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# Universidad de Valladolid

**MÁSTER DE PROFESOR EN EDUCACIÓN SECUNDARIA OBLIGATORIA Y  
BACHILLERATO, FORMACIÓN PROFESIONAL Y ENSEÑANZAS DE IDIOMAS.**

**INTEGRATING LITERATURE AND ICTS AS DIDACTIC RESOURCES IN THE  
XXI<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY FOR AN EFL CLASSROOM: A DIDACTIC PROPOSAL.**

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## Index

1. Introduction.....	1
2. Justification .....	3
3. Theoretical Framework.....	4
3.1 Literature in the EFL Classroom.....	4
3.1.1 Benefits of Using Literature as a Didactic Resource in the EFL Classroom. ....	4
3.1.2 Approaches to Literature by Different Methodologies –Decades from 1950s to 1990s.....	6
3.2 ICTs in the EFL Classroom.....	10
3.2.1 The Role of ICTs in the Educational Model Shift - Years 2000 to 2018. ....	10
3.2.2 Advantages of Using ICTs in the EFL Classroom .....	13
4. Didactic Proposal.....	16
4.1. Research Methodology and Instruments .....	16
4.2. Results, Data Analysis and Selection of Text.....	18
4.2.1 Results and Data Analysis.....	18
4.2.2 Selection of Text: <i>The Gift of the Magi</i> by O. Henry .....	33
4.3. ICTs Employed in this Study.....	38
4.4. Didactic Unit: “ <i>The Gift of the Magi</i> Brought to the Big Screen” .....	41
4.4.1 Session 1. What is the meaning of Christmas? .....	41
4.4.2 Session 2. The Perfect Gift.....	43
4.4.3 Session 3. True Love Relationships.....	44
4.4.4 Session 4. Declaration of Love.....	45
4.4.5 Session 5. We Record our Own Trailer .....	47
4.4.6 Session 6. Film Awards (Final Task).....	48
4.5 Assessment .....	48
5. Conclusion .....	50
6. Bibliography .....	51
7. Appendix .....	56



## 1. Introduction

Throughout the past decades, literature has played a changing role in the English as a foreign language classroom. Although many studies, such as Lazar (1993) and Collie and Slater (1987), have indicated the numerous advantages of using literary works as a didactic resource (not only for the development of the students' communicative skills but also for the overall education of the person), its presence in the EFL classroom has been unstable. With the exception of the decade of the 1950s, when foreign language lessons were predominantly based on literature, since it was the cornerstone of the Grammar-Translation Method, for the most part of the second half of the twentieth century literary works have certainly been ignored in the English classroom, being the common belief that literature was “part of the bad old ‘traditional’ methods” (Duff and Maley, 1990, p.3). The development of the Communicative Approach during the 1980s awoke the interest of researchers in literature which eventually lead to the reintroduction of literary works in the EFL classroom, that continues to this day as illustrated by the fact of being currently part of the curriculum in Spain.

Likewise, even though the technological revolution that has gradually introduced the use of Information and Communication Technologies (or ICTs) in every imaginable daily situation originated approximately twenty years ago, and there were experts who immediately noted the need for teachers to adapt to the new language of technology (Prensky 2001), it has not been until recently that, generally speaking, instructors have become concerned with the use of different electronic devices and software applications during their lessons.

Nowadays, multiple institutions and researchers like the National Association for the Teaching of English (from the UK) (2009), and Plass and Jones (2005) investigate the potential of ICTs in the EFL classroom and its benefits for the improvement of students' communicative skills in English (and other foreign languages). However, to my knowledge, not many are concerned with the use of ICTs in relation to literature. As an instance, Rank et al. (2011) among others, list many different software applications and examine their possible exploitation in tasks based on literary works. What is more, the authors declare themselves “lovers of language and literature” (Rank et al., 2011, p.1).

The aim of this study is therefore to design a didactic proposal that unifies the advantages provided by both literature and the ICTs within the framework of the

Communicative Approach and in the context of a XXI<sup>st</sup> century EFL classroom. For that purpose, I will first select a specific group of students from a secondary education centre. Secondly, I will conduct a survey to gather information about the classroom characteristics together with the students' reading habits, their literary interests, and their use of ICTs in relation to literature. Such information will allow me, in turn, to select a suitable literary text that would constitute the basis of the didactic proposal, as well as the type of tasks and the ICTs implemented.

In devising such didactic unit, the argument will be made that literature, because of its many advantages, is a very useful didactic resource to improve EFL students' communicative competence. I will also attempt to show that, the integration in the same didactic unit of ICTs along with literature seems to contribute to adapt the latter to the needs of XXI<sup>st</sup> century students, motivating them and allowing them to take full advantage of it, in terms of learning.

This dissertation is divided as follows. First of all, I will review the benefits of using literature in the EFL classroom as stated by different researchers. Secondly, I will examine the role of literature in the main methodological approaches to the teaching of English as a foreign language of the XX<sup>th</sup> century. Thirdly, I will analyse the function of ICTs in the current shift of educational model brought by the technological revolution. In the fourth place, I will concentrate on the possibilities offered by ICTs to improve students' communicative skills. Then, I will describe the research methodology and instruments and I will undertake a quantitative and qualitative analysis of the data gathered from the survey. In the sixth place, I will follow a series of criteria so as to select the literary text that constitutes the connecting thread of the different tasks and sessions of the didactic unit. Finally, I will present the different ICTs employed in this study and I will explain the procedure of the main tasks of the didactic unit.

## 2. Justification

The reasons that justify choosing to devise a didactic proposal based on literature as well as in ICTs as my MA thesis are closely related to my period of supervised practice teaching in the secondary education centre José Jimenez Lozano, in Valladolid. During the weeks when I was allowed to participate in the teaching of English to a group of students taking 3<sup>o</sup> year of E.S.O at this high-school I implemented a didactic unit built upon an existing didactic unit from a course book called ‘Watch it, Read it’(which was linked to the semantic fields of literature and films).

Throughout the different lessons I could not help but noticing that the majority of the students in that group were members of the high school’s book club, and that they regularly attended its meetings. These findings lead me to wonder, on the one hand, whether it is usual to find didactic units and lesson plans that use literary texts as a real language source to be examined by students so as to improve their communicative skills or simply to promote reading. After I confirmed that the group of students I was teaching under supervised conditions seemed very motivated to work on a lesson plan based on the novel *Dracula* by Bram Stoker, I also asked myself whether other groups of students would be interested in working with literature.

On the other hand, the 3<sup>o</sup> year of E.S.O learners I taught knew a lot of vocabulary related to film characteristics and film genres, and they were aware of all the films that were on at the cinema in that moment. Consequently, I thought that audiovisual materials such as fragments of TV series or films could also have some benefits in the English classroom when combined with literary texts. Also, the combination of literature and audiovisual materials appeared to be suitable, for many films are based on literature. Finally, I also realised that audiovisual materials have been employed by teachers for a long period of time and that there could be new resources involving technology (ICTs) whose possibilities in the classroom were worth exploring.

### **3. Theoretical Framework.**

#### **3.1 Literature in the EFL Classroom**

##### **3.1.1 Benefits of Using Literature as a Didactic Resource in the EFL Classroom.**

Over the past years, numerous researchers have explored the advantages for the teaching and learning of English associated to the use of literature as a didactic resource in the foreign language classroom. Throughout this section, I will examine the reasons provided by Collie and Slater (1987) and Lazar (1993) in favour of the employment of literary texts in the teaching of English as a foreign language (henceforth EFL).

To begin with, literature seems to be a motivating resource in itself for a number of reasons. For instance, working with this material may generate a feeling of accomplishment due to the great importance attributed to literature in many nations; it may encourage English learners to reflect on and compare the literary text in use with other works from their national literature; or it may be engaging and enthralling simply because of the gradual disclosure of the events of the plot (Lazar, 1993, p.15).

In the second place, literary texts are authentic materials which are not designed for the foreign language classroom. This means that, by using literature as a resource for the teaching and learning of English, students are exposed to real, non-adapted uses of the language addressed to native speakers together with cultural information, in the same manner as by reading a newspaper, or a leaflet, or listening to a TV show (Collie and Slater, 1987, pp.3-4). Hence, it seems that, -as will be explored below-, the more students read literature in the foreign language, the more they may improve their language skills and their cultural knowledge.

Thirdly, literature may increase students' knowledge about the culture of the nations whose native language they are learning. However, literary works hardly ever provide an objective and accurate description of a whole society (Lazar, 1993, p.16). Still, literature offers information about "how a member of a particular society might behave or react in a specific situation" as well as how his or her "relationships, emotions and attitudes" are articulated (1993, p.17). Furthermore, according to Lazar, reading literary texts motivates students to learn more about the social, economic, historical and political events that are mentioned or insinuated as the background of the work (1993, p.17). What is more, literature

constitutes a means to obtain cultural insight for those learners who cannot afford a visit to the countries where the language is spoken, or even a complement for those who can (Collie and Slater, 1987, p.4).

In the fourth place, reading literary texts regularly benefits learners' acquisition of the foreign language, in terms of new vocabulary, idioms, grammatical structures, discursive patterns, and other oral and written linguistic elements- (Collie and Slater, 19987, p.4) (Lazar, 1993, p. 17). In other words, using literature as a didactic resource could improve English students' four basic skills. The students' ability to produce written texts is favoured by the rich context of literary works, which allows students to easily interpret and remember the new grammatical and semantic items, as well as discourse connectors or linguistic functions (Collie and Slater, 1987, p. 5) (Lazar, 1993, p.17). Indeed, reading also ameliorates students' reading skill, since it enables them to deduce semantic and pragmatic meaning from linguistic clues and from context (Collie and Slater, 1987, p.5). Finally, with regards to the oral skills, that is listening and speaking, listening to the reading of a story or play (even more if it is performed) facilitates the inference of the meaning of new linguistic items (Lazar, 1993, p.18), and completing tasks in which students are required to share their personal opinions and reactions to literature stimulates the internalisation of such meanings (p.17). Although literature has often been disapproved as a didactic resource due to the literary language, which is far from common everyday English, it is a fact that, many different types of registers and dialects are represented in literary texts, implying that it only takes a "judicious choice of the text to read" to provide students with the desired linguistic input (Collie and Slater, 1987, p.5).

The fifth reason to introduce literature in EFL programmes is the improvement of learners' capacity to develop interpretations. According to Lazar, literary texts constitute an especially useful material to encourage students to speculate and discuss about linguistic issues such as "when a particular idiom is used appropriately, how far a grammatical rule can be generalised or what is implied behind the literal meaning of what someone says in a conversation" (1993, p.19). The different existing levels of meaning in literature -"the literal, the allegorical, the tropological or moral, and the anagogic" (Frye, 1950, p.246)- along with the readers' dynamic involvement with the text create the perfect situation to motivate students to conjecture about and comment about such meanings, which in turn, improves their ability to interpret (Lazar, 1990, p.19). Furthermore, this ability could be useful for students in other communicative contexts in which the meaning may not be explicit (1990, p.19).



Finally, the advantages of using literature in the classroom for students of English **are** not limited to linguistic skills. As Lazar argues, working with literature may develop or reinforce many other abilities that contribute to “educating the whole person” (1993, p.19). To mention a few, reading literary texts can help students’ to spur their imagination, to think critically about many different topics, or to dare to share personal opinions and interpretations in front of their classmates (1993, p.19).

### **3.1.2 Approaches to Literature by Different Methodologies –Decades from 1950s to 1990s.**

Literature is not a newly introduced material in the foreign language classroom, and more specifically in the English as a Foreign Language (or EFL) classroom. Even before the increase in the need of learning modern foreign languages, which took place at the end of the nineteenth century and the early twentieth century -as a result of the industrial revolution (Karavas, 2003, p.5)-, dead languages, that is Latin and Ancient Greek, were learnt by means of literature, since written texts were the only remaining source of the language. Teaching Latin and Ancient Greek “involved the transmission of knowledge about the language –the rules of prescriptive grammar– as well as practice through translation from the source to the target language and vice-versa” (Karavas, 2003, p.5). As a consequence, the first methodology developed to teach modern foreign languages, i.e. the Grammar-Translation Method, was based on the traditional approach to teaching Latin and Ancient Greek.

During the 1950s, when the Grammar-Translation Method was the predominant approach in the EFL classroom, literary texts were considered an essential material. Learning a foreign language implied, according to Bowen (n.d.) and Bonachera (2013), memorising the different grammatical rules of the language approximately in the traditional order associated to the grammar of Latin and then practising such rules by translating texts into and from the students’ native language (Bowen n.d., par. 3) (Bonachera, 2013, p.12). Albaladejo adds, as a third objective, the “imitación de muestras ‘elevadas’ de lengua”<sup>1</sup> typically found in literature (Albaladejo, 2007, p.2). The ultimate goals of this method were therefore the comprehension of written language as well as the production of written texts. In this context, literature represented the perfect classroom resource, for literary texts are “models of good writing” (Duff and Maley, 1990, p.3) and provide examples of all sorts of grammatical rules.

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<sup>1</sup> In what follows, and for the sake of clarity, all quotations originally written in a language other than English will be translated: “imitation of ‘grandiloquent’ samples of the language”.

In the 1960s, a new methodology aimed at correcting some aspects of the Grammar-Translation Method that were regarded as weaknesses, including the use of literature in the foreign language classroom, achieved dominance: the Structural Approach. As the name of the method suggests, the main focus was on the grammatical structures of the language together with vocabulary. Literary language and the translation of literary texts were excluded from classrooms since, in words of Duff and Maley, “literature study was seen as part of the bad old ‘traditional methods’” (1990, p. 3). Moreover, in the Structural Approach, the classification of grammatical structures and vocabulary, in terms of their difficulty and the level of the student, was underscored. This feature further discredited the use of literature in the classroom, considering that works could not be adapted to such arrangement by grade (Albaladejo, 2007, p. 2).

At the beginning of the 1970s, the appearance of the Functional-Notional Approach meant a reshaping of the previous method, in the sense that the social use of language (communicative purposes, functional expressions) began to be considered the core element in the teaching and learning of foreign languages, but contents were still organized around linguistic elements (Albaladejo, 2007, p.3). However, this “emphasis ... on pragmatic, efficient communication with no frills”, without unnecessary details, implied that literature remained utterly disregarded in the EFL classroom (Duff and Maley, 1990, p. 3).

Throughout the decade of the 1980s, the idea of the students’ development of the communicative competence disseminated among EFL teachers as a result of the new Communicative Approach or Communicative Language Teaching (CLT). This method also emphasized the spoken over the written language, which consequently involved that literary texts were still disallowed in the EFL classroom. According to Collie and Slater (1987), “(w)hat was needed was a more neutral, more functional kind of English ... relevant ... to the demands of particular uses in business, trade, travel or tourism, advertising and so on” which was incompatible with the “static, convoluted” literary language (Collie and Slater, 1987, p. 2). In addition, literature was dismissed because of the amount of metalanguage required to understand the different texts as well as the numerous cultural allusions, all of which demanded time that would otherwise be employed in learning everyday English (Collie and Slater, 1987, p.2). Nevertheless, this was not the only attitude towards literary texts in the 1980s. Other educational researchers regained interest in literature and initiated reconsideration of it as a didactic resource that could play an important role in the EFL

classroom. Some of the researchers who suggested a reintroduction of this material in the foreign language classroom during the decade of the 1980s were the following:

To begin with, Morgan and Rinvoluceri (1983) proposed storytelling as a method to employ literature in the EFL classroom within the framework of the Communicative Approach and taking into consideration S.D. Krashen's "Monitor Theory" from *Second Language Acquisition and Second Language Learning* (1981). They argue that storytelling (which is different from reading a story aloud) constitutes a better listening comprehension practice than a recording, in that the former "involves" the students in the situation, whereas "the latter is always a third person listening" in which students find themselves "eavesdropping" rather than listening (Morgan and Rinvoluceri, 1983, p. 2). Their method supports the idea that literature is a perfectly suitable resource for fostering oral communication among students since, throughout their work, Morgan and Rinvoluceri provide many different classroom exercises focused on the production of oral texts. To mention a few, these include students suggesting each other questions as a follow up activity; assigning roles to examine what the different students think of a character; retelling a story in a relevant situation; working on grammar through repeated phrases "e.g. 'Who's been sleeping in MY bed?'" ; or providing "symbolic picture stories" that would allow different interpretations (Morgan and Rinvoluceri, 1983, pp. 2-3). Such exercises "are offered as communicative alternatives to traditional language-teaching activities" (Morgan and Rinvoluceri, 1983, p.1).

In the second place, throughout their work, Collie and Slater (1987) attempted to integrate literature in foreign language teaching programmes as an important resource to develop students' four skills of listening, speaking, reading, and writing (Collie and Slater, 1987, p.2). For that purpose, they pinpoint what they argue are some usual practices that are to be avoided when using literature, and they formulate a series of principles to work properly with literary texts in the foreign language classroom –also- within the communicative approach. To be more specific, some of the common practices associated to the use of literature that prevent, rather than contribute to, the development of students' communicative competence, as suggested by Collie and Slater include the following: teachers' resorting to "imparting information about the author, the background of the work, ... and so on"; transforming "the teaching of literature into a massive process of explanation ... or even translation" of the complex literary language, which takes some considerable classroom time; and employing "the metalanguage of criticism", that "may both distance learners from their own response and cause them to undervalue it" (Collie and Slater, 1987, pp. 7-8).

Nevertheless, they also offer a set of six guidelines to make use of literature in a communicative manner, namely: 1. Implementing a selection of varied student-centred activities (for instance, role play, creative writing, debates, and the like) to maintain students' interest and involvement; 2. Stimulating students' imagination and emotional engagement with the literary text; 3. Using collaboration and group work to allow students to have knowledge of his or her classmates' experiences with the text, which would in turn improve awareness of his or her personal reaction or interpretation; 4. Encouraging learners' "to develop, express and value" their individual reactions to literature; 5. Employing as much as possible the target language and not resorting to the metalanguage of literary criticism; and 6. Helping students to acquire the benefits resulting from the integration of literature in the EFL classroom within a communicative approach (Collie and Slater, 1987, pp. 8-11).

Finally, during the 1990s, the number of researchers interested in integrating literature in the teaching of foreign languages grew to the point of becoming "un asunto de máxima actualidad"<sup>2</sup> and constituting a resurgence of its use in the EFL classroom (Naranjo Pita, 1999, p.8). Needless to say, this new attention to literature developed within the framework of the Communicative Approach –meaning, therefore, not a comeback of the Grammar-Translation Method- and aimed at realizing the potential of literary texts as didactic resources (Duff and Maley, 1990, p.3). As expressed by Duff and Maley, referring to the 1990s, "if indeed literature is back, it is back wearing different clothing" (1990, p. 3).

Two of the most important works published in the decade of the 1990s, whose authors explored the advantages of the use of literature as a didactic resource and hence supported its integration in the foreign language classroom were Alan Duff and Alan Maley's *Literature* (1990) and Gillian Lazar's *Literature and Language Teaching. A guide for teachers and trainers* (1993).

On the one hand, in *Literature* (1990), Duff and Maley intended to provide a series of foreign language classroom tasks based on literary texts, instead of a study program on literature. As stated by them, "[i]t is not our intention in this book to teach students how to study literature" but "to use literary texts as a resource ... for stimulating language activities" (1990, p.5). Their main purpose in designing such materials appears to be the involvement of learners in an intercommunication process, not only with the texts but also with other learners and with the teacher, which results in the oral or written production of language (1990, p.5).

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<sup>2</sup> "an extremely topical issue".

In addition, their work is based on seven principles, which could be summarised as follows: 1. The literary text per se, and not “information *about* the text” is fundamental to the tasks suggested; 2. Learners play an active rather than passive part while completing the tasks, since they are involved in interaction with the text; 3. Text-based tasks need to allow students to express their personal ideas, opinions, interpretations, experiences, and similar personal information prompted by the text; 4. The different tasks should be inspired by the specific literary text, instead of resorting to sets of questions to check understanding; 5. Literary texts can be presented in various manners, such as using just a fragment of the text, working with several texts at a time, adding media, etc; 6. Literature is not the only material used in the tasks, however it is the key connecting element; and 7. Literary quality, or the canon, is not the only criterion to be considered when selecting a text –sometimes literary quality may not even be necessary- (1990, pp.5-6).

On the other hand, in *Literature and Language Teaching. A guide for teachers and trainers* (1993), Gillian Lazar offers different examples of literature-based tasks classified by genre (novels and short stories, poetry, and plays) as well as questions for discussion, in order to help teachers design classroom materials adapted to their students’ needs (1993, pp xii-xiii). However, her ultimate goal was to identify “ways of using literature which will help learners ... to improve their English” (1993, p. xiii). For that purpose, throughout her work, Lazar develops and explores four different approaches to the use of literature in the EFL classroom: a “language-based approach to using literature” intended at analysing the grammatical, semantic and discourse elements of a text so as to produce interpretations (1993, p. 23); an approach focused on “stylistics” and how to interpret literary texts (1993, p.31); “literature as content” which implies teaching information about the texts such as “the history and characteristics of literary movements; the social, political, and historical background to a text; the biography of the author, etc” (1993, p. 35); and “literature for personal enrichment” which is focused on stimulating the students’ expression of personal experiences and opinions by means of literary texts (1993, p. 39).

## **3.2 ICTs in the EFL Classroom**

### **3.2.1 The Role of ICTs in the Educational Model Shift - Years 2000 to 2018.**

Over the last two decades, the growing pace of a technological revolution has changed the lifestyle of many people around the world, especially in Western societies. Nowadays, Information and Communication Technologies (usually referred to as ICTs) are being used in

many different daily situations and they are “transforming how we all work, play, think, feel, and relate to each other” (Robinson and Aronica, 2016, n.p.).

Increasingly, people of all ages are making a frequent use of ICTs, especially the Internet. For instance, as reported by Eurostat, in the year 2017, 84% of individuals aged 16 to 74 in the European Union (28 countries) declared having used the Internet in the last three months (Eurostat, n.d.). Likewise, in Spain, according to the ‘Instituto Nacional de Estadística (INE)’, in the same year 84,6% of the population in the 16-74 age range had accessed the Internet in the same period of three months (I.N.E, 2017). However, the older the individuals are, the more the frequency of ICT use decreases. Taking a closer look at the data, in Spain, 98,1% of men and 97,9% of women aged 16 to 24 answered the above mentioned survey affirmatively, while in the case of the population aged 65 to 74 it was only 47,6% of men and 40,2% of women (I.N.E, 2017).

This “*discontinuity*” between age groups is not a recent phenomenon and, it began drawing the attention of educational researchers as soon as in the year 2001 (Prensky, 2001, p.1). Today’s students, represented by the youngest age group, are absolutely different from those of previous generations, which correspond to the older population groups, and so it is the society in which they are growing up. Students in these days are living in the information society, surrounded by advertisements, news, and messages coming from all sorts of digital (and classic) media. As Robinson (2010) puts it, this is “the most intensely stimulating period in the History of the Earth” and students “are being besieged with information and calls for their attention from every platform, computers, from I-phones, from advertising hoardings, from hundreds of television channels” (2010, min. 4:26-4:43). Consequently, it seems that these circumstances have totally changed the way students’ “*think and process information*”, if compared to that of their parents or grandparents (Prensky, 2001, p.1).

This reasoning appears to have led Marc Prensky to coin in 2001 the now popular terms of ‘digital native’ and ‘digital immigrant’ (2001, pp. 1-2). Nowadays, students could be considered digital natives since they “are all ‘native speakers’ of the digital language of computers, video games and the Internet” whereas people belonging to the generation of their parents and teachers would be digital immigrants because they “were not born into the digital world but have, at some later point ..., become fascinated by and adopted many or most aspects of the new technology” (2001 pp.1-2).

The revolution of technology and the differences between generations appear to have originated an incompatibility with the current educational model, for teachers are not as learned as their students in terms of ICTs. As Prensky explains, “*our Digital Immigrant instructors, who speak an outdated language (that of the pre-digital age), are struggling to teach a population that speaks an entirely new language*” (2001, p.2). Stated in another way, the society of the Industrial Revolution that gave rise to the public education system in the mid-XIX<sup>th</sup> century in order to meet the need for skilled workforce has disappeared (Robinson and Aronica 2016, n.p.), and a new society goes hand in hand with the need of a new educational paradigm.

Therefore, an educational reform appears to be essential and it would probably involve the full integration and exploitation of ICTs in the classroom, for, on the one hand, these gadgets and applications are part of students’ reality. It only takes to observe a class-group to know that “most students carry around at least one mobile device more powerful and versatile than the machines that first started to appear in classrooms 30 years ago”, even though, at least in Spanish high- schools, they are not allowed to do so (Rank et al. 2011, p.2). On the other hand, this new technological society implies the requirement of new skills to practise many occupations and the new educational model should help students to develop such digital competence. What is more, in words of Ala-Mutka et al. From the Joint Research Centre of the European Union (2008), “[l]earning digital skills not only needs to be addressed as a separate subject but also embedded within teaching in all subjects”, including English as a foreign language indeed (2008, p.2).

It seems also true that, focusing on the Spanish education system, this change has already began, since many classrooms have smartboards, Internet access, laptops, and tablets, whose many possibilities are being explored by teachers. Also, following the suggestions provided by the EU on the key competences for lifelong learning, the digital competence, understood as “el uso creativo, crítico y seguro de las tecnologías de la información y la comunicación para alcanzar los objetivos relacionados con el trabajo, la empleabilidad, el aprendizaje, el uso del tiempo libre, la inclusión y participación en la sociedad”<sup>3</sup>, is included in the Spanish curriculum (*Orden ECD/65/2015*, p. 6995). Still, more changes are probably yet to come, because “[t]hat revolution has barely began” (Robinson and Aronica, 2016, n.p.).

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<sup>3</sup> “the creative, critical, and safe use of information and communication technologies to reach the objectives related to work, employability, learning, use of leisure time, inclusion and participation in society”.

### **3.2.2 Advantages of Using ICTs in the EFL Classroom**

With regards to the teaching and learning of modern foreign languages, such as the case of English, many researchers have examined the advantages of the use of ICTs in the EFL classroom. In this section, I will attempt to review the benefits of information and communication technologies for the development of students' communicative skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing) in English as reported in several studies.

To begin with, discussion around the use of ICTs to improve students' listening skill focuses on multimedia materials, which are the result of the combination of words and pictures by means of electronic devices and software. In line with this, words are understood as "verbal materials that can be presented in printed or in spoken form" (Plass and Jones 2005 p.468) and pictures refer to "static graphics such as photos, drawings, maps, charts, figures, and tables or dynamic graphics such as video or animation" (Mayer 2002, n.p.). Such multimedia materials help students to create "a mental representation" from this verbal and visual input (Mayer, 2002 n.p.) and have been proven to be effective in ameliorating students' listening comprehension in second-language acquisition. As an instance, Plass and Jones (2002) conducted an experiment in which they gave a group of students the possibility of using "pictorial and written verbal annotations" during a listening task (Plass and Jones, 2005, p. 474). These researchers concluded that those students who employed both types of materials ("verbal and visual annotations") were able to recollect more vocabulary and ideas from the oral text and therefore to understand it better (Plass and Jones, 2005, p. 474). Moreover, the National Association for the Teaching of English (NATE) of the United Kingdom, examined different ICTs devised for an innovative annotation which they argue contribute to the comprehension of oral and written texts (NATE, 2009, p.3). In the case of oral texts, some of the specific uses of those tools that could enhance students' oral comprehension include the "[u]se of hypertext to link images and sound recordings in response to an electronic version of a source text" or the use of "a multimedia presentation package to combine text, sound and visuals" (NATE, 2009, p.4).

Secondly, information and communication technologies, and more specifically software designed for synchronous communication, can contribute to the development of students' speaking skill. The Internet provides a wealth of useful applications that students may employ so as to practice their oral production and to communicate instantly with other



classmates, with native speakers of English (language exchanges), and even with teachers if they are –for example- participating in a M.O.O.C (which stands for Massive Online Open Course). Synchronous communication applications have been categorized into four types, namely chat, Skype, social networking sites and Second Life virtual world (“Section 3.2 online learning tools”, n.d.). All of these tools seem to be effective for certain different speaking activities: chats may be used for “[r]eal time question and answer sessions, “[b]rainstorming,... problem-solving sessions”, and “[o]ral examinations”; Skype appears to be particularly useful for students when it comes to “sharing their experiences and collaborate in project work”; and finally social networks and Second Life platforms could be used in order to “exchange ... academic information” (“Section 3.2 online learning tools”, n.d.).

In addition, various studies have suggested that, by means of simultaneous communication tools, students’ oral production is enhanced in several manners. For example, as reviewed by Payne and Whitney (2002), “students tend to produce more complex language in chatrooms than in face-to-face conversational settings” and also “participation increases online with ‘quieter’ students participating as much or even more than those individuals who normally dominate classroom discussion” (2002, p.14). In fact, Payne and Whitney (2002) investigated whether the employment of “synchronous computer-mediated communication (CMC)” could enhance students’ L2 oral proficiency (p. 7). For that purpose, they divided fifty-eight students into two groups: a control group, which always received instruction face-to-face, and an experimental group, which communicated with the teacher via online class in a chatroom during two of their four weekly lessons (Payne and Whitney, 2002, pp-15-16). Payne and Whitney found that the students in the experimental group certainly developed their speaking skills more than those in the control group, because the former employed “the same cognitive mechanisms underlying spontaneous conversational speech” while communicating online (2002, p.7).

With regards to the development of students’ reading skill, different studies have also proved ICTs to be helpful. Firstly, in a similar manner as in the case of the listening skill, multimedia materials seem to contribute to a better reading comprehension in students’ L2. To be more specific, Nikolova (2002) verified that these resources had a positive impact on the acquisition of vocabulary, which therefore leads to a better understanding (p.100). For that purpose, this researcher compared the performance of two groups of students in reading an online text: the control group was provided with “20 relatively low-frequency words” from the text accompanied by images, sound and text; while the materials used by the experimental

group contained the same text but lacked the annotations (Nikolova, 2002, p.100). This later group was requested to produce annotations for the mentioned low-frequency terms (2002, p.100). As a result, the students who were involved in the creation of the multimedia materials “learnt vocabulary significantly better” than the control group (2002, p.100). Other studies, such as Kasper (2000) have examined whether ICTs have a positive effect on students reading comprehension in a foreign language, with a successful outcome. Kasper (2000) investigated, among other topics, the influence of “information technology resources” on the pass rates of two groups of students who attended a reading examination in their L2 (p.96). Both groups of students had been participating in a research activity prior to the examination, but only one was asked to use technologies, meaning electronic resources (2000, p.100). The higher pass rates of the group that had employed information technology resources (69% of the students, as compared to the 47% of students using printed library resources) indicated that ICTs are beneficial for students to develop their reading comprehension (Kasper, 2000, p.110). In words of Kasper (2000), “technology use appears to have significantly facilitated reading skill development” (p.110).

Finally, ICTs appear to be advantageous for students when it comes to writing in the foreign language they are learning. The National Association for the Teaching of English (NATE) of the United Kingdom lists some of the benefits of the use of digital technologies that may contribute to develop students’ written production. Particularly, for instance, they argue that using an “outline layout in Word” could help learners to plan and organize their writing activities; that VLEs (or virtual learning environments) facilitate the creation of texts by multiple students without necessarily being in the same room; or that word processors allow students to “save, record, edit and adapt their work quickly and efficiently” (NATE pp.8-9). Research, such as Cunningham (2000), has also been conducted to explore the relationship between ICTs and students’ writing skill. In that particular study Cunningham analysed the attitudes of a group of students with regards to the use of word processor software while working in a writing task (Cunningham, 2000, n.p.). The data collected from these students indicated that they “found the word-processing class to be challenging and non threatening, and believed that word processing benefited their performance in writing” even believing that their grades would probably be better “on word-processed papers” (Cunningham, 2000, n.p.)

## 4. Didactic Proposal

### 4.1. Research Methodology and Instruments

Every didactic unit should be adapted to the needs and interests of the specific group of students for whom it is destined, if they are to take full advantage of it, in terms of learning. For that reason, before designing a didactic unit based on a literary work and the implementation of which requires the use of several ICTs, it is essential to have knowledge, on the one hand, of the classroom characteristics, and, on the other hand, of the students' reading habits, their literary interests, and their use of ICTs in relation to literature.

In the first place, I obtained the information relative to the classroom context and high-school context during my period of supervised practice teaching in a secondary education centre as well as from their 'Proyecto Educativo de Centro (PEC)'<sup>4</sup>. To be more specific, the subsequent didactic unit is intended for one of the groups of second year of Bachillerato at I.E.S. José Jiménez Lozano, in Valladolid. This centre which is in public ownership and offers two educational stages –E.S.O. and Bachillerato– is relatively new, for it has been operating since the academic year 2009-2010. It is placed in a middle-class neighbourhood that receives the name of Parquesol, with a stable and secure employment situation; and most of its students grow up in families with a medium or high level of culture and two parent figures ("Proyecto Educativo de Centro", pp. 10-11).

The sixty-seven students taking second year of Bachillerato during the present academic year, that is 2017-2018, are distributed in three different groups (A, B, and C). Regarding ICTs, their classrooms are equipped with smartboards connected to a computer, and internet access. Furthermore, at I.E.S. José Jimenez Lozano there are two computer rooms and two technology classrooms which are available for students. In relation to the subject of English, the language employed by the teacher is mostly English, seldom using Spanish to clarify doubts.

Secondly, in order to gather personal and meaningful information for the study, from the specific group of students to whom the didactic unit is addressed (such as their reading habits, their literary interests, their use of technology in relation to literature, and the like) I have devised a research tool, namely an online survey. The data obtained from this survey

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<sup>4</sup> 'School-based Education Project'

would, in turn, allow me to select –according to a series of criteria- a literary work that would constitute the basis of the didactic unit.

Prior to designing the aforementioned survey, I formulated its subject matter as well as several objectives. In particular, the object of investigation in the survey was the perception of students taking the second year of Bachillerato at I.E.S. José Jiménez Lozano relative to literature (particularly, literature in English) in and outside the classroom together with their use of technology in relation to literary works. I also specified three different aims, namely:

1. Determining students' interest in literature (particularly, literature in English);
2. Discovering their reading habits and their use of technology with respect to literature; and
3. Eliciting in what manner and by what means they would like to work with literature in the EFL classroom and verifying, in agreement with their opinion, whether technologies would actually represent an incentive.

Once the object of investigation and the objectives were clear, I proceeded to create the online survey by means of one of Google's online apps: Google Forms. The survey comprises three main sections, i.e. a short introductory description of the questionnaire, a set of identification questions –respecting anonymity- and the main body of questions. First of all, the introduction is aimed at providing the respondents with an outline of the topic of the survey. I also mention in the introduction the fact that the survey is very brief in order to encourage students to participate; I ensure the anonymity of the answers; and I thank participants for their collaboration (“Encuesta sobre lectura”). Next in order, I added two identification questions (age and gender) the purpose of which is allowing a more accurate description of the real classroom context in which the didactic unit would hypothetically be implemented, yet keeping the students' identity anonymous. In the third and last place, I included the main set of fourteen questions. Such questions may be further subdivided into four categories, particularly: a. students' interest in literature in general and reading habits – questions 1 to 3-; b. students' interest in literature in English and reading habits –questions 4 and 5-; c. Students' preferred manner to work with literature in the EFL classroom –questions 6, 7, 12, and 14-; and d. students' use of ICTs and audiovisual materials in relation to literature –questions 8, 9, 11, 12, and 13-. Besides, the whole survey was worded in Spanish, which is the native language of all the participants, in order to avoid misunderstandings and to obtain as much objective answers as possible.

After writing every question, I generated a hyperlink to the survey by clicking on the 'send' button on the Google forms document. There was no need to save the document previously, since every change is automatically saved by the application. I then sent the URL via e-mail to my supervising teacher at I.E.S. José Jimenez Lozano who, in turn, sent it to the twenty-eight students who belong to one of the groups of second year of Bachillerato, asking them to participate in the survey.

In order to complete the questionnaire, the students only needed to click on the options provided as answers in every question or, optionally, in a few cases, to write one additional answer, for the survey was entirely made of closed or semi-closed questions. Moreover, I configured the survey so that some of the questions allowed only one answer whereas others permitted multiple answers. While examining the questions, the students would notice this difference not only because it is stated in the heading if a question approves more than one answer but also because the clicking space in these cases is squared, as opposed to the round one available in those questions that require only one answer. Finally, the students clicked on the 'send' button at the end of the survey, and all the data from their answers was automatically sent to my Google Forms' document and organized in tables and charts by percentages.

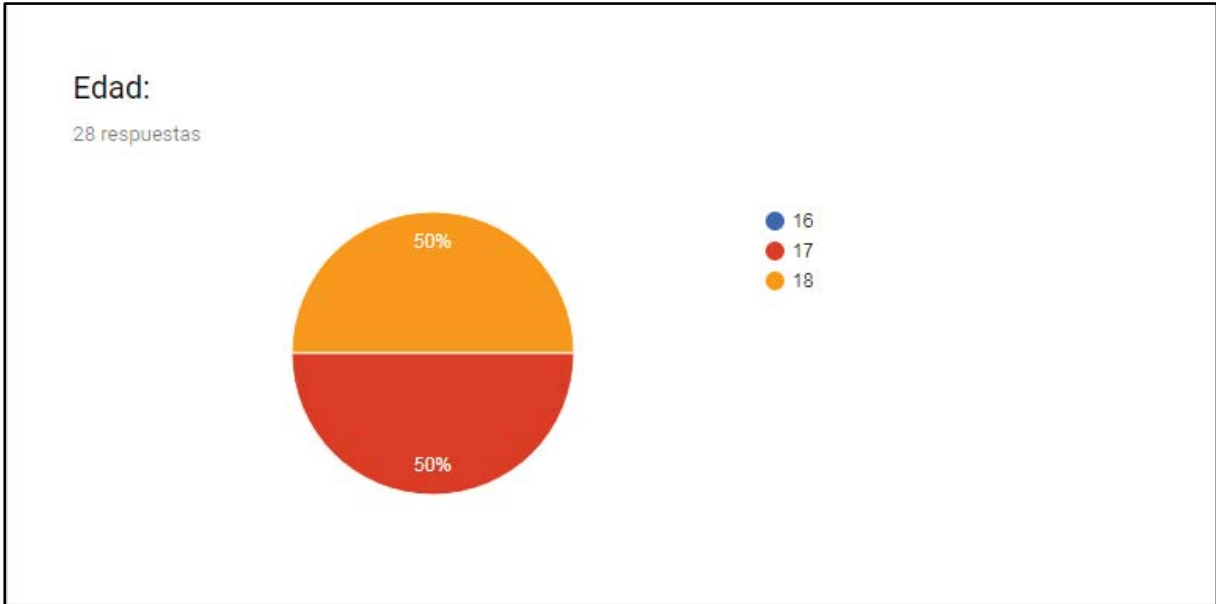
## **4.2. Results, Data Analysis and Selection of Text**

Throughout this section, I am going to present a summary of the answers obtained from each of the questions of the survey in the shape of graphics (tables and charts), together with a quantitative and qualitative interpretation of the data. After that, I will choose the literary work that would constitute the basis of the didactic unit central to this study, taking into consideration the conclusions drawn from the analysis of the data obtained from the surveys and a series of criteria to select an appropriate literary work for the English classroom as noted by Gillian Lazar (1993).

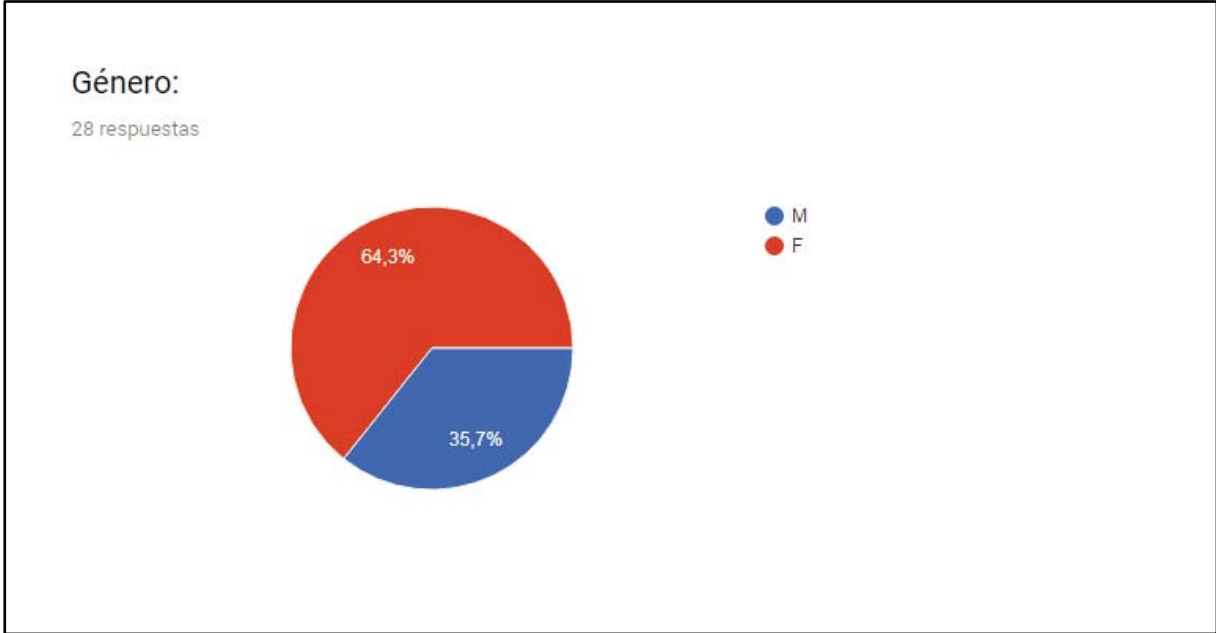
### **4.2.1 Results and Data Analysis**

As I have mentioned in the previous section, before the main set of questions, I have included two identifying questions in the survey, that is, age and gender. On the one hand, as it is showed in Chart 1, exactly half of the students -14- is already eighteen years old, whereas the other half is still seventeen years old. On the other hand, Chart 2 reveals that the majority of students are girls, since 64, 3% of the respondents (i.e. 18) indicated female as their gender,

while only 35, 7% (i.e. 10) of the participants selected the option ‘M’, which stands for ‘male’. The aim of these questions is solely descriptive, so as to provide a precise picture of the classroom, but no further conclusions are to be drawn in relation to these two variables.



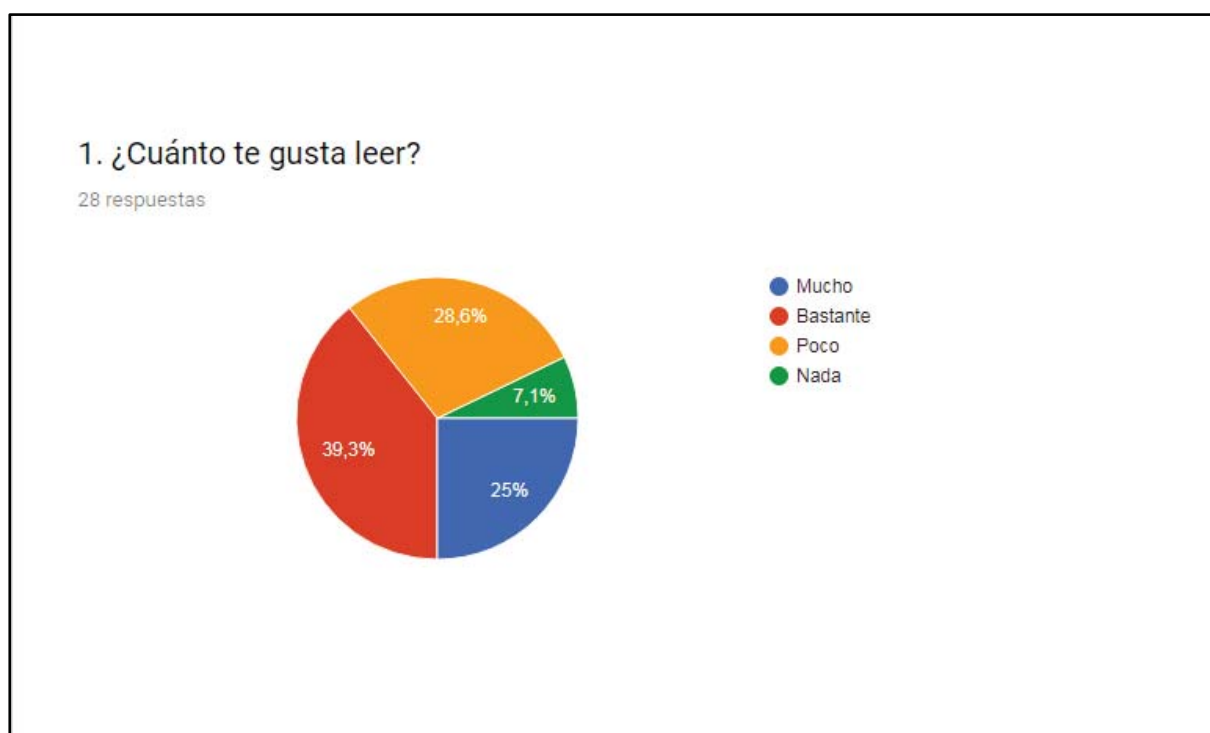
**Chart 1. Age of Participants<sup>5</sup>**



**Chart 2. Gender of Participants**

<sup>5</sup> All the charts that appear in this study are taken from the results section of the Google Forms document I created.

Moving on to the main body of questions, the first query posed to the students was: ‘1. How much do you like reading?’. According to the data displayed in Chart 3., almost 40% of the students answered that they like reading quite a lot; a quarter (7 students) said they like it very much; 28,6% of them replied that they like reading only a little; and 2 of the students (7.1%) declared that they don’t like reading at all. On the positive side, these results show that more than the half of the class (i.e. 64,9%) are really or quite interested in reading. Therefore, it could be interpreted that, generally speaking, this group of students would be receptive to a proposal of classroom activities involving the reading of a literary text. Thus, initially, the context of this class seems perfectly suitable for the implementation of a didactic unit based on the reading of a literary work.



**Chart 3. ‘How Much do you Like Reading?’**

The second question that students were asked in the survey was ‘2. How often do you read?’, as indicated in Chart 4. Although only 10,7% of the respondents reported that they read on a daily basis, a quarter of the participants answered that they read at least once a week, and the half of the class replied that they read at least once a month. Besides, 3.6% of the students chose the option “at least once a year”, and 10,7% (i.e. 3) of them declared to never spend time reading. If these results are compared to those of the first question, there seems to be a lack of consistency between the respondents’ interest in reading and the time they devote to such activity, for 64,9% of the participants asserted that they are really or quite

interested in reading but only 35.7% stated that they do it frequently (be it every day, or some days per week). There may be numerous reasons for such difference. However, considering that 50% of the students claim to read at least once a month, and that they are taking second year of Bachillerato, it could be argued that there are some students who cannot spend as much free time reading as they would like to, due to their responsibilities, for instance studying for their university admissions test. Still, having more than one third (35.7%) of the students surveyed reported that they read regularly (every day, or every week) together with the fact that very few students hardly ever or never read (14,3%) also support the idea that this class-group would be willing and even motivated to work with literary texts in the classroom. What is more, some students may be even more enthusiastic about participating in classroom activities related to literature, if those represent an opportunity to read that they lack in their free time.

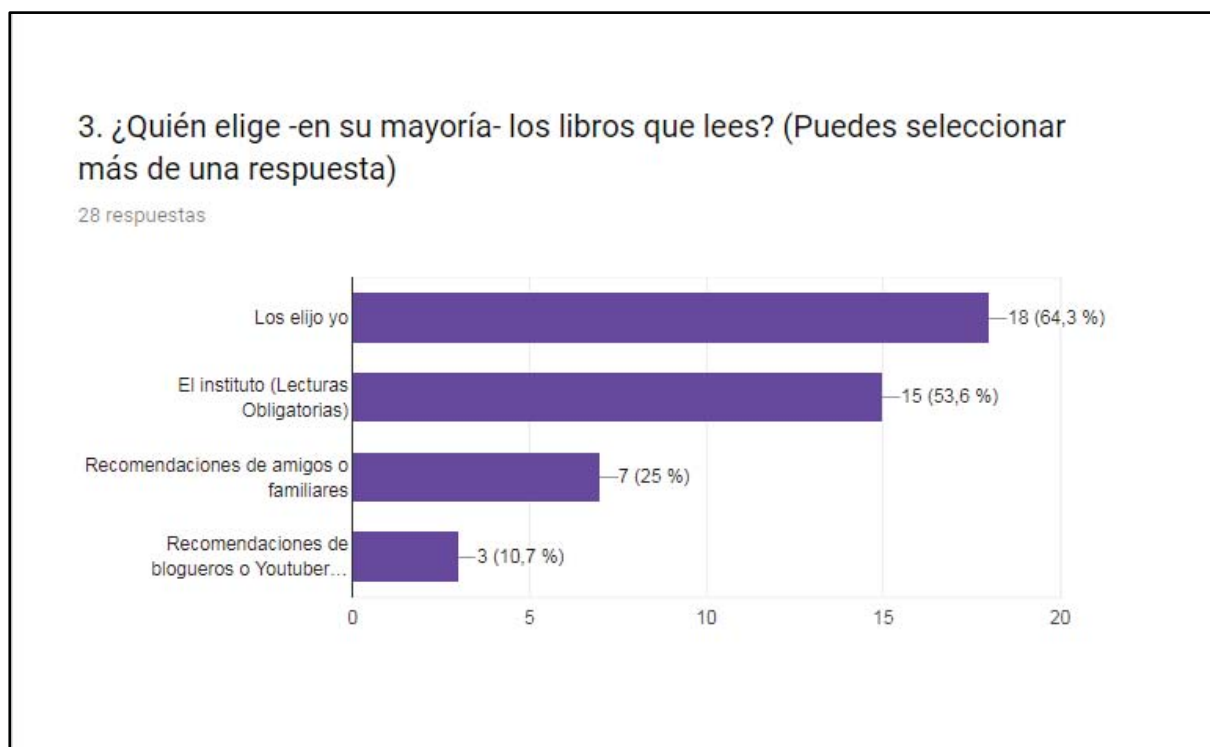


**Chart 4. How Often do you Read?**

Thirdly, the respondents of the survey were asked about their sources of suggestions about books, in other words “3. Who chooses –for the most part- the books that you read?”. As Chart 5. shows, the two most frequent sources are the students’ own decisions (64,3%), and the high school where they study -specifically those compulsory readings required as part of the syllabus of some subjects – (53,6%). However, some of the students (25%) also selected their family and friends as one of the main sources of recommendations and a few of them (10,7%) also reported to be mainly accepting suggestions from YouTubers and bloggers.



These results indicate that students primarily rely on their own appreciation and interests when choosing a literary work, which is something that needs to be taken into account when selecting the book which as the basis of the didactic unit. This data also reveals that, up until this point, some students (10.7%) make use of ICTs as one of the prevailing tools to look for information about books and to select which one to read in their free time.



**Chart 5. “Who chooses –for the most part- the books that you read?”**

In the fourth place, the participants of the survey were asked about their reading habits, but this time particularly in relation to literature in English. Strictly speaking, they were asked: “4. How often do you spend time reading books or stories in English?”. As Chart 6. shows, their answers were radically different from those in question 2, when asked about reading habits in general. To be more specific, in question 4., 7,1% of the students reported to be reading literary texts in English every day, or almost every day; 14,3% of them declared that they devote time to read in English at least once per week; 21,4% replied that their reading habits are limited to nearly once a month when it comes to literature in English; 46,4% of the respondents, which constitutes almost half of the class, claimed to be reading in English only some days per year; and finally, 10,7% of the students admitted that they never read in English. The fact that almost half of the group of students (46.4%) declared to be reading in English approximately once a year together with a very similar percentage of

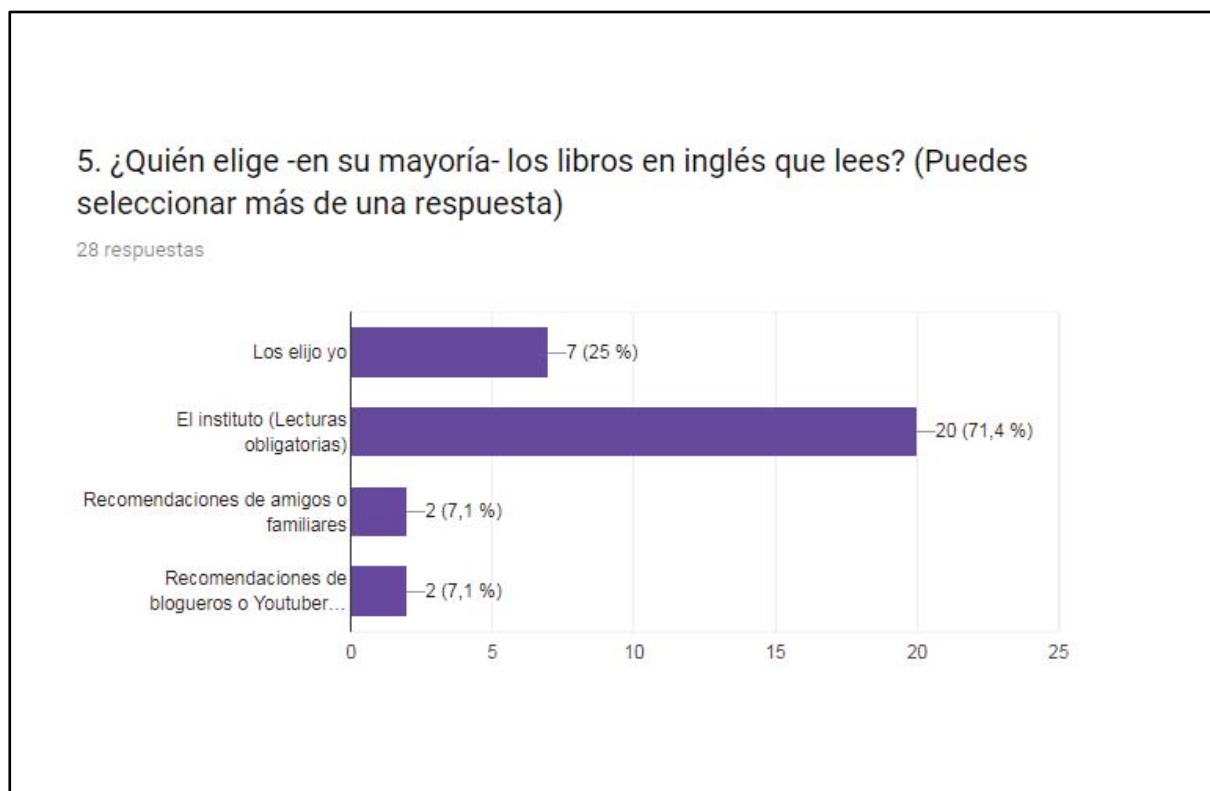
students (50%) answering that they read literature –in general- some times per month show a clear tendency to a lower frequency of reading with regards to literature in English. An implication of these findings is that these students read more literature in Spanish than in English, which seems natural given that Spanish is their native language. Moreover, they are not as proficient in English as they are in Spanish, which may discourage students to face a book written in English even if they enjoy reading. Therefore, when looking for a literary work that forms the foundation of the didactic unit, it appears to be very important to select a text that contains a language a little beyond the bounds\* of the ‘intake’ -meaning “all input that is *understood*” (Krashen, 1981, 102)- of our students for, in line with Krashen’s input hypothesis, “perhaps we acquire by *understanding* language that is ‘a little beyond’ our current level of competence” (Krashen, 1981, pp.102-103). Thus, the students need to be acquainted with a great part of the semantic, pragmatic and cultural meaning of the input they receive while reading the literary work, but still there must be room for improvement, in terms of students’ communicative competence. Moreover, if students’ find themselves able to understand the text, not without a little effort, they may perceive reading as a feasible and exciting challenge.



**Chart 6. “How Often do you Spend Time Reading Books or Stories in English?”**

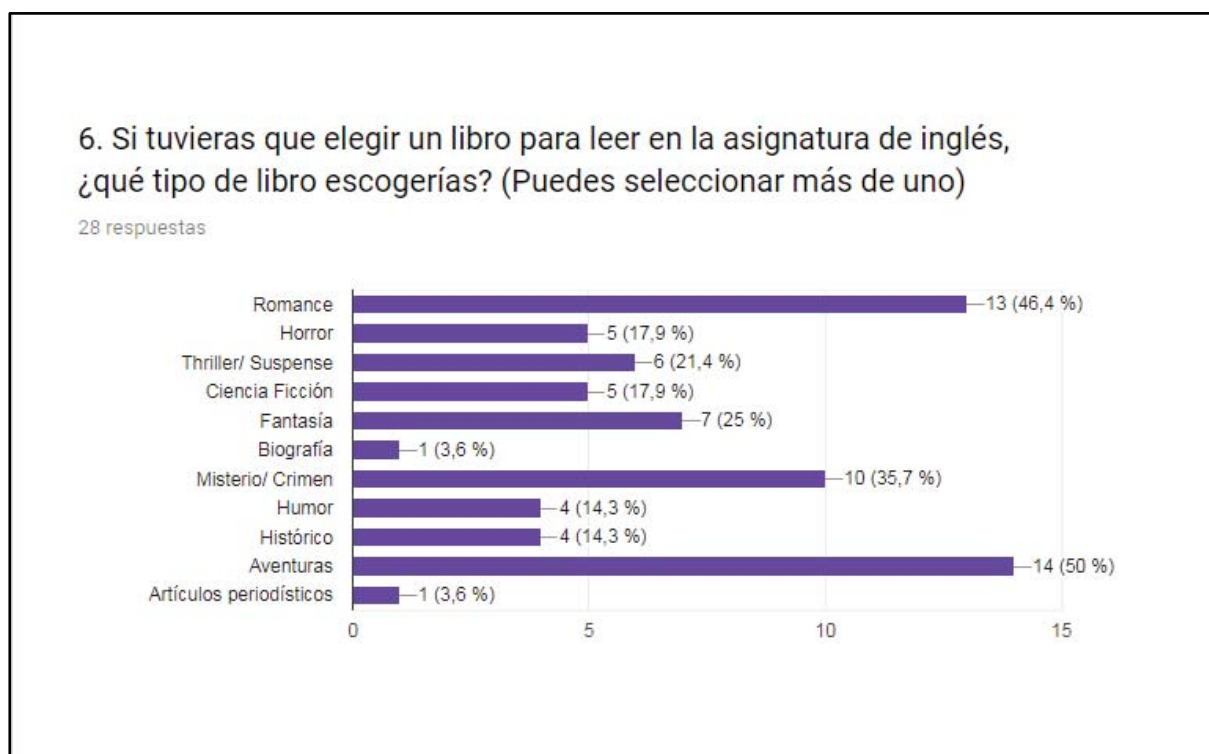
The fifth question that the participants had to answer was very similar to question 3., but in relation to literature in English: “5. Who chooses –for the most part- the books in English that you read?”. Unlike the results from question 3., in this case, almost three quarters

of the class-group (71,4%) agreed that, the compulsory readings suggested by the high-school comprise the majority of the books in English they read. Given the fact that nowadays books are published in many languages other than the one employed by the author, it seems reasonable that the literature in English that students who are not natives read is mostly provided by teachers. Still, 25% of students also consider their own choices as one of the main sources of book suggestions, which implies an intrinsic interest in literature written in English in nearly one third of the students. Consequently, students' opinion needs to be given due consideration when selecting the literary work employed in this study, so as to motivate them to read. With regards to family and friends, and YouTubers and bloggers, only 7,1% of the students respectively perceive them as their main source of recommendations. In the same manner as in question 3., some students –although not a significant number- employ ICTs as one of the prevailing tools to look for information about books and to select which one to read in their free time. Nevertheless, it remains unclear whether the rest of the respondents do not make a regular use of technologies in relation to literature because they are not familiar with the amount of people (bloggers, YouTubers, etc) and web pages devoted to literary works on the Internet, or because they are ‘classic’ readers who do not require ICTs to be motivated - perhaps the latter is the case of the 25% of students who primarily rely on their own choices-.



**Chart 7. “Who Chooses –for the Most Part- the Books in English that you Read?”**

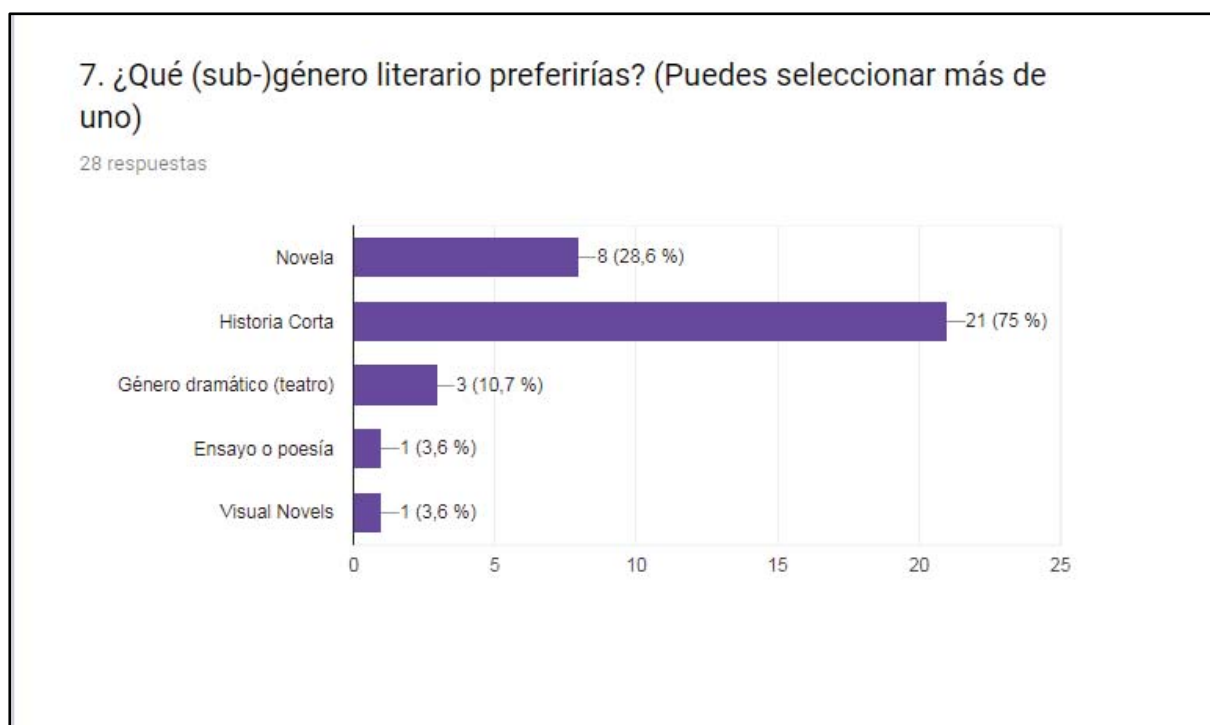
The sixth question addressed to the group of students taking second year of Bachillerato at I.E.S. José Jimenez Lozano was related to the plot-based genres of popular fiction with the aim of discovering which one is the favourite of these specific students. The question was articulated as follows: “6. If you had to select one book to read for your English class, what kind of book would you choose?”. Originally, ten categories were provided, namely romance, horror, thriller, science fiction, fantasy, biography, mystery/crime, humour, historical fiction, and adventures. However, one of the students added newspaper articles as the eleventh option. As it is clearly displayed on Chart 8, the two most voted genres, with a very similar result were adventures, selected by 50% of the respondents, followed by romance, chosen by 46,4% of the participants. The third most favourite genre, with 35,7% of the vote, was mystery/crime. Since it seems important to consider the students’ opinion so as to motivate them to read and participate, the literary work that I will use as foundation of the didactic unit will be one that falls into the categories of adventures and romance. Ideally, I am also using a work that develops around a mystery or crime.



**Chart 8. . “If you Had to Select one Book to Read for your English Class, what Kind of Book would you Choose?”**

In the seventh place, the students were asked to decide between the major literary genres of poetry, prose and drama. The exact wording of the question was “7. What literary

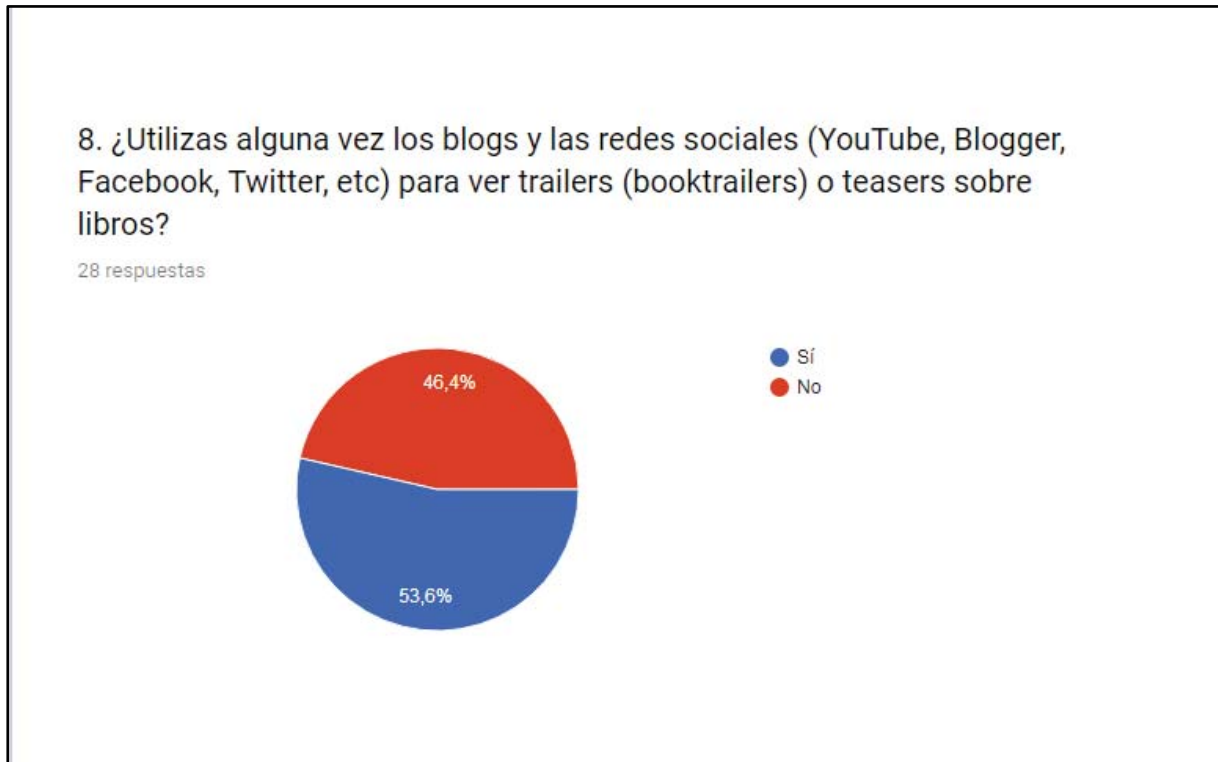
(sub-)genre would you prefer?”. The reason why I did not delimit the question to either subgenre or genre, is that drama was represented in the question as a genre, while regarding prose, only two of its subgenres were given as options, that is, novel and short story. Only these three possibilities were offered, being the most popular literary genres. The genre of poetry did not appear initially in the question. However, students were free to add as many options as they considered necessary. In fact, the students incorporated two new answers, i.e. poetry and essay, and visual novels. As Chart 9. shows, the preferred literary subgenre –in this case-, according to 75% of the students was the short story. The novel was the second most voted subgenre with 28,6% of the vote, followed by the genre of drama (10,7%), and finally essay and poetry (3,6%) and visual novels (3,6%). Hence, the literary work selected for the didactic unit would clearly be a short story.



**Chart 9. “What literary (sub-)genre would you prefer?”.**

The eighth question of the survey concerned the use of ICTs in relation to literature and was worded as follows: “Do you ever make use of blogs and social networks (YouTube, Blogger, Facebook, Twitter, etc) to watch book trailers or teasers about books?”. A little more than the half of the students (53,6%) answered affirmatively whereas 46,4% of them declared to not be watching book trailers or teasers. According to the data displayed in charts 5 and 7, not many students considered bloggers and Youtubers as their main source of book recommendations. It seems though, that many of them (53,6%) employ ICTs to at least

consult the book trailers and teasers produced by publishing houses or even fans, proving to be interested in audiovisual materials dealing with literature. Thus, they may respond positively to the employment of audiovisual technologies when completing the tasks of the didactic unit.



**Chart 10. “Do you Ever Make use of Blogs and Social Networks (YouTube, Blogger, Facebook, Twitter, etc) to Watch Booktrailers or Teasers about Books?”.**

Also with regards to ICTs and literature, students were asked “9.Do you ever make use of blogs and social networks (YouTube, Blogger, Facebook, Twitter, etc) to watch YouTubers and bloggers reviewing books?”. This time, 35,7% of the students chose the option ‘yes’, while 64,6% of them selected the option ‘no’. If compared to the data provided in chart 10, these results indicate that, with regards to audiovisual materials, the students are more interested in book trailers and book teasers than in book reviews produced by bloggers and YouTubers. Therefore, when designing the tasks of the didactic unit, it seems more appropriate to ask students to work with book trailers and teasers for a bigger section of the group would be motivated by those materials.

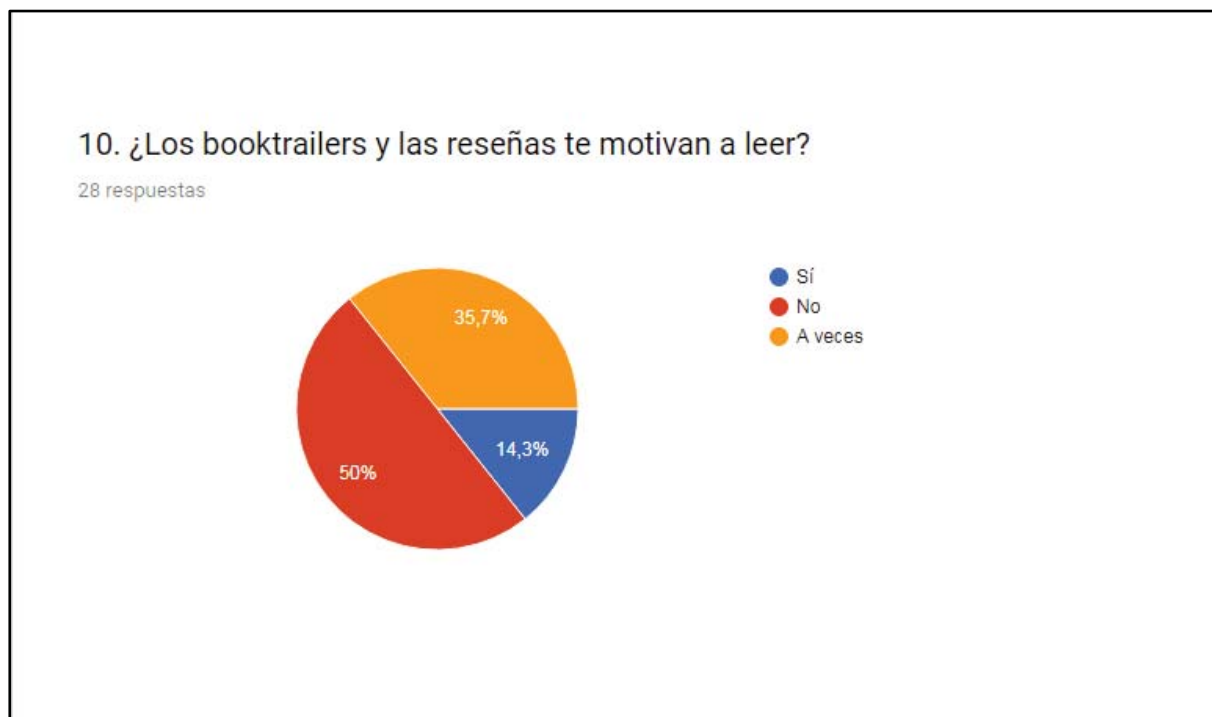


**Chart 11. “Do you Ever Make use of Blogs and Social Networks (YouTube, Blogger, Facebook, Twitter, etc) to Watch YouTubers and Bloggers Reviewing Books?”.**

In the tenth place, in relation to questions eight and nine, the participants were asked: “10. Are you motivated to read after watching book trailers and reviews?”. The results, summarized in Chart 12, show that 14,3% of the students are always motivated to read by these materials; 35,7% of them consider book trailers and reviews to be sometimes encouraging and finally, 50% of the class agreed that audiovisual materials do not stimulate their interest in reading a book.

The number of the students (i.e. 50%) who answered that, at least sometimes, these materials encourage them to read, may correspond to the similar percentage of students who admitted to be using (and therefore to be interested in) ICTs to watch book trailers and reviews in questions eight (53.6%) and nine (35.7%). Following this reasoning, the percentage of students answering that, audiovisual materials about books are not inspiring when it comes to reading, could correspond to those who do not watch book trailers and reviews online. Regarding this last association, the interpretation that appears to be the most likely is that these students do not watch trailers and reviews because those do not inspire them to read. However, it could also be understood that these students chose the option ‘no’ in the tenth question because it is not possible to be encouraged to read by audiovisual materials they do not watch. Still, considering that 50 % of the students perceive trailers and reviews as

an efficient means to be motivated to read, it seems that these materials are more than suitable to be used in a didactic unit implemented in their class.



**Chart 12. “Are you Motivated to Read after Watching Book Trailers and Reviews?”.**

In relation to a different audiovisual material, the survey contained the following question: “11. When a film based on a book you have read is released, do you watch it?”. The most voted answer was ‘almost always’ with 42,9% of the vote, followed by ‘always’ selected by 28,6% of the students. Six participants (that is 21,4%) reported that they only watch those films ‘sometimes’, and finally, 7,1% of the students chose ‘never’ as their answer. From this data, it seems clear that the majority of the students (71,5%) are interested, or very interested in watching films which are inspired in books they have previously read. If compared to the results from the previous question, the percentage of participants who are motivated to watch a film about a book is higher than that of students who feel that, at least sometimes, book trailers or reviews encourage them to read (50%), and even much larger than that of students who are always motivated to read because of reviews and trailers. The comparison of these percentages appears to be very meaningful for, motivation seems to vary depending on the order in which materials are presented. That is to say, the data suggests that these students are more interested in watching audiovisual documents after reading than in watching them previously in order to decide what to read. An implication of these findings is that, in order to motivate students as much as possible and to improve their communicative competence in



English, the first task to be completed in the didactic unit central to this study needs to be the reading of the literary work and then complete the rest of the tasks by means of audiovisual materials and other technologies. A second inference derived from this data is that, since students are, apparently, highly interested in book trailers, teasers, films and the like based on books, a potentially suitable final task for the didactic unit could be the creation of a short or a trailer about the literary work they have read which they could show to the rest of their classmates.



**Chart 13. “When a Film Based on a Book you have Read is Released, do you Watch it?”**

The twelfth question reads as follows: “12. Do you –or would you- like to record and to edit videos?”. As graphic 14 indicates, the majority of the respondents (i.e. 71,4%) answered affirmatively, whereas 28,6% of them declared to not be curious about recording and editing. Taking into account that, generally speaking, these students evidently declare themselves interested in recording and editing videos, as well as in watching trailers, teasers<sup>6</sup>, and films about the literary work they have read<sup>7</sup>, these results support the idea, as suggested in question eleven, of the suitability of the creation of a trailer or a short as the final task of the didactic unit, which they would ultimately show to their classmates.

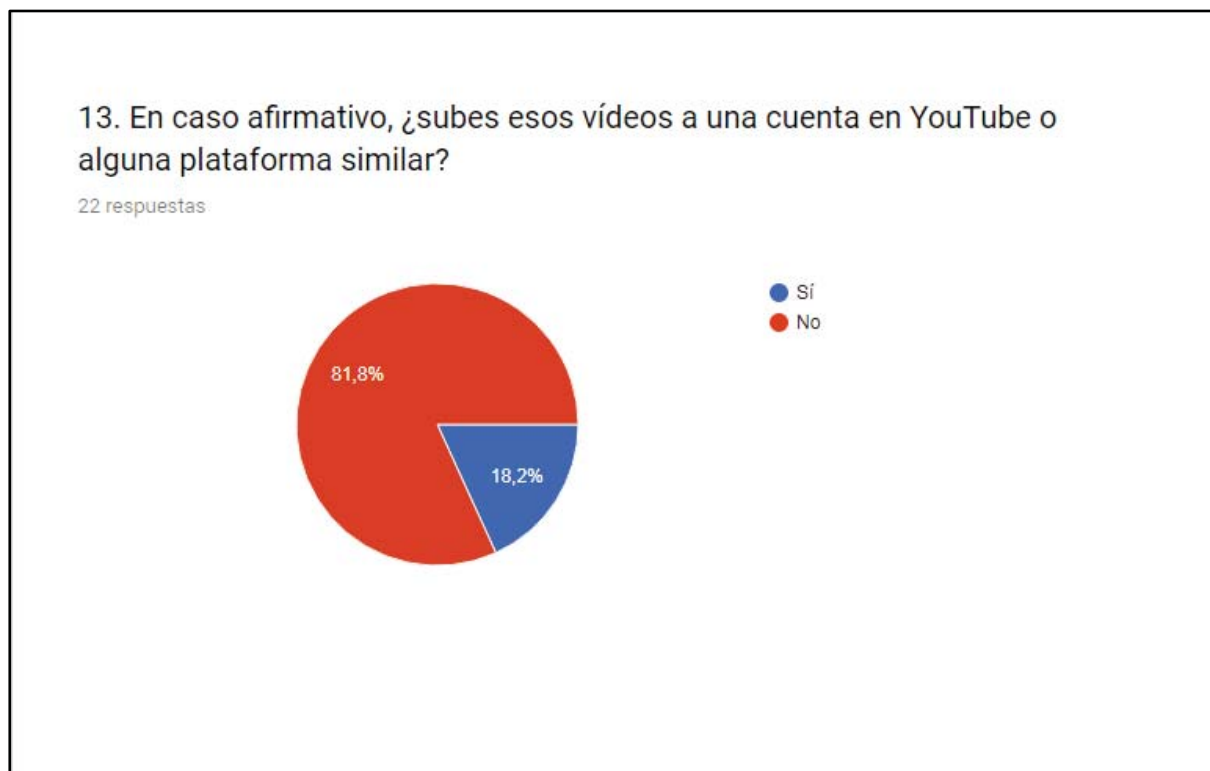
<sup>6</sup> Interpreted from the data in question 8

<sup>7</sup> As implied in the results from question 11



**Chart 14: “Do you –or would you- Like to Record and to Edit Videos?”**

The second-to-last question of the survey was directly related to the previous one and was addressed only to those participants who answered affirmatively: “13. If so, do you upload those videos to a YouTube account or a similar platform?”. Although, as I have mentioned, this question was only addressed to the twenty students (i.e. 71,4%) who declared that they like recording videos in the previous question, two more people voted. Out of the twenty-two respondents, the vast majority (81,8%) of them selected the option ‘no’, while 18,2% of them (which represents four answers) chose the option ‘yes’. The two people who answered this question by mistake, selected the answer ‘no’, but a different answer would not have clouded the results for, visibly in Chart 15, most of the students are uncomfortable with publically sharing their videos on the web. With respect to the didactic unit, these results imply that students may enjoy the employment of ICTs but not being asked to publish their recordings online.

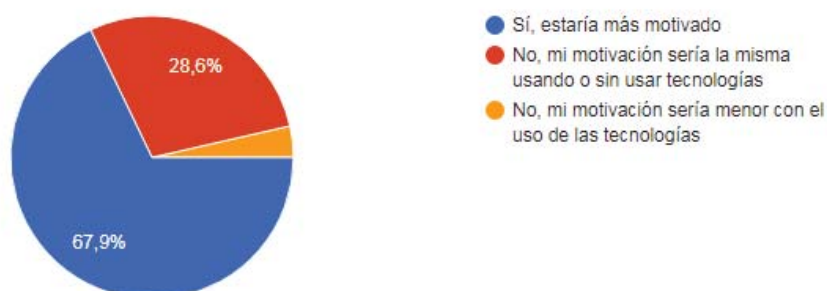


**Chart 15 “If so, do you Upload those Videos to a YouTube Account or a Similar Platform?”.**

Finally, the last question in the survey was worded as follows: “14. Do you think that you would be more interested and more motivated when it comes to read a book for your English subject knowing that you would be completing tasks in class using the computer, ICTs, Apps, the Internet, etc?”. As, Chart 16 shows, near three quarters of the participants (i.e. 67,9%) agreed that they would be more motivated because of the technologies; 28,6% of the students think that ICTs and other technologies would not enhance their motivation in relation to reading but neither would diminish it; and only 3,6% of them, which stands for only one student, answered that the use of technologies would discourage him or her from reading in English. With regards to the design of the didactic unit that constitutes the basis of this study, these results imply that several different types of technological software and devices are likely to contribute to the improvement of students communicative competence since the vast majority of the students would feel encouraged to read and work in the English classroom if technologies are involved. Furthermore, for those students who are not directly motivated, neither discouraged by the use of technologies, the literary work (its genre, its plot, etc) may represent an incentive in itself.

14. ¿Crees que estarías más interesado, más motivado a la hora de leer un libro para la asignatura de inglés si en clase hicierais tareas usando el ordenador, TICs, Apps, internet, etc?

28 respuestas



**Chart 16. “Do you think that you would Be More Interested and More Motivated when it Comes to Read a Book for your English Subject Knowing that you would Be Completing Tasks in Class Using the Computer, ICTs, Apps, the Internet, etc?”.**

#### **4.2.2 Selection of Text: *The Gift of the Magi* by O. Henry**

In *Literature and Language Teaching. A Guide for Teachers and Trainers* (1993), Gillian Lazar offers a set of criteria for teachers to select an appropriate literary text for their students. Such criteria are classified into three different categories, namely “type of course”, “type of students”, and “other text-related factors” (Lazar, 1993, p.65). In this section, I will endeavour to apply Lazar’s guidelines so as to select a suitable literary work for the group of students taking second year of Bachillerato at I.E.S. José Jiménez Lozano.

With regards to the first group of criteria, that is to say the “type of course”, Lazar invites teachers to consider the “[l]evel of students”; the “[s]tudents’ reasons for learning English”, the “[k]ind of English required” and the “[l]ength/intensity of course” (1993, p.56).

To begin with, as I have already mentioned, the level of the students is second year of Bachillerato. Secondly, among the reasons that this group of students may have for learning English, apart from improving their communicative competence, one of their main aims is probably to meet the requirements to pass the university admissions test. Accordingly, the

chosen literary work should be one that allows students to work on different linguistic elements and functions included in the English course syllabus so as to develop the communicative skills of reading, writing, listening and speaking. In relation to the kind of English, being the context of the course second year of Bachillerato at a high school, these students are not learning Business English, Aviation English or any other type of English for Specific Purposes, but they are required to learn General English. Therefore, no specialization is needed in the literary work in these terms. In addition, as the length of an academic year in Spain is 175 days, and it is not for instance, a summer course, it may be considered long enough to introduce a didactic unit based on a literary text.

The second group of criteria developed by Lazar is related to the characteristics of the type of students who will be reading the selected literary work. This category examines the “[a]ge” of students; their “[i]ntellectual maturity”, their level of “[e]motional understanding”; their “[i]nterests/hobbies”, their “[c]ultural background”, their “[l]inguistic proficiency”, and their “[l]iterary background” (1993, p.56)

With respect to age, as reflected in the survey results, half of the students are seventeen years old, and the other half are already eighteen. As their age indicates they are teenagers. Consequently, the chosen literary text should be addressed to this sector of the population reflecting topics considered of interest to teenagers and the main characters should also be either teenagers or at least young adults. In this manner, the literary work would be appropriate for their age, and they won’t be “too old” neither “too young to enjoy the text” (Lazar, 1993, p-51).

In addition, teenagers’ and young adults’ intellectual maturity goes hand in hand with their age. Teenagers usually have an idealistic vision of the world that changes as their critical thinking skills develop and they start being aware of and concerned with philosophical questions and social problems. According to these students’ age, the literary work used in the didactic unit should ideally reflect this gradual change of perspective, a balance between idealism and reality.

These students’ emotional maturity and interests became quite clear after participating in the survey. In the sixth question, students were asked about their preferred literary genre based on the plot. The second most voted answer, with a difference of one vote from the first, was romance. This result seems to reflect young adults emotional situation since, around their age, people start discovering and experiencing love relationships. Therefore, a literary work

depicting the passion and pain of a young couple would help students to, in words of Lazar “find the text engaging” and “relate to the text” (1993, p.51).

Regarding the cultural background, these students were born and are growing up in the twenty-first century in Spain. Thanks to the media and ICTs, they are probably aware not only of cultural elements from Spain but also presumably from other closely related countries such as those belonging to the European Union, or even any other nation. In addition, given the great amount of History classes scheduled in the Spanish curriculum, they are most probably conscious of many cultural practices of the past, at least, as far as this study is concerned, in connection to Great Britain. Nevertheless, it is important to select a literary text which displays a cultural background that students mostly understand, or in which the cultural references are easily inferred from the context, in order to avoid spending an excessive amount of time providing such information to students. Furthermore, choosing a book that addresses universal, or in any case European, concerns or human feelings would facilitate students understanding of the cultural background.

The students’ linguistic proficiency is another element to take into consideration. The level of mastery of the English language of a group of learners taking second year of Bachillerato would be B1, in the terms employed by the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) (Gisbert, 2011, p.3). When selecting a literary work, it is important to verify that, generally speaking, the students are familiar with the most repeated linguistic elements and functions displayed by finding a correlation with the contents, learning outcomes and assessment criteria established in the English course syllabus. Also, it is necessary to select a text with a rich context to help students to infer language uses typical from literature, such as rhetorical devices.

The last element to be examined with regards to the type of students is their literary background since, as stated by Lazar, studying literature –for example, in their native language-, improves their literary competence (1993, p.54). The importance of this competence, understood as the ability to assign subjective, metaphorical meaning to a literary text (Lazar, 1993, pp. 11-13), lies in the fact that it may contribute to the students’ general understanding of the text (1993, p.54), which in turn would motivate them to continue reading and working with literature and would benefit the development of their communicative skills. In the case of this particular group of students, they are already acquainted with the study of Spanish literature “in which similar conventions to those in English operate for reading and

interpreting literature”. Therefore, these students seem to be suitable candidates to be taught a didactic unit based on a literary text.

Finally, Lazar suggests teachers to ponder “other text-related factors” (Lazar, 1993, p. 65). Exactly, those elements are the “[a]vailability of texts”, the “length of text”, its “[e]xploitability”, and whether texts “fit with syllabus” (1993, p. 56). This latter aspect I have already discussed when examining the students linguistic proficiency. Besides, literary texts fit with the English syllabus because they are essentially a requirement in second year of Bachillerato, as it may be understood from the following learning outcome:

“7. Comprende los aspectos principales, detalles relevantes, algunas ideas implícitas y el uso poético de la lengua en textos literarios que presenten una estructura accesible y un lenguaje no muy idiomático, y en los que el desarrollo del tema o de la historia, los personajes centrales y sus relaciones, o el motivo poético, estén claramente señalizados con marcadores lingüísticos fácilmente reconocibles.” (Consejería de Educación de Castilla y León, 2015, p. 32801)<sup>8</sup>

With regards to the availability of literature, it seems a good option to choose a literary work that is available online, in order to enable students to easily access the text either at home or in class. Online texts also permit the teacher to send students the hyperlink so that everybody reads the same document.

The length of the text was chosen by the students in the survey, since the most voted subgenre in question number seven was the short story. One of the main advantages of short stories in relation to its use in the English class is precisely its length since “they can usually be read entirely within one or two class lessons”, which implies that students can start working on tasks based on the text earlier as compared to the use of novels or plays (Collie and Slater, 1987, 196). Apart from requiring less time to be read than other literary works, their length makes short stories “more suitable when set as home tasks” (1987, p.196).

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<sup>8</sup> The student understands the main aspects, relevant details, some implicit ideas and the poetic use of language in literary texts that present an accessible structure and a not too-idiomatic language and in which the development of the plot, the main characters and their relationships are clearly signalled by means of easily recognizable discourse markers

Finally, the exploitability of the text is ensured because, as the numerous works on how to employ literature in the EFL classroom –some of them referenced in this study<sup>9</sup>- there are many different types of tasks that a teacher can design to use a literary text to the students' communicative competence advantage. This study, in particular, is going to be focused on the use of ICTs to enhance the exploitability and benefits of literature for the learning of English as a foreign language.

After examining several literary works, one that fully met the criteria explained above was *The Gift of the Magi* (1906) by the American writer O. Henry. This literary work is a short story about a poor young couple, each of whom needs to buy a gift for each other during Christmas, ultimately realising that the best gift is their love. It seems clear from this brief plot summary that the short story could be categorised as a 'romance'. In addition, this is also an adventure story, for the characters' quest is finding a perfect Christmas present for each other having very little money. For the most part, this literary work is written in general everyday English, meeting the requirements of the second year of Bachillerato. Besides, the main characters are young, a little older than the group of students, and they are presented in a common situation in the life of a young couple with which they can identify and relate, i.e. buying a present for each other, not having a lot of money<sup>10</sup>. Also, the fact that the story develops around the universal human feeling of love helps students to find the text engaging. In the sixth place, the above mentioned balance between idealism and reality is found in the text in the harmony between the perfect love and the daily problems of poverty. With regards to the cultural background, Christmas and the Magi (that is, the Three Wise Men) are very familiar concepts for students living in Spain. Being the work published in 1906, it also displays cultural features of the past, especially in terms of inequality in love relationships, which leave room for critical thinking and discussion. What is more, the moral, the message at the end of the story about the importance of love also encourages students to debate. Finally, this short story seems suitable to be used as the basis of the subsequent didactic unit for it is available online and students can access and read it anywhere.

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<sup>9</sup> See section 3.1

<sup>10</sup> Students usually depend economically on their parents and the only money they manage is the allowance they receive



### **4.3. ICTs Employed in this Study**

Before explaining in detail the contents and procedures of each of the sessions of the didactic proposal contained in this study, I will describe the basic functions of the different information and communication technologies that students would be required to use in such sessions.

#### **4.3.1. Quizizz 2.5**

First of all, Quizizz is an application designed for teachers so as to allow them to introduce ICTs and gamification in the assessment of their students' knowledge or simply to help them to motivate learners. To be more specific, by means of this application, teachers can design questionnaires for every possible topic, or use tests created by other instructors. Then, such questionnaires may be 'played live' during a lesson if students introduce a code provided by the application in their electronic devices (laptops, tablets, smartphones, etc), or may be assigned as online homework. Either way, once students have filled the questionnaire, their answers are recorded in the teachers' account, allowing him or her to check each student's individual answers, as in a traditional test. Furthermore, the games devised by means of this application are characterized by their interactivity, since the text of the questions may be accompanied by sound, images or even memes (Quizizz inc., 2018).

#### **4.3.2. Youtube**

In the second place, YouTube, which is a well known video sharing online platform, will be employed in the subsequent didactic unit. This webpage allows teachers to search among the millions of uploaded videos to find the one that better meets their needs. YouTube provides teachers (without the need of an account) with access to many different educational channels that contain tutorials for every imaginable task; but also to authentic materials to develop students' oral comprehension (TV shows and series, radio programmes, music videos, interviews, and reviews of products, etc). In addition, YouTube permits teachers and learners to create playlists with useful resources, and subscribe to channels, among other possibilities (Google LLC, 2018).

#### **4.3.3. Blogger 2.1.3**

Thirdly, the application Blogger, as its name suggests, permits users to create a personal blog and publish entries. The main features of this application include: saving entries

as drafts, without publishing them; combine the text of entries with images and hyperlinks to websites or videos or even adding locations to the entries (Google LLC, 2016). In the English classroom, Blogger seems to constitute a useful resource to motivate students to practice their writing skills and to facilitate assessment for teachers.

#### **4.3.4. PowerPoint (version 16.0.9330.2080)**

In the fourth place, Powerpoint is also a widely known software application developed by Microsoft Corporation (2018) and meant to be used to create, edit and share a set of slides that constitute an audiovisual support for oral presentations (talks, seminars, lectures, etc). However, if used imaginatively, PowerPoint could also be used as a didactic resource in other types of tasks. For instance, in the didactic unit designed for this study, this application helps students to create the environment of different shops and the street in a role play.

#### **4.3.5. WhatsApp Web**

WhatsApp Messenger is a free instant messaging application designed for Android and used by sixty-seven and a half million people, according to the data provided by Play Store (WhatsApp Messenger, 2018). Nevertheless, there is also a version of the application for computers, i.e. WhatsApp Web, which is the one included as resource in the didactic unit central to this study. The most important characteristics of WhatsApp Web that make it a suitable application for the EFL classroom are that it is free software, and therefore teachers avoid asking students to pay for it; it allows students to send pictures, videos, documents and even their voices, which means that it is a useful multimedia resource to develop students spoken and written production; and it encourages collaboration, since it enables learners to work jointly to create conversations in group chats.

#### **4.3.6. Plickers**

Another application that will require the participation of students in several of the sessions of the didactic unit is Plickers. Like Quizizz, Plickers is a valuable ICT aimed at creating questionnaires for students. However, Plickers permits teachers to survey students without the need of having one electronic device per respondent. In order to conduct an opinion poll with these application, only the teacher needs to use one of such devices (particularly a smartphone or a tablet) to read the 'paper clicker' (QR codes) of each student (Plickers, 2017). Consequently, Plickers seems to be a very practical application for teachers

to introduce ICTs in high schools that operate with limited resources, or in contexts outside the classroom (such as school trips).

#### **4.3.7. Pixton 1.2.4**

In addition, in the didactic unit I employed Pixton, which is a storyboarding application especially designed for education (Pixton, 2016). By means of Pixton students can create their own comics. To be more specific, they can create every setting from a shop to a forest for their comic strips; they can edit the main characters (that is, choose their physical appearance and their body language); and they can add speech bubbles with their own text. Moreover, students can design a single scene or several ones that will be shaped into a comic. With respect to this particular study, Pixton is a valuable application not only to contribute to develop students writing skills, but also to motivate them and the help them to express their own interpretations of literary texts.

#### **4.3.8. Wordle**

Wordle is a webpage of free use designed for the creation of ‘word clouds’ (Feinberg, 2014). In order to produce such clouds, the students introduce a text or simply disjointed words and click on the ‘go’ button. In the resulting cloud, the words that appeared in the text more frequently are represented with a bigger size. Furthermore, the visual aspects of the cloud can be modified: the font of the words, their colour and the layouts (Feinberg, 2014). In the EFL classroom, this webpage represents a useful resource, for instance, to allow students to brainstorm and internalise vocabulary by creating clouds for different semantic fields that would help them to relate familiar terms with new ones. Also, in relation to literature, if students introduce a fragment of text from a literary work Wordle will permit them to investigate its most important topics in an innovative and motivating manner.

#### **4.3.9. Stop Motion Studio (version 4.3.0.6187)**

Finally, Stop Motion Studio is a free software application meant to design animation films. For that purpose, students have to take pictures, each of which constitutes a frame of the film and the application will transform them into an animated video. Stop Motion Studio also makes it possible to add music (a soundtrack) and pictures stored in the specific electronic device being used (smartphone, tablet, etc), and even to record the students’ own voice, thus providing a motivating situation for students to practice their oral production skills in English while they develop their digital competence.

#### **4.4. Didactic Unit: “*The Gift of the Magi Brought to the Big Screen*”**

This didactic unit is meant for students to create a trailer based on the short story *The Gift of the Magi* (1906). The first lesson plan is designed to contextualize the didactic unit. During the three following lessons, the students will have created the necessary materials for the three main scenes of the trailer. In the fifth lesson, the students record the trailer, and in the final lesson the students present their final project as in a film awards ceremony. In the following paragraphs, the main activities of each lesson plan will be described.

In order to carry out the subsequent didactic unit, the teacher previously asks the students to read the short story *The Gift of the Magi* by O.Henry at home before this lesson (flipped classroom).

##### **4.4.1 Session 1. What is the meaning of Christmas?**

Task 1: How Much do You Remember?

During this task, a test found by the teacher by means of the application Quizizz is “played live” and each student completes it. Such test contains ten easy questions about the short story they have read. This task is both an activation strategy and a way of checking that the students have read the short story at home, since Quizizz allows teachers to check each student’s individual answers. It is also meant to contextualize the didactic unit by reminding students the different topics dealt with in the story as well as several plot details.

Task 2: It’s a Christmas Film.

Students are told to sit in rows, as if they were at the cinema watching a Christmas film. Then the teacher tells them that they are going to watch a short on YouTube based of the short story they have read. In is important to take into consideration that the majority of students reported in the eleventh question of the survey I conducted that they like watching films inspired by literary works they have read.

After the short, the teacher and the students engage in a short conversation about the context of the story: whether they already knew the story; whether they know something about the author; what do they think is the main topic or topics of the story (love, Christmas, poverty, etc); where and when does the story take place; whether they liked the story and what version (story or short film) they prefer.

### Task 3: Good Stories Have a Moral:

The teacher hands photocopies of the last paragraph of the story (one per student) and he/she asks for volunteers to read. After reading the story out loud, the teacher focuses on the topic of Christmas and asks students to explain the different cultural references related to such holidays that appear in the story (the presents, the Magi, the wise men, etc) so as to check understanding.

Then the teacher elicits and discusses the moral of the story: O. Henry seems to argue that the meaning of Christmas is love rather than gifts; and that, by selling their most valuable possessions to buy a present for their loved one, this couple formed by the two main characters of the story (Della and James) was as wise as the magi, who invented the habit of giving presents in Christmas.

Thirdly, the teacher gives instructions. He/She explains that, after watching a film at the cinema, sometimes, journalists ask you some questions related to the film (a short interview). He/she tells the students that, by the end of the lesson, they would have produced an interview in that context that they will post on a blog.

Finally, the teacher elicits useful language: taking into account that journalists want to know the opinions of the people they interview, the teacher elicits syntactic-discursive elements that would help students to express their opinions in an informal register. These expressions will be later showed in the smartboard for reference in the following tasks.

### Task 4: Interview at the Cinema

The teacher explains that in pairs, they are going to interview each other and that each student in the pair is going to have a different set of questions about their Christmas traditions and what is their opinion on the meaning of this holiday in the XXI<sup>st</sup> century. Then, in turns, each student has to ask his/her set of questions (as a journalist) to his/her classmate -who answers orally- and write his/her exact answers, as in an interview. The teacher reminds that, at the end, the students have to post the interview in their Blogger account and that, if they do not have time, they have to copy the interview at home.

### Task 5: So What is the Meaning of Christmas?

The teacher asks for voluntary students to stand in the front of the classroom and share their personal opinions about the meaning of Christmas. He/she asks generally whether they agree with O. Henry that the most important Christmas gift is the love of your families, friends and boyfriends or girlfriends. At the end, they take a vote raising their hands.

#### **4.4.2 Session 2. The Perfect Gift**

##### **Task 1: Della's Present for James**

The teacher introduces the topic of gifts by showing a picture of Christmas presents on the smartboard and asking students questions such as what is the gift that they received as children that they liked the most; what is the gift that took more effort choosing; what is the worst gift they have received, etc

Then, the teacher hands the photocopies of the fragment of the short story in which Della sells her hair to buy her husband a watch chain. After reading it, the teacher asks students whether they remember what Della and James buy each other as Christmas gift in the story and how do they get the money if they are poor. Then the teacher asks the students how they do get the money when they want to buy a present since they do not have a salary.

The teacher asks the students to look at the language of the text and find the expressions the characters use while looking for a present in a shop and elicits syntactic discursive elements. He/she later explains that, throughout this lesson they are going to work on the first of the scenes of their trailer, which is buying a present for your loved one and that, in the next task they are going to decide, in groups what is the best gift they could give to the loved one. But considering that everybody has different opinions, how do they give opinions and express reasons for their choice? The teacher elicits syntactic-discursive elements.

##### **Task 2: What is the Perfect Gift?**

In this task, the students discuss in groups what would be the perfect present for the loved one, and make a final decision.

##### **Task 3: We Go Shopping**

Once they have chosen the perfect gift, the teacher explains that the following task would be preparing a 'special' role play, that the teacher is going to record. Before the

students start working the teacher reminds them of useful language to interact with shop assistants so that they can help you choose a present. He/she also elicits useful vocabulary for buying: shop, customer, cashier, wallet, basket, cash, notes, etc

The students are then asked to write, in groups, a short script (of two minutes maximum) of a conversation between a teenager who wants to buy a perfect gift with little money, and different shop assistants. Together with the conversation they have to create a PowerPoint presentation with images and sound that they could use to create the environment of shops and the street while performing.

#### Task 4: Lights, Camera, Action

In the last task of the session, the teacher asks students for their attention and each group, in turns, goes up to the front of the class and performs their scene. Meanwhile, the rest of the students listen in silence and the teacher records the scenes. Finally, the students vote which scene they liked the most and explain why.

### **4.4.3 Session 3. True Love Relationships**

#### Task 1: How Does She Feel?

First of all, the teacher shows a YouTube video about a woman who suffers anxiety, but without telling that to the students. After that, the teacher elicits vocabulary about negative feelings (How does she feel?). Then, he/she hands a photocopy with a fragment of the short story that constitutes the basis of the didactic unit, in which Della is worried about her husband being angry with her after she sold her hair. The teacher tries to elicit what is Della feeling (anxiety, despair, sadness, etc) and to make the students reflect on this situation (Is this good in a love relationship?).

Next, the teacher elicits the central communicative function in this lesson plan, which is giving advice. (If you were Della's friend what would you do?; What expressions do you know that are used to give advice?; Any other useful language?).

At the end, the teacher explains that, throughout this lesson they are going to work on the second of the scenes of their trailer, which is not strictly part of the story but inspired on it: A XXI<sup>st</sup> century conversation between Della or James and her friends, in which they give her/him advice about her relationship via WhatsApp Web.

## Task 2: True love Healthy Relationships

In this task the teacher elicits vocabulary of positive feelings. After that the students are asked to sit again in groups of four and then discuss and try to describe the five most important principles of a healthy true love relationship (describe them).

## Task 3: Tell me What to do.

Once the students have taken a stance about what they consider a good relationship, they write a conversation (by means of WhatsApp Web application) between Della or James and her/his friends, in which they give her/him giving advice about her/his relationship, knowing that they love each other.

## Task 4: The Best Piece of Advice

At the end of the lesson, in turns, each group of students goes up to the front of the class and makes a short oral presentation about the conversation they have previously created by means of WhatsApp Web, showing such conversation on the smartboard and clearly reporting the pieces of advice they consider the best for a healthy relationship. Then the students take a vote by means of plickers, on what piece of advice they consider most useful out of all the proposals.

### **4.4.4 Session 4. Declaration of Love.**

#### Task 1: Della and James' Love

To begin with, the teacher shows the video of a song they probably know, *Thinking Out Loud* by Ed Sheeran, on Youtube with subtitles. After that, the teacher elicits what is the main topic of the song: the love of a lifetime. Then asks if they remember the relationship between Della and James and whether there are differences or similarities with the relationship portrayed in the song.

The teacher hands photocopies (one per pair of students) of the fragment of the short story *The Gift of the Magi* in which Della and James realise how much they love each other since both of them have sold their most valued possessions to find a Christmas gift for each other. After reading the fragment, the teacher and the students engage in a short discussion about how Della and James' love is described in the text (the students have to interpret), focusing especially in the following sentences:



(Della:) “‘Maybe the hairs of my head were numbered,’ she went on with sudden serious sweetness, “but nobody could ever count my love for you.” (Henry, 1906, p.7)

(James:) “‘Don't make any mistake, Dell,’ he said, ‘about me. I don't think there's anything in the way of a haircut or a shave or a shampoo that could make me like my girl any less. But if you'll unwrap that package you may see why you had me going a while at first.’” (Henry, 1906, p.8)

Finally, the teacher elicits other syntactic-discursive elements useful for descriptions, and explains that, throughout this lesson they are going to work on the third of the scenes of their trailer, which is a declaration of love between a couple.

#### Task 2: Picture of Love

In this task, students are asked to sit in groups of four again. They are asked to brainstorm vocabulary to describe love, and using Wordle they create a visual representation of their idea of love.

#### Task 3: Declaration of Love

During this task, after having a clear idea of the vocabulary related to love, students are asked to work in groups of four and, by means of the storyboarding application ‘Pixton’, they have to discuss and represent the scene of a declaration of love between a couple in the XXI<sup>st</sup> century, and reflect both in the comic bubbles and in the body language of the characters how to describe or express true love.

#### Task 4: Present your Storyboard

Finally, in turns, each group of students shows their Pixton storyboard to the class and explains, in front of their classmates, how they have expressed love both in the comic bubbles and in the body language of the characters. Once they have finished, the teacher and voluntary students give oral feedback.

Before leaving, the teacher tells the students that during the following sessions they are going to record the final trailer using a stop motion app (given that in the survey conducted prior to designing the didactic unit, the students reported that they do not upload videos to online platforms such as YouTube, and this trailers would be uploaded to the school

blog). Therefore, the teacher asks the students to bring any necessary ‘stage props’, such as Lego dolls to represent the characters of the story.

#### **4.4.5 Session 5. We Record our Own Trailer**

##### **Task 1: What is Stop Motion?**

In order to introduce the topic of the lesson plan, the teacher first of all shows a stop-motion trailer made with Lego dolls by some students as a project for a different school. After watching it, the teacher asks whether they know the concept of stop-motion animation and whether they know any films that used this strategy (*The Nightmare Before Christmas; Chicken Run; James and the Giant Peach, The Boxtrolls*, etc).

Then the teacher reminds the students that throughout the lesson they are going to record their own stop-motion animation trailer following these steps: First they have to write the script for the narrator of the trailer; secondly, they have to choose the fragments of the dialogues/conversations created in the three previous lessons that they want to include in the trailer; thirdly, they are going to record the trailer by means of a stop motion application; and finally, they are going to record the voices and add music to the project. (The teacher reminds them that they can finish at home if they do not have enough time). As the first step is deciding what the narrator is going to say, the teacher elicits useful language for narrating, particularly:

##### **Task 2: I am the Narrator**

In this task students are told to sit in groups of four to start working. Then, they write the script of the narrator of the trailer, using the syntactic-discursive elements inferred in the previous task. This sentences attributed to the narrator would be used to link the three different scenes of the trailer.

The students also select the fragments of the dialogues/conversations created in the three previous lessons that they want to include in the trailer (these would also be part of the audio recorded in the next task).

##### **Task 3: The Trailer of *The Gift of the Magi***

In the last task of the lesson, students work in groups. Once they have written the script of the narrator and have chosen the fragments of the conversations that will constitute

each of the three scenes of the trailer, the students record the trailer following several steps: To begin with, using the application Stop Motion Studio, they take pictures of the Lego dolls and the rest of ‘stage props’ that the students think necessary. This will be the visual part of the trailer. Then, by means of the same application, they record their voices (the narrator and the conversations). Each student records one out of the four sections of the narration as there is one narrative section between each scene, one at the beginning and another at the end of the trailer. Finally, still by means of Stop Motion Studio, they add the music they choose as soundtrack of the trailer.

#### **4.4.6 Session 6. Film Awards (Final Task).**

##### Task 1: Self-evaluation

In this task, the teacher asks students to answer several questions about their work throughout the previous five lessons as self-evaluation. In order to answer the questions the application Plickers is employed anonymously.

##### Task 2: Trailer Presentation at Film Awards

In this task, each group of students simply shows their final trailers of the short story *The Gift of the Magi* to the rest of their classmates. The teacher takes notes, checking whether the contents that have been practiced during the five previous lessons appear in the trailer, and whether the students employed the Stop Motion Studio application correctly.

##### Task 3: Review your Classmates Work

After watching each of the trailers, the students are asked to individually choose the best trailer and vote by means of Plickers.

#### **4.5 Assessment**

The performance of students throughout the didactic unit would be assessed as follows: the final tasks of the four first sessions would constitute 40% of the final mark; the trailer of the short story *The Gift of the Magi* would also constitute 40% of the final mark; and the remaining 20% of the mark would depend on the behaviour and willingness to participate and collaborate showed by the students.

Furthermore, in order to assess the final tasks of the four first sessions and the final trailer, two different rubrics would be used, depending on the type of task (oral or written).

**Writing Assessment Rubric:**

Content –ideas- (2 points)

Vocabulary and expressions –communicative function- (3 points)

Grammar and punctuation (2'5 points)

Textual organization (1'5 points)

Presentation and length (1 points)

**2 Speaking Assessment Rubric:**

Content –ideas- (1'5 points)

Vocabulary and expressions –communicative function- (2 points)

Fluency (2'5 points)

Pronunciation (1 points)

Textual organization (1'5 point)

Body language (1'5 points)

## 5. Conclusion

Throughout this MA thesis, I have attempted to devise a didactic unit combining the benefits of literary works and ICTs for the students of English as a foreign language and within the framework of the communicative approach.

The data obtained from a group of students taking 2<sup>nd</sup> year of Bachillerato at I.E.S. José Jiménez Lozano (Valladolid) that I surveyed, has made it possible to assert, as far as this particular class-group is concerned, that the employment of Information and communication technologies (such as software applications, webpages, social networks and audiovisual materials) in a didactic unit based on a literary work (particularly the short story *The Gift of the Magi* (1906) by O. Henry) helps to adjust literature to the needs of XXI<sup>st</sup> century students, to make it more appealing for them and therefore to take full advantage of it in terms of learning.

To be more specific, the data proved that initially, this group of students were not very interested in reading literary works in English. In fact, in the fourth question of the survey, almost half of the students reported that they were used to read stories in English some times during the year, which is a significant percentage if compared to the 7,1% of students who answered that they usually read in English, meaning (almost) every day. However, when asked about the employment of ICTs in the classroom in question number fourteen, almost three quarters of the participants asserted that they would be more motivated to read literature in English if that implied carrying out tasks by means of ICTs.

An implication of these findings is that both literary works and information and communication technologies, when implemented together may be useful and suitable didactic resources in any XXI<sup>st</sup> century EFL classroom which not only encourage students to work and improve their communicative competence, but also promote reading. However, further research, and a greater number of participants from other secondary education centres, other cities and even other countries and nationalities will be required to confirm these ideas.

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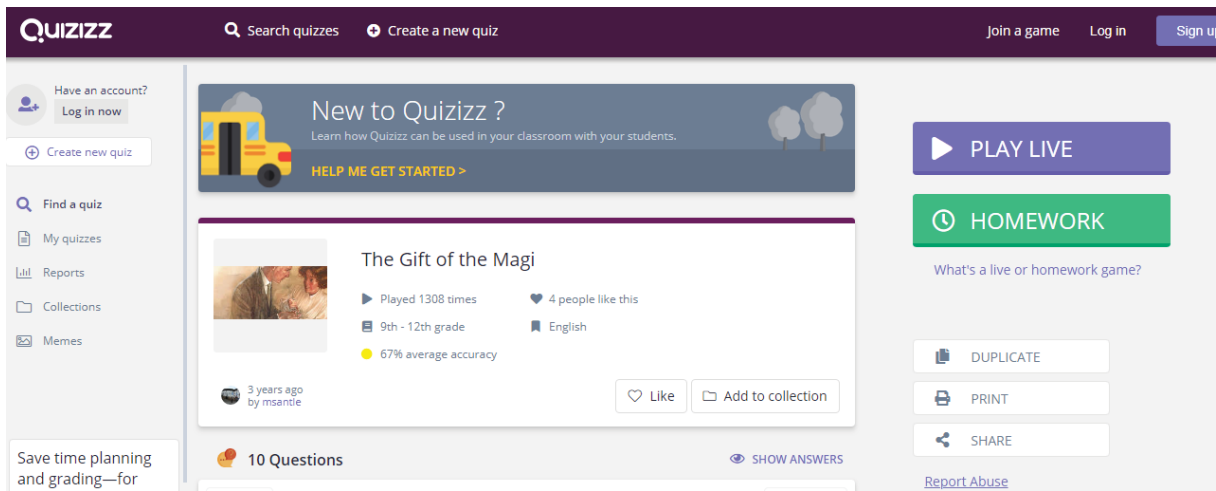
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Zakka Shop (n.d.) *Picture of Shop*. From “OMOI zakka shop” [Picture]. Retrieved from <https://omoionline.com/>

## 7. Appendix. Main materials

### 7.1 Quizizz test :

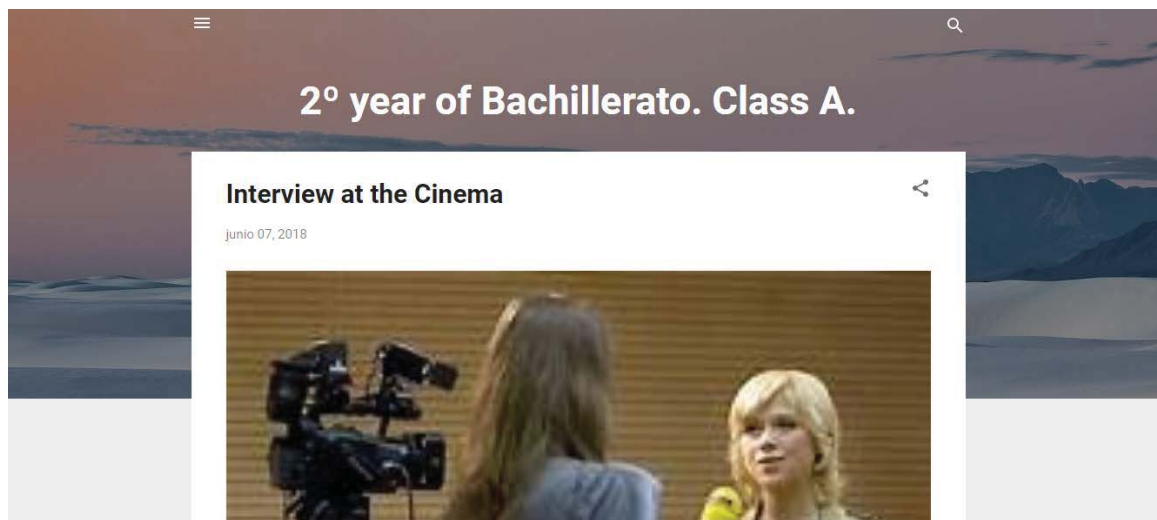


The screenshot displays the Quizizz website interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with the Quizizz logo, search and create quiz options, and user login/sign-up links. A sidebar on the left provides navigation for account management, creating quizzes, and finding existing ones. The main content area features a 'New to Quizizz?' banner and a featured quiz card for 'The Gift of the Magi'. This card includes a thumbnail image, the quiz title, and statistics such as 'Played 1308 times', '4 people like this', '9th - 12th grade', 'English', and '67% average accuracy'. It also shows the creator's name 'msantie' and the time '3 years ago'. Action buttons for 'Like' and 'Add to collection' are present. Below the card, it indicates '10 Questions' and a 'SHOW ANSWERS' link. On the right side, there are buttons for 'PLAY LIVE' and 'HOMEWORK', along with a 'What's a live or homework game?' prompt. At the bottom right, there are buttons for 'DUPLICATE', 'PRINT', and 'SHARE', and a 'Report Abuse' link.

### 7.2 Short based on *The Gift of the Magi*



### 7.3 Blogger Account



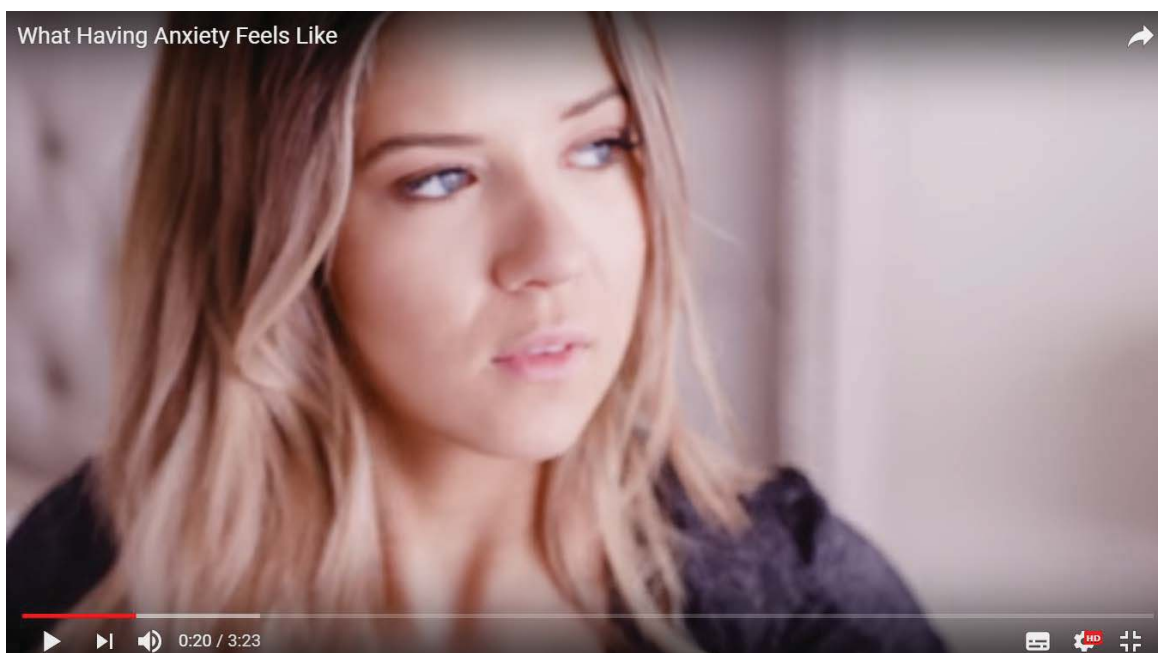
### 7.4 Picture of a Present



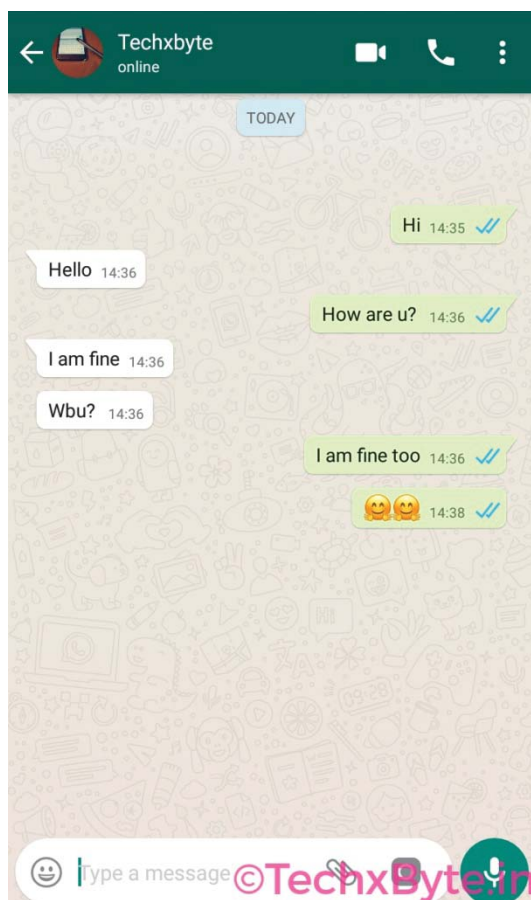
## 7.5 PPT Presentation



## 7.6 Anxiety Video



## 7.7 WhatsApp Web conversation



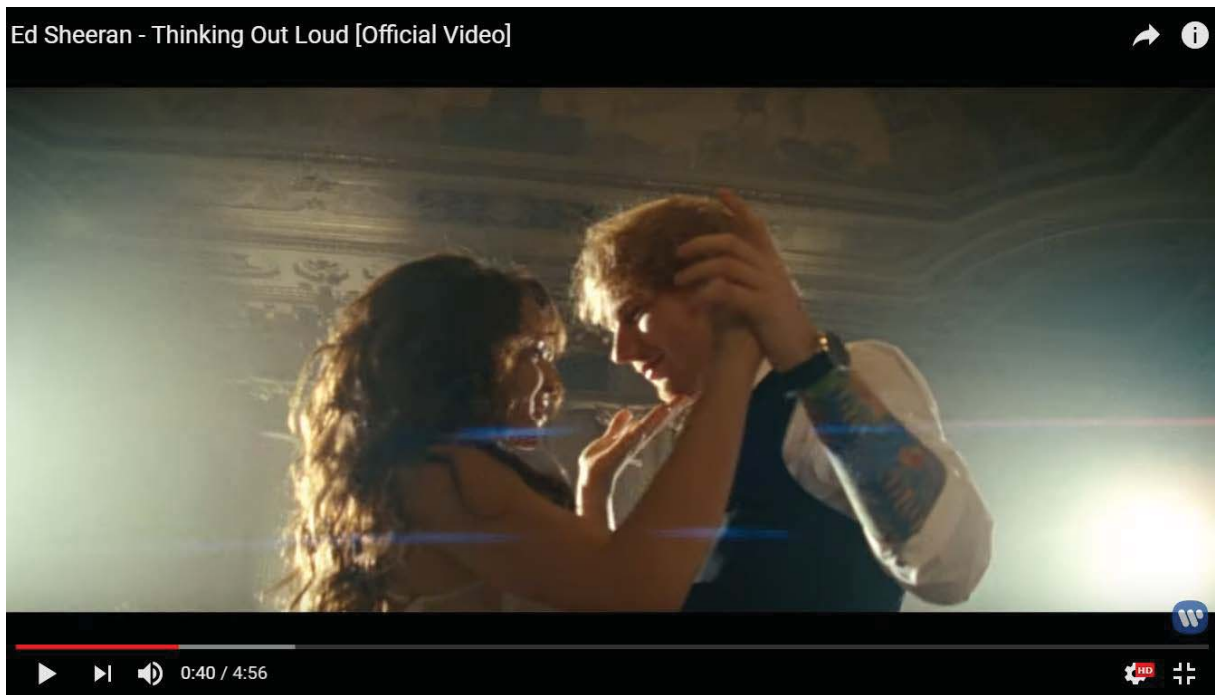
## 7.8 Plickers Poll

The screenshot shows the Plickers web interface. On the left, a smartphone displays a poll titled 'grammar check 3' with a 73% completion rate and a total of 33 responses. The poll results are shown as a bar chart with 3 votes for A, 2 for B, 24 for C, and 4 for D. Below the chart is a grid of student names and their selected options:

Eric	Felicia	Gerardo	Harry
C	D	C	C
Ingrid	Jack	Klaus	Lucy
A	C	C	B
Manuel	Natasha	Oliver	Peter
B	C	C	D

On the right, the text reads: 'Tailor instruction with instant feedback' and 'Use Plickers for quick checks for understanding to know whether students are understanding big concepts and mastering key skills'. A quote from @andersoneLHS is also present: 'Seeing responses like these on @plickers quizzes let[s] me know I can move on! #standardsbased #lhsbestpractices'.

### 7.9 Thinking Out Loud music video

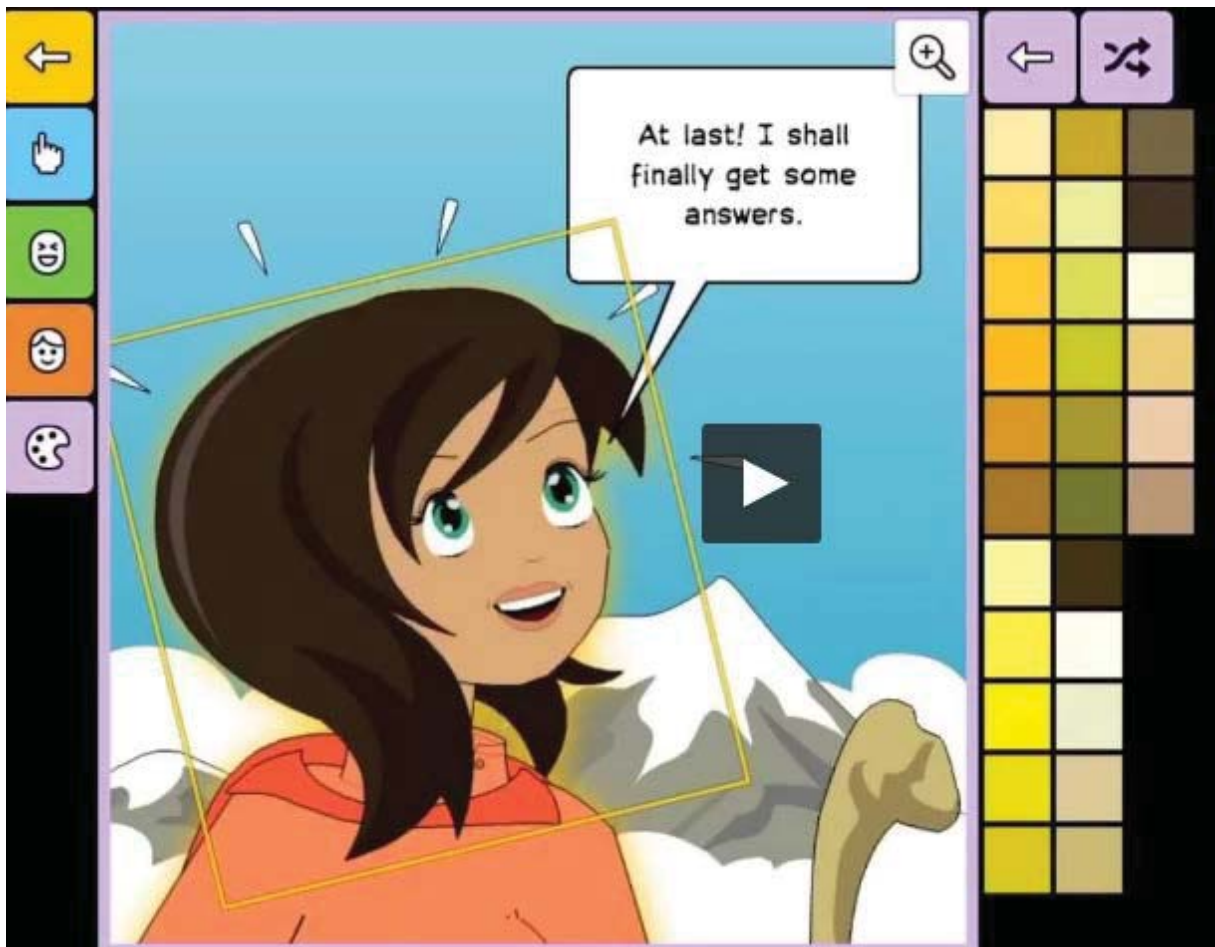


### 7.10 Example of Wordle Word Cloud





### 7.11 Pixton Comic Application



### 7.12 Lego Stop Motion Animation



7.13. Stop Motion studio

