



FACULTAD DE EDUCACIÓN DE PALENCIA
UNIVERSIDAD DE VALLADOLID

Teaching English through Children's Literature in Infant Education

*La enseñanza del inglés a través de la Literatura Infantil en el aula de
Educación Infantil*

**TRABAJO FIN DE GRADO
EN EDUCACIÓN INFANTIL**

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RESUMEN

El objetivo fundamental de este TFG es realizar una investigación sobre la enseñanza del inglés a través de la literatura infantil en el aula de Educación Infantil. Esta investigación se lleva a cabo a través de la recogida de información sobre este asunto y el diseño de una propuesta didáctica estableciendo relaciones entre la alfabetización emergente, el enfoque natural, la literatura infantil, las capacidades de pensamiento, el desarrollo de la creatividad y la lengua inglesa.

Palabras clave: Alfabetización emergente, enfoque natural, literatura infantil, capacidades de pensamiento, creatividad, la biblioteca del aula.

ABSTRACT

The main objective of this Final Degree Project is to carry out research on the teaching of English through children's literature in the Infant Education classroom. This research is carried out through the collection of information on this matter and the design of a didactic proposal establishing relationships between emergent literacy, the natural approach, children's literature, thinking skills, the development of creativity and the English language.

Key words: Emergent literacy, natural approach, children's literature, thinking skills, creativity, the classroom library.

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1. Introduction

The document presented below includes the research carried out on teaching English through children's literature and the design of a unit for teaching English following the premises of the development of thinking skills, emergent literacy and natural approach, all through children's literature and using English as a vehicular language for the development of language skills in an early childhood classroom.

This document will present research prior to the design of a proposal. In this proposal, an approach is made to the theories on the teaching of English through children's literature, the importance of reading and the classroom library.

Based on the conclusions drawn, the design has been made with the elements that must be considered when designing a proposal for teaching English at this stage. Obviously, if we think about acquiring a language, it is necessary for the proposal to have a global approach in which the language is developed in unison with other learning, thus promoting the use of the English language, inside and outside the classroom.

All this process of theoretical foundation that is given in this work is intended to be put into practice through various activities designed with the aim of linking the teaching of English through the reading of stories in the 5-year-old classroom so that children participate in their own learning.

Unfortunately, due to the circumstances that occurred in this academic year, 2019-2020, the designed proposal could not be carried out. However, based on this design and together with the theoretical foundations, the data obtained will be analysed and conclusions will be drawn in relation to what I previously examined in the theoretical justification, carrying out an effective and coherent research process.

1.1 Justification

Humans are social beings; therefore, we tend to communicate with our environment. We live in a globalized world in which communication is a necessity. Nowadays, the English language has become part of our day to day, of our daily life. There are more and more workplaces where speaking English is an essential requirement. Gone are those times where being able to speak English language was only available to a privileged few. The

society in which we live demands increasingly fluent speakers of this language, and, as teachers of the speciality of English, we must make the teaching of this foreign language as effective as possible. Different research has been shown that the highest degree of language acquisition occurs in early childhood. Therefore, we have decided to do research and contrast different theories to find an effective way to teach and deal with the English language in the infant education classroom.

On the other hand, the chosen topic has led us to reflect on the level of development that I have reached as a teacher. Following the main premises established in various official documents, in addition to previous research as well as the design of this project have helped to demonstrate the high degree of achievement of these competencies, which justifies the choice and development of the topic. These competencies we must specify, differentiated into training objectives of the degree, specific competencies of the degree and specific competencies of the Speciality in Foreign Language, including the competencies that must be acquired by teachers responsible for bilingual education, CLIL.

As is reflected in the Memory of the study plan of the degree in Infant Education by the University of Valladolid; the fundamental objective of the infant education degree is to train professionals with the capacity to direct educational attention to the children of the first cycle of early childhood education. And, for the preparation and monitoring of the pedagogical proposal referred to in article 14 of Organic Law 2/2006, of May 3, on Education and to teach the second cycle of early childhood education.

As it appears in this document, these professionals must know the objectives, curricular contents, and evaluation criteria of Infant Education and develop didactic strategies both to promote and facilitate learning in early childhood. That must happen from a globalizing and integrating perspective of the different cognitive dimensions, emotional, psychomotor, and evolutional, as to design and regulate learning spaces and situations in contexts of diversity. Thus, that meets the unique educational needs of students, gender equality, equity, and respect for human rights.

To demonstrate the development reached as a teacher we are going to divide the competences obtained into two groups, the general ones for the bachelor's degree in Infant Education and the specific ones for the English as a foreign language speciality.

1.2 Bachelor's degree in Infant Education:

Among the main competencies that a teacher must achieve we find that teachers have to be capable of analysing the context and planning the educational action appropriately. A teacher should be able to design, organize and evaluate learning in contexts of diversity, also needs to plan to adapt to the needs and characteristics of students. To meet these needs we have designed a unit taking into account the degree of acquisition in which the children are, this we have done through the evaluation by levels of expectation so that all children succeed in at least one from them. Children have different ways to learn and they take different moments to do it, so we have to plan considering these conditions.

In the *Basic Training Module*, we find different premises that teaching students must acquire. It is important that as students of this degree we understand the educational processes and psychological development in this educational stage, 3-6 years. For this reason, we have carried out a theoretical research to find a suitable methodology based on which to develop our unit. Another very important aspect is that we must promote habits of autonomy, freedom, curiosity, experimentation... For this we believe it is necessary to educate children in thinking skills so that we train their brains and the ability to think, that is why this kind of skills are going to be paramount in our unit. Promoting teamwork is very important in this educational stage, which is why we have designed activities for children to experience as a team, work together and learn from each other through interaction, another important aspect to deal with in early childhood education. As teachers we must transmit values of respect to different groups, we must work against racism and violence in the same way that we must work in teaching respect for children and conflict resolution. To achieve these objectives, we have chosen certain books as resources to use in the classroom so that we can work with them in the classroom.

In the *Didactic-disciplinary module*, we find the teachings and the contents that we must promote and impart in our students. Among them, we find all those related to literacy and the skills that our students must acquire. It is essential that as future teachers we know these needs and requirements and design units to achieve it, that is why we have decided to design a literacy unit through which our students can acquire knowledgeable skills such as writing and reading. Other contents that we must also work on are those related to creativity and artistic expression, that is why we have decided to design a unit to work

not only on the artistic expression on children but on creative thinking with our unit we intend to promote imagination in all its variants.

1.3 English as a Foreign Language Speciality:

As a student of the English speciality, there are certain specific skills that we must get as a supplement to the general skills of the degree.

Among them, we find that we must be able to express ourselves in a natural way in English, which is why we have decided to carry out this final degree project in this language. Another requirement is that we must work with an integrative approach such as CLIL, that is why our unit is designed based on this method. It is important that we encourage reading in our students, so our unit will be focused on this aspect and on teaching English through children's literature. Finally, we must know the official documents on which to design our proposal, for this reason, we are going to work with both the Early Childhood Education Curriculum and the Spanish-British Integrated Curriculum for Early Childhood Education.

2. Objectives

2.1 Main objective

The main objective of this Final Degree Project is to present children's literature, in English, as a resource in teaching this language in the firsts years of school. This will be done through the development of a didactic unit following these premises of teaching English through literature. As indicated above, due to the extraordinary circumstances that occurred in the current academic year, 2019-2020, this unit could not be carried out. The unit was designed to be carried out in the last infant education course considering all the members of the class, their interests, needs and family and personal characteristics. The methodology is based on the use of children's literature as a means of teaching English as well as for the development of thinking skills and creative thinking. Our main intention is that children see English as a tool for an end and not as another subject.

2.2 Specific objectives

To achieve the general objective, we have to establish a series of specific objectives. The first of them will be to deepen the aspects corresponding to the teaching and acquisition of the English foreign language in Early Childhood Education. We believe that it is very important to know these language acquisition processes at this stage to carry out our unit, for this we will carry out theoretical research.

Another specific objective is to design a proposal to teach the English language through children's literature following the premises established by emergent literacy, the natural approach and CLIL. It is also important to understand the importance of teaching this second language naturally from the first years of schooling, for this, we see that it is necessary to use a methodology based on the natural approach, emergent literacy and, above all, in teaching English by reading stories.

To achieve our main objective, we must also provide children, through children's literature, with a context that they know how to handle and through which they acquire the English language. Combined with teaching children to use English as a medium to read their favourite stories, as a tool. We must also promote thinking skills and develop creative thinking in children.

If we want to carry out a unit taking into account all the members of our class, we must aim to plan to create 3 levels of expectations through which all children, regardless of their development and the skills they possess, succeed in at least one.

Finally, as a fundamental part of this work, if we want to present literature as a teaching resource, we must create a classroom library with different resources in Spanish and English, through which children have a focus on children's literature and develop thinking skills.

3. Theoretical justification

According to the Royal Spanish Academy (RAE) "literature" is the art of verbal expression, that is, therefore, artistic expression through the word, whether written or oral language [REAL ACADEMIA ESPAÑOLA (2019)]. Naashia Mohamed (2007) says that

literature broadens knowledge, promotes intellectual and emotional understanding, enriches the mind, and humanizes the soul (p. 22).

There are different types of literature, among which "Children's literature", on which this final report is based, stands out.

3.1 What is children's literature?

As José Mateo & Isabel Rodes (1986) point out, in their article on this subject, children's literature is normally known as that read by children (p.135). According to *Children's Literature in the College Classroom* (Kutzer, 1981) quoted by José Mateo & Isabel Rodes (1986), children's literature is that which is read, heard and enjoyed mainly by children but that does not have to have been specifically written for them (p.136).

However, for José Mateo & Isabel Rodes (1986), literature should be defined as any creation or adapted text that has a linguistic, aesthetical, and cultural value, thought for children and in which the values of fantasy and imagination stand out (p.136).

We know that a work belongs to this group of literature when it has a playful aspect and its main objective is to bring children closer to the social reality that surrounds them, thus stimulating the imagination and aesthetic sensibilities. It is also worth noting the formative character that also characterizes this type of works with respect to the social norms that appear, which children begin to acquire through enjoyment, also preparing them for other more complex forms of literature.

Therefore, we can say that children's literature is not only a means of entertainment, but rather that it is a source of language contribution from the earliest childhood to the beginning of the adult stage. It has a series of predictable and repetitive patterns that help to expand and reinforce vocabulary as well as different structures. In works of this genre, highly relevant topics for children and young people are discussed.

3.2 Emergent Literacy

In this section, we will deal with emergent literacy and how it is related to reading. As we will see below, children acquire knowledge of reading and writing before knowing how to read and write, even before going to school. This is called emergent literacy and is deeply related with reading and infant literature.

Marie Clay, quoted by Marie Ann Doyle (2013), said that literacy occurs in a social setting. This author said that emergent literacy believes that a child acquires some knowledge about language, reading and writing even before attending any formal education. (pp. 636-637). The key is on how this happens.

Several authors established a relation between emergent literacy and reading. Elisabeth Duursma, Marilyn Augustyn & Barry Zuckerman (2008) mention in their article that some studies have shown that reading aloud to children promotes the development of language and other emergent literacy skills (p. 554). Isbell et al., (2004) state in their study that children learn the meaning of new words during story reading (pp. 2-5).

Anat Ninio (1983), among others, affirms that reading aloud familiarizes the child with the vocabulary found in books (pp. 445-451). Sénéchal M, LeFevre JA, Hudson E, et al. (1996) found that books contain many words, especially more sophisticated words that children do not frequently hear in spoken language (pp. 520-521). Several studies show that books belonging to children's literature contain 50% more rare words than television during prime time or even a conversation between university students. Other studies go even further and affirm that through oral reading between a child and an adult, there is a greater verbal stimulation than that developed during playing. That would make reading aloud a more powerful resource than social interaction itself, regarding the development of oral language. These studies expose the idea that in addition to the new vocabulary, children would be exposed to a more complex language than adults use when they interact with children around a book.

Thus, we can affirm that kids learn their mother tongue not only through oral interactions with their parents, but that much of the learning process occurs through reading aloud to children by an adult, commonly called story reading. Which leads us to think about the importance of reading, its benefits, and its repercussions in teaching a second language.

3.3 Reading; importance and benefits in L2 teaching

As Mariem Dris (2011) affirms, reading is one of the most complete activities for cognitive development. In addition to providing information, reading teaches, creates habits of reflection and analysis, of effort and concentration, apart from entertaining and distracting (p.2). According to different research, reading is one of the most effective exercises for our brain. Three areas of the brain are involved in the reading process;

Broca's area in the frontal lobe (it controls our ability to speak and is activated whenever we read, either silently or aloud, transforming the words into an auditory code), Wernicke's area in the temporal lobe (it helps us understand the sequence of letters in front of our eyes, deciphers the writing code, phonemes, and translates it into sounds) and the Angular turn in the parietal lobe (it works together with the previous one and also remembers complete words, linking them with a similar sound or meaning). In addition to all this, reading activates many other brain regions, such as those linked to the senses, causing feelings, and activating our sensory memory.

Mariem Dris (2011) shown some benefits of reading (p. 2-3). After a deep reading of these, we have selected the ones most related to the intention of this document and our teaching proposal. She said that reading helps the development and improvement of the language, that presupposes we can maybe use reading for teaching a language. Reading also improves oral and written expression and makes the language more fluent increasing vocabulary and improving spelling. We can also improve human relations through reading. It facilitates the exposition of one's own thought and enables the ability to think through reading we can stimulate and satisfy intellectual and scientific curiosity and this would be useful in terms of developing thinking skills as well as the idea of reading enhances the capacity for observation, attention and concentration. Reading increases cultural baggage. She also says that reading facilitates the recreation of fantasy and the development of creativity, and this sets an interesting research point in our teaching proposal. For this reason, we are going to carry out certain activities which involve reading and literature to develop these skills, and also natural writing, developing other literacy ones.

Stephen D. Krashen & Tracy D. Terrell (1983) affirmed that the acquisition of a second language occurs through natural exposure to it (p.18). These authors differentiate between *learning a language* and *acquiring a language*. They point out that learning a language is simply knowing the rules, having knowledge about the grammar. However, acquiring a language for them goes further (p. 18). These authors affirm that a person acquires a language when it is used to communicate real ideas. Following the natural approach, Krashen and Terrell said that understanding precedes production. It means that listening and reading precedes speaking or writing (p. 19-21). These affirmations make sense; babies are able to understand what other adults say when they speak to them before

starting to produce their first words. Other researchers affirm that children understand far more than they can speak.

In the previous section, we affirmed that children acquire their mother tongue largely through reading stories. Now, considering the ideas of the natural approach, we have discovered that the acquisition of a second language is produced through natural exposure to it. Therefore, we can affirm that the teaching of a second language should be done, mostly, through literature. Naturally, we should expose children to literature, read in class, just like their parents do when they read stories to them in Spanish. We must present the English language as an instrument and not as an objective. If we show children The English language as the instrument to read the tales and stories that they like so much, they will begin to feel a greater interest in it. Our students will also acquire the language more naturally, in a context and, most importantly, with a purpose. They will have a clear aim for learning English. Through a familiar situation for students, such as reading stories, we can gradually assimilate and acquire concepts. Starting with an activity that is familiar to children and knows how to manage, it is easier for us as teachers to get answers from children, whether they are spoken productions or not.

3.4 Teaching English in Infant Education through infant literature

Celia Genishi (1988) said that the development of oral language is one of the children's most impressive accomplishments that occur during the first five years of life (p. 2). In Spain, Infant Education is the educational stage from 0 to 6 years old. It is divided into two cycles, from 0 to 3 (it can be paid, it takes place in specialized centres, kindergartens) and from 3 to 6 (free, it takes place in schools). The second cycle, 3 to 6 years, is the one that concerns us as infant education teachers. Through this section, we will see different research on why to start teaching a second language during this stage.

3.4.1 Why to start teaching English in Infant Education

As Isbell et al. (2004) said, the early childhood classroom is the correct place to enrich the language of infant children (p. 2). In *Enhancing language skills in four- and five-year-olds* (Rubin and Wilson, 1995), quoted by Isbell et al. (2004), it is stated that we, as infant education teachers, can provide opportunities for young children to play with language while gaining an appreciation for the sounds and meaning of words. Children's literature offers us a starting point and a context for the development of activities related to

language learning, creatively and actively involving children. Literature allows children to relate history to their own life (p. 2). It is as a result of these studies and research that I have decided to design an educational proposal for teaching English at the infant education stage. By starting in this stage, we take advantage of the developing brain of children, making it easier to acquire a second language.

Considering these ideas together with those of Emergent Literacy, previously presented, we can assume that teaching English through literature is the way to go in this educational stage. Recall that the authors on emergent literacy established that children acquire knowledge of the language before attending any formal education, all thanks to literature. Consequently, we affirm that literature would provide us with a more natural teaching model and a context that children understand and know how to handle. These ideas will be discussed in-depth in the next section.

3.4.2 Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL)

The first thing we must do is establish what the CLIL methodology is. According to the British Council (n.d), CLIL is that methodology that teaches English in a different way. It focuses on teaching a subject, Science for example, in English. With this type of methodology, children understand the functionality provided by English. Through this approach, we present English to children as a tool through which to get to know the world and acquire another knowledge. With this method, we focus on the students and their learning and not on the content. Learning in this methodology is interactive and autonomous, it is focused on processes and tasks.

Concluding, with this approach, the student learns through real and unforced situations with a specific purpose and that is a fundamental objective in our Final Degree Project. We will put into practice this method in the design of our unit.

3.4.3 Teaching English through literature

For Naashia Mohamed (2007), literature is an essential component of a language teaching program for children and young people (p. 2). Throughout this document, so far, we have defined what children's literature is, the benefits of reading, emergent literacy, and the importance of working a second language from the beginning of schooling in the infant education stage. We have also been able to start guessing that the way to teach a language

at this stage is through literature. In this section, the reasons why we should do it and how we should do it will be presented and analysed in-depth.

Children's literature offers us a means to fulfil the linguistic, psychological, cognitive, social, and cultural objectives that we must teach as language teachers. José Mateo & Isabel Rodes (1986), stated that children's literature has a series of special characteristics in the development of imagination and fantasy in children and also presents a linguistic adaptation to their age; all this offers us many possibilities in the English classroom (p. 137). For that reason, literature will be proposed as the central resource in our teaching design related to English teaching.

After analysing *La literatura infantil en el aula de inglés* (Mateo & Rodes, 1986, p. 137) and *Storytelling and Story Reading in Foreign Language Teaching: A review of recent research* (Bežilová, 2020, n.p.), we can highlight some advantages of using children's literature when teaching English. Literature puts the students in contact with highly imaginative and stimulating texts that are very interesting to them, more than other types of texts. This kind of books also have simple vocabulary and structures adapted to their level. Storybooks develop different types of intelligence that contribute to language learning, including emotional intelligence. It also introduces children to the knowledge of literature, thus creating a predisposition to reading. Children's literature normally reflects the beliefs and values of the world (the culture of its authors and illustrators); this provides us with the opportunity to present cultural information and provoke intercultural comparison, which needs to be performed in this educational stage. This kind of motivating and fun stories help develop positive attitudes towards foreign language, culture, and language learning. Also, by presenting literature in a language different from their own, it also introduces the child to a process of intercultural communication.

Veronika Bežilová's research also revealed that learning and using new words in real situations is complicated for children when they have learnt this new vocabulary without a context. Storybooks offer us the context that children need. Context is vital on the grounds that it puts new words in meaningful situations. This author also found that literature provides us, teachers, with a cross-curricular teaching source and also brings the opportunity to explore cross-curricular topics, which is a necessity in all kind of educations, even more so, in the infant one (2020, n.p). With all this information we see

the necessity of teaching English using literature in the first stages of education. Now the question is related to how we can do it.

3.4.4 Scaffolding

Scaffolding, also known as Vygotsky's scaffolding theory, is a teaching method that focuses on students and their learning. This theory is part of the educational concept "zone of proximal development" or ZPD. The ZPD is defined as the set of skills or knowledge that a student cannot access on his / her own, but with help and guidance. It is the skill level just above which the students are. Therefore, with this type of methodology, we focus on the students and their abilities, focusing our teaching on children's learning and not on content.

For the teaching of English through literature, the theory of scaffolding will help us in such a way that, from the knowledge that our students already possess, we will create new learning structures in them. We build on our students' prior knowledge to create others.

3.4.5 Story reading in class

Catherine Snow stated in 1983 that story reading benefits children in two ways; it provides them with the acquisition of language and literacy, as we already knew, but it also offers them the possibility of experiencing growth of vocabulary, knowledge of book management and other skills (pp. 182-184). Kaderavek & Justice (2002) said that through reading stories we can foster communication opportunities in young children through conversation, talking about text and illustrations (pp. 395-400). That means we can, and we should, use story reading for the achievement of objectives and not only to entertain children.

Parent involvement and reading achievement: A review of research and implications for practice (Silvern, 1985) quoted by Isbell et al, (2004), affirms that children who are frequently exposed to story reading are more likely to use complex sentences and have greater literal and inferential comprehension skills (p.3). This means that reading books out loud increases not only reading achievement scores, but also listening and speaking skills.

Isbell et al. (2004) affirm that other studies have shown that through shared-stories experiences children can benefit from various areas of development; they have found also

that an increase in syntactic complexity and growing vocabulary in this stage could be caused by story reading experiences (pp. 2-5). Clara Hoyne & Suzzane M. Egan (2019) found that several studies affirm a growth in expressive and receptive vocabulary because of shared reading (p. 77).

In their research, Elisabeth Duursma, Marilyn Augustyn & Barry Zuckerman (2008) found that during story reading or shared book-reading children learn to recognise letters, understand that print represents the spoken word and learn how to hold a book, turn the pages, or start at the beginning. Children are also exposed to the story's structures (beginning, middle and end) as well as to the written language register which is different from the spoken one (p. 554). This, as previously stated, would offer us other types of knowledge in addition to the English language. With these new concepts in context, it is easier their understanding by children, who sometimes present problems in this regard.

Veronika Bežilová (2020, n.p) found several reasons for story reading in class; we have selected the following ones which are related to our proposal. She found that children enjoy listening to stories repeatedly. Through this repetition, certain elements of language are acquired while others are reinforced. As the author said, it does not matter if they already know the story, that could be an advantage. Reading stories allows the teacher to introduce or revise new vocabulary and sentence structures, exposing children to language in various contexts. Reading and listening to stories in class is a shared social experience, which is a fundamental pillar in the infant education classroom regarding the development of social skills. Listening to stories helps children become aware of language rhythm, intonation, and pronunciation.

After analysing all these studies, we can affirm that there are several reasons why we should carry out shared reading and story reading activities in the English classroom for the development of this language in the infant stage. Therefore, we have decided to develop a proposal for intervention in the infant's classroom. The proposal is based on English teaching through children's literature in this language. The use of children's books in English would, therefore, help us to acquire literacy skills and new vocabulary as well as other contents and skills. When teaching is done through shared reading, we are also working on social skills, respect, prediction and anticipating skills.

3.5 Developing thinking skills through literature in the English language class

Real-life is not boxed, it is not closed or typecast, it has multiple variables. Today's society requires that people can process, organize, and retrieve information effectively. We live in a world that requires logical and creative thinkers to interpret and question evidence, who use information strategically to make wise decisions and solve problems. These are the thinking skills; thinking ability can be learned, it can be developed and improved. As teachers, we are responsible of that. Siti Aisyah (2019) affirms that children are not born with this type of skills they do not acquire them automatically, although these skills are part of the way they think. Children must repeat thinking skills through practice. We must carry out a development of thinking skills from the earliest stages of schooling and always from the perspective of playing. Through a pleasant environment, these skills can be trained (p. 58).

3.5.1 Developing thinking skills and language

Thinking skills and language teaching should be combined and there are two main reasons for that. Regarding children's cognitive participation in homework, we must consider if the activity presents a challenge for them. Sometimes, as teachers, we fall in the mistake of creating linguistically easier activities for children but not intellectually challenging. We take the risk for children are often bored by overly simple activities, designed to suit their language level, but below their cognitive potential, not offering a challenge for them. By presenting a cognitive challenge we keep the students involved in the activity, in their own learning. Students must be challenged on the grounds that knowing that they are capable of a high level of thinking encourages them to keep learning and excel.

The idea is to use language for a real purpose to solve problems and think together. Therefore, our idea is to develop children's language skills while they learn to think. As we said before, to understand English as a tool for their real life and not as a subject.

3.5.2 Thinking skills and literature

Reading stories in class offers us the possibility to pose different challenges to students. If we ask them to use ideas, actions or put themselves in certain situations found in books, we can give them the opportunity to develop their own behaviours, thoughts, and feelings.

One way to do this is through questions, helping them making predictions. "What would happen if ...?", "How ...?", etc. Through questions like these, children quickly learn to express themselves, either verbally or in writing. They express their hunches and predictions about characters or events, engaging in reading in this way. Through this resource, we develop creative reading processes instead of emphasizing reading techniques or content. [*Literature and Creativity-A Systems Approach*, (1972, pp. 676-677)].

Siti Aisyah (2019) found in her research that children who like to read will have greater facilities to understand complex ideas. Reading gives children a broader view of everything and thus facilitates their learning. Thanks to reading, children can acquire a variety of perspectives. It can help them develop empathy and compassion by putting themselves in the role of the protagonist. Furthermore, children who like to read face a world full of possibilities and opportunities. This author also highlights that through reading, children develop creative patterns within themselves, which we will discuss in more depth later (pp. 47-48).

We could thus define literature as an agent of change. The morals and teachings that children acquire through stories manage to introduce them in reflecting on different everyday situations; it helps them better understand the world around them and resolve conflicts, thereby laying the foundation for thinking skills.

3.5.3 Developing creative thinking through literature

Creativity is often seen as a feature of literature. Some linguists say that creativity deliberately breaks external categories. Muthusamy Chitra, Mohamad Faizah, Siti Ghazali & Angelina Michael (2010) affirm that literature tends to invoke our imagination and our desire to create. This statement puts us on the right path to develop creativity and creative thinking in the classroom through story reading. Through reading aloud and representation, discussions can be held in which children begin to forge their most creative ideas and thoughts, developing an important quality for the society in which we live (p. 46).

Other authors affirm that teachers must motivate students; we must relate them with literary content, thus involving children in processes of thought and feeling. By identifying with the characters, children learn about themselves and establish meaningful

relationships between their own lives and the world around them. These kinds of experiences are essential for our students to contribute intelligently to creating a better world. Literature as a means of enjoyment is a valid objective, but we can go further. We can use it to contribute to the clarification of values and creative thinking. If we train children in these processes from the first years of teaching, they will have an easier time moving towards clear and independent thinking about important topics as they grow up.

Through literature, children obtain the necessary knowledge for the development of a mature, self-controlled, and self-directed personality. Identifying with different characters and situations leads them to clarify personal values and standards. Through literature, children understand more easily that not all people share their personal beliefs; that in other cultures people may have different value systems, and that despite differences, individuals and groups must live together in harmony. [*Literature and Creativity-A Systems Approach*, (1972, p. 681)].

This leads us to early acquisition of creative thinking, which, over the years, will be forged and expanded. Children's literature stimulates the fantasy and imagination of those who read it. (Mateo & Rodes, 1986, p.137). The stories can be used as a union between children's fantasy and imagination and their real world. (Bežilová, 2020, n.p.). We must take advantage of all these moments to develop this aspect. Through simple shared-ideas conversation about the illustrations in the book, role-playing of the stories, drawing pictures about them or writing new ones, we not only check and evaluate the acquisition of the language or the understanding of the text, but we are also developing imagination in kids and fostering the creativity of our students.

3.6 Spaces in Infant Education classroom. The class library

The spaces of the children's classroom must have a series of characteristics that facilitate development and give children the possibility of movement. The legislation establishes for these reasons', certain requirements for the children's classroom.

Among the objectives of infant education written in LOE 2/2006, May the 3rd, we find that this educational stage should contribute to the development of capacities in children that allow them to: know their own body and that of others; observe and explore their family, natural, and social environment, acquire autonomy progressively; interact with others and acquire patterns of coexistence and social relationships; developing

communication skills and forms of expression and start developing logical-mathematical, or reading-writing skills. Regarding this law, we also find the methodological principles of this stage, which dictate that in infant education working methods must be based on experiences, activities and play and that they will be applied in an environment of affection and trust so that their self-esteem and personal autonomy can be enhanced [art. 13 and 14 LOE 2/2006, May the 3rd, (pp. 21-22)].

With this information we can get an idea of the requirements that an early childhood classroom must meet. It must be a space that stimulates the development-learning of children. It is very important to take care of this aspect. The nursery classroom must facilitate the child's global growth, must favour activity and exploration, as well as autonomy and imagination. The most frequent is to find the children's classrooms divided by activity corners. In these corners, there are different materials depending on what is taught at that moment.

3.6.1 Learning corners

The corners allow children to develop habits. They allow us to establish norms and kids follow these rules. In the same way, with learning corners, children develop their personal autonomy. The classroom is divided into several workspaces such as could be constructions, logical-mathematical, language, classroom library... But not everything is valid. There are a series of criteria that must be met. We must consider the needs of children when planning a space (affective, autonomy, socialization, physiological, discovery, exploration, and movement). Space-time is also something that we must consider when designing a space. There is a need to temporarily establish routines of daily life and a specific space for its development.

The classroom must be provided with a series of materials that will facilitate the development and learning of children. We must bear in mind that these materials are sometimes going to have a directed use while others are not. Each material must have a specific and duly marked site. The materials and their organization must ensure that children take on responsibilities and develop their autonomy.

Depending on the age of the children, the kids' classroom will have some corners or others. In addition, the teacher's preferences also play an important point in this regard. However, we should identify a series of common and necessary areas: *large group and*

meeting area, space where the discussion of ideas and meeting and the assembly is facilitated; *symbolic play area and dramatization*, a space with a small house, kitchenette, dolls, costumes, etc; *activity area*, can be in groups or individual, it must have tables, chairs that favour this type of work; *messy area or manipulation and experimentation area*, space where children can experiment with sand and water, take care of plants, paint, etc; and *the class library*, a crucial part of our project. We will see it more deeply in the following section.

3.6.2 The class library

The library in the children's classroom is, on many occasions, the first contact of children with sources of information. Many authors highlight different reasons why it is necessary. Among them, they stand out that it encourages learning, research, and documentary investigation. It develops creativity, aesthetics, and a taste for beauty. It encourages us, as teachers, to promote reading, writing, literacy, etc.

In Royal Decree 1630/2006 it is clearly specified that an approach to children's literature must be made, starting from understandable and accessible texts so that this literary initiation is a source of enjoyment and pleasure, of fun and play (p. 13). More specifically, it is detailed that listening and understanding of tales, stories, legends, poetry, rhymes, or riddles, both traditional and contemporary, must be presented as a source of pleasure and learning. Also, we have to promote the interest in sharing interpretations, sensations, and emotions caused by literary productions and the use of the library with respect and care. We also have to focus on developing behaviours on children so that they value and see the library as an informative source of entertainment and fun (p. 14). In the education law previously mentioned, there are different areas to be developed. Among the objectives of the *Languages Area: Communication and representation*, we find the following ones that must be developed: to understand, reproduce, and recreate some literary texts showing attitudes of appreciation, enjoyment, and interest towards; to start on the social uses of reading and writing, exploring their functioning, and valuing them as an instrument of communication, information, and enjoyment; to approach the knowledge of artistic works expressed in different languages and carry out activities of artistic representation and expression using various techniques (p. 13). As English teachers, we also rely on the Spanish/English Infants Integrated Curriculum which specifies the need to work with picture books and storytelling (p. 42).

If we follow all these recommendations of experts and needs contained in official documents, we see the great importance of a library in the children's classroom, in which such activities like storytelling or information research can be carried out and meet these needs.

a) Space management

The classroom library should be presented as an attractive place. A place where children have to respect certain rules, but they also have the freedom to choose the book they want to read or just look at the illustrations, copy the drawings, etc. In this way, we ensure that children enrich their literary and cultural tastes.

The children's library corner must have different areas: a) *Reading area*, a comfortable place to sit and enjoy reading stories; b) *Consulting space*, with non-fiction books, photos, and materials normally related to the project being carried out at that time in the classroom; c) *Computer area*, where they can consult in a guided way through the computer; d) *Tranquillity zone*, a place with cushions and mats where they can relax, massage each other or meditate.

The children's classroom library should be a place where children are calm and comfortable. It must have a natural light source and provide children with a space to research, consult and search for information. Manuela Sánchez (2009) proposes locating the classroom library in a place away from other corners of greater activity and closer to the quieter corners. She proposes to delimit the space using shelves in which the books will be placed so that children can access them; this material could be easily viewed. Benches should also be used to delimit the space, as well as for children to sit on them (p. 3). This author states that it is also very important that we write the rules of the library together and that we display them on a wall in the classroom library (p. 4).

From a personal point of view, I believe that it is very important that the library's rules are agreed upon jointly, through questions to the children that make them reflect on the care and respect for books. For me, it is also very important that they are exposed to all these materials so that the children become familiar with the rules and show respect, which is something important in social relations.

b) Materials

A good arrangement of the space is as important as the quality of the materials found in that area. This we must also apply to our classroom library. The classroom library must collect both storybooks and non-fiction books, as well as newspapers, magazines, comics, riddles.

Manuela Sánchez (2009) presents 6 different types of materials: stories, poetry books, magazines, tongue twister books and riddles, stories made by children, and interactive books (pp. 4-5). To which we think it is important to add reference books, encyclopaedias, and books on specific topics such as cooking or gardening, (nonfiction books).

As English teachers, we must bear in mind that part of this material must also be in English. M^a del Mar González-Martín & Mercedes Querol-Julián (2015) affirm after their research that the choice of stories in English for the classroom library should prioritize that they are motivating, fun and interesting. The stories and characters must be able to attract the children's attention and make them feel empathy. These authors also propose that the plot be clear and structured and that there should be a balance between dialogue and narration. They should have grammar and vocabulary patterns as well as new vocabulary but not in excess (p. 108).

After the compilation of all this information, we can lay some foundations on the classroom library. The library is a fundamental space in the children's classroom, through it, children will begin to have more direct contact with written sources. They will become familiar with books. Kids will acquire habits of respect and hygiene through interaction with books.

The classroom library will allow us to individualize the maturation and development processes of children. Using story reading and personal interaction with books by children, these processes will develop on their own. Each child will evolve at the pace they need, which helps us individualize teaching. In addition, through the use of those sources of information that they will find in the library, we will work on thinking skills. Children will learn to correctly manipulate the sources of information, collect information, and reflect on it as well as expose their ideas.

In summary, after having analysed different studies and research related to the teaching of English and children's literature, we can lay certain foundations for children's

education. Following the models of emergent literacy and the natural approach, we can affirm that children's literature is a resource that must be exploited when teaching English at this educational stage. Among its virtues we find that it provides us with a context in which to develop the English language, thus facilitating its acquisition by children. In addition, through children's literature, we will be able to develop thinking skills and creative thinking in our students. We also realized that reading is very important regarding brain development and literacy, so we have to be sure of providing our children with different experiences with books as well as trying to develop certain liking or passion for books in the kids. Finally, we have seen the importance of the classroom library in the early childhood education class and therefore the organization in corners. Through the classroom library, children will have a closer approach to books, will have information sources adapted to their needs, and will begin to learn to search in them. Thus, we can affirm that reserving a space for children's literature and the English language is paramount in children's classroom.

This is why an important requirement for the development of our unit will be the prior creation of a library. As will be explained later, the classroom in which the unit was to be implemented does not have a library that met the requirements. Therefore, following the parameters explained here about the classroom library we would reorganize the already existing classroom library in order to meet the needs we have in our project.

After research, we have realized that this space should be reorganized so that the library corner would be located in an area with sufficient natural lighting. It should be provided with cushions or a soft surface on which children can sit comfortably and interact with books, and of course, with fiction and non-fiction books, newspapers, magazines, encyclopaedias, and dictionaries. Despite being an infant education class, we must not forget that to develop thinking skills, which is one of the objectives of our project, we must stimulate their curiosity and give them the opportunity to research. To do this, they must interact as soon as possible with different sources of information and learn to search in them, that is why the classroom library should not only house children's stories. Considering theoretical basis about the topic it is very important to highlight that the library must have books in both Spanish and English languages and that children will have free access to them, promoting interaction with books naturally.

4. Design of the proposal

The proposal that will be presented below consists of a unit designed to be put into practice in a 5-year-old classroom, Infant Education. For the design of this proposal, we have based ourselves on the theories presented in the Theoretical Justification section.

4.1 Context

This proposal was thought to be developed in a rural school located in the province of Palencia. The school in question is a bilingual primary section centre, but it tries to work on this aspect in all courses, including infant ones.

It is a rural school, so many of the courses are grouped. In the infant stage, the 3 and 4-year-old courses are in the same class. 5 years old kids have their own classroom, as well as the first and second years of primary school. Third and fourth share a classroom as well as fifth and sixth. As it is said previously, it is a bilingual section centre, so the English language is present daily in this school's life. Although the bilingual section is only implemented in the primary stage, English is very present in the infant stage. The activities carried out at the centre level related to the bilingual program are also carried out by the infant students.

This centre is a coeducational school. Among its objectives, we find respect for ideological plurality and giving personalized attention to students. Their desire is to educate freely and responsibly. Another important aspect of this centre is the study and work based on the environment to transmit the values of respect and educate in its conservation. For this centre, it is very important to promote the autonomy of its students by involving them in their learning process.

Another important aspect for the centre is the values that they intend to instil and that they consider essential for coexistence. The values they try to promote are morality and civility as the axis of the other transversal themes like coeducation, education for peace, equal opportunities for both sexes... Promoting solidarity, respect, responsibility, love and justice are also part of the ideology of the centre. The centre is also characterized by trying to instil a series of indispensable habits for life in society, such as cleaning and personal hygiene, development in the environment, social habits, thinking and planning skills of work as well as ecologist habits and self-criticism. This is an important reason why we

have decided to make a proposal that develops thinking skills. All this is carried out through different tools, such as meaningful learning, coeducation, and the development of an active and personalized methodology. The centre also has a Coexistence Plan with which it is intended to generate a culture for peace and coexistence in the school. For that, they work in the classroom on the contents related to student knowledge, group reinforcement, self-esteem, social skills, resolution of conflicts, norms, and values. Also, improving collaboration between all members of the Educational Community is important for this school. So that they address and solve problems of coexistence applying measures for the prevention and controlling conflicts in daily coexistence. This was another important reason why we decided to develop a unit in which we could work on social skills and human interactions. Regarding the class for which the proposal is designed, students have an average age of 6 years; the class has 7 students. There are some students who present a certain delay compared to their peers, but none have a curricular adaptation, only methodological ones.

The main methodological axis of this classroom is based on cooperative work and coeducation. All the students are sitting together at a large table. The class has different spaces. We have the assembly area in which stories are also read, working area, computer area, and a corner with toys designed for symbolic play. In this corner, we also find some books available to children, although most of the contact that children have with books is in the school library, which they access to twice a month. This is the main reason why we decided to develop a unit in which to improve this class aspect and to work deeply on literature with the intention that children have a closer relationship with it.

After a period of observing the classroom and the teacher's work and reading the official documents for teaching English at this stage and other research, I decided to create a unit focused on children and their learning of the English language through literature. This unit should also be able to develop thinking skills and creative thinking, an important issue in the infant education stage. The main idea was to design a unit through which children would acquire all this using children's books. The unit also focuses on creating a classroom space for the classroom library, something that during the observation period was found to be improved.

4.2 Proposal

The aim of this unit is for children to meet new foreign authors, learn the structure of a book and its parts, and experience the artistic expression that imitates the style of illustrations by previously worked authors. Similarly, children will try to make the difference between fiction and nonfiction books.

The unit is made up of 10 lessons and the final task is based on the creation of a collective story and subsequent reading.

For this, and considering what we have seen about Vygotsky's scaffolding, we must take into account what our students already know. Consequently, we will consider the skills that our students already have active listening to a story, good behaviour and predisposition, and the use of illustrations as a resource in understanding a text.

For the development of this unit, we need a series of resources. These will be detailed later in the specific session in which we are going to use them. The resources are books written by Todd Parr and Eric Carle, through which to work the English language and the specific vocabulary of the unit. Also, we need colour paints, liquid tempera, small ice buckets, food colouring, colour markers, sheets, fluor sticks and a toothbrush. With all these materials we will also work part of the vocabulary, and we will develop behaviours of respect and cooperation; we will work respecting the rules and following instructions; in addition to promoting creativity and artistic expression in children.

As said before; there is a series of specific vocabulary that we intend to work on in this unit. The main vocabulary will be the colours (red, blue, orange, yellow, pink, green, white, black) and some animals that appear in the books we are going to work with (horse, spider, cow, sheep, goat, pig, dog, cat, duck, rooster, fly, owl, cricket).

4.3 Methodology

In our proposal, we want to focus the attention on the complete development of children. Considering the premises established by the ideology of the school we must understand the complete development of children as the physical, cognitive, social, emotional, and cultural growth of all. We will prioritize language acquisition and literacy skills, not forgetting scientific skills and numerical ones. All this in both languages, Spanish and English, and through an approach based on the child's comprehensive development.

As mentioned in the specific objectives of this Final Degree Project, for the evaluation of our students we have designed 3 levels of expectations so that all students succeed in at least one of them. The objectives to be achieved are divided according to the areas of the curriculum that we are going to work within this unit and according to the language in which they are intended to be achieved. Therefore, the evaluation of the unit will be developed through the creation of three levels of expectations: *all the children*; *most of the children*; and *some of the children*. In this way, what is intended is to set the goals of the unit considering all the students in the class. No matter how small the class and how few students it has, each of them has a different learning rhythm, especially if we take into account that in our unit some objectives are set to be achieved in Spanish and others in English. This is why we must divide the goals so that all students succeed in at least one of these levels. In this way, we also ensure that no student loses motivation and interest in activities that are too easy or difficult. There will be 3 levels of expectations for the objectives of each curriculum area and each language, Spanish and English. The unit aims to be global, so there must be parts that are developed in English and other content that is developed in Spanish, not forgetting the 3 areas of the curriculum in infant education. We understand that our students may be at a higher level in one language or in one area than in another, which does not mean failure, it is just the natural way of learning. A child's learning is conditioned by many and very diverse factors, so the best choice is to propose these levels for both languages and the different areas.

4.3.1 Teaching English through literature

Following Vygotsky's Theory of Constructivism (scaffolding), we will focus on the students' prior knowledge in order to help them. Therefore, for us teaching English through children's literature is very important. Children's stories are part of their daily lives; they are a reality that they know and feel safe and happy to work with. For Vygotsky there is a series of relationships between language and thought. This author affirms that one is essential for the other and vice versa. The development of each is not based on the changes that occur independently, but on the changes that occur in their relationships. We cannot understand the language without thought or vice versa. That is why in our proposal we are going to use stories for the development of language and thought so that both will be developed jointly and progressively. Through this natural and not forced exposure to English we are going to achieve better and longer results over time.

4.3.2 Developing thinking skills through literature

As we already saw in the theoretical justification, the development of thinking skills becomes essential in the stages of schooling for the total cognitive development of children. Through this kind of skills, we encourage children to be participants in their education, learning to solve the problems that are presented to them, to use the information they have, and to make decisions accordingly. In short, they will learn to be more autonomous. We must encourage creative thinking and dig deep into the concept that all ideas are valid and should be valued. As English teachers, we also have to make sure that children express their ideas, no matter if they do it orally or not, or the language they use. We must prioritize that they feel comfortable expressing themselves, the rest will come by itself. When they understand that the foreign language is simply a means of communication, a tool, and not an obligation, they will feel free to use it. It is therefore very important to train thinking skills for them to identify the information they have and formulate ideas from it, showing their reflections trying to use English as a vehicular language. The literature will be of great help to us in this regard, as we have dealt with in the theoretical foundation. It will provide us with a context that children can handle and control and, as a result, they will naturally acquire the rest of the skills.

4.3.3 Content Language Integrated Learning

As a basic reference method in our proposal, we will have CLIL (Content Language Integrated Learning). We consider it as a basic approach that must be followed by English teachers. It enables our students to explore the opportunities that English provides to communicate with others, and children are being introduced to a broader cultural context, thus improving general and specific language skills. Through this method, children develop interests and attitudes and are more motivated to work from their environment using English as a vehicular language. We focus, in this way, on the student acquirement of the language, and kids realize that this is what guides and allows the learning of the rest contents. We understand English as support for knowledge, so we will use it as a vehicular language. As we have said before, we intend to present English as a medium, not as a subject. Just like kids learn Spanish to communicate with others and it serves them to acquire other knowledge, the same happens with the English language; in this way, they see in it a direct utility to them.

4.3.4 The spaces in Infant Education

The use of corners in the infant classroom is not merely a criterion for ordering space. Through the learning corners, children develop a series of habits. They learn to follow rules and develop their personal autonomy. This is the reason for we want to focus on the distribution by corners, and, consequently, the creation of a library in the classroom through which to put into practice all the ideas previously exposed.

4.4 What objectives are intended to be achieved with the execution of this unit?

By completing this literacy unit, the child will be able to:

- meet new foreign authors;
- know the different types of books and their characteristics;
- experiment with artistic expression in different ways;
- work on the oral and written expressions, and
- develop attitudes of respect and help.

Here is the relation between the objectives and the curriculum areas.

AREAS GENERAL OBJECTIVES	SOCIAL SKILLS	KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD	LITERACY
Meet new foreign authors		X	X
Know the different types of books and their characteristics			X
Experiment with artistic expression in different ways	X	X	X
Work on the written expression and oral			X
Develop attitudes of respect and help	X	X	X

4.5 Lessons

Next, we will present the lessons grouped according to their content.

4.5.1 Lessons 1 to 6

In accordance with the theories of emergent literacy, and the natural approach, that demonstrates the importance of reading, the first 6 lessons are designed. Their main intention is to bring the English language closer to children through different stories by two authors. In addition to working on the vocabulary present in these books, it is also intended to work on social skills and the development of creative thinking and creativity. The stories are chosen accordingly to deal with certain topics such as respect for the environment, towards other students or to work on their own feelings. The storybooks are Carle, E. (1997). *The very quiet cricket*; Carle, E. (2009). *The very busy spider*; Carle, E. (2013). *The tiny seed*; Parr, T. (2009). *It's okay to be different*; Parr, T. (2010). *The Earth book*; and Parr, T. (2011). *The feelings book*.

We will present them the books using story-reading to develop the English language. After reading the books, it is proposed to them to make a summary of the book accompanied by a drawing of their favourite part,¹ so we can check the degree of understanding of the book. The drawings will be made by imitating the illustration techniques using different materials like colour markers, fluor sticks, liquid tempera, toothbrush... What is intended is encouraging their creativity and that they learn different drawing techniques.

It should be noted that the children will show their drawings to the other classmates and through questions, we will also work on understanding the book. We will also work on thinking skills through literature by asking them to use ideas, actions or put themselves in certain situations found in books. We can give them the opportunity to develop their own behaviours, thoughts, and feelings. Also, we will develop a language using it for a real purpose, solving problems and thinking together, developing children's language skills while they learn to think.

¹ Appendix I

It is very important to highlight that all these books that are read during the first sessions and they will be deposited in the classroom library along with others wrote by the same authors and other ones so that students can interact with them whenever they want and begin to observe differences. Among those books that are going to be put, we find some non-fiction ones, like cookbooks and animal books. To be a proper resource, the classroom library must collect both storybooks and non-fiction books, as well as newspapers, magazines, comics, riddles... But first, we, as teachers, must reorganize the space and create a specific one for the library, following the premises exposed in the theoretical justification about the compulsory spaces in a class library.

The structure of these first 6 sessions will be the same to develop a routine. First, questions will be asked about the book of that day and its contents, promoting inference, then the story will be read aloud for later we will carry out the activities round of the Book Review, and finally, the results will be shared through oral expression. What we want with this repetition of the lessons is that they acquire a procedure routine around books. This routine that we seek consists of previous work around a book, a reading of the story, a personal reflection (Book Review), and, finally, a sharing of ideas with the rest of their classmates. This kind of routine will be helpful in their future as students and readers.

The timing for these sessions will depend more or less on the students, it is calculated around one hour per session, but it could be longer. This is because oral interaction between students is going to take precedence, so it will not matter to extend the session. It should be noted that a minimum time of 5 minutes will be reserved for a previous talk about the book, its cover, its parts, and content inference.

4.5.2 Lesson 7

After these sessions, brainstorming will be held. We must first collect ideas from the previous sessions before continuing with the unit and moving on to a different part. They will draw conclusions about the books they have in the class library. By questioning, we will work on finding similarities and differences in the books' structures. We will also focus the attention on the parts of the books, although this should be presented from the first sessions but without going into details so that they gradually acquire these concepts in context and not suddenly. Thus, they would begin to learn the parts of the books through direct experimentation with them.

In this seventh session, we are going to focus on the development of thinking skills. It is very important to develop this kind of skills, on the grounds that we live in a world that requires logical and creative thinkers to interpret and question the evidence. We need people to use information strategically to make wise decisions and solve problems. The activity consists of making a Venn diagram in which the children, by means of questions from the teacher, compare and contrast the fiction and non-fiction books paying attention to their parts and their content. Questions should be asked so that the children reflect and think.

The timing of this lesson should last around 30-45 minutes, it all depends on the oral interaction between the students. As specific materials for this lesson, we find sheets of paper, writing material and different books, fiction, and non-fiction. In addition to the display with the Venn diagram template.

That completed Venn diagram will be exposed so it can be seen by the rest of the school community (students and families).

What is intended to achieve with the implementation of this lesson is for children to reflect on the parts of a book and the differences that exist between books, taking into account the content inside. In this way children would begin to develop increasingly effective relationships with books, knowing which books are for reading for pleasure and what others are for looking for information that they need. Again, we focus on the development and training of thinking abilities, providing children with knowledge about the sources of information and their characteristics.

4.5.3 Lessons 8 to 10. Final task

The last three remaining sessions are aimed at creating a story. The first of these three (eighth session of the unit) will focus on writing the story. Using the resource sheet “We create a story”² and “the story dices”.³ The operation of these resources and the activity will be explained to them. Each child will have to write two sentences with the pictures that have appeared on the dice. Those phrases will be part of our story. All the sentences must be put together and permit the children to put them in the right way searching for

² Appendix III

³ Appendix II

the complete meaning. The teacher can give some indications to guide the process. Then the story will be divided into as many parts as students, and each one will write their part.

Hence, for this session, we need the resources mentioned before (“We create a story” and “the story dices”) and writing material. The timing of this session will be around one hour. Dividing the times for the explanation of the dynamics and giving them enough time to write their part of the story, taking into account the different rhythms of writing that children present at this age. Also, we must consider giving them enough time to put in common their parts of the story and building it up together. It is important to emphasize that the intention to write and the motivation will be rewarded more than the content itself. In order for children to show pleasure in writing, it is necessary to forget about education in the ruling, make them understand that nothing happens if they do not know how to write something well, the important thing is that they try to do it.

The next session will focus on the illustration of the story. Each student will make the drawings they consider appropriate, at least one. The different materials used during the first sessions will be made available to children to make these drawings, giving freedom to their creativity. Through simple share-ideas conversation about the illustrations in the book or drawing pictures we not only check and evaluate the acquisition of the language or the understanding of the text, but we are also working on the imagination and fostering the creativity of our students. The timing of this lesson will be around the hour, more or less. We must leave the children the freedom to express their ideas and put them into the drawing. What is intended to be achieved with the implementation of this lesson is that children express themselves in an artistic way, put into practice the vocabulary acquired in previous lessons about colours and also work with the parts of the books creating one by themselves.

To conclude the unit, we will assemble the story paying attention to its parts and the children will read their story, among themselves and to the classmates of other classes. This last lesson is very important for two reasons, it will be the one that closes the unit and it will be a summary of everything we intended to achieve in the unit. The parts of the books and the reading and oral expression will be worked on again, in addition to teamwork and respect for the work of colleagues.

The result must be available to children in the classroom library, along with the rest of the books, so that the library is always growing.

4.6 Evaluation

As explained in the methodology, the evaluation will be carried out taking into account three levels of expectations. These levels are intended to divide set goals so that each child is successful at least one of the 3 levels: *all children*, *most children*, and *some of the children*. These objectives are divided by areas and language, Spanish or English since we understand that each student can be at a certain level depending on the area or language. To check the degree of acquisition of the objectives we will use different resources and direct observation. We will use the printed sheets “Book review” to measure the degree of understanding of the story as well as the written and artistic representation. Through questions during the children's oral expression, we will check the degree of understanding of the vocabulary and its use. To assess attitudinal objectives such as respect for materials or peers we will use direct observation. To evaluate the aspects related to writing, we will mainly focus on the degree of children's interest in writing and the ease they present.

For the creation of this unit different research has been valued and several theories, as well as official documents, have been considered. For the choice of books, the indications given by M^a del Mar González-Martín & Mercedes Querol-Julián (2015) are considered. Different premises on emergent literacy have been considered for the choice of activities, but most of all the ideas presented by Stephen D. Krashen & Tracy D. Terrell. (1983) *The Natural Approach. Language Acquisition in the Classroom*.

To determine the contents, two documents were taken into account namely, the Spanish/English Infants Integrated Curriculum and Decree 122/2007, of December 27, which establishes the curriculum for the second cycle of Early Childhood Education in the Community of Castilla y León.

5. Results

In the academic year 2019-2020, a series of exceptional circumstances occurred, the unit we proposed could not be developed, so in this section, we will indicate the results we expected to obtain based on the theory set forth in the theoretical justification.

5.1 Reading stories

By reading the stories in English, the children were expected to acquire a certain key vocabulary, such as feelings (happy, sad, angry...). They were also expected to use inference to understand the story even if it was not in their native language, just as they do when they are little and are still learning their language. With the subsequent interaction, in which it was intended to ask questions about the book, it was not only sought to evaluate the understanding of the story but to encourage the use of thinking abilities.

5.2 Book review

The expected results of the book review were to evaluate the choice of books based on the tastes and interests of children and to promote children's creativity so that they learn to express themselves artistically using different styles imitating the illustrations of the books. In addition, by carrying out these activities, we sought to get the children to acquire vocabulary related to primary and secondary colours in English, in addition to learning to differentiate one from the other in Spanish.

5.3 Compare and contrast

With this activity, the expected results were focused on the acquisition of thinking skills. With this comparison, the first objective was to compile the characteristics of fiction and non-fiction books through a Venn diagram, so that kids organized their ideas and saw the differences and similarities in a simpler way.

5.4 Creating a story

With these sessions related to writing, illustration, and storytelling, what was intended was mainly to develop literacy and creativity as well as group work and social skills, such as respect for the work of other colleagues.

6. Conclusions

After having designed the didactic proposal previously exposed and having established a relationship with the theoretical base presented on the teaching of English through children's literature, I was able to draw some conclusions. However, it was not until I established the relationship between literacy development, children's literature, thinking skills, and creative thinking, and creativity, that I drew clearer ideas about these aspects and education at this stage.

The teaching of the English language through children's literature, following the theories of emergent literacy and the natural approach, facilitates the acquisition of knowledge and gives us a different view of the language. We have been able to see that through children's literature, children obtain an easy handle context in which to place the new knowledge and vocabulary acquired. In the same way, children are more motivated to learn this language by having a direct purpose for them, reading their favourite books and tales.

We have been able to see how reading plays a decisive role in the development of the brain, so encouraging children' liking for reading is a crucial task for us, as teachers of the early educational stages. Through the research of different studies, we have been able to determine that children, just as they learn their mother tongue through the social interaction that takes place in the reading of stories, can learn the English language through these interactions around a book.

Another important point of this Final Degree Project has been dealing with the relationship that exists between thinking skills and literature. As previously indicated, literature gives us infinite contexts and possibilities through which to challenge our students by asking questions that activate their minds, thus developing their thinking skills in the same way that we encourage the use of English and reading.

It is also worth highlighting the conclusions obtained after researching the importance of the classroom library. Through this space in the infant classroom, children have easy access and establish premature relationships with books and sources of information. Thus, we start training children in a crucial part for their development as persons on the grounds of a society in which we all live, that needs capable of thinking minds to adapt to a changing and globalized society.

Furthermore, we have established a relationship between these ideas and the CLIL methodology, which allows students to explore the opportunities that English offers them when it comes to communicating and interacting with the rest of the world around them. As adults, it is easy for us to see the importance and utilities that a language provides us. However, for children, this is not the case. Normally, children see the English language as a compulsory subject to learn, thus cancelling all motivation for the acquisition of this language. With this CLIL methodology, students obtain the evidence that the English language can be used in any context as a vehicular language. As we indicated before, kids see a real situation for which they need to learn English, children find a real purpose to learn the language, forgetting the concept of English as a compulsory subject to learn and changing it for the conception that it is a tool through which to approach the world. In this way, the motivation for learning a new language would increase.

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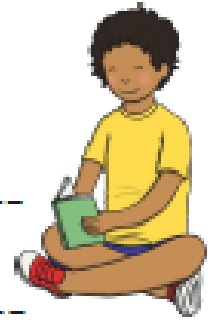
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8. Appendix

8.1 Appendix I

Book review

My Book Review



TÍTULO DEL LIBRO _____

¿CUÁNTAS ESTRELLAS LE DAS A ESTE LIBRO?

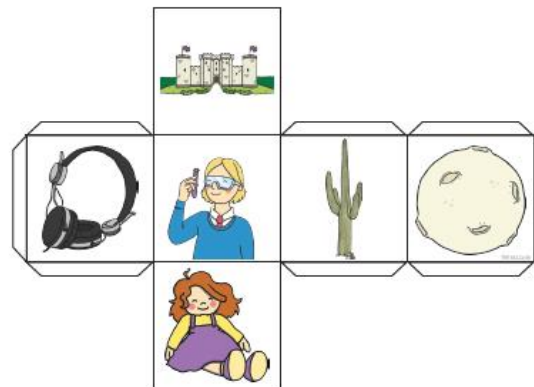
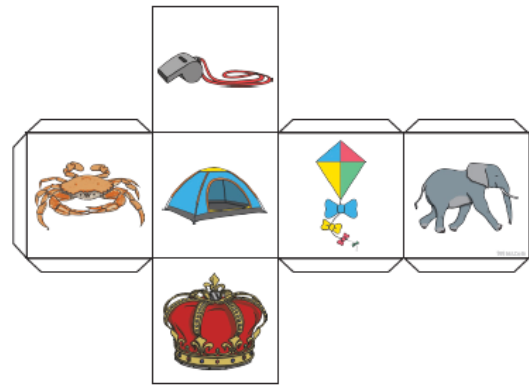
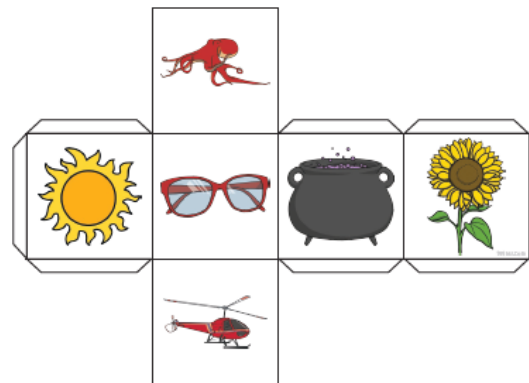
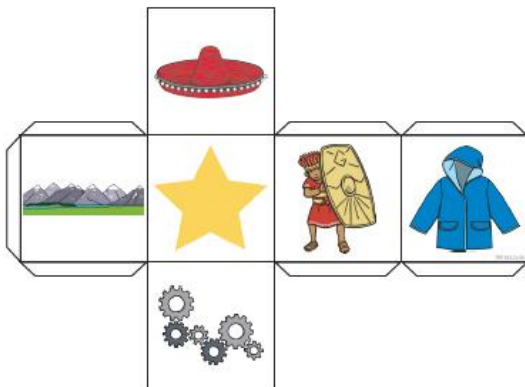
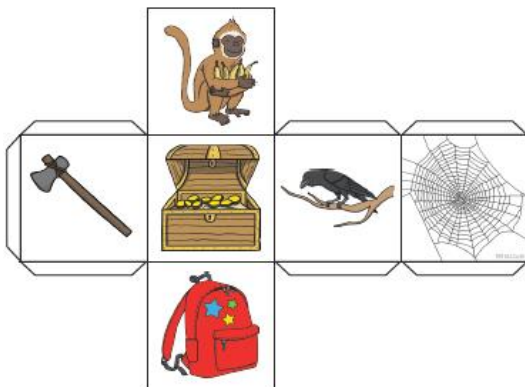
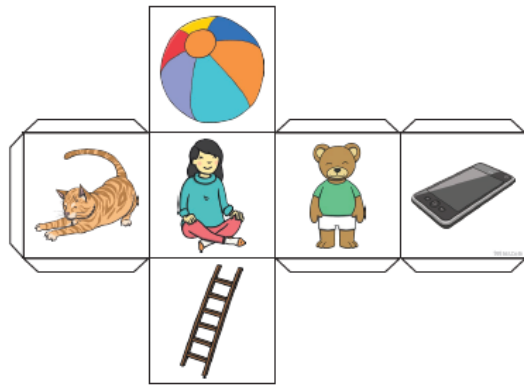
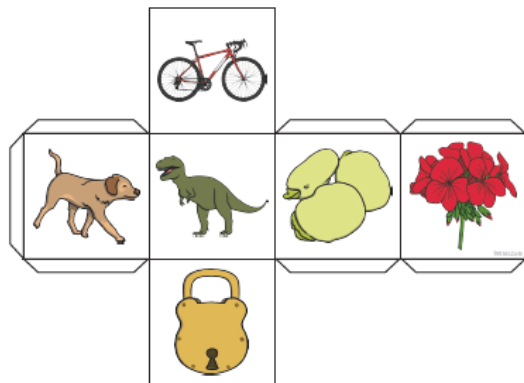


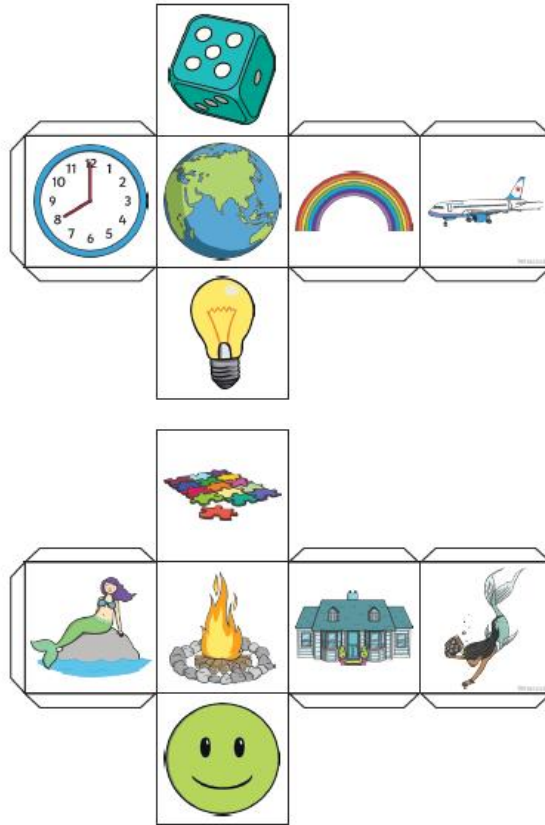
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8.2 Appendix II

Story cubes





8.3 Appendix III

Natural writing

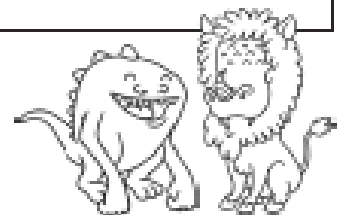
Creamos un cuento

Jugamos con los dados de cuento

Tirada	Descripción del dibujo
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Escribe dos frases con los dibujos que te han salido.

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