers when we give our English lessons because in the school there is not a specific teacher that teach English for all groups. In my opinion is an easy method and it doesn't imply to much work for teachers. It is also good for children because is easy for them.

- c. Can you tell me what is about the method you follow in English lessons? (general lines)

Take it easy is a way of teaching English trough the digital board that assist the teachers in our lessons. It includes a kind of virtual teachers, videos, songs and interactive activities in an native English. The bad side of this method could be that sometimes could seem like that is quite traditional because the pupils are sitting in front of the board listening, but is more than that. The method doesn't substitute the teacher, just support him/her. Therefore it is up to the teacher to make students interact and to share with their own learning process.

2. Teaching practice

- a. What routines do you have?

Every lesson starts with an introductory video or song with a digital talker. Then, there is a video explanation that can be gave buy the board or by the teacher. Afterwards, is time to self-work students in their workbook. When is possible I make them interact, sometimes they work in pairs practising dialogs and worksheets.

- b. Do students have homework?

Yes, but just related to vocabulary.

c. What difficulties or problems do you face teaching English? How do you solve it?
Lessons have a high level of English so I have to prepare my lessons carefully. What I find more difficult is grammar.

d. What kinds of activities do the children?
In their work books they can find exercises of reading comprehension, cross words, True/false activities, fill in the gaps, not a lot grammar exercise and listening with multiple choice.

3. Skills more developed and how

a. How do you develop 21st Century Skills during English lessons?

Pupils develop some of the 21st century skills during English classes because the use of ICTs provide the development of skills related to Digital Age literacy. Basic literacy, because they are acquiring an English language proficiency; Visual literacy, because they interpret images and videos; information Literacy, because they evaluate information, locate, synthesize, and use information effectively; and accomplish these functions using technology; Multicultural Literacy, because through the different speakers they can find in the lessons they appreciate the similarities and differences in the customs, values, and beliefs of other cultures. About Inventive thinking students work on self-direction, curiosity and creativity. In their interactions, pupils develop their interpersonal skills, personal responsibility and interactive communication.

b. And writing, listening, speaking and reading?

Regarding language skills writing, listening, speaking and reading are all highlighted and develop during the lessons.

4. Use of ICTs support

a. Do you use any digital support in your lessons? *Yes, the smart board or digital board.*

5. Assessment

a. What do you assess: skills, knowledge or both? And how?
There are exams at the end of every unit and it takes three or four weeks to finish the unit. In total, there are 6 units. We assess both of them.

6. Level of English

a. Why the English level of the children is not the same?
Because some children speak at home English with their parents or play computer games in English. Some others don't do these things so their level is lower.

b. Is this a problem for you? How do you solve it?

No, it's not a problem because they all have good marks.

7. Do parents involve or involucrate in their children's English learning?

Yes, definitely. Parents are really involved in their children's' learning process.

8. General questions

d. What does English mean in the school?

English is one of the core subjects in our school due to our Bilingual Section condition. Furthermore, is one important part of the "School Linguistic Project" that sets the teaching/learning goals, learning skills, abilities, methods, techniques and didactic practices for all languages taught in the school. Through this project, the whole school teachers have a common line to follow when implementing communicative activities whichever the subject involved could be.

e. What means for you teach the subject of English in this school?

Due to my administrative situation (Bilingual but not English teacher), I'm not allowed to teach English as a language. I can teach any other subject that our Bilingual Section Project sets to be taught in English but not English as a language. In our school, the subjects selected to be taught in English are "Natural Science" ("Natural Science and Social Studies" in the previous law) and Art (not "Music" but just "Plastic Art -Crafts-")

So that, my actual administrative situation allows me to teach "Natural Science" and "Arts and Crafts" in Primary Education in our school.

It is a very high responsibility for me to teach these subjects because the whole school community considers Bilingualism as a very important project in our school. It is obviously very important for me and I always try to improve my linguistic and teaching skills, evaluating my own practice, coordinating with the rest of the Bilingual or English teachers, modifying the program, and updating the Bilingual Project when applicable.

My professional practice led me to focus more and more on the Natural Science contents instead of the Linguistic contents. Through coordination, we transmit the weak or strong points found in the students for the English language teachers to try to put the stress on these aspects.

From a broader point of view, I consider teaching-learning English a way to activate a variety of different learning strategies in the students, allowing them to put some skills and abilities into practice, and helping them to generalize in order to build their own knowledge.

- f. Can you tell me what is about the method you follow in English lessons?

Materials/extra activities/ (general lines)

As a general framework, I plan my practice focussing on the contents set by the Law. To facilitate this, every four years (period set by law), the school decides what Text Books and Didactic resources fits the best to our School, Linguistic and Bilingual Projects...

Actually, for English and Natural Science subjects, we use a Text-Book, an Activity-Book, and other resources provided by the publishers. For 10 to 12 years old students, there is a class blog where the teachers collect and update a variety of teaching resources. Because of the ICT project, it is also important in our school allowing students to access computers and to our Virtual Class (platform). This allows all students to learn about technologies, but also to access some reinforcing or extension activities.

It is also a decision of the School Teachers' Staff that the "Art" subject is taught through a self-designed Art program that we call "Entusiam-Arte". So instead of selecting a TextBook, we design and implement a year program focusing on students' and teachers' interests but following the statements set by Law.

Talking about "Natural Science", children have a Text-Book, an Activity-Book, and a Note-Book. For "Art" classes, they have a Drawing Block but the rest of the materials needed are assorted and depend on the project we are involved in (and are mostly provided by the school).

I try to design my "Natural Science" lesson plans focussing on oral interaction (basically listening) and reading comprehension. Written productions of our students are quite limited, but I also try to improve it through short and simple writing activities.

The main source of the written and oral texts is the Text-Book. The core of the listening texts is basically my own explanation of the scientific topics to the class. The content of the texts is obviously scientific, and supported by a great variety of visual, graphic, and gestural information. I also try to stablish oral interaction through oral questions to the students, trying to continuously check their comprehension.

There is an additional bunch of reinforcement activities for every Didactic Block that are mainly focused on written language and mostly set as homework for the students.

Individual and Pair work takes place when asking the students to practice certain writing activities or oral interaction skills.

Teamwork is fostered every two or three weeks, asking the class to organize and set teams to perform a "Show and tell" oral presentation to summarize or reinforce the main contents worked in class.

Sometimes the “Show and Tell” is focused on scientific experiments developed in class. Anyway, they always have to develop a visual support, using posters or PowerPoint presentations.

Students also have the opportunity to perform a self-evaluation in terms of communicative skills (fluency and accuracy), knowledge of the content, team work evaluation...

As a tool for their future studying routines, we encourage them to include in their notebook a scheme/mindmap to summarize the main contents of the unit, and a word-bank that collects the vocabulary they have individually learnt during the unit.

To ensure the achievement of the goals of “Natural Science” contents, we set a mark for every student.

To get this mark, every student has to face five parts: A written exam, activity-book work, notebook work, computer interactive activities, and an interactive test. This is the way we try to obtain an objective measure of their work during the developing of the unit.

9. Teaching practice

e. What routines do you have?

Routines are essential for students to make them confident about what teachers expect from them.

Every UNIT starts setting the final work (or works) to be evaluated, how is it going to be developed, and how is it going to be measured.

Every lesson starts with....

- *Teacher - students greetings: establishing first contact, warming up to allow them time enough to set their materials, activating their English and practicing some greeting expressions in a relaxed way.*
- *Warming up: recalling the last part of the previous class (topic, work done...), solving doubts or correcting homework activities when applicable.*
- *Listening/ Reading: teacher (or computer) reads aloud a text (mainly from the text book) with the scientific content to be explained later on. This way the students obtain the model for most of the pronunciation, rhythm and intonation of the texts. It is also time for students to ask for difficult expressions or scientific vocabulary to facilitate the comprehension of the content.*
- *Teacher explanation: when complex texts or contents, the teachers uses additional resources to reinforce the comprehension (sometimes in the IWB -Interactive White Board- or in the traditional board, but sometimes with REAL materials), giving examples, using videos or animations... This is also the opportunity to establish oral interaction (student-teacher, or student-student). Sometimes students read aloud the text again to eventually solve some pronunciation problems.*

- *Setting task: teacher sets some individual/pair/group activities to reinforce the specific content explained in class. Sometimes the source is the TextBook, sometimes the ActivityBook, sometimes photocopies provided by the teacher, sometimes individual interactive activities using computers... They are asked to solve them in class, but sometimes there's no time enough so they have to finish them as a homework (and to correct at the beginning of the next class)*

f. What difficulties or problems do you face teaching English? How do you solve it?

First, there are no linguistic goals set by law for Natural Science teachers, even if there is some specific texts types, grammatical expressions, vocabulary, etc. that are essential when learning/teaching Natural Science.

Second, the wide range of levels found in a single class; furthermore, when a school decides to be a "Bilingual Section", there is no possibility for students with learning disabilities, handicaps or serious problems to leave the program. Curricular adaptations are very difficult to implement if you want to ensure they reach a minimum key competences level.

Last, but not least, Natural Science teachers have to ensure that the scientific contents are understood/learnt by the students in English, but the students are going to be evaluated in Spanish by the administration in their Primary Final Exam!!

10. Skills more developed

c. How do you develop 21st Century Skills during English lessons? And writing, listening, speaking and reading?

*Natural Science aims to promote the **acquisition of key competences**, trying to ensure every student achieves a minimum development of the key competences, promoting excellence when possible, and the undertaking of **global assessment**.*

It also promotes the acquisition of basic skills, such as reading comprehension, speaking and writing skills and integrates Information and Communication Technology (ICT), entrepreneurship and civic education.

From my point of view, it is crucial to face students to a variety of communicative situations, and to face their mistakes with no fear but as part of their own learning process. Sometimes they need just to feel confident to put their communicative skills into practice.

11. Use of ICTs support

Do you use any digital support in your lessons? Do students use computers?

Yes, we use online-resources to support our lessons... We have a Class Blog to gather and update the contents or resources to work with. Sometimes they consist on videos, or animations. Sometimes it works as a repository of interactive activities or reading documents (basically Reinforcement or Extension activities). We also count with a Virtual Class Platform to interact and communicate with the students. Every student from year 5 and 6 has its own computer used to perform some tasks.

12. Assessment

b. What do you assess: skills, knowledge or both? And how?

Students as asked to show in their tests that they have acquired knowledge and also different competence.

(Deeply explained some questions above)

13. Level of English

The English level of your students is not the same. How do you deal with it? Is this a problem for you? How do you solve it?

As I mentioned before, it is a fact that my students' English levels are very different into every single class. I consider this a very difficult challenge to face every year, but I also think that I have the resources and experience to face it and solve it in an adequate way, even though it consumes a lot of my time and energy.

It is not easy to determine the level of competence of every student. In some cases, an adapted curriculum can be the solution (different requirements and goals, maybe from lower primary levels). Other simpler cases require just a personalization or review of the general requirements for the regular class.

Anyway, inclusive work perspective makes easier these students to improve their communicative skills, not just in English but in every language.

14. Teacher's perspective

What is your personal opinion about the way you teach English as a bilingual school? Are there any highlighted dis/advantage of using it?

Teaching means continuous updating and learning. Being Bilingual teacher in a bilingual school sounds very cool but it is a very hard work. You are in the spotlight of most of the learning problems of the students... The common way some families face a student that is struggling with Natural Science or English is blaming on his/her problem with the English... but is not!

Bilingual teaching/learning highlights different learning problems than other subjects may don't. Probably because it requires from students to implement some other different learning strategies or skills that are not commonly found in not bilingual classes (to build their own knowledge).

Attachment 3: Example of observation

Date: 25 th November 2015		Group: Year 6 Primary Education		Teacher : X 1	
English lesson					
Observation			Reflections		
<p>12: 55 I am sitting at the back of the classroom. Here I can almost control the whole class. I watch the digital board and the back of the students.</p> <p>13:00 The teacher start by opening the class: “Hello everyone” “Today we are going to learn how to describe the clothes” “ what are you wearing today?” “So please pay attention to the video”.</p> <p>13: 10 The teacher stops the video to give students time to do the activity.</p> <p>13: 14 Then she press again the play and pupils check the activity through the explanation given in the video.</p> <p>13:19 Now, the teacher is in charge of the activity. She ask pupils to interact by asking them questions. She ask for volunteers and some children stand up and the rest of the class has to speak about what they are wearing today.</p> <p>13:28 She ends the lesson by asking “what is the weather like today?” she point out some students to answer her and she finish the lesson.</p> <p>13:30 the lesson is finished.</p>			<p>I am observing every movement and every pupils’ reaction. I keep my eyes open. I also focus my attention on how the teacher phrases commands, how she communicated with students. She gives the information in multiple mediums: orally in English and Dutch and the information I also on the digital board.</p> <p>The teacher introduces the topic and then she play the video on the digital board. The video has a lot of repetitions in order to make pupils learn how to say what somebody is wearing and to learn the different types of fabric and prints to describe clothes. Also the vocabulary related to the clothes.</p> <p>Different persons in the video ask each other creating dialogues and then, ask the pupils to do one activity in their books.</p> <p>The teacher creates a classroom activity that engage and motivated students at the same time that they are reviewing what they have learnt.</p> <p>At the end of the lesson the teacher ask them about the weather because she knows that learning English is a continuous process and we have to reactivate their prior learning to build up a new one.</p> <p>*I noticed that during the lesson the teacher modulates the students behaviour by doing eye contact or asking clueless students</p>		