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INCLUSION OF AUTISTIC STUDENTS IN A
SECONDARY EDUCATION CLASSROOM: A
TEACHING PROJECT FOR “ENGLISH AS A
FOREIGN LANGUAGE”

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PREFACE

This dissertation has been written in order to obtain a Master Degree in Secondary Education Teaching. For the preparation of this work, the competencies of these Master studies have been implemented, particularly the following:

- **General competences**

To know the curricular contents of subjects related to the corresponding teaching specialization, as well as the didactic contents related to teaching and learning processes.

To plan, develop and assess the teaching and learning process maximizing the educational processes that facilitate the acquisition of the corresponding competences of the subjects, attending to the level and previous education of the students as well as their orienteering, either individually and in collaboration with other teachers and educational staff.

To look for, obtain, process, and communicate (oral, written, audiovisual, digital or multimedia) information, to turn it into knowledge and to apply it in the learning and teaching processes in the corresponding subjects of the specialization.

To specify the curriculum which will be implemented in schools, participating in its collective plan; to develop and apply didactic methodologies either in groups and individually, adapted to student diversity.

To know the processes of interaction and communication in the classroom, to master skills and social abilities needed to promote learning and coexistence inside the classroom, and to face problems of discipline and conflict solving.

- **Specific Competences of the general module**

Learning and development of personality

To elaborate proposals based on the acquisition of knowledge, and intellectual and emotional skills and abilities.

To identify and plan educational-situation solving which affect students with different capacities and different learning paces.

- **Specific Competences of the specific module**

Supporting features for disciplinary education

To know the educational and cultural value of the corresponding subjects to the specialization and the contents that are studied in the corresponding subjects.

Learning and teaching of the corresponding subjects

To turn the curriculum into working programs of activities.

- **Specific Competences of the practicum module**

Practicum in specialization, including the Final Project for the Master Degree

To acquire experience of planning, education and assessment of the corresponding subjects to the specialization.

To master the skills and social abilities needed to promote an environment that facilitates the learning and the coexistence.

ABSTRACT

Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) is a condition that affects people's ability to interact, communicate and behave properly. This dissertation explains the main traits of this disorder in order to raise awareness of the special needs that Autistic people have. In addition to this, it is also the aim of this paper to provide the readers with a teaching project for the "English as a Foreign Language" classroom that meets not only the Autistic students' requirements, but also the non-Autistic children's ones. This teaching project is based on a group performance of one of Shakespeare's plays, in this case *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (1595), the students having to accomplish a series of previous tasks in order to perform the play successfully.

Key words: Autism, Shakespeare, *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (1595), PBL, Ángel Rivière (2001), Leo Kanner (1943).

RESUMEN

El Trastorno del Espectro Autista (TEA) es una condición que afecta la habilidad que tienen las personas para interactuar, comunicarse y comportarse adecuadamente. Este trabajo explica los principales rasgos de este trastorno con el fin de concienciar a la gente de las necesidades especiales que tienen las personas Autistas. Además, este trabajo también tiene el objetivo de proporcionar a los lectores un proyecto educativo para el aula de "Inglés como Lengua Extranjera" que no solo cubre los requisitos de los alumnos Autistas, sino también los de los niños no Autistas. Este proyecto se basa en una representación grupal de una de las obras de Shakespeare, en este caso *Sueño de Una Noche de Verano* (1595), teniendo que realizar los alumnos una serie de tareas previas necesarias para representar la obra con éxito.

Palabras clave: Autismo, Shakespeare, *Sueño de Una Noche de Verano* (1595), ABP, Ángel Rivière (2001), Leo Kanner (1943).

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. Introduction	11
2. Official Regulations Attending to Student Diversity	13
3. Approaching the Autism Spectrum Disorder	14
3.1. Early notions of Autism	15
3.1.1. Qualitative impairments in social interaction	15
3.1.2. Qualitative impairments in communication	16
3.1.3. Restricted repetitive and stereotyped patterns of behavior, interests, and activities	16
3.2. Emergence of Autism	18
3.3. Current descriptions of Autistic disturbances	19
3.3.1. Restricted or repetitive behavior/interests/activities	19
3.3.2. Communication and social interaction shortage	20
3.4. Frequent necessities in the different Autistic stages	25
3.4.1. Educational necessities	26
4. Methodology	30
4.1. Project Based Learning (PBL)	30
4.2. The use of drama in the EFL classroom	33
5. Teaching Project for “English as a Foreign Language”	35
5.1. Foreign languages regulations	35
5.2. Group context	37
5.3. Timing	37
5.4. Overview of the project: “Shakespeare performed”	37
5.5. Session sequencing	38
5.6. Assessment	50
6. Conclusions	53
7. List of References	55
8. Annexes	61
9. Additional Notes	77

LIST OF ACRONYMS

ADHD (Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder).

APA (American Psychiatric Association).

ASD (Autism Spectrum Disorder).

CDD (Childhood Disintegrative Disorder).

DSM (Diagnostic and Statistical Manual for mental disorders).

EFL (English as a Foreign Language).

ESL (English as a Second Language).

FOCM (Folate-dependent One Carbon Metabolism).

ICD (International statistical Classification of Diseases and related health problems).

ICT (Information and Communication Technology).

IDEA (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act).

LOMCE (Ley Orgánica para la Mejora de la Calidad Educativa).

PBL (Project Based Learning).

PDD (Pervasive Developmental Disorders).

PDD-NOS (Pervasive Developmental Disorders- Not Otherwise Specified).

TS (transsulfuration).

VAK (Visual, Auditory, and Kinesthetic).

WHO (World Health Organization).

1. INTRODUCTION

Autistic disorder so present in our lives that it has been often taken to fiction, from movies like *Rain Man* (1989) by Barry Levinson to literature, as in *The Empty Fortress* (1967) by Bruno Bettelheim. Thus, everybody is highly likely to have heard about Autism, but it is quite difficult to determine the extent of veracity of the sources from which they got their knowledge. Personally, after inquiring into the Autistic disorder, I realized that the previous notions I had were in fact misleading. To illustrate, it is commonly acknowledged that people with Autism usually show social deficits. However, what is not so well recognized is the fact that these social shortfalls generally lead to a deficit in communication. This concept was demonstrated in the experiment carried out by Patricia Kuhl, Feng-Ming Tsao, and Huei-Mei Liu called *Foreign-Language Experience in Infancy: Effects of Short-Term Exposure and Social Interaction on Phonetic Learning* (2003). What they did in this research was exposing a group of native English babies to a Chinese woman who interacted face to face with them in Mandarin. Consistently, these American babies began to acquire Mandarin Chinese as their L1. The other side of the experiment consisted of a similar group of American children being exposed to interaction with the same Chinese woman but, in this case, through a television screen. Unlike the first group, the babies from the second panel did not acquire Mandarin Chinese as their L1.

What I aim to show at referencing their research is showing that there is more to Autism than what we see in the surface. It is necessary to consider Autism entirely in order to get to understand it fully. Therefore, the first aim of this paper is to illustrate the readers with some fundamental and at the same time essential background of Autism. On the other hand, the current “Second Plan for attention to student diversity” (Junta de Castilla y León, 2017) embodies some central principles, raising awareness of the importance of inclusive education being at its core. As it will be subsequently accounted for in this dissertation, inclusive education focuses on guaranteeing that no student is excluded from the educational system. This means that all types of students, including those pupils with special educational needs, ought to be included in ordinary schools. Therefore, it is vital to find a methodology that meets the diverse students’ requirements, without leaving out any person. Indeed, this is the second aim of this project: to develop a teaching project suitable for any student, especially for both Autistic and non-Autistic pupils.

In this way, this paper will be divided into two main sections, namely “Approaching the Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)” and “Teaching Project for “English as a Foreign Language”.” The former chapter deals with the first aim of this dissertation, which is to offer a detailed explanation of this condition given that, although it is a quite known disorder, its symptoms and characteristics can lead to confusion. Then, the second section of this paper focuses on describing the teaching project designed for the ESO first year students for the subject of “English as a foreign language.” Following the Project Based Learning (PBL) methodology, students will be required to perform a play written by William Shakespeare. Nevertheless, the play will not be performed in the classroom in live, but students will be asked to record the play and then to display the video in the classroom. By doing this, students will mix drama and ICTs, which will increase their motivation significantly. Apart from these two chapters, this paper also includes other sections such as regulations, some basic information about the methodology employed for carrying out the project (PBL), and a final annex section where the contents and learning standards, key competences, and the materials needed for implementing the project will be included.

As it can be seen, this study endorses a large amount of theoretical contents obtained from the growing body of literature available about the Autism Spectrum Disorder. One of the praised authors that have been most considered in this paper is Leo Kanner, who in 1943 conducted a research study in which Autism was first disassociated from Schizophrenia and Autistic characteristics were categorized for the first time. Also, the work of Angel Rivière (2001) has been much taken into account for developing this dissertation since he includes a lot of valuable information about the Autistic condition. Last but not least, the effort made by K. O’Leary (2013) by whom my proposal of employing drama in a classroom with Autistic students remained ratified.

All in all, this paper has been intended to contribute to some extent to the improvement of our current educational system. Honestly, I hope this dissertation can be of assistance to the learning process of both Autistic and non-Autistic children and to the teaching of any member of the educative community.

2. OFFICIAL REGULATIONS ATTENDING TO STUDENT DIVERSITY

As this teaching project is aimed at a highly heterogeneous classroom, the regulations on which this paper will focus are strongly related to student diversity. In this way, the *Ley Orgánica 8/2013, de 9 de diciembre, para la Mejora de la Calidad Educativa (LOMCE)* (2016) establishes that all students are talented, but their talent differs. Consequently, the educational system must possess the necessary mechanisms to recognize and maximize that talent. Besides this, the law reports in Article 79 that it is the educative administration's mission to identify those students with special educational needs so as to make an early assessment of their requirements. Also, this section states that schooling of those students who present learning difficulties has to be ruled by principles of inclusion and standardization in order to prevent discrimination and to ensure equality.

In the same way, the Regional Act *Orden EDU/362/2015, de 4 de mayo* disposes some general action principles in connection to student diversity such as respect, equity, individualization, and social sensitization among others. This document also includes a "Plan for attention to student diversity" which describes the specific programs and the procedures that schools have decided to adopt in order to attend to student diversity. In addition to these general procedures, some specialized actions fall within Article 26. These extraordinary procedures may imply curricular adaptations, the intervention of specialist teachers and/or complementary staff, and the schooling in non-ordinary institutions. Moreover, Section 4 of this document sets some educational reinforcement actions and materials. These formulae are addressed to students who present learning difficulties in relation to the basic aspects of the curriculum, who have not developed correctly work and study habits, who have some pending subjects from previous courses, or those students whom the orienteering department has considered to include in those procedures. Indeed, the Autonomic Government of Castilla y León published on June 15, 2017 the "Second Plan for attention to student diversity" (2017-2022) (Junta de Castilla y León, 2017). This document consists of six "strategic lines" which itemize its different principles. Some of the principles determined in this second plan are to make the educative community realize about the importance of inclusive education, to improve the mechanisms of prevention and early detection of students' needs, and to promote equality among the student body to say but a few.

More specifically, the Official document called *Real Decreto 1105/2014* (2015) states that all actions aimed at attending to student diversity in secondary education are oriented towards achieving academic success in this educational stage. Therefore, educative institutions need to provide students with individual attention in order to allow them to develop their self-learning and group-work capacities at their own paces.

Thus, it is vitally important that all students are included in the classroom equally and that each student's individual needs are attended and covered. As it has been formerly stated in the introduction, this paper will develop an inclusive teaching project addressed to a classroom where there may be one or two students with special needs; they are Autistic. In order to approach this project, the normative previously explained will be considered and the major features of children with ASD, which will be subsequently accounted for, will constitute the mainstay for this teaching project. Nevertheless, the considerations taken into account for carrying out this project are not only beneficial for Autistic children, but they have been selected for being suitable for non-Autistic children as well.

3. APPROACHING THE AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDER (ASD)

Although each human being develops at slightly different paces, the general developmental milestones are almost the same for everyone. This means that, as a general rule, everybody acquires the equivalent sets of skills concurrently. These dexterities refer mainly to the linguistic and communicative competence, socializing, cognitive skills, and corporal progression such as crawling and walking. It is crucially important to remark that all these skills evolve while the brain grows. Therefore, when one of these linguistic, social or motor human capacities does not evolve as expected, it may be presented as a neuro-developmental disorder. Focusing on the topic of this dissertation, the delay in the development of linguistic and communicative skills may result in isolation. Indeed, this is where the term 'autism' originated since 'auto' etymologically refers to "self, one's own, by oneself or of oneself" as specified on the online etymology dictionary (Harper, 2001-2017). It can be thus inferred that Autism is mainly a condition in which the person suffering from this disorder is virtually unable to maintain social interaction and communication, being therefore essentially isolated.

3.1. Early notions of Autism

The first time Autism was considered an independent disorder was in Leo Kanner's study called *Autistic Disturbances of Affective Contact* (1943). Before this research was conducted, Autistic symptoms had been heretofore regarded as belonging to a schizophrenic condition. However, Kanner manages to clarify that although Autism features may resemble to schizophrenic ones, there are some clear differences that make Autism an independent syndrome from Schizophrenia.

In this paper, Kanner collected data and reports from the families of eleven Autistic children who shared some "fascinating peculiarities" (Kanner, 1943, p. 217). Kanner stated that, although there existed some "individual differences in the degree of their disturbance [...] a number of essential common characteristics appear inevitable." (Kanner, 1943, p. 241-242). Kanner classified those common characteristics, establishing in that categorization three main dimensions, namely:

1. Qualitative impairments in social interaction.
2. Qualitative impairments in communication.
3. Restricted repetitive and stereotyped patterns of behavior, interests, and activities. ⁱ

3.1.1. QUALITATIVE IMPAIRMENTS IN SOCIAL INTERACTION

The first of these features shared by all the Autistic children explored in the research was the children's inability to have a social relationship from birth. Besides, those children usually isolate themselves, what seems to comfort them greatly. This idea is supported by the fact that these Autistic children exclude or avoid almost all the stimuli that come from the outside. For instance, the data collected from the families of these children point out that they just ignored the people around them, no matter if they were other children of their age or even their own grandparents. Also, Autistic children can restrict social or affective contact to such an extreme that they only allow contact with one person, namely their mothers, as occurs with Donald T. from Case 1 from Kanner's study. There are two types of intrusions from the outside that come to the children inevitably, which are food on the one hand, and noises and objects on the other; being the former type the only outside intrusion accepted by the child. The latter type, objects and noises, is sometimes regarded by the children as terrifying. More specifically,

children react to electronic objects and their respective noises — e.g: vacuum cleaners or mechanical toys— with particular horror. This is called *Hyperresponsiveness* or *Over reactivity to Sensory Input*, which is “the state of feeling overwhelmed by what most people would consider common or ordinary stimuli of sound, sight, taste, touch, or smell” (Glossary of Terms, 2017).

3.1.2. QUALITATIVE IMPAIRMENTS IN COMMUNICATION.

The language of the autistic children from Kanner’s study was described as repetitive, irrelevant and metaphorical. For example, the child from the first case of the experiment kept on parroting some verbal rituals all day long. Besides, this child expressed so much pleasure when producing utterances such as “Chrysanthemum” or “Trumpet vine” (Kanner, 1943, p. 219) which have no meaningful relevance. Besides, this child usually responded to questions in a rather peculiar manner. For instance, he stated “I’ll draw a hexagon” when he was asked to subtract 4 from 10 (Kanner, 1943, p. 222).

It is also acknowledged from this study that autistic children usually produce utterances that have no connection to the present time, being related to the children’s previous experiences though. For example, we find Paul G. from case 4 who uttered sentences such as “The people in the hotel” or “Did you hurt your leg?” (Kanner, 1943, p. 227) when they were completely unrelated to the children’s speaking situation.

3.1.3. RESTRICTED REPETITIVE AND STEREOTYPED PATTERNS OF BEHAVIOR, INTERESTS, AND ACTIVITIES

As for their demeanor, Kanner observed that Autistic children’s actions were driven by an “obsessive desire for the maintenance of sameness” (Kanner, 1943, p. 245) which usually leads to a lack or a restraint of spontaneous activity. Therefore, these children often repeat the same ritualistic routine and get agitated and anxious when that routine is altered.

Regarding physical condition, Autistic children’s physical appearance is basically similar to the average children. Nevertheless, it can be noticed a delay in the age at which they learn to adapt their posture when their parents hold them in their arms. Kanner affirms that ordinary babies learn to do this during their first months of life.

However, it is not until they are two or three years old when Autistic children learn to adjust their posture to the person who is holding them. In connection to this, it became observable from Kanner's study that Autistic children show a lack of "anticipatory posture preparatory to being picked up." (Kanner, 1943, p. 242). This means that these infants will not raise their arms when they want to be picked up.

Nevertheless, Autistic children have shown a cognitive advantage in relation to the average children: they present an extraordinary memory, used for no profitable use though such as for recollecting complex sequences or for learning several poems and numbers by heart. Therefore, "even though most of these children were at one time or another looked upon as feebleminded, they are all unquestionably endowed with good cognitive potentialities." (Kanner, 1943, p. 247).

Leo Kanner concludes his research by stating that "We must, then, assume that these children have come into the world with innate inability to form the usual, biologically provided affective contact with people, just as other children come into the world with innate physical or intellectual handicaps." (Kanner, 1943, p. 250).

As it can be observed, Autism embraces a large variety of symptoms and evidences. In order to arrange this turmoil of Autism marks, Lorna Wing developed the notion of "Autism spectrum" to systematize this wide range of Autism conditions and disturbances. This British psychiatrist became involved in the area of developmental disorders, particularly in autism, after her daughter was diagnosed with this disorder. Indeed, the novel notion of an Autism spectrum was not only launched by Wing, but in co-operation with Dr Judith Gould in 1979 (Rivière, 2001). They conducted a research paper called *Severe Impairments of Social Interaction and Associated Abnormalities in Children: Epidemiology and Classification* (1979) in order to broaden the notion of Autism originated by Leo Kanner in 1943. In this way, after carrying the epidemiological survey detailed in their paper, Wing and Gould established the term "Autism spectrum" to refer to the different levels of disturbances and impairments that the children of their experiment presented. This study implied a significant progress in this field since from then on it became vital to specify the level of deficiency when referring to Autism. The detection of an Autism spectrum has proved to be extremely valuable given that it makes it possible to establish an order in the previously considered heterogeneity of the Autism characteristics. Furthermore, the

notion of an Autism spectrum may be of assistance in education by means of a better understanding of the needs and pace of progress of children with Autism.

3.2. Emergence of Autism

According to Ángel Rivière, Leo Kanner (1943) and Hans Asperger (1944) initially believed that Autism symptoms were observable since birth. Nonetheless, some current research has evidenced that Autism is manifested during the first year of life only in one of every four cases. As a rule, Autistic traces begin to appear around eighteen months of life (Rivière, 2001). This was indeed demonstrated in a research conducted by Rivière himself. This author analyzed the reports provided by the parents of hundred Autistic children, out of them seventy eight were boys and twenty two were girls¹. Rivière realized that fifty seven children had manifested Autistic symptoms around the second year of life and twenty five children did so during their first year. Out of the remaining eighteen children, eleven had presented Autistic disturbances between their second and their second and a half year of life and only seven children evidenced Autistic features between their second and a half and their third year of life. Therefore, Rivière's research proved that Autistic symptoms are more frequently observable during the child's second year of life.

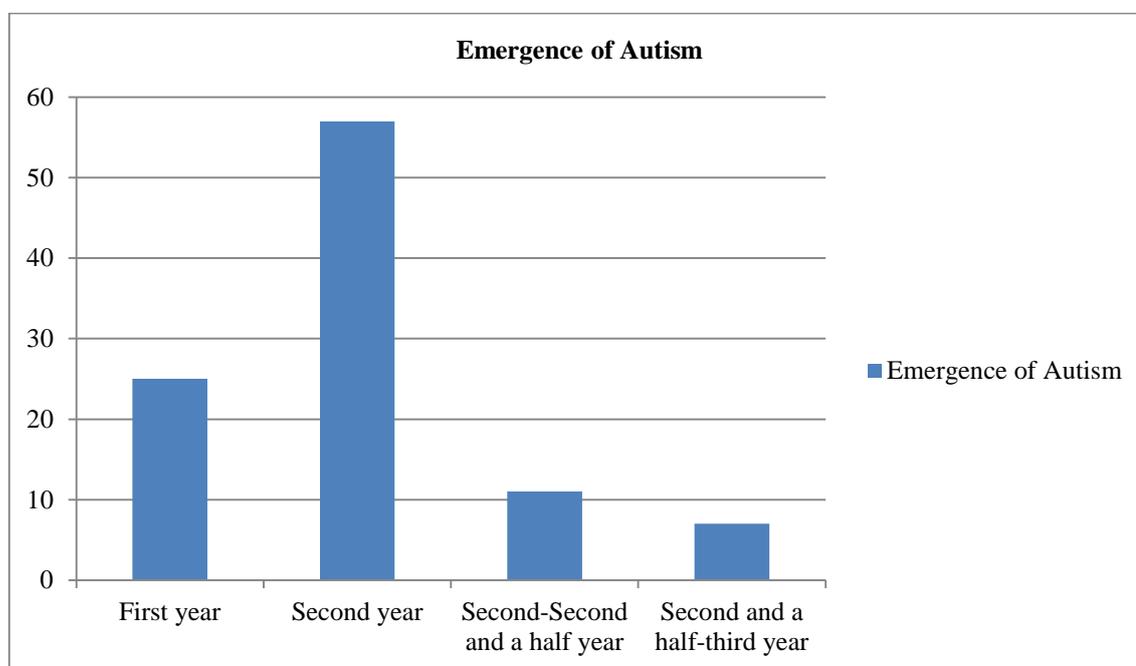


Figure 1. Emergence of Autism

¹The fact that there are more Autistic boys than girls in Rivière's study is supported by Lai, Lombardo, Auyeung, Chakrabarti, and Baron-Cohen (2015), who affirm that ASD is more prevalent in males than in females.

This is the notion that has been accepted for years. Nonetheless, a current article carried by a group of biological and biomedical engineers from the United States, entitled *Classification and adaptive behavior prediction of children with autism spectrum disorder based upon multivariate data analysis of markers of oxidative stress and DNA methylation*(2017) alleges that Autism can be diagnosed by means of a blood test. The authors —Juergen Hahn, Daniel Howsmon and their colleagues— have reached the conclusion that abnormalities in the amount of metabolic substances can be considered indicators of ASD.ⁱⁱTherefore, this study implies that blood tests are a highly-accurate means of Autism detection. Nevertheless, the researchers of the article have admitted that although this method has proved to be quite precise, it is still not factual to use this system to detect Autism precisely (Howsmon, Kruger, Melnyk, James and Hahn, 2017).

On the whole, ASD is considered to have a genetic cause, which influences brain development, particularly cognitive tasks that involve social and communication skills. Nevertheless, it is still very much unknown which the genes that are disturbed in ASDs are. Besides, although there are a lot of environmental triggers that need to be analyzed, no obvious causes have been yet identified. It is also quite relevant to remark that there is no cure for ASD, having been demonstrated though that specific management and therapy have proven to be genuinely useful to take full advantage of independence and quality of life. It becomes vital to mention that a significant diagnosis of ASD relies greatly on paying attention to what parents and care-takers are noticing at home or school given that they spend long time with them.

3.3. Current descriptions of Autistic disturbances

It was not until 2013 when the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual for mental disorders-V (DSM-V) classified the Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) depending on the severity of two main fields: Restricted or repetitive behavior/interests/activities and Communication and social interaction shortage.ⁱⁱⁱ

3.3.1. RESTRICTED OR REPETITIVE BEHAVIOR/INTERESTS/ACTIVITIES.

Although this section might be remarkably wide, the types of behavior which are usually shared by Autistic children can be organized as follows:

- Ritualistic patterns such as shaking their hands, repeating or imitating words or sounds, and/or aligning objects.
- Having strict fixed routines.
- Demonstrating restricted patterns of interests like learning by heart the weekday dates of any preceding year.

Children suffering from ASD might show evidence of one or more of these shortage symptoms with different levels of severity. This severity levels will facilitate the identification of how much care and assistance the child is going to need. On the one hand, severity level 1 indicates that the child requires some support. On the other hand, a level 3 of severity implies that the child requires complete and solid support.

3.3.2. COMMUNICATION AND SOCIAL INTERACTION SHORTAGE

Although the DSM-V divides the communication and social interaction area into four^{iv} subcategories, they are usually considered to be only three, regarding a) *social communication*, b) *social interaction* and c) *social imagination*, and being therefore called “the triad” (Triad of Impairments, 2017). In this paper, the disturbances of this area will be explained according to the triad classification, which is the following:

a. Social communication

As it was illustrated in Patricia Kuhl et al.’s study, it becomes clear that social impact is vital for elaborating the patterns and statistics required for acquiring a new language. Indeed, the social aspect is one of the most relevant deficits of Autism, which explains why these children usually show linguistic shortages. Besides, linguistic capacity is one of the key elements involved in the learning process. This is why some years ago it was considered that 80% of Autistic children were mentally disabled when the problem relied on their linguistic capacities and not on their intelligence quotient.

Having this conception in mind, it is now adequate to present the basic features that Autistic children normally show in terms of language deficits:

Communication is one of the “triad of impairments” that defines autism. Indeed, the second component of this triad, i.e. deficit in social interaction, is closely related to communication in the sense that social interactions are accomplished through the

medium of communication. A deficit in communication affects both verbal and non-verbal aspects such as words and sentences, and gestures, pitch and visual expression respectively. The two main features that characterized the communication of autistic children compared to the one of those normally developing children are that it is delayed and deviant. It is said that the communication of autistic children is delayed because their language progress is slowed down. For instance, they say their first words and sentences later. Autistic children communication is also said to be deviant from the one of non-Autistic children given that children with autism present some behaviors or conducts that do not appear at any stage of communication of a typically developing child (Tager-Flusberg, Paul and Lord, 2013)

In relation to the onset of speech, Tager-Flusberg, Paul, and Lord (2013) affirm that non-autistic children produce their first words at 12 months of age, while autistic children do it not at 12, but at 24 or 30 months. There is a fascinating fact about the 25% of the autistic children who produce language between 12 and 18 months of age, and it is that once they have said their first words, they seem to lose them by the age of 18 and 24 months. There is not a firm explanation about this apparent digression but Tager-Flusberg et al. point at a disconnection between other developmental aspects and language development. These authors state that the first words that a baby produces need to be assembled to other developmental aspects in order to be incorporated into the child's cognitive system. Therefore, those first words that were produced by autistic children collapse since they do not have other growing aspects they can establish some cognitive connections to.

As it has been previously announced, autistic children present a wide range of abnormal communicative conducts, which are in fact key elements in the diagnosis of ASD. One of these abnormalities is the presence of uncommon and delayed vocalizations (i.e. babbling). Furthermore, autistic children tend to persist longer in using speech-like vocalization such as high pitch sounds, yelling and growling, which normally developing children stop using between 9 and 12 months of age.

It is also quite important to highlight that children with autism do not only communicate much infrequently, but they are also characterized with a limited variety of communicative intentions. Nevertheless, they manage to make requests and to get other people to have something done for them. For example, the gesture of hand over

hand, which is absent in the behavior of a non-autistic children. A child with autism would put their hand in the other person's hand or arm and would guide it to the object of desire without, of course, looking at the person's face. Therefore, autistic children are presented with a lack of communicative conducts previous to speech, namely protoimperatives and protodeclaratives² (Rivière, 2001).

Another relevant communicative abnormality in children with autism is that they are much less receptive to others' speech. For instance, from the very beginning, a non-autistic child is capable of reacting when they are called by their names or they pay special attention to their mother's speech. However, as Tager-Flusberg et al. (2013) have explicitly stated in their paper:

Several studies have found that, as early as 1 year of age, very young children with autism are less responsive to their names or to someone speaking compared to other children [...] and they are less responsive to the sound of their mother's voice. (p. 341)

Finally, children with autism present a restricted aptitude to imitate, especially the sounds and behaviors of the people that surround them. This is directly connected with the delayed onset of speech in autistic children given that acquisition of language takes place by means of imitation of sounds and words. Therefore, it is logical that autistic children show more problems in acquiring a language than typically developing children.

One of the most prominent features of Autistic speech is echolalia. As the term suggests, echolalia is basically a chat or a talk based on repetition. Autistic children usually repeat what they have just heard or what they heard some time ago, what is called delayed echolalia. The employment of this linguistic phenomenon is not always random, but sometimes it is used in the appropriate context, namely functional echolalia. Jose Ramón Alonso Peña (2009) illustrates this last type of echolalia with the following example: an autistic child may repeat their teacher's exact words "if you don't seat down, you will get out of the class" when a kid behaves inappropriately, even when they are not at school. Furthermore, Kanner speaks of a "delayed echolalia" in the sense that these children repeated the questions they were asked as a sign of affirmation.

²The term protoimperative stands for the pointing employed to request something and protodeclarative is the pointing made for drawing attention to something in particular.

For example, Donald T. from Kanner's research would say "Do you want to get down?" when he wanted to be got down. In this example, the echolalia is fairly clear since the child is just repeating their parents' statement to express a desire, instead of producing a new sentence.

b. Social Interaction

Deficits in social skills are notably present in people suffering from ASD and it has been therefore considered one of the main characteristics of Autistic people. This was acknowledged in an experiment carried out by Catherine Lord and Joyce MaGill-Evans called *Peer Interactions of Autistic Children and Adolescents* (2009). In this article, the authors explain that they grouped in a summer camp three different types of children and adolescents, all of them being in the same age range. The first group consisted of high-functioning Autistic children. The second group was made of non-autistic youngsters that presented linguistic deficits similar to those included in ASD. Finally, the third group was composed of typically-developed children and adolescents. During the two-week period, it was clearly observable that the Autistic children were less likely to participate in social situations, neither initiating nor responding to those social interactions than the other two groups of adolescents. Therefore, although it can be deduced that the social shortages present in people with ASD are connected with their linguistic deficit, this experiment proves that their lack of linguistic competence is not the only agent responsible for this social interaction deficit given that the non-Autistic group of youngsters, who also presented linguistic deficits, were more willing to interact than the Autistic group.

However, although young Autistic people present several social interaction impairments, they cannot be considered totally anti-social. As it was previously explained in Kanner's article (1943), Autistic children do not reject all kinds of social interaction, but they restrict it. For instance, they allow social contact with parents (usually their mothers). Besides, people with Autism usually get along with especial friends³. Therefore, it cannot be stated that people with ASD lack social skills, but they have some deficits interacting in social situations.

³During my period of *practicum* in a school, I had the opportunity to deal with two Autistic children. I noticed that these children did have several social deficits since they had troubles interacting in

As regards the ability of people suffering from Autism to read body language, it has been always accepted that they were able neither to interpret body language nor to decode others' emotions. Indeed, this notion has been tested at different times and by different researches. However, all the experiments that ratified this deep-seated credence only took into account the Autistic children's ability to read body language from other people's face. Nevertheless, a fairly recent study about the autistic children's ability or inability to read other's emotions challenges the belief that has been hitherto held. This article, called *Children with autism spectrum disorder are skilled at reading emotion body language*(2015), was written by C. Peterson, V. Slaughter and C. Brownell (Rachel David, 2015). In their paper, these authors demonstrated that people with the Autistic condition were in fact capable of interpreting body language when it was done from a distance. Besides, the authors had some people with ASD in front of some pictures of the faces of some people who were expressing certain emotions. The results were that people with Autism succeed at recognizing the emotions of those people's faces. However, these people showed several difficulties when reacting to those emotions. For example, they may be aware of the fact that someone is sad, but they might not know what to do or how to react when someone is sad. Therefore, this experiment refutes the notion that Autistic people cannot read people's emotions, and supports the idea that these people have troubles with looking at other people's eyes when they are in face-to-face contact and with reacting to other people's emotions.

c. Social Imagination

First of all, it is vital to distinguish between imagination and social imagination. The former term stands for "the faculty or action of forming new ideas, or images or concepts of external objects not present to the senses" (*Oxford Dictionaries*, 2017). On the other hand, social imagination is the capacity to "understand and predict the behavior of other people" (Social Imagination, 2017). Besides, impairment in the faculty of social interaction does not only imply an inability to predict other people's behavior, but also to predict the consequences of their own actions. This latter issue is

particular situations. Nevertheless, these children had special relationships with some of their mates and with some teachers as well. Besides, when the students were required to work in groups, these two Autistic children were properly integrated within their group.

highly related to some of the conduct patterns that have been formerly regarded. Furthermore, the concept of social imagination includes the ability to imagine social situations which can be familiar or unfamiliar to our ordinary social circumstances. Indeed, the fact that children with autism lack or at least have some deficits in imagining or foreseeing social situations is highly related to the fact that these children become quite stressed and agitated when their normal routine is altered. In addition to this anxiety when their routine is changed, this deficit in social imagination also leads to unwillingness to move from one activity to another one (transition) (*Social Imagination/ Flexible Thinking*).

Social imagination is also much related to the concept of empathy. The presence of a shortage in the field of social imagination implies a difficulty or an inability to understand other people's feelings. This is why several Autistic children are unable to perceive the meaning or the perspective of what other people say and do, which is fairly connected with the fact that Autistic children and people in general present several social interaction impairments. In connection to the issue of understanding others' perspective, people with ASD are incapable of interpreting irony and sarcasm given that the conveyed meaning is the opposite than the literal one

Last but not least, deficits in social imagination are linked to an inability to engaging in imaginative games, neither in groups nor individually. For instance, when a child is playing with a toy car, they are much likely to be considering that toy as an amusing thing that rolls rather than as an actual toy car. In connection with this idea, children suffering from ASD present numerous troubles with interpreting abstract thinking. Although this aspect may have not relevant implications, being able to comprehend abstract thinking is crucial in our every-day life. For instance, if a child is not able to understand the abstract concept of danger, they may not understand why it is dangerous to cross the road when the traffic light is red.

3.4.Frequent necessities in the different Autistic stages

Some Autistic people whose intellectual level is fairly high are able to talk about their inner world. Although they might not reflect deeply on their essence, they illustrate us the key necessities of people suffering ASD. The most interesting testimony might be

that recollected by Jules Bemporad in his article entitled *Adult Recollections of a Formerly Autistic Child* (1979) (through Rivière, 2001). The data came from a 31-year-old man who was diagnosed with Autism when he was a child. Thanks to his statement, Bemporad enumerated a list of necessities shared by Autistic people, which had also been displayed in Rivière's work. All these necessities that will be subsequently exposed in this paper consist of the desires and requests that Autistic patients are not able to articulate, but that are transmitted by their conduct. It is important to highlight that the following list is reported in the Autistic man's voice, so it is written in the first person:

1. Necessity of a structured and predictable life.
2. Use clear signs.
3. Avoid chaotic, crowded and bustling atmospheres.
4. Lead me; don't expect me to take initiative.
5. Assess objectively my capacities; don't trust my physical appearance excessively.
6. Help me communicate; provide me with signs, movements, gestures and not only with words.
7. Show in a transparent way the purpose of what you are asking for.
8. The consequences of my conduct should be clear and proportional.
9. Do not respect my loneliness. Try to draw me gently in social interactions and help me take part in them.
10. My conduct disturbances are not against you; do not think my intentions are evil.
11. My actions are not absurd, they are not positive though. Try to find the logic of my actions, even of the strangest ones.
12. The best way to extinguish the dysfunctional conducts —e.g. self-harm, huffs, etc— is substituting them with functional ones.
13. Draw the line: the limits we establish help me notice we both exist.
14. I cannot learn by a trial and error method, but by learning experiences without errors. It is necessary to adapt the aims and learning processes to my developmental level.
15. But do not help me in excess; I should not depend on you, but on the stimuli and my experiences.
16. Do not compare me to non-Autistic children.

This is not the complete list that appears on Rivière's work, but a selected fragment of the, from my view, most relevant samples of necessities and demands of Autistic people. It is quite important to bear in mind that all these requests should be adapted to the different stages of the life cycle.

3.4.1. EDUCATIONAL NECESSITIES

The overriding consideration to take into account regarding the educational necessities of children with ASD is making a thorough assessment of the student's capacities. The reason for this is that an adequate assessment is what will allow Autistic children to go from just having possibilities of development to truly developing themselves. From a general perspective, there are three main aspects that teachers and educators ought to bear in mind in relation to Autistic children's education, namely a) The environment b) Coordination between teachers and psychopedagogists c) Specific attention.

a. The environment

As it has been previously mentioned, children with ASD should be as much integrated with non-Autistic children as possible. Indeed, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, aka IDEA, (2004) established that it is the schools' mission to provide these children with an appropriate public education (*IDEA Parent Guide*, 2006). Besides, Rivière (2001) affirms that the most appropriate educational environments for Autistic students are those which are patient and quiet, and which imply clear signs and the omission of irrelevant stimuli. Unfortunately, getting a stark environment in a public school can become really challenging for teachers and educators. Nevertheless, it should be those professionals' commitment to achieve this union.

b. Coordination between teachers and psychopedagogists

More often than not, teachers and educators get distressed and powerless when dealing with ASD students given that they have not received any training which allows them to face those situations calmly and efficiently. For this reason, it is vital that teachers and psychopedagogists work in a collaborative manner, so that the latter group of professionals can assist teachers when educating Autistic children. Nevertheless, the psychopedagogists' mission is much bigger. For instance,

psychopedagogists must carry out an analysis about ASD children's familiar circumstances; about their cognitive, linguistic, motor and social capacity; and about their learning necessities among others (Rivière, 2001).

c. Specific attention

It is officially acknowledged that students with ASD require specific and individual attention, especially in relation to their linguistic and social difficulties. Thus, it is necessary that these children work these aspects with support teachers and experts in hearing and language.

Furthermore, it is logical that Autistic children achieve progress in a slower pace than non-Autistic students. In the wake of this fact, some strategies have been formulated in order to improve ASD children's educational performance. For instance, in the early 1980s Schaeffer, Musil, and Kollinzas developed the *Program of Total Communication* (through Consejería de Educación y Cultura de la Región de Murcia, 2001) which consisted of employing simultaneously signs and words, but the ASD child is first taught to make gestures to get what he wants. Then, those signs are joined to some words and after the child produces both the sign and the word, the signs are gradually removed. In this way, the expressive aspect of language, which is the least developed in Autism, is emphasized

In addition to Schaeffer's program, there are some strategies that can be adopted on a daily basis in ordinary schools. For example, teachers and educators have to maximize the strong points and abilities of Autistic children and to improve their deficiencies. Besides, it is crucial to motivate these students by letting them know which accomplishments they have achieved. Last but not least, teachers need to provide these students with security in the sense that teachers have to establish the objectives and what is going to be done during the lessons beforehand. This will make children with ASD less stressed during the lessons due to their deficits in social imagination.

All in all, a chart has been disposed including the main aspects of children with ASD that are required to take into account when developing an inclusive proposal:

	Description	Strategy
Repetitive Behavior	Tendency to fixed routines and restricted patterns of interests.	Establish a routine and find out which their interests are.
Social Communication Deficit	Rejection to making requests.	Be aware of what they might need.
	Little receptivity to others' speech. Echolalia.	Make sure that they have understood you. Make an effort to understand their speech.
Social Interaction Deficit	They do have social interaction deficits, but they are not antisocial.	They can work in groups
Social Imagination Deficit	Inability to predict other people's behavior.	Provide them with information about what is going to happen next, and to follow a routine in order to prevent anxiety.
	Inability to understand hidden meanings.	Give a clear message and avoid using irony and/or sarcasm.
	Inability to interpret abstract thinking.	Use visual materials to support your instructions.
Frequent Necessities	Avoid chaotic environments.	
	Show the purpose of what you are asking them to.	
	Draw them in social interactions.	
	Try to understand their conduct.	
	Establish some limits.	
	Do not use trial and error method.	
Educational Necessities	Assess the students' capacities.	
	Avoid irrelevant stimuli.	
	Cooperation with psychopedagogists.	
	Patience.	
	Take advantage of their capacities.	
	Motivate and praise.	

Figure 2. Descriptions and Strategies of the Main Autistic Traits

4. METHODOLOGY

4.1. Project Based Learning (PBL)

The methodology chosen for carrying out this inclusive proposal is the Project Based Learning (PBL) approach. The reason for having selected this methodology is that, during my school *Practicum* internship, I had the opportunity to have two Autistic students in the classrooms, as I have previously stated in this paper. By the end of my stay in that school, we, the students and I, developed a group project about the Shakespearean theatre in which all the students were involved and keenly interested. Indeed, the class I was in charge of was not only composed of Autistic and non-Autistic students, but the diversity within the pupils was even richer: from students with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) to students with significant curriculum adaptations. Although there was a large variety of students within the same classroom, the implemented project was indeed a success in the sense that it suited the students' necessities and interests. Therefore, I have decided to include this type of project into my inclusive proposal since it actually worked for both Autistic and non-Autistic students.

Inquiring into the literature that has been written about PBL, it becomes evident that there is not a unique definition about this concept, but several different ones, each of them including diverse specific features. Therefore, it is difficult to assess what a project is and what it is not. However, the definition made by Gewen Solomon (2003) is, from my view, the most thorough one.

In project-based learning, students work in groups to solve challenging problems that are authentic, curriculum-based, and often interdisciplinary. Learners decide how to approach a problem and what activities to pursue. They gather information from a variety of sources and synthesize, analyze, and derive knowledge from it. (p.1)

Thus, there are some features to take into account when developing a project with the PBL methodology:

- Students must work in groups.
- Students must solve a problem.

- That problem must be authentic, based on the curriculum and must encompass more than one discipline.
- Students must make decisions about how to approach the problem and what activities to undertake.
- Students must collect and analyze information.
- Finally, students must derive knowledge from the information analysis.

One specific aspect that makes this methodology especially appropriate for children with autism is that PBL requires social interaction in order to accomplish the task. At first, it might seem that this feature can have a negative effect for these students. However, looking back on the necessities formerly collected in this research paper, it was declared that people with ASD do not need to be isolated, that respecting their loneliness is not beneficial for them. For this reason, engaging children with autism in group activities with peer pupils is a way of making them take part in social interactions comfortably.

Although this methodology can result of substantial assistance to the Autistic children's learning process, there are some issues to be considered beforehand. As it has been previously explained, PBL promotes the students' autonomy by allowing them to make their own decisions. However, this may be a drawback for children with autism due to their inability to predict other people's behavior and their necessity of having a fixed routine. For these reasons, it is crucial that teachers provide an adequate environment where the objectives and the steps to follow are clearly established. Besides, it is appropriate to maintain the same pattern of work since this will provide Autistic students with a double security: it will prevent the sense of anxiety of not knowing what is going to happen next and it will give these students sameness and a routine.

According to Kennedy and Shukla (1995), the ability to engage in social interaction is not innate, but it can be learnt. For this reason, it is vital that children with Autism are included in social interactions as much as possible in order to amend their impairment. Moreover, as McConnell (2002) explicitly states in his paper, "Children with autism can benefit reliably from social interaction skill interventions" (p. 365-366). Therefore, it is

highly beneficial to encourage Autistic students to interrelate to the rest of their mates by means of group work. However, although it is favorable not to respect Autistic children's desire of isolation, their restricted interests have to fall within the classroom (Gunn & Delafield-Butt, 2016). The methodology chosen for implementing a teaching project in a classroom with Autistic students, which is PBL, meets these two aspects. This methodological approach suits the Autistic children's need of being involved in social interaction given that students will have to develop the project in groups, the pupils in each group being inevitably in contact. Second, PBL respects the restricted interests of children with ASD since they can adapt the project to their personal preferences to the extent to which they follow the teacher's rules.

Finally, the Project Based Learning methodology will be of assistance when elaborating the inclusive teaching project for a heterogeneous classroom given that PBL meets the criteria established by Villa, Thousand, Nevin, and Liston (2005) in their article *Successful Inclusive Practices in Middle and Secondary Schools*. This paper consists of a list of those practices considered successful for achieving the inclusion of diverse students within the same classroom. These actions are listed and explained in their paper, and those which deserve consideration for suiting the PBL characteristics will be subsequently accounted for:

- Use of technology

Nowadays, students are required by law to develop a digital competence throughout the different subjects. Furthermore, Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) facilitate the students' learning process by means of increasing their motivation, speeding up tasks and allowing students to go a step further. Besides, the use of technology is beneficial when dealing with the PBL approach since it provides the students with the opportunity to investigate on their own on the topic at issue and to elaborate a wider variety of projects.

- Student collaboration and cooperative group learning

As it has been formerly explained, the projects implemented through PBL are meant to be accomplished in groups of students. In the same way, it has already been stated that children with Autism benefit considerably from peer work. Now, it can be observed that group work and learning does not only work for the two former aspects, but it is also highly beneficial for achieving an inclusive environment in the classroom.

- **Interdisciplinary curriculum**

An interdisciplinary curriculum integrates diverse subjects which have a central topic in common. For instance, history and literature can be incorporated into the foreign language classroom. The Project Based Learning methodology has proven to be especially suitable for combining different disciplines given that the project can be as wide as desired and can require the use of varied branches of knowledge.

- **Promoting self-determination**

Self-determination skills imply the capacity of making decisions, solving problems, and setting goals among others (Villa et al., 2005). Indeed, PBL includes these three aspects as its foremost features. This attribute is not only vitally important for the students' academic life, but also for their real life. A particularly unusual but remarkably effective way of promoting self-determination among students is through the use of literature. Whittaker (2012) establishes that the students' capacity of self-selection, self-awareness, and self-expression benefits positively by analyzing literature.

4.2. The use of drama in the EFL classroom

As William Shakespeare declared in his play *As You Like It*, “All the world's a stage, / and all the men and women merely players” (*The complete works of William Shakespeare*, n.d., p. 262). If he was right, then drama should be employed more at schools, especially for teaching and learning English as a foreign language. Indeed, this statement is supported by Valerie Whiteson (1996), who claimed that drama provides a great platform for developing fluency and for analyzing the English language. Notwithstanding, drama benefits English learning and teaching in many other different ways. For instance, it promotes the acquisition of authentic language, the vocabulary and the grammatical structures being fully contextualized (Boudreault, 2010). Furthermore, employing drama in the English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classroom suits the different learning styles, namely Visual, Auditory, and Kinesthetic (VAK) (Gholami and Bagheri, 2013). For example, students whose learning process is based on visual elements will feel comfortable with this method since drama offers a considerable amount of visual stimuli. In the same way, those students who learn by means of hearing will focus on the dialogues and those whose learning process is kinesthetic will take advantage of the staging. Finally, it is vital to highlight that having students in

direct contact with literature and drama provides them with cultural background, which is extremely important, and usually disregarded though.

Although drama benefits non-Autistic students' learning process, it is also of considerable assistance for Autistic children. In fact, the body of literature supporting this assertion is quite extensive. For instance, O'Leary (2013) conducted a research project called *The Effects of Drama Therapy for Children with Autism Spectrum Disorders* in order to uncover the benefits and the downsides of drama for Autistic children. This author analyzed the behavior and attitude of several children with Autism who were in contact to drama. Unanimously, the results proved that exposing Autistic children to drama activities is of real assistance for them. For example, drama encourages these students to engage and initiate social interactions, and it improves these children's capacity of social imagination by means of seeing themselves in another character. Moreover, other authors such as McConnell (2002) states that "sociodramatic play—typically, more structured activities than free play—increases social interaction rates [...] sociodramatic behaviors and social participation" (p. 360). In addition to improving these children's social interaction, drama is a way of integrating these students into the classroom community given that, more often than not, Autistic children are isolated and excluded by the rest of their mates.

Drama may not only be of assistance for children with ASD in terms of interaction, but also in terms of motor capacities. As it has been formerly illustrated in this paper, some Autistic children present physical difficulties as, for example, adapting their posture when there are held in someone's arms. Although children with Autism do not have motor severities as a general rule, some of these children may display some troubles in relation to their motor capacities. In view of that, carrying out drama activities in the classroom will help students with ASD reinforce and develop their motor capacities through the performances that they will be required to deliver.

Last but not least, employing drama in the English as a Second Language (ESL) classroom will improve the Autistic students' speech by staging the performance of the play at issue. It is highly relevant to remark that uttering words aloud is not something to take for granted in Autistic children's speech. Conversely, as it has been stated before, linguistic and communicative deficits are extremely common among children

with Autism. Therefore, having these students speaking aloud will serve as the initial step that Autistic children have to take in order to enhance their linguistic abilities.

On the whole, exploiting drama in the classroom as a medium of amending Autistic children's shortfalls has proven to be effective given that it offers the opportunity to analyze, discover, and train social relations, and motor and linguistic capacities. For this reason, the final aim of the teaching project that will be portrayed afterward in this paper is a group performance of a Shakespeare's play. In order for these students to manage ICTs and the digital competence, the performance will be recorded by the students, and each group will be required to display the videos in the classroom by means of a projector.

5. TEACHING PROJECT FOR "ENGLISH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE"

An inclusive education system welcomes all type of students in order to guarantee universal education goals. In this way, students with disabilities will have the opportunity to join an ordinary classroom, regardless of their differences. This notion will be the basis of the teaching project that will be subsequently accounted for, one or more Autistic students being at its core. In order to carry out this proposal, all the information formerly described about the ASD condition will be taken into account. However, the actions taken will not only be chosen because they suit the Autistic students' necessities, but also because they are favorable for the non-Autistic children in the classroom.

5.1. Foreign languages regulations

The Government recognizes the importance of speaking a foreign language at school, as it is determined in the LOMCE (2016). This document disposes that the current globalized society in which we are immersed has prioritized the fact of speaking a second or even a third language fluently. For this reason, it is mandatory that students of secondary education study at least one foreign language.

Likewise, the Regional Act *Orden EDU/362/2015, de 4 de mayo* establishes that the study of a foreign language at school should not be focused on learning about the language from a theoretical point of view, but on practicing that language in order to

communicate both orally and in a written way. Also, this Regional Release determines that this subject conforms the rule established in the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (Council of Europe, 2001) that a student needs to develop five skills: oral comprehension, written comprehension, oral expression and interaction, and written output. In this way, the curriculum is divided into four blocks, namely comprehension and output of oral and written texts, each block including its contents, assessment criteria, and learning standards.

Additionally, this document describes the competence mainly exploited throughout this subject, which is the linguistic one. Equally important, this document also disposes that the study of a foreign language does not only imply having linguistic knowledge, but also a grasp of cultural aspects, which involves opening our minds towards those foreign realities. Moreover, this Regional Act sets that the key competence of *initiative and entrepreneurship* plays an important role in the foreign language subject in terms of oral and written expression and interaction activities given that the students have to decide what to say, and how and by which means to say it. In addition to these two key competences, this subject also involves the digital one since ICTs are part of our daily —globalized— life.

Similarly, the *Real Decreto 1105/2014* (2015) conveys the foremost issues stated in the previous document. However, the *Real Decreto* broadens these aspects. For instance, it declares that it is crucial to adopt a respectful attitude towards the different cultures considered in the foreign language classroom. Therefore, the social and civic competence, and that of cultural awareness and expression would fit into this subject as well. Also, this document establishes that the curriculum of this subject help students develop their *learning to learn* competence. To accomplish this competence, it is necessary to make clear the aims they have to achieve and which the procedure to attain it is. Finally, this paper disposes a final competence included within the foreign language subject, which is the *mathematical, scientific and technological* one. This competence is developed in this subject given that it promotes data processing and investigation techniques.

5.2.Group context

The following teaching project is aimed at a classroom composed of 24 students of the first year of ESO. This classroom is very heterogeneous since the students' needs and capacities differ markedly. More specifically, this teaching project has been designed for a classroom where one or more students have high-functioning Autism. Nonetheless, it is vital to highlight that although they may not have any significant disorder, all students in the classroom have different necessities and skills. Thus, it is highly important that the teacher considers each student individually.

5.3.Timing

This project will be run during the second term of the course, which is from January to March approximately. Since students of secondary education receive four hours of the subject "English as a Foreign Language" a week, and the project takes seven sessions to complete it, it will be carried out in two weeks.

5.4.Overview of the project: "Shakespeare performed"

From a general perspective, this teaching project designed for the EFL classroom consists of a set of performances of six plays by Shakespeare carried out by different groups of pupils. As stated before, this performance will not be delivered in live, but through a video recording. The plays chosen to be performed by the students are 5 tragedies, namely *Romeo and Juliet* (1597), *Hamlet* (1609), *Macbeth* (1606), *King Lear* (1606), and *Othello* (1604); and one comedy, which is *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (1595) (*The complete works of William Shakespeare*, n.d.). The reason for having chosen these plays is that they are, from my view, the most popular ones. Thus, students will be motivated and will learn more significantly since they already have some previous knowledge about the plays.⁴

As the methodology followed for developing this proposal is PBL, a set of previous tasks need to be carried out in order to accomplish the final project. It is crucial to highlight that all the tasks on which students will work are needed in order to achieve the ending project. In this line, in order for each student to fully understand and

⁴Contents, learning standards and key competences are included in the annex section.

appreciate drama, they will be previously educated about William Shakespeare, his Theatre Company, and The Globe. Thus, pupils will be taught first about the Shakespearean era: Queen Elizabeth I, some English geography, and finally some relevant aspects about this author's biography. Then, students will learn about drama as a literary genre and about the theatre as a prestigious institution. In order to ascertain if the learners have understood and followed the lessons, an online test will be created by the teacher using *Quizlet* online program. After regarding those theoretical contents, students will be presented the six plays on which they will be asked to work. This will be done through a series of videos retrieved from YouTube, which summarize in an amusing manner the plot of each of the plays. Finally, students will be organized into groups and they will work on the play the teacher assigned to them. After analyzing the text, each group will show the recording of the performance to the rest of the classroom.

It is vital to remark that the steps to follow will be stated at the beginning of each session, and more specifically at the beginning of each activity so that students will know what is going to happen next. Therefore, instructions will be given to the students beforehand to improve the students' performance of the activities and to prevent that the child with Autism gets anxious or stressed.

5.5.Session sequencing

SESSION 1

Time: 60 minutes.

Activity 1: "Approaching William Shakespeare."

Timing: 10 minutes.

Classroom management: the whole classroom.

Resources: interactive whiteboard and internet connection.

Description: To introduce the figure of William Shakespeare to the students, it would be interesting to do it in a way that will encourage the pupils to know more about this author. For this class in particular, the teacher will begin the lesson with some speaking introductory activity. As there is a child with Autism in this classroom, it is highly important to include him in the classroom and to respect their necessities. In this

way, the teacher will ask the students yes or no questions so that students can answer them by just raising their hands. By doing this, the Autistic student can interact with the teacher without even realizing, being therefore included in the interactive environment of the classroom. Then, the teacher will show the students some pictures of Shakespeare, and will tell them some appealing aspects of the author that will motivate the students and will serve as an introduction for the topic. For instance, the teacher will mention that William Shakespeare, who was born in the sixteenth century, already had an earring. In this way, students are engaged in the topic and, at the same time, they are taught the era in which William Shakespeare lived.

Activity 2: “Social hierarchy.”

Timing: 25 minutes.

Classroom management: 8 groups of 3 students.

Resources: pieces of paper and pictures of the social classes.

Description: Following this topic, the teacher will deal with the Shakespearean era. The first aspect that students will learn about this age is the social classes of the era and the hierarchy existing between them. As PBL implies that the students collect and analyze information, they will be given five pictures of the different social classes of the time. These students will be asked to draw a pyramid and to arrange the pictures of the social classes in the correct order, from the lowest social rank to the highest. Then, the teacher will provide some feedback if necessary.

Activity 3: “Check your knowledge.”

Timing: 25 minutes.

Classroom management: individual.

Resources: Online presentation

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pjJOLI2mTMM>

Internet connection, the interactive whiteboard and the questionnaire

Description: The topic of social classes in England in the sixteenth century will be followed by a very short presentation about Queen Elizabeth I. The presentation will

be created by the teacher using the online program “Powtoon”. After delivering the presentation, the teacher will hand out a questionnaire with some questions about what has been displayed in the presentation in order to make sure they have a complete grasp of all the issues.

A note on ASD students

This session includes an activity carried out in groups of three people not only because Project Based Learning involves group work, but also because it is of considerable assistance that the Autistic students have some mates working with them. Besides, the teacher will make use of a questionnaire given that, as it has been stated before in this paper, it is especially important for Autistic children to ascertain if they have followed the lesson correctly. In this case, it will be done through a written test in order not to overwhelm this student in particular with direct spoken questions since they may not be willing to answer them.

SESSION 2

Time: 60 minutes.

Activity 1: “Deepening into the figure of William Shakespeare.”

Timing: 10 minutes.

Classroom management: the whole classroom.

Resources: internet connection and the interactive whiteboard.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GiqIKkaHLKI>

Description: Students will plunge into the figure of William Shakespeare and the relevant aspects they need to know in order to perform the plays properly. To achieve this, a video created by the British Council, available on YouTube, about the most relevant facts about the life of the author at issue will be shown in to the pupils as many times as necessary.

Activity 2: “Shakespeare’s birthplace.”

Timing: 10 minutes.

Classroom management: the whole classroom.

Resources: internet connection and the interactive whiteboard.

Description: Then, those aspects exhibited in the video will be explained by the teacher little by little. In the first place, a map of the England of the sixteenth century will be put on the digital board, signaling two main places: Stratford and London. Then, the students will be asked why those spots are marked on the map. In this way, students will learn Shakespeare's birth and workplace.

Activity 3: "Stratford or London?"

Timing: 40 minutes.

Classroom management: individual.

Resources: photocopies.

Description: After that, the teacher will hand each pupil in a photocopy including a chart and some sentences. For this activity, students will have to classify the sentences, which are facts about the life of William Shakespeare, according to whether they correspond to Stratford or London. To illustrate, if students find the sentence "William Shakespeare studied Latin, Greek, and History" they will be required to insert the statement in the correct group, namely Stratford. To finish this activity, students will be asked individually to choose one of the groups of sentences from the chart, and to write a short paragraph including all the statements in the group connecting the ideas properly. Finally, each pupil will pass their piece of paper to another student and they will have to write some feedback on it.

A note on ASD students

These activities will be favorable for the Autistic students since they offer a wide range of visual materials which, as it has been formerly declared in this study, are especially beneficial for students with this condition. In addition to including visual resources, the final activity of the session provides peer written feedback. In this way, students will

communicate and interact in an indirect way, which will be of considerable assistance for the Autistic child's deficit in social communication and interaction.

SESSION 3

Time: 60 minutes.

Activity 1: "Introducing The Globe."

Timing: 10 minutes.

Classroom management: the whole classroom.

Resources: internet connection and the interactive whiteboard.

Description: After analyzing some relevant aspects of the life of this prestigious author, students will deal with Shakespeare's theatre The Globe and with drama as a literary genre. As an introduction, the teacher will display a picture of The Globe theatre and right after that a picture of Shakespeare's house in Stratford. Then, the students will be asked if there is something worth remarking about the buildings.

Activity 2: "What is it for?"

Timing: 15 minutes.

Classroom management: 8 groups of 3 students.

Resources: internet connection, interactive whiteboard and a photocopy.

Description: After some conversation with the pupils, the teacher will make use of the interactive whiteboard in order to signal the main parts of The Globe. Thus, the foremost elements of the building will be explained so that the learners can later do a matching activity by themselves. This activity, which will be done in groups of three students, consists of matching the parts of the theatre with their main function in a photocopy the teacher will hand out.

Activity 3: "Describing The Globe."

Timing: 35 minutes.

Classroom management: 8 groups of 3 students.

Resources: a photocopy, internet connection and the digital whiteboard.

Description: Afterwards, pupils will be given an empty plan of the building in order for them to allocate the name of the elements in the correct spot. As there will be eight elements and eight groups of students, each group will describe one of those elements in front of the classroom, and will point to the correct place of the element they had to analyze in an image that will be displayed on the whiteboard.

A note on ASD students

Again, these activities allow communication between the members of the groups and between the whole classroom in a way that does not disturb the Autistic child's comfort. Besides, although the students will be pushed to stand in front of the classroom, they do it in groups, so they feel protected and supported.

SESSION 4

Time: 60 minutes.

Activity 1: "What do you know about drama?"

Timing: 10 minutes

Classroom management: the whole classroom.

Resources: blackboard and chinks.

Description: Once the students have been taught about The Globe, they will be dealing with the six plays they will have to analyze and perform. To introduce the works, pupils will first learn some basic traits about drama. To do this, the teacher will invite the students to do a brainstorming of ideas about what they know about this literary genre. While the pupils talk, the teacher will write their ideas down on the blackboard so that they will remember them more easily. Then, the teacher will correct the learners' proposals if necessary, and then will highlight those aspects which are the most relevant.

Activity 2: "Shakespeare in a nutshell."

Timing: 50 minutes.

Classroom management: the whole classroom.

Resources: internet connection and the interactive whiteboard.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M1wMfOwIAZ8>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PRwEQj2qZ5g>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UkBp-2fAbiU>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ptXr7LKylpg>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Bp6LqSgukOU>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MnFHtx9Lb8g>

Description: After it has been made clear what drama consists in, the teacher will show the classroom some videos retrieved from YouTube which summarize in an entertaining style the plot of each of the plays.

Activity 3: “Quizlet.”

Timing: not specified

Classroom management: individual (at home).

Resources: internet connection. <https://quizlet.com/214849481/william-shakespeare-flash-cards/>

Description: Finally, students will use *Quizlet* online platform, which will include all the contents that have been explored during the sessions. The pupils will have full access to the contents of the unit of work, which have been previously elaborated by the teacher. More interestingly, they will be required to complete a quiz and some didactic games at home through this online platform so that the teacher can notice the pupils’ understanding of the contents approached during the lessons.

A note on ASD students

The first activity designed for this fourth session is of particular assistance for Autistic students, even though it may seem very simple. Brainstorming about an idea develops and maximizes our imagination, which is something highly important for students with ASD. Also, the students will be presented the plays through a series of videos starring cartoon characters which will motivate the pupils, and especially students with Autism. Last but not least, studying is also softened since it can be done through the platform the teacher has created. In this way, the study time for the contents of the lessons is made more pleasant not only for students with Autism, but for the whole classroom in general.

SESSION 5

Time: 60 minutes.

Activity 1: “Organizing the groups.”

Timing: 5 minutes.

Classroom management: 6 groups of 4 students.

Resources: not necessary.

Description: Once the students have some general knowledge about the plays and about Shakespeare in general, they will be organized into groups. As there are 24 students in the classroom, there will be six groups of four pupils each. The members of each group will be selected by the teacher strategically given that the students that will be in the Autistic student’s group need to meet some specific requirements. For instance, the Autistic child needs to have a friendly relationship with the members of their group so that they will feel comfortable to interact and communicate with them, or at least to allow interaction and communication between them and their classmates. In addition to having a harmonious relationship, the rest of the members of the Autistic student’s group should be sympathetic and thoughtful with their classmate condition. Therefore, they will have to respect and understand the behavior of their Autistic peer and to try to integrate and to make their mate feel integrated within the group. Nevertheless, the teacher has to bear in mind that these students are only twelve and/or thirteen years old, so they cannot assume the whole responsibility of taking care of their

Autistic classmate. It is the teacher's role to care for this student's needs and demands in particular.

Activity 2: "Distributing the plays."

Timing: 5 minutes

Classroom management: 6 groups of 4 people.

Resources: not necessary.

Description: Afterward, the plays will be distributed to the groups, the comedy being allocated to the Autistic student's group. The reason for having distributed the plays like that is because this comedy in particular is an action-packed story starring four main characters which has a happy ending as well. Once the plays have been distributed, students will be asked to start working in groups.

Activity 3: "Shakespeare's vocabulary."

Timing: 25 minutes.

Classroom management: 6 groups of 4 students.

Resources: the scripts and a dictionary.

Description: First, pupils will be given the script of the play at issue, in this case *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Although the teacher will try to provide the works as authentic as possible, the screenplays will be adapted as there are several Old English terms or some high-level grammatical structures. Once the pupils have been told what the activity consists in and after each group has their corresponding script, they will be asked to analyze the text. To do this, they will have to read the whole writing as many times as they find necessary. Then, students will be required to mark all those words they do not understand. As they will have a dictionary with themselves, the teacher will ask the pupils to look those terms up. Straightaway, students will have to select five words from those they have previously marked. If some of the groups selected less than five words, they will have to read the text again and look for some words they think their mates will not understand or will have some troubles with.

Activity 4: "Expanding our knowledge."

Timing: 25 minutes.

Classroom management: 6 groups of 4 people.

Resources: the blackboard, chalks, pieces of paper and the scripts.

Description: Once each group has chosen five terms, they will be asked to write them down in the blackboard and to explain the meaning to the rest of the classroom so that the rest of the students can learn those terms as well. Then, pupils will have to classify those terms in a chart according to their grammar category, namely nouns, adjectives, verbs or adverbs. Once they have made the table and classified the terms, the members of each group will be required to make a sentence with each of the words that the group next to them has written on the blackboard. The reason for having chosen this vocabulary activity is because it provides students with autonomy and self-learning given that, although the teacher may give the groups some feedback, it is the students themselves the ones who elaborate the activity.

A note on ASD students

Considering the Autistic student's demands, these tasks meet their needs and at the same time they encourage them in a gently way to take the reins of their learning process, having the support of their peers as well. Besides, the fact that the activities enable the groups of students to follow the same pattern of performance will fill the Autistic pupils with a sense of calmness, which will benefit their learning process undeniably.

SESSION 6

Time: 60 minutes.

Activity 1: "Who is who?"

Timing: 50 minutes.

Classroom management: 6 groups of 4 students.

Resources: pieces of paper and the scripts.

Description: After analyzing the screenplay, students will be asked to elaborate an identity card of each of the characters that appear in the fragment they will have to perform. The identity cards they will have to elaborate should include the following aspects: full name of the characters, age, physical appearance, relation to the other characters, and a drawing of the character. Of course, there will be some information that will not appear on the text, but which the students will have to make up.

Activity 2: “Who are you?”

Timing: 10 minutes.

Classroom management: 6 groups of 4 students.

Resources: the students.

Description: Once they have finished the identity cards of the characters, the students will be required to decide which member of the group is going to perform which character. Finally, pupils will tell the teacher which character they are going to perform.

A note on ASD students

By doing the main task of this sixth session, the deficit in social imagination and in imagination in general of the child with Autism will be worked out since they will need to make up some information in order to complete the cards. Besides, as each member of the group will have to elaborate one character’s identity card, the Autistic child will have a role just like the rest of the mates, which will make the Autistic student feel integrated in the classroom.

Rehearsal of the play

It is vital to remark that the students will not rehearse the performances in the classroom since it may provoke a chaotic environment which might affect negatively the student with ASD. The teacher must make sure that the group including the ASD teenager chooses an adequate place safe of over stimuli.

SESSION 7

Time: 60 minutes.

Activity 1: “Time to perform!”

Time: 60 minutes.

Classroom management: 6 groups of 4 students.

Resources: props and costumes.

Description: Finally, students will be required to perform the corresponding fragments of the plays. As there are six groups of students and the session consists of sixty minutes, each group will have 10 minutes to carry out the performance which they have been rehearsing outside the classroom.

A note on ASD students

As it has been formerly accounted for in this paper, drama is especially beneficial for children with Autism in the sense that it enhances their shortages in communication and speech, interaction, and their motor abilities. From my view, using drama in the classroom will also make students, and Autistic children in particular, have a great time at school which not only will improve their grades, but also their attitude in the sense that it will boost their good mood and self-confidence.

In order for the Autistic students not to get nervous and stressed about not knowing what is going to happen during the lessons, they will be given this session plan so that they identify exactly what is going to be done. Nevertheless, this chart will be handed out to the whole classroom. This session plan will also include the classroom management in each type of activity, i.e. individual or group, and a list with the names of the students that will form the groups of each task. Likewise, at the beginning of each session the teacher will broadcast the activities that will be carried out, and will announce the transition between the activities.

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
	Session 1: -"Approaching William Shakespeare" → class activity. -"Social hierarchy" → group activity (list of names). -"Check your knowledge" → individual.		Session 2: -"Deepening into the figure of William Shakespeare" → class activity. -"Shakespeare's birthplace" → class activity. -"Stratford or London?" → individual.	Session 3: -"Introducing The Globe" → class activity. -"What is it for?" → group activity (list of names). -"Describing The Globe" → group activity (list of names).
Session 4: -"What do you know about drama?" → class activity. -"Shakespeare in a nutshell" → class activity. -"Quizlet" → individual.	Session 5: -"Organizing the groups" → group activity (list of names). -"Distributing the plays" → group activity (list of names). -"Shakespeare's vocabulary" → group activity (list of names). -"Expanding our knowledge" → group activity (list of names).		Session 6: -"Who is who?" → group activity (list of names). -"Who are you?" → group activity (list of names).	Session 7: -"Time to perform!" → group activity (list of names).

Figure 3. Session plan

5.6. Assessment

As it has been previously accounted for in this study that Autistic children's condition requires specific attention, especially in an educational context. For this reason, this teaching project has been aimed at respecting Autistic students' needs and at enhancing their capacities. Therefore, their individual demands have been considered for developing the activities. In the same way, the evaluation process of the Autistic students needs to differ from the one of the non-Autistic pupils, since their requirements differ as well. For this reason, two models of rubrics have been designed and exposed in this paper: an open rubric for the non-Autistic students and a closed one for the Autistic children.

The following model of rubric is an open one, which has been designed for the non-Autistic students in the classroom:

	Needs improvement	Developing	Accomplished	Proficiency
Takes part in conversations				
Fulfils the tasks				
Equal effort in group				

activities				
Shows interest				
Level of performance				
Management of ICTs				
Grammar aspects				

Figure 4. Open Rubric

Similarly, a closed rubric has been elaborated for assessing the Autistic students' meeting of the requirements established by the teacher:

	Needs improvement	Developing	Accomplished	Proficiency
Takes part in conversations	The student refuses to establish any kind of communication.	The student allows communication but they do not take part in conversations.	The student allows communication and attempts to take part in conversation, e.g., using body language like nodding or shaking their heads.	The student takes part in conversations, either between them and the teacher or between them and their peers.
Fulfills the tasks	The student does not accomplish any of the tasks, nor shows any attempt to complete them.	The student attempts to tackle the tasks, even though they are fulfilled.	The student aims at completing the task even though they may not succeed.	The student accomplishes the task.
Equal effort in group activities	The student ignores the rest of the member of the group, being the task completed by the rest of the members of the group.	The student is aware that each member of the group has a particular role to take, even though the student does not play such role.	The student is aware that each member of the group has a role and attempts to perform it.	The student understand what work group means and occupies their role properly.
Shows interest	The student is completely alien to the lessons and adopts a passive attitude.	The student seems to have some vague notions about the subject but does not show any interest.	The student listens carefully to the teacher but in a passive way.	The student listens carefully to the teacher and is engaged in the

				lessons.
Level of performance	The student performs the play reading the script instead of reciting it.	The student plays the corresponding role but the performance is poor.	The student performs the play and recites the script correctly.	The student performs the play and recites the script superbly.
Management of ICTs	The student lacks ICT management abilities.	The student makes use of ICTs but they do not have a great command of them.	The student manages the use of ICTs.	The student manages and innovates in the use of ICTs.
Grammar aspects	The student does not produce any grammatical structure.	The student attempts to use grammatical structures, having no success though.	The student employs the same pattern of grammar structures correctly.	The student produces a wide variety of grammar structures in different contexts.

Figure 5. Closed Rubric

6. CONCLUSIONS

The five-week internship that I spent in a secondary school where two students were Autistic encouraged me to inquire into this disorder and how it affected people. After some research and after having been in contact with those children, I considered that it was necessary to think carefully about which activities and methodology that best suited the Autistic students' personal, cognitive and educative characteristics. Besides this, the fact that the *LOMCE* establishes that the schooling of students with special educational needs, such as Autistic pupils, has to comply with principles of inclusion to avoid discrimination also set the basis for choosing this topic for my dissertation. As children with ASD ought to be included in ordinary classrooms by law, I took into account that it is crucial to find an effective means of teaching and learning for both Autistic and non-Autistic students. Although some other authors have previously filled this gap in education, I consider that the more extensive the body of literature about this issue is, the better our educational system will be.

Therefore, I decided to design a teaching project for including students with Autism into an ordinary classroom. This inclusive project consists of a series of tasks aimed at enabling pupils to perform one of the plays written by Shakespeare—in this case, *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (1595)—in groups of four students. In an attempt to employ this proposal in actual schools, both the tasks and the final project have been intended to be feasible and practicable in all kinds of secondary institutions.

This paper has illustrated the nature of the Autistic condition, which is the first and foremost step to take when dealing with people—in this case, children—with Autistic Spectrum Disorder. This is really important for providing these students with the adequate attention they need to have their educational requirements met. Besides, having a grasp of the ASD enables teachers and other members of the educative community to make an early detection of this disorder. Furthermore, providing teachers and other professionals of secondary education with a general enlightenment of what Autism is will raise their awareness about the relevance of adapting and adjusting the methodology to these Autistic students. Moreover, this proposal may serve as a point of reference for other members of the educative community to develop their own teaching projects.

Nonetheless, some limitations can be found in this project as well. To illustrate, although all Autistic individuals share some basic traits, it is vital to mention that each student is different from the rest of the pupils. This feature also applies to non-Autistic

students since we all have our particular differences, which conforms the so-called student diversity. Therefore, this project may not be equally effective for all students.

According to the WHO, 1 in 160 children has ASD (Trastornos del espectro autista, 2017). Certainly, this figure shows that a large number of individuals are affected by this disorder, the families and people around them being excluded from this statistic. In fact, chances are that all of us will have to deal with Autistic individuals. Therefore, it is necessary to comprehend the Autistic Spectrum Disorder in order to assist and support these people.

As Dan Brown affirmed, “We all fear what we do not understand” (We All Fear What We Don’t Understand, 2016); a statement that is quite accurate in the context of Autism since very often we judge people with Autism because we do not have an empiric base of this disorder. For this reason, it is so important to explore Autism in order to avoid shaping a misleading idea about this concept. In addition to being educated about ASD, it is also especially relevant to have moral values towards these people, especially if we are dealing with Autistic children. Empathy, respect, patience, and sensitivity are the most relevant skills to put into practice when it comes to individuals with Autism.

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8. ANNEXES

Annex 1. Curricular contents and learning standards.

	Contents	Learning standards
Block 1. Understanding of oral texts.	<p>To infer and formulate hypothesis about meanings obtained from the understanding of significant, linguistic and paralinguistic elements.</p> <p>Communicative functions: To initiate personal relationships. To describe physical attributes of people, objects, places and activities.</p> <p>To express knowledge and certainty.</p> <p>To express interest, approval, esteem, sympathy, satisfaction, hope, trust, surprise, and their opposite equivalents.</p>	<p>Identifies relevant information of TV programs about daily or personal issues which have been articulated slowly and clearly (e.g., the news, documentary films), when understanding is supported by images.</p> <p>Taking part in an informal conversation, understands descriptions, narrations and opinions about practical issues of daily life and about topics of interest when the interlocutor speaks clearly, slowly and directly, the interlocutor being willing to repeat or reformulate what has been said.</p> <p>Identifies the general meaning and the key points of an informal conversation between two or more speakers, which takes place in the presence of the student, the topic being familiar and the speech clearly articulated at a slow pace and in a standard linguistic variety.</p> <p>Having visual support, distinguishes the main ideas and relevant information in presentations about educational topics or of personal interest (e.g., about a curricular issue or about a talk to organize group work).</p>

<p>Block 2. Production of oral texts: expression and interaction</p>	<p>To conceive the message clearly, distinguishing its main idea or ideas, and its basic structure.</p> <p>To express the message clearly and consistently, structuring it properly and adjusting it to the models and forms of each type of text if necessary.</p> <p>To modify words with similar meanings. To define or paraphrase a term or expression.</p> <p>To point at objects, to use deictic terms or to perform actions that clarify the meaning. To use body language culturally appropriate (gestures, facial expressions, postures, eye or body contact, proxemy).</p> <p>To product basic patterns of rhythm, intonation and accentuation in words and sentences.</p> <p>Communicative functions: to initiate personal relationships. To describe physical attributes of people, objects, places and activities. To request and offer information, directions, opinions and addresses.</p> <p>To express knowledge and</p>	<p>Makes short and rehearsed presentations which are well structured and visually supported about topics of interest or related to their education. Answers short and simple questions from the listeners about the content of the presentation.</p> <p>Takes part in informal conversations establishing social contact, exchanging information and expressing opinions.</p> <p>Takes part in a formal conversation or meeting, exchanging enough information and reacting in a</p>

	certainty.	simple way to the comments, as long as the key points can be repeated if necessary.
Block 3. Understanding of written texts	<p>To gather previous information about task type and topic.</p> <p>To identify the type of text, the comprehension being adapted to the text type.</p> <p>To initiate personal relationships.</p> <p>To narrate concrete and frequent past events, to describe present states and situations, and to express future events.</p> <p>To express knowledge and certainty</p> <p>To express will, intention, decision and order.</p> <p>To express interest, approval, esteem, sympathy, satisfaction, hope, trust, surprise, and their opposite equivalents.</p> <p>To distinct between the different types of understanding (general meaning, essential information, key points).</p>	<p>Understands the essence (e.g., youth literature) of short and well-structured fictional stories and gets an idea of the personality of the different characters, of their relationships, and of the plot.</p> <p>Understands essential and specific information in web pages and other reference and consulting materials, which are clearly structured about topics related to academic subjects or to their interests (e.g., a curricular topic or a sport), as long as the difficult sections can be reread.</p>

<p>Block 4. Production of written texts: expression and interaction</p>	<p>To gather and to coordinate the communicative key competences in order to undertake the task efficiently (review what is known about the topic, what can be said, or what is aimed to say, etc).</p> <p>To locate and to use the resources adequately.</p> <p>To locate and to use the linguistic and themed resources (using a dictionary, asking for help, etc).</p> <p>To express the message clearly, adjusting it to the models and forms of each type of text.</p> <p>To take advantage of and to get supported by previous knowledge (using “prefabricated” language, etc.).</p> <p>To describe physical attributes of people, objects, places, and activities.</p>	<p>Writes short reports in a conventional format, with simple information about habitual events and the reasons of certain actions in an academic context.</p> <p>Describes in a simple way situations, people, objects, and places, pointing at the main events in a very schematic manner.</p>
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Annex 2. Key competences.

According to the official Act ECD/65/2015 (Jefatura del Estado, 2015) the European Union establishes that European citizens should acquire a set of key competences necessary for our personal, social and professional context. Indeed, this governmental Act also declares that students ought to have expanded these key competences by the end of their compulsory education in order for these students to be able to incorporate

into adulthood satisfactorily. In this line, the *LOMCE* describes these seven key competences which are also included in the curriculum:

- Linguistic communication.
- Mathematic competence and key competences in science and technology.
- Digital competence.
- Learning to learn.
- Social and civic competences.
- Sense of initiative and entrepreneurship.
- Cultural awareness and expression.

It is highly important to remark that these competences need to be expanded transversely. In other words, they should be promoted throughout all the subjects. In this way, most of these key competences have been expanded in this project. Certainly, the competence that has been most promoted along this teaching project is the linguistic communication. This competence has been developed in this paper given that language has been manipulated for communicative purposes, both orally and in a written way. Also, the digital competence has been frequently used during the sessions given that students were shown several videos. In addition to the animated videos, students were required to access an online platform and to resort to ICTs in order to record the performances of the plays.

Another key competence to which students were in contact is learning to learn. This can be seen in the fifth session, when students were asked to look up words in the dictionary themselves and to teach the rest of their mates what they found. This competence is linked to the sense of initiative and entrepreneurship, which has been expanded by the students as well. As it has been formerly explained, pupils were required to rehearse the performances and to find the means to record them on their own. Therefore, students had to make decisions without being led by the teacher.

Last but not least, this teaching project undeniably promotes social and civic competences, as well as cultural awareness and expression. To illustrate this statement, students have been in direct contact with the English literature and society of the sixteenth century, which has promoted the cultural awareness and expression competence. In relation to social and civic competence, it is vital to state that having students working in groups brings them with the opportunity to enhance tolerance and

respect. Besides, pupils had to pay special attention to their Autistic mate's necessities and demands, which unquestionably makes students acquire this key competence. Indeed, the Autistic child does also acquire this social and civic competence, even more than non-Autistic students since children with Autism have to learn how to work in groups with other students, which entails making a harder effort for these students.

Annex 3. Materials

a. Session 1 Activity 1

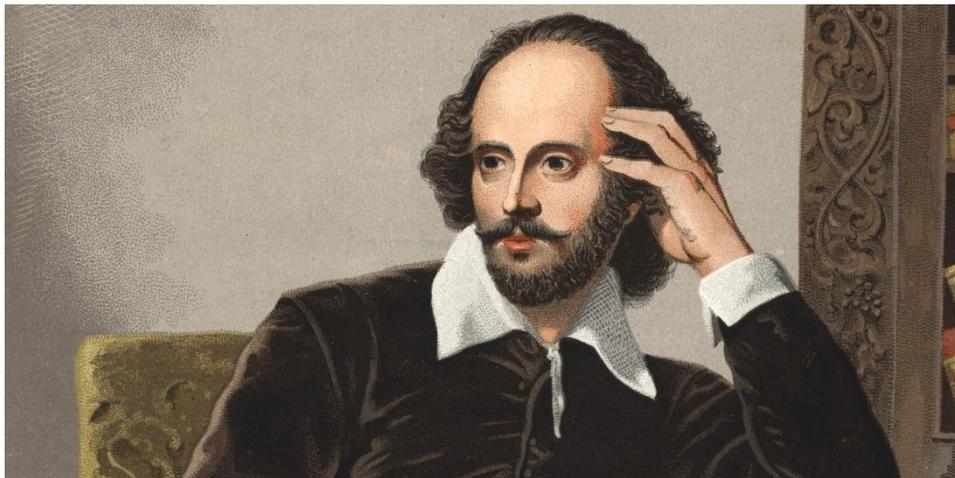


Figure 6. Shakespeare 1 (Aguilera, 2016)

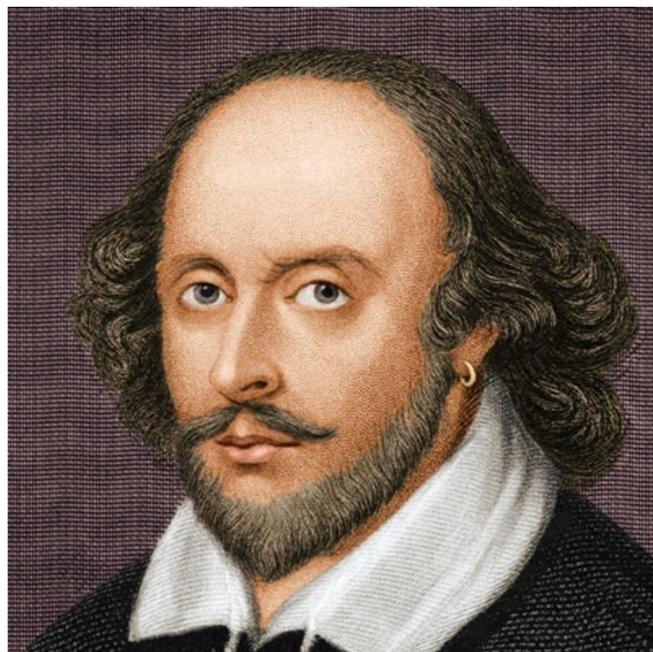


Figure 7. Shakespeare 2 (William Shakespeare, 2017)

b. Session 1 Activity 2



Figure 8. Merchants (Hil, 2014)



Figure 9. The Queen (Queen Elizabeth I: Biography, Facts, Portraits & Information, 2017)



Figure 10. Knights (warfare 1500, 2017)



Figure 11. Nobles (Nobles Dancing at a Ball (2nd Half of 16th Century)



Figure 12. Peasants

(Marx on peasant consciousness, 2015)

c. Session 1 Activity 3

1. When was Elizabeth I born?
 - a. She was born in 1553
 - b. She was born in 1603
 - c. She borned in 1553

2. Why was Elizabeth I called “The virgin Queen”?
 - a. Because she was very religious
 - b. Because she never married
 - c. Because she was very kind

3. How many languages did Elizabeth I speak?
 - a. Five languages
 - b. Four languages
 - c. Three languages

4. When was Elizabeth I crowned?
 - a. She was crowned in 1559
 - b. She was crowned in 1545
 - c. She were crowned in 1556

5. Where was Elizabeth I imprisoned?
 - a. She was imprisoned in the London Eye

- b. She was imprisoned in the Big Ben
 - c. She was imprisoned in the Tower of London
6. Who did Elizabeth I defeat?
- a. She defeated the Spanish Armada
 - b. She defeated the French Army
 - c. She defeated the German tropes
7. How was her sister called?
- a. She was called Lucy
 - b. She was called Helen
 - c. She was called Mary
8. How were her parents called?
- a. Henry VIII and Anne Boleyn
 - b. Henry VII and Anne Boleyn
 - c. Henry VII and Ann Boleyn
9. How many years did Elizabeth I reign?
- a. She reigned 40 years
 - b. She reigned 35 years
 - c. She reigned 45 years
10. What did Elizabeth I love to do?
- a. She loved to paint
 - b. She loved to play football
 - c. She loved to dance, ride horses and hunt

d. Session 2 Activity 2

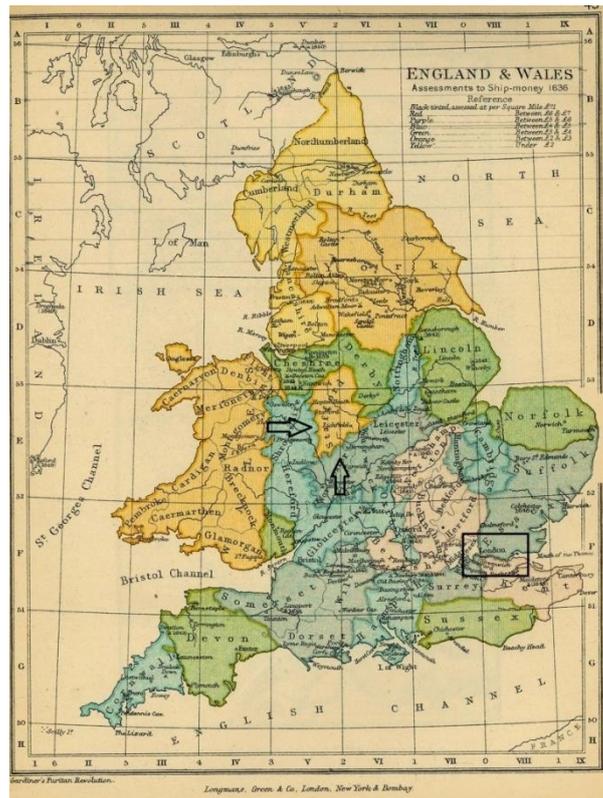


Figure 13. Map of England (Maps of United Kingdom, 2017)

e. Session 2 Activity 3

- Shakespeare married Anne Hathaway
- Shakespeare worked as an actor
- Shakespeare wrote plays
- Shakespeare studied Latin, Greek and History
- Shakespeare wrote short poems called “sonnets”
- Shakespeare left school when he was 15
- Shakespeare helped build the new theatre called “The Globe”
- Shakespeare was born in 1564

Stratford	London

Figure 14. Sentence classification

f. Session 3 Activity 1



Figure 15. The Globe (Shakespeare's Globe, 2017)



Figure 16. Stratford (Gray, 2014)

g. Session 3 Activity 2

Picture to display in the whiteboard:

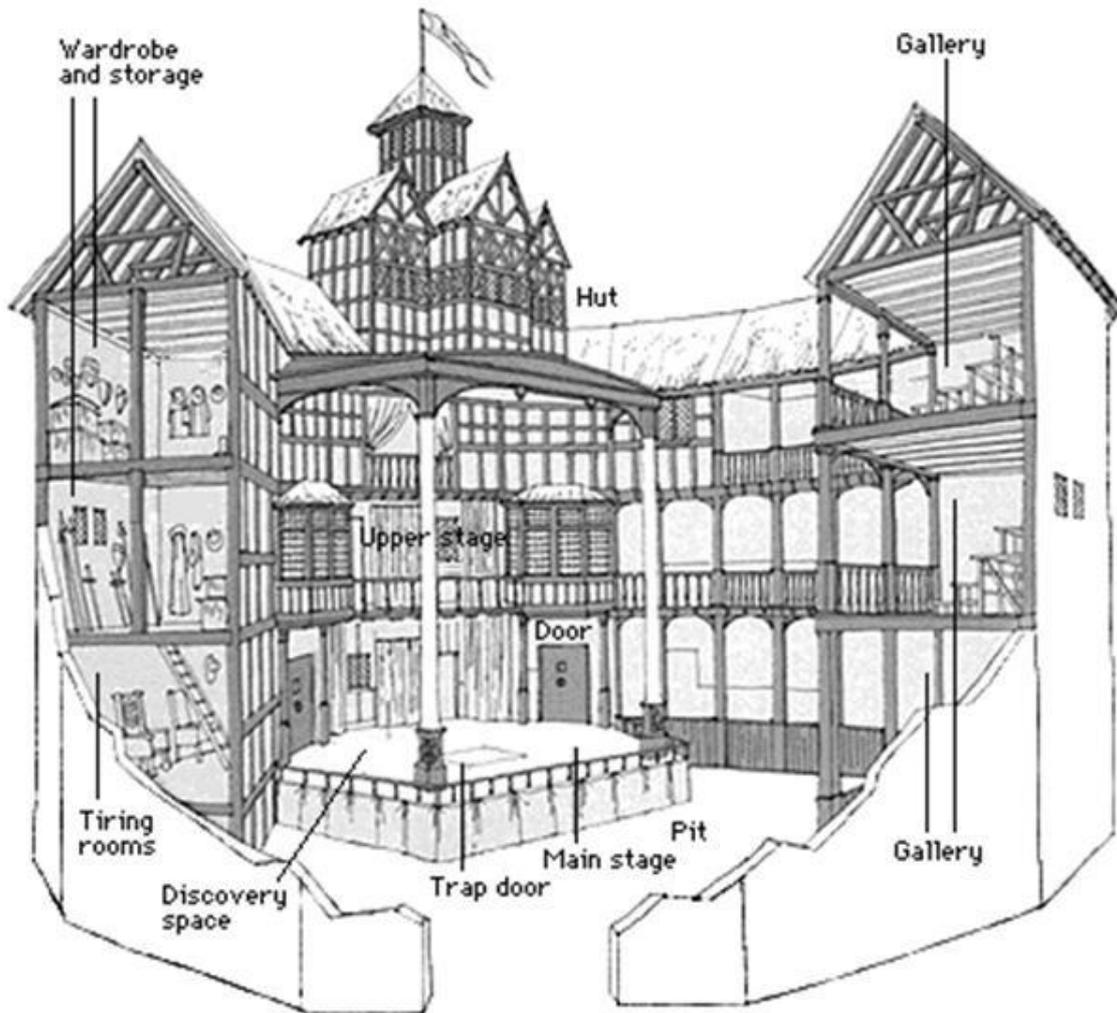


Figure 17. Parts of the Globe (Shakespeare's Globe Theatre, 2017)

Photocopy the teacher will hand out:

Flag	Depending on the color, it announced the type of play that was going to be performed
Wardrobe and Storage	Stored costumes, props etc.
Hut	Above the tiring room, it was a small houselike structure used for storage for the acting troupe
Gallery	Seats and benches for the audience

Trap Door	A door concealed on the main stage floor.
Main Stage	Represents earth, where most of the acting happens.
Pit	The cheapest place to watch a show.
Tiring Room	Rooms for actors to put on clothes
Discovery Space	The space in the central opening which can be hidden by curtains that are pulled away to 'discover'

h. Session 3 Activity 3

Flag	Wardrobe and Storage	Hut	Gallery	
Trap Door	Main Stage	Pit	Tiring Rooms	Discovery Space

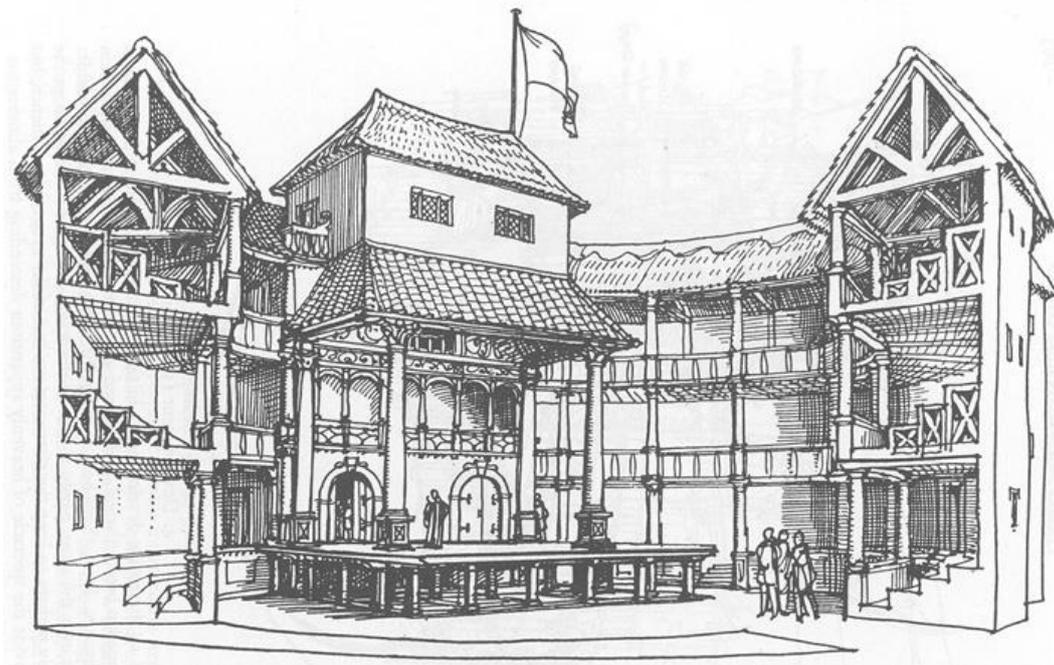


Figure 18. Parts arrangement (El Globe Thetare de Shakespeare renace de sus cenizas, 2014)

i. Session 5 Activity 3

HERMIA: I shall never marry Demetrius! (To LYSANDER.) It is you alone I love. I'll die first!

LYSANDER: Do not die, love, but live with me. Listen, I have an aunt who lives not far from here in the woods outside of Athens. If we can but escape to her cottage, she will hide us. Then we can find a priest who will marry us. Once married, not even Lord Theseus can harm us, for no man has power to break the sacred bonds of marriage. Tonight you must escape from your father's house and meet me in the forest.

HERMIA: Oh, my love, I will.

LYSANDER: Now hush, my dearest, for here comes Helena, who might give away our plot. (HELENA ENTERS.) HERMIA: Godspeed, fair Helena! Where goest thou?

HELENA: Call you me fair? Ha! Demetrius loves you and loves not me. It is you he thinks is fair. Not me. I am miserable!

HERMIA: But I don't love him. I scorn him.

HELENA: It matters not. It is you he loves. Me? He thinks I am a toad!

HERMIA: Take comfort. He no more shall see my face. He's yours to have, if you will grace. LYSANDER: Gentle Helena, to you our plan we will unfold. Tonight, under the full moon, we two shall escape to the woods and pledge our love and be married.

HERMIA: (To HELENA.) Therefore, Demetrius will be yours alone. Keep our secret, dearest friend. (To LYSANDER.) And now, come, my love, we will go to the duke and my father and pretend to them that we accept the royal decree. For by seeming to give consent, my father will give me that freedom which will allow me to flee from his house tonight. Adieu. (She and LYSANDER EXIT.)

HELENA: (Waves to them.) Never fear, your secret is safe with me. Oh, spite and spite and triple spite! It was I Demetrius loved until he met Hermia. I was the fairest. I was the sweetest. But now all he can see is she! Oh, unfair love, you are always blind. But wait! If I could get Demetrius to see how much Hermia despises him and how she dotes on Lysander, Demetrius might return to me. I will tell him of the lovers' plan. He will follow them to the forest, and I will follow him. There let him see how badly she behaves and, turning from her, he will find me true. (EXITS.)

(DEMETRIUS AND HELENA MEET)

DEMETRIUS: I love thee not, therefore, pursue me not. Where are Lysander and Hermia? You swore to me that they would be here. When I catch them, I shall slay that dog, Lysander. HELENA: I love you so.

DEMETRIUS: Why? Don't I tell you that I don't love you?

HELENA: Yes, but even so, I love you all the more.

DEMETRIUS: You make me sick when I look on you!

HELENA: I become sick when I cannot look on you!

DEMETRIUS: I run from thee and hide in these woods. (EXITS.)

HELENA: Run where you will and hide, my love will find you no matter where!
(EXITS, following him.)

(IN THE FOREST)

(LYSANDER HAS DRUNK A MAGIC PHILTER)

LYSANDER: Oh, sweet Hermia, we are both so tired, and to be truthful, I am lost. Let's rest here 'til morning, and in the light, find our way to my aunt's cottage.
(Reclines.)

HERMIA: Sweetest Lysander, you are right. You lie there, and I'll lie here, and these mossy banks will be our pillows. (Reclines.) Sleep well, my gentle love. (They sleep.)

HELENA: I love you so!

DEMETRIUS: Please, please, please leave me alone!

HELENA: Will you leave me? Do not go!

DEMETRIUS: I go... and go... and go! Pray heaven, woman, leave me alone! (EXITS, running.)

HELENA: (In tears.) I am so out of breath. I can't run anymore. Demetrius hates me. The more I love him, the more he hates me. I'm so miserable I could just die! (Spies LYSANDER.) But who is here? Lysander! On the ground! Dead or asleep? I see no blood, no wound. (Bends to wake him.) Lysander, if you live, good sir, awake.

LYSANDER: (Awakes from a dream.) ...and run through fire for thy sweet sake...
(Sees HELENA.) Beautiful Helena! I adore you! I love you so!

HELENA: What! No, it's Hermia that you love!

LYSANDER: Hermia's a toad! It's you I love!

HELENA: (In tears.) What have I done to deserve this?

LYSANDER: Come, sweet Helena, a kiss.

HELENA: (Runs away.) No, no, no! (Calls.) Demetrius, wait for me! (EXITS.)

LYSANDER: (Moves to the sleeping HERMIA.) Sleep on, you toad. It's Helena that I

love. How could I have ever thought to love you? You? You're one ugly woman. (Calls into the forest.) Wait, Helena, wait! Here comes your sweet Lysander. Helena? Oh, Helena! (EXITS.)

HERMIA: (Awakes from a nightmare.) Oh, help, Lysander. Help! Help me! Oh, what an awful dream. I dreamt I was a toad. Isn't that funny, Lysander? (Looks about.) Lysander? Lysander? Where is he? Mayhap some dreadful beast has carried him away. Don't worry, my darling, I'll save you. Lysander? Lysander? Answer me, my love. (EXITS.)

(Adapted from Harper, 2017)

9. ADDITIONAL NOTES.

ⁱ These three elements have been incorporated into the definitions made by the most accredited diagnostic associations such as the DSM-IV (Diagnostic and Statistical Manual for mental disorders) developed by the APA (American Psychiatric Association) in 1994 or the ICD-10 (International statistical Classification of Diseases and related health problems) elaborated by the WHO (World Health Organization) in 1993.

ⁱⁱ Those substances refer to FOCM (Folate-dependent One Carbon Metabolism) and TS (transsulfuration) pathways, which are two molecular processes altered by the ASD. To support this hypothesis, the researches of the previously cited article used data from the Arkansas Children's Hospital. They analyzed blood samples from 83 Autistic children and 76 Non-Autistic children, all of them aged between 3 and 10 years old. After analyzing the children's blood samples, the researched were able to accurately identify 97,6 % of the Autistic children and 96,1% of Non-Autistic children.

ⁱⁱⁱ Until 2013, the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (2005) (the fourth edition, or the DSM IV), described Autism as one of several Pervasive Developmental Disorders (PDD). These PDD also include Asperger Syndrome, Childhood Disintegration Disorder, and that PDD Not Otherwise Specified (also known as PDD-NOS).

The term Asperger Syndrome was firstly employed to refer to those children who appeared to have some of the main features of Autism, such as difficulties with social interaction or non-verbal communication, but don't usually suffer significant delays in language or cognitive development. For this reason, Asperger Syndrome has been frequently identified as a high-functioning form of Autism. As it is literally stated in the DSM IV (2005) "Asperger's Disorder can be distinguished from Autistic Disorder by the lack of delay in language development" (p. 69).

- Childhood Disintegrative Disorder was the term employed to describe late beginning of developmental delays. This means that children suffering from CDD develop normally for their age, but as of age two until ten they seem to start losing the acquired social and communication skills.
- Pervasive Developmental Disorder, not otherwise specified, is essentially a catch-all term used to depict those patients who meet some, but not all features of Asperger Syndrome, Autism or Childhood Disintegrative Disorder.

Nevertheless, separate diagnoses of these pervasive developmental disorders were not consistent across diverse medical centers given that all these disorders tend to have analogous symptoms. It was not after 2013 when the DSM V, a new version that removed these terms and replaced them with a revised name: Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD).

^{iv} In this area, there are four subcategories in which the ASD may have some deficits:

- The first subcategory is social *reciprocity*, which refers to how sufferers from ASD respond in social interactions. This section also includes the way in which the behavior of one person influences the other and vice versa. A model of this type of shortage might be referring to isolating and not taking your social role.

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- The second subarea relates to a *lack of shared attention*. This can be illustrated with the fact that a child with ASD will not be willing to share an object of interest with their parent or caretaker.
 - ASD children are also likely to *lack communication skills*, and more specifically, non-verbal communication skills. This third category refers to having problems either using nonverbal communication or interpreting nonverbal signs from someone else. An example of this subarea might be that a child does not raise their arms when they want to be picked up, or maybe they are unable to read the emotions of their parent's face, being therefore incapable of telling when their parent is delighted or, conversely, upset.

The final subcategory has much to do with the problems that ASD children have to face in terms of *social relationships*. Since these children find several difficulties developing relationships, it is not unusual to find that these children are unable to make friends or to maintain friendship relationships.