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TRABAJO FIN DE MÁSTER

English language learning and the use of Apps. A lesson proposal for Secondary Education

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ABSTRACT

The content of this paper revolves around learning foreign languages, emphasizing the communicative approach and mobile learning. Likewise, both the international recommendations and the national guidelines that establish the teaching standards of the Foreign Language in Compulsory Secondary Education are analyzed. From the methodological point of view, a teaching proposal is planned with a communicative perspective that promotes the use of Apps and technological resources, contributing to the development of the key competences necessary for said school stage. The use of activities and materials based on real contexts is considered, in which collaboration between students and communicative exchange are essential. Finally, the concluding remarks reflect, among other aspects, the importance of enriching the communicative approach of language with the use of information and communication technologies.

Key words: Communicative approach, teaching proposal, mobile learning, foreign language, Secondary education.

RESUMEN

El contenido de este Trabajo Fin de Máster gira en torno al aprendizaje de lenguas extranjeras, poniendo énfasis en el enfoque comunicativo y el aprendizaje electrónico móvil. Asimismo, se analizan tanto las recomendaciones internacionales como los documentos que establecen las pautas de enseñanza de la Lengua Extranjera en Educación Secundaria Obligatoria. Desde el punto de vista metodológico, se plantea una propuesta didáctica que, con una perspectiva comunicativa, promueve el uso de Apps y recursos tecnológicos, contribuyendo al desarrollo de las competencias clave necesarias para dicha etapa escolar. Se contempla el uso de actividades y materiales basados en contextos reales, en los que la colaboración entre alumnos y el intercambio comunicativo son esenciales. Por último, las consideraciones finales reflejan, entre otros aspectos, la importancia de enriquecer el enfoque comunicativo de la lengua con el uso de las tecnologías de la información.

Palabras clave: Enfoque comunicativo, propuesta didáctica, aprendizaje electrónico móvil, lengua extranjera, Educación Secundaria.

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INTRODUCTION

In today's society, language teaching plays a crucial role at all levels of compulsory education. Due to globalization, we are constantly in contact with people from other cultures so that we feel the need to "learn to live together" as explained by Delors (1996) in *Education Contains a Treasure*. Knowing how to communicate effectively with individuals from other countries has become essential and involves other ways of communication where ICT and APPs are gaining in importance. This social change, added to the guidelines established by the institutions (Council of Europe, 2020), have led to continue developing the communicative competence in the classroom through methodological approaches such as the communicative approach and mobile learning. It is not enough to only learn grammar rules and vocabulary, but language must be understood as the union of communication skills that allows its use in real contexts. It is about the student communicating effectively in everyday situations and therefore developing language skills.

The acquisition process has been the subject of study since the 20th century by researchers such as Krashen & Terrel (1983), the first authors who develop the natural approach in second language acquisition. From their discoveries, methodologies based on the natural approach have been developed with the aim of making the second language acquisition process similar to that of the mother tongue. In line with this process, the use of technological resources seems useful. They promote the use of the target language in real situations developing autonomy through authentic materials.

In the context of national education, the planning process is increasingly referred to. It involves a set of decisions to develop the best action possible and achieve individual or collective goals taking into account the school context. In this way, it brings closer specific problems, needs, characteristics and expectations of the students and the nation, respecting the teachers´ autonomy.

For this reason, the following paper aims to point out the importance of the planning process in Secondary education through a teaching proposal that attends to current circumstances and supports the communicative approach as well as the use of technological resources. This approach will respond to the communicative competence indicated by the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment (Council of Europe, 2020), as well as institutional guidelines and regulations.

Justification

In today's society, the acquisition of languages and, specifically, English, is of vital importance. Language knowledge gives us work and personal opportunities that enrich us and unite people from different cultures as well as improve comprehension and acquisition in the native language. To do this, the communicative competence, which allows us to know the use of language based on the context, must be encouraged, in order to communicate effectively with people from different countries. So that students use the target language in real situations, it is necessary to organize the content in a coherent way, taking into account the objectives and methodology as well as the context of the school and its students. Therefore, a good curricular concretion on the part of the teaching staff makes it possible to put into practice the European recommendations and guidelines to face current challenges, giving rise to a social change that broadens the perspectives and communication skills of students.

Therefore, the object of study of this paper is the curricular planning process and its relevant notions for the subject of English as a foreign language as a base for a teaching proposal for Secondary education with ICT and APPs on the front line. This is the starting point for adapting to current education conditions that broaden the perspective of students regarding the acquisition of languages.

This paper has allowed the development of general and specific competences that must be possessed as teachers. In accordance with the Real Decreto 1393/2007 of October 29, it should be noted:

-The performance of tasks that promote language learning, through the four skills (listening, speaking, writing and reading);

-Stimulate students by promoting both individual and group learning and the development of thinking and decision skills to promote autonomy, confidence and personal initiative.

-Concrete and adapt the curriculum to the needs of students by carrying out activities that facilitate learning.

-Master evaluation strategies and techniques so that they stimulate the effort of the students.

- The use of ICTs and audiovisual and multimedia material;

- Involvement in the improvement proposals of the adopted methods or methodologies, based on a reflection in the practical sphere.

Objectives

According to the considerations set out above, we formulate the following objective and the corresponding aims:

Objective:

To address foreign language learning from the perspective of the communicative approach, the planning process and the use of technological sources, as the basis for a teaching proposal.

Aims:

1. To analyse the current international and national policies for language learning in Secondary Education, by reflecting upon the importance of communicative and planning notions.

2. To plan a teaching proposal for the third year of Secondary Education based on the mobile learning and the communicative approach, as a way to promote communication in authentic contexts.

3. To reflect upon curricular and programmatic strategies, for helping to guide the decision-making of foreign language teachers when designing classroom proposals.

4. To conclude with the key elements of designing a proposal and its real didactic application in the classroom.

PART I

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

1.1 Language Learning Process

People all over the world go through the same stages when it comes to learning a new language. During the first years of our lives, we communicate unconsciously, sometimes imitating what we hear, without knowing grammar rules. This means we start developing communication skills naturally. The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (Council of Europe, 2001) defines language learning as "a lifelong task, the development of a young person's motivation, skill and confidence in facing new language experience" (p. 5). For some theorists, the student acquires the skills by being exposed to the language, so the teacher's role is to provide the appropriate environment for communication.

Lev Vygotsky (1978) raises a psychological model, in which thought patterns are not due to innate factors but the result of interaction with the environment. Thus, if the child is given a suitable environment, s/he can go further and develop his/her potential. In this sense, it is important to study not only the previous ideas about the content or the motivation for learning but also the mechanisms that allow us to build and update knowledge. Following his theory, the Vygotskyan concept that has the greatest applicability in the educational field is the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD).

This concept is basic for the teaching and learning processes since the educators must take into account the development of the student in two levels: the real and the potential to promote levels of advancement and self-regulation through collaborative activities as proposed by Vygotsky. In this process, the apprentice not only modifies what s/he already has, but also interprets the new in a peculiar way, so that s/he can integrate it and make it his own. Through the reflection of each student according to his/her mental rules and models, his/her understanding of the world is built. This means that, although the teacher is responsible for guiding the learning processes, s/he does not determine them since they are generated by social interaction.

For other scholars such as Krashen (1987), it is not enough. He thinks a communicative exchange is necessary and the students have to receive input through listening and reading."When the acquirer does not understand the message, there will be no acquisition. In other words, incomprehensible input, or `noise´, will not help." (p.63). On the contrary, others advocate learning vocabulary and grammar before beginning to communicate.

Krashen and Terrell (1983) distinguish between language acquisition, given by the need to communicate prior to the study of grammar rules, and language learning, a traditional process in which students acquire the rules consciously as a result of direct instruction. The latter produces very limited and artificial communication, based on the repetition of patterns and far from real and effective communication between natives.

Among the most important theories, Krashen (1985) stands out with his Natural Order hypothesis. He states we acquire the rules of language in a predictable order, some rules tending to come earlier than others. To do this, students must be exposed to the target language. In his theory, he refers to the order in which the mother tongue or second language is acquired, in connection with the concept of acquisition. He created the formula "I + 1" to refer to comprehensible input ("I") that contains linguistic elements above the level of the student. Krashen considered, in the Affective Filter Hypothesis, that the student's attitude and his/her feelings had a positive or negative impact on acquisition and learning.

Nowadays, taking into account the globalized world in which we live, educational practices combine the conscious learning of grammar rules with communicative practice that favors interaction among students. Therefore, as far as possible, the use of communication in the classroom should be encouraged in order to meet our needs as European speakers and citizens.

1.1.1. Communicative language teaching

When planning an English course, decisions about how to teach the content are made. Therefore, it is important to consider the changes CLT has urged in the field of methodology. In the 1970s the traditional grammar centered method began to be questioned, drawing attention to the necessity of developing a communicative competence.

Dell Hymes defined communicative competence not only as an inherent grammatical competence but also as the ability to use grammatical competence in a variety of communicative situations. The term arose as a reaction to Chomsky's linguistic competence. He considered that the linguistic aspect was not enough, and that the social and contextual aspects of the language itself had to be taken into account. Hymes (1972) stressed that a person "acquires competence as to when to speak, when not, and as to what to talk about with whom, when, where, in what manner." (p. 277).

Many British linguists contributed to the formation of the Communicative Approach which aims to make communicative competence the goal of language teaching and develop methodologies for the teaching of the five language skills that acknowledge the interdependence of language and communication. Later, Canale and Swain (1980) developed four interrelated sub competencies: linguistic, sociolinguistic, discursive and strategic competence.

-Linguistic competence deals with the lexical, syntactic, morphological and phonological elements of a language.

-Sociolinguistic competence aims to understand the language through sociocultural norms for its proper use.

-Discursive competence seeks coherence and cohesion in a text with the use of discursive elements.

-The strategic competence, which relates to the use of resources such as definitions or gestures in spoken or written language.

As a consequence of this, new communicative approaches such as CLT ought to be designed on the basis of communicative functions. Its aim is the development of the communicative competence against the grammatical competence, making authentic production the focus.

Littlewoold (1981) stated that ''one of the most characteristic features of communicative language teaching is that it pays systematic attention to functional as well as structural aspects of language, combining these into a more fully communicative view'' (p. 1). CLT is based on knowing how to use language depending on the context, participants, functions and limitations in one's knowledge in order to experiment and try out what they know. In order to achieve this, language should be taught by integrating all language skills with activities in which the target language is the vehicle of classroom communication, not just the object of study.

Under the CLT, activities should contain meaningful, authentic and fluent communicative practice in group-work such as role-plays, games or problem-solving tasks. The latter is beneficial for learners since they can learn from hearing what other classmates say, produce when talking to the teacher, develop fluency and be more motivated. The class is understood as a community in which learners learn sharing and the teacher adopts the role of

a facilitator, who provides a constructive classroom climate and opportunities to practice and reflect on language. Therefore, one of the most important elements is the negotiation of meaning, which happens when students encounter a word with multiple meanings and they go through a process to reach an understanding of each other. The treatment of errors will obey fluency criteria, since they are part of the natural learning process, through the creation of an interlanguage, and do not interfere with communicative effectiveness. Thus, the students will be encouraged to accept them not only as normal, but also useful and necessary.

Communicative language teaching is achieved through activities that involve reception, production, interaction and mediation depending on the number of people involved in the process of communication. The so-called receptive skills - listening comprehension and reading comprehension - and the so-called productive skills - oral expression and written expression - tend to be linked together, giving rise to interactive skills (for example, talking or corresponding with a friend) or mediation skills (for example, to read a book and then write a review). The combination of these linguistic skills shows the will to bring the reality of the foreign language classroom closer to the reality of communication between the speakers of that language. Receptive skills involve the comprehension of general and specific information, inferring or interpreting through silent reading, oral presentations, written texts etc. In mediation activities, the user does not express ideas but acts as a mediator between people who cannot communicate directly. On the other hand, interactive skills are those in which students assume both the role of sender and receiver of messages and build a conversation or a written text together by negotiating meanings and following the principle of cooperation. Both interactive and mediation skills can be done with activities such as role-plays, debates, discussions or free conversations.

1.1.2. The role of the teacher and learner in EFL classroom

Instruction has become learner-centered instead of teacher-centered. As Nunan (1989) states: "Traditionally, the role of the teacher in writing class is to provide correct models to set tasks and to provide corrective feedback" (p.85). In communicative language teaching, the teacher promotes communication between the students by being a facilitator and monitor. Some of their tasks are: guiding while doing the activities, planning them considering students´needs or giving feedback, rephrasing information in order to develop a new view of their errors. Therefore, teachers are responsible for creating a relaxing and motivating environment for students to participate.

According to Harmer (1998) we can classify an ESL teacher as: controller, advisor, organizer, promoter, participant and source of resources. Controlling is not the most efficient tool since, if teachers determine the language use, students will not produce it in a spontaneous and autonomous way. The role of advisor highlights the importance of giving feedback to students on how to avoid errors. It is of vital importance doing it in a sensitive way, clarifying mistakes are necessary to acquire a language in order to prevent students from being unmotivated. As the organizer, the teacher gives clear instructions on the task, planning what they will need and checking they understand what they have to do. When being the promoter, he/she helps when necessary, encourages students or gives suggestions when they are lost. However, teachers should not participate in communication tasks since the focus is on making students interact and be in charge. Andrews (1999) argues "the L2 teacher also needs to reflect upon that knowledge and ability, and upon his/her knowledge of the underlying systems of the language, in order to ensure that the learners receive maximally useful input for learning" (p.163).

On the other hand, the learner is the negotiator in charge of the learning process. Mclean (2012) explains that 'only when the teacher's authority recedes can the learner be thrown back on his own resources' (p. 33). Students have to communicate with others and engage in cooperative activities rather than in an individualistic way. Students are given tools to understand their learning strategies and develop the appropriate ones for autonomous learning.

1.1.3. Syllabus and planning issues of the English subject matter

In order to plan a lesson, it is important to know the basis of syllabus design. As Breen (1984) states "a syllabus is a plan of what is to be achieved through our teaching and our students' learning" (p.54). The choice of syllabus is crucial in language teaching. According to Krahnke (1987), there are six types of language teaching syllabus including:

- Structural syllabus: This type of syllabus focuses on grammar instruction and linguistic exercises.
- A notional/functional syllabus: It is one in which "the content of language teaching is a collection of the functions or the notions that are performed when the language is used" (Wilkins, 1976, p 8).
- Situational syllabus: The contents are organized according to real and imaginary situations in which communicative exchange occurs.

- Skill-based syllabus: The content of language is understood as the development of all the skills that take part in language learning (listening, reading, writing and speaking), as well as other learning abilities.

- Task-based syllabus (TBLT): The content is conveyed through several purposeful and social-oriented tasks that learners have to perform using the language they are learning.

- Content-based syllabus: The aim is to teach students content using the target language so they learn about the subject and language at the same time.

All in all, these types of syllabi are not independent from one another. Almost all of the syllabi used nowadays are combinations of several types since they share certain components. In order to improve communication in the EFL classroom, the most ideal syllabi are TBLT combined with the functional and notional as well as simulation and skill-based.

Among the planning tools available to the teacher, the Course syllabus, teaching units and lesson plans stand out.

As for the Course syllabus, it is defined as the planning of the aims to be achieved, the means to achieve them and the elements that intervene in the action of the center. Its main functions are: planning the teaching-learning process to avoid making incorrect decisions, ensuring coherence in curriculum development, promoting reflection and evaluation of teaching practice, attending to the diversity and involvement of students in their learning as well as sequencing the teaching units which form it. This instrument includes the knowledge of the learning conditions (resources, materials, characteristics of students).

The principles of organization which are applied in the construction of a syllabus are selection, focus, subdivision, and sequencing (or grading). In discussing syllabus design, the major determinant must be the objectives and goals of the lessons, what type of knowledge, skills and attitudes are desired as an outcome from the instruction that is, what type of content is he/she comfortable teaching. Furthermore, the syllabus should be flexible since the context and characteristics of the students may require adjustment during the process, being open to alternative interpretation. Teachers might negotiate with students when modifying the syllabus in order to consider the learners' perception of language. It should reflect language learning as what it is, a process in which all skills have to be taken into account.

First, the needs analysis of the students are primary when it comes to designing a syllabus. It is very important that students share the same goals as the program and that these

goals are achieved as a result of instruction despite having different learning styles and strategies. Learners need plans to have a sense of direction in their work and a clear idea of what their role is, that is, what it is expected of them. In order to do this, the teacher should establish the purposes for which the target language is required, considering the environment and resources available. Syllabus contents should be clear and easily understood by students to know what is expected from them, providing enough detail and motivation. In order to do that, teachers should design them considering their prior knowledge, expectations, experience, goals, personality and values. It is also crucial to analyse other characteristics of students such as age, ethnicity, nationality, mother tongue etc.

Another factor to take into account are the resources available to the teacher. That is, authentic materials which facilitate genuine communication to bring "real-life" contexts into the classroom. Some examples of printed, visual or listening materials are TV and radio broadcasts, movies, novels, songs, documentaries, newspapers, articles or realia, real objects used in EFL classrooms to illustrate concepts. The teacher can use class diaries and checklists in order to reflect student observation as well as rubrics which summarize the assessment standards in a more orderly way to guide students through the process. It encourages a continuous review and a balanced integration of content, skills and cognitive processes. Lastly, portfolios are used as a learning record for gathering reflections about decision making as well as compiling evidence of students' progress throughout the classes.

Fry, Ketteridge & Marshall (2009) propose the steps to follow when preparing a syllabus. The first is to consider the essential aims of the course or program and define what the student should know as a result from the activity establishing big questions that help orientate this process. These questions should take into account the needs of the students. Wilkins (1981) states that "starting from an awareness of the learners and their needs, it is proposed that from the total set those categories should be selected that are relevant to the particular population of learners." (p. 84). Then establish a monitoring process to check the achievement of the proposed aims and a plan of contents, with the sequence of topics.

The activities have to be student-centered and promote participation. Designing a plan involves thinking about resources, readings or other tools; taking into account the type of assessment (formative or summative) and give feedback. This process has to be coherent with the contents, therefore, teachers should establish evaluation criteria that shows evidence of the results obtained. Cowan & Harding (2006) emphasize the importance of learning outcomes as a key element in syllabus design, guiding decision making toward the formative approach. That is, how to teach and learn, and the evaluation process.

1.2. Institutional remarks for language learning

1.2.1. European linguistic and education policies

The EU language policy promotes the teaching of foreign languages through educational and professional training programs. The importance of acquiring a second language is being reflected in several European policies and institutional documents as shown below:

-The *Recommendation of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 of December of 2006 on key competences for lifelong learning.* One of the key competences is communication in foreign languages, the practice of both oral and written communication skills. In order to apply linguistic and grammatical content, the student has to be aware of cultural aspects and social conventions.

-The *Council Recommendation of 22 of May of 2018 on key competences for lifelong learning.* It refers to language learning from the point of view of multilingualism as it is becoming more important in modern societies.

-The *Council Recommendation of 22 of May of 2018 on a comprehensible approach to teaching and learning of languages.* It aims to improve language skills and competences, especially in Secondary Education and encourage the creation of measures for teachers to support language awareness and monitor the acquisition of language competences at different stages of life. Some of the measures were inviting teachers to learn abroad and to use innovative methods such as School Education Gateway and eTwinning.

At the summit held on the 17 of November of 2017, the commission stated its intention to create a European area of education in which it will be necessary to speak two other languages in addition to one's mother tongue by the year 2025. The *Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of Regions on achieving the European Education Area by 2025* includes an update on the key competences for lifelong learning reflecting the evolution of teaching and learning since the competences of 2006 were established. It also proposes a Digital Education Action Plan and the promotion of common values and inclusive education.

The EU also works with language research centers, the European Center for Modern Languages of the Council of Europe (ECML/CELV) and the European Research Center on

Multilingualism and Language Learning (Mercator) that facilitate dialogue between member states and support language integration projects such as CELV. The ECML also proposes nine key areas in language education such as teacher and learner competences, plurilingual and intercultural education, curricula and evaluation or new media in language education.

Furthermore, when it comes to evaluation, the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages* (CEFR) (Council of Europe, 2002) establishes the tools to assess students in Chapter 9. "Assessment is used in this chapter in the sense of the assessment of the proficiency of the language user." (p.177). In this section, the contents students must achieve depending on the linguistic level, objectives and criteria to achieve those objectives, are established. In 2005, the Common Reference Levels, included in the CEFR, were created as a basis for developing programs and curricula, designing materials, and evaluating.

Finally, the *Guide for the development and implementation of curricula for plurilingual and intercultural education* (Beacco et al, 2016). It provides a general view of the issues faced when designing and planning a curriculum that implements plurilingual and intercultural education.

1.2.2. Language guidelines in the Spanish educational legislation

The *Organic Law 3/2020, of 29 of December*, is the law that regulates the Spanish education system nationally, modifying the previous *Organic Law 8/2013, 9th December*, the well-known LOMCE. The main aim of the present instructional system is to improve the quality of education, making sure it ensures there is no discrimination and all the students have the same opportunities. As indicated in this law, in Article 2, one of the purposes is: "training for communication in the official and co-official language and, if any, in one or more foreign languages" (p. 16). In turn, Spain has followed the European guidelines on language policies as a method of union between European members.

Given the importance of communication and developing the linguistic competence, in Compulsory Secondary Education, students must study the subject "First foreign language" and can choose a second one optionally, the "Second foreign language". Usually, English is the "first language" and French is the "second" one, although some schools offer other languages. In accordance with European guidelines, the objective is to develop oral and written production and listening and reading comprehension using an action-oriented approach, favoring rapprochement and respect for other cultures. In Compulsory Secondary Education it is intended that students acquire the basis for learning languages that allows

them to communicate adequately, in Bachillerato fluency and correctness in communication are expected.

The *Royal Decree 1105/2014, of December 26*, establishes the basic curriculum of both Compulsory Secondary Education and Bachillerato nationally. At the regional level, the *Order EDU/362/2015, of May 4*, is put into effect. It establishes the curriculum and regulates the implementation, evaluation and development of compulsory secondary education in the Community of Castilla y León.

Regarding the learning of second languages, its importance is highlighted in the *Royal Decree 1105/2014*: "multilingualism is one of the hallmarks of citizenship in a multilingual and multicultural Europe, whose diversity should not be an obstacle to mobility and cooperation" (p. 516). In Article 11 of this same document, referring to the stage objectives, it is established as the necessary capacity of the students "to understand and express themselves in one or more foreign languages in an appropriate way" (p. 11).

The main role of foreign language teaching is the development of linguistic competence, with respect to itself and the mother tongue. The use of a language implies respect for cultures with different values, so social and civic competences are part of the skills that are acquired. The aim is the integration of the contents and competences by the students in a continuous process of acquiring a second language, in order to later put that knowledge into practice and achieve real and effective communication. To be able to express themselves effectively, the student must carry out autonomous and cooperative learning with their classmates following the actional approach.

The LOMCE determined the First Foreign Language as a core subject during 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th of Compulsory Secondary Education and 1st and 2nd of Bachillerato. The concept of "core subject" has been eliminated in the *Organic Law 3/2020, of 29 of December,* but it is still mandatory to take it regardless of the modality in which the students are enrolled. The educational administrations must also include a second foreign language as an optional subject during the three courses of the first cycle. In the same way, in ESO, part of the subjects of the curriculum may be taught in a foreign language without this implying changes in the curriculum, a prescription that has been developed through bilingual centers.

The basic curriculum of the first foreign language is divided into four blocks as described by the CEFR: comprehension and production (expression and interaction) of oral and written texts. The first block contains comprehension of oral texts, the second production

of oral texts, the third comprehension of written texts and the fourth is about the production of written texts. Each of these includes evaluation criteria and assessable learning standards that are derived from competency content (strategic, sociocultural and sociolinguistic, functional, syntactic-discursive, lexical, phonetic-phonological, and orthographic). *The Royal Decree 1041/2017, of December 22* grants recognition of a specific level of English proficiency at the end of each academic cycle. In Compulsory Secondary Education it would be level A2 (comparable to second elementary) and in Bachillerato it would be equivalent to level B1 of the CEFR (first and second intermediate level). Regarding the curricular schedule in First Foreign Language, although it depends on each Autonomous Community, students have four hours of classes per week in the first year of Secondary Education; and three hours per week in the second, third and fourth grades.

1.2.3. The curricular components

The curriculum is defined in the *Organic Law 3/2020, of 29 of December* as: "the regulation of the elements that determine the teaching and learning processes for each of the teaching and educational stages" (p. 169). So far, it is composed of the aims, the key competences, the contents, the learning standards, the evaluation criteria and the methodology. All these elements articulate the curricular design and lesson proposals of the subject.

Guillén Díaz and Castro Prieto (1998) define the aims as the pedagogical intentions to develop communicative competence in the Foreign Language classroom. Students should be able to take responsibility as well as develop discipline habits. They must also become autonomous people who know to value and respect their peers as well as understand and express themselves in a second language appropriately.

The learning standards are the specifications of the evaluation criteria that define the learning outcomes and determine what the student should know and do. They must be concrete and observable since they accurately indicate the achievement achieved. They facilitate exams or task design.

The methodology comprises a set of principles such as classroom, space and time distribution, methodological principles, teaching strategies and procedures for organizing a lesson that help achieve the objectives set.

The contents are organized in four blocks in relation to the communication skills. According to the *Royal Decree 1105/2014* they are divided into: comprehension/production strategies (planification and execution), sociocultural and sociolinguistic aspects, communicative functions and syntactic-discursive structures.

The evaluation criteria refer to what is intended to be evaluated (formative or summative evaluation). They are organized into four blocks according to communication skills: oral text comprehension, oral text production, expression and interaction. They must be consistent with the objectives and standards.

Lastly, the key competences: literacy competence; mathematical competence and basic competence in science, technology and engineering; digital competence; personal, social and learning to learn competence; social and civic competence; entrepreneurship competence and cultural awareness and expression competence. They are regulated in Order ECD 65/2015, of January 21, which addresses the relationships between competencies, content and evaluation criteria at all levels.

1.3. Integration of the ICT in the English classroom

The quick growth of ICT has influenced the practices and methods used in language learning. Computers, internet, smart boards, cell phones, video games, music players etc. are used in the target language learning process to raise students' motivation and language awareness (Altun, 2015). However, the lack of time and confidence, limited access to resources, too much content, lack of support when learning and assessment criteria without online tools are the main obstacles when normalizing ICT in education. Livingstone (2012) asserts that ICT "is not suitable for all learners in all situations and for all purposes, and may require some considerable learner training for effective use." (p.12).

The integration of ICT will not have significant results as long as teachers do not integrate them in the daily tasks of the classroom. According to the European Commision (2010), Spain is one of the least developed countries in the matter of ICT. Despite the Internet accessibility and resources, teachers are not using it to its full potential. Therefore, although it has clear limits, ICTs should be integrated to foreign language teaching as a complementary tool with valuable benefits for both teachers and students.

In order to reach a more complex use of technology in the classroom, the subject should be oriented towards an ICT approach. Therefore, a natural and coherent integration of App use should be planned in advance by teachers so as to ensure ICT is used to promote creativity, motivation and autonomy. That is, giving more importance to autonomous and creative learning so that students are able to look for resources that could enhance their learning.

Teachers have to acquire enough knowledge in order to prove a correct use of ICT in the classroom. It is also crucial that students are given guidelines on how to use these tools and the possibilities it offers. Students need to achieve confidence when working with ICT and raise awareness on the variety of possibilities for assisting their language learning using technology.

Finally, when evaluating the use of these tools in the classroom, teachers should reflect on its exploitability and whether they have been helpful for the students to reach the learning aims.

1.3.1 Technology Integration and Communication Skills

When developing an effective technology integration process, teachers should focus on the student-centered approach. Students should recognize the importance of using digital resources for practicing language skills and becoming independent learners. There is a need for instruction so that they take advantage of the learning opportunities ICT facilitates. The teacher must encourage the creation of an adequate learning environment based on problem-solving, collaborative and constructive language acquisition. Young (2003) reflects the importance of considering what the aim is with the specific learning section before language teachers choose what type of technology, if any, to use. Moreover, its use should reflect upon the evaluation process, that is, including ICT not only during the sessions but also when assessing and giving feedback. In this context, the use of ICT in the classroom is achieved through interactive boards, computers, projectors, tablets and smartphones.

The use of the interactive board enhances students' memorization skills, providing a positive impact on previous materials and reinforcing their attention. It allows them to follow the materials easily and solve the activities in an interactive way.

Tablets and mobile phones are also important for continuing learning outside the classroom, enhancing participation and improving motivation. They offer the opportunity to connect the real-lives of the students with the classroom environment by enabling students to take notes, web browsing, text messaging and emailing.

Media tools such as radio, TV programmes, podcasts, videos and audio-tapes can improve listening skills as students have access to native speakers' speech and experience accent and intonation differences from different varieties of English. When it comes to reading skills, students can improve and gain independence by searching for information, using online dictionaries, reading newspapers and books online and using multimedia software. The wide range of articles, magazines and newspapers available and the variety of topics they deal with make reading activities more enjoyable. ESL students can also practice their speaking skills using resources like speech recognition software and speech synthesis programs as well as interacting with others using the internet (Skype, Google Talk) and pod casting. These tools can improve language proficiency while gaining self-confidence and enhancing cultural awareness.

Finally, writing activities are more motivating for students whenever they use blogs, wikis or social media networks. Blogs provide a real digital environment in which students communicate with others, produce, share and read each other's work. Allowing students to choose topics and materials and express their point of view has a positive impact on their learning process. Moreover, E-portfolios allow students to share their progress, achievements and experiences while adding personal touches and supporting self-assessment. Finally, social media broadens students´ knowledge on their ability to use grammatically correct language which is socially and pragmatically appropriate. However, it is important that teachers pay attention to the writing style used for avoiding spelling mistakes in order to develop a correct speech and avoid abbreviations that are common in social media contexts.

1.3.2. The use of Apps for language learning

Nowadays, technology plays an important role in language teaching. Due to the technological society in which we live in, it is necessary that learning theories reflect on the social environments and needs of learners. Ozuorcun and Tabak (2012) define Mobile Assisted Learning as a model of education that allows students to obtain learning materials anywhere and at any time using mobile technologies and the Internet.

More specifically, Apps have become increasingly popular tools for language learning for their accessibility and usability. Apps tend to be inexpensive, easy to install and give the opportunity to connect students and create a community in which they share content. The use of mobile phones and tables has changed the traditional paradigm in favor of a collaborative and constructivist approach. The individual is capable of building knowledge through the use of mobile devices and capable of reproducing it in social contexts.

The use of Apps has some clear advantages for both students and teachers. The portability of Apps enables learners to continue their learning process outside the classroom autonomously. According to Chen, Chung & Yen (2012), "Cell phones are flexible tools which have the potential to be exploited to cater to the needs of language learning students" (p. 122). This involves a change in the learning habits, it requires students to be self-directive.

Mobile Apps allow learners to use their visual and auditory senses to learn language patterns in a variety of ways. Due to its adaptability, students can find Apps for practicing different skills, at several levels and from a variety of approaches depending on their learning strategies. This influences the ways of working, use of methodologies and adaptability to different learning strategies.

Apps also encourage students´ collaborative skills and creativity. It is crucial that students know how to work with their peers and take different roles during the process. They become active learners and develop such skills as search, analysis and synthesis of information. Most of the Apps, especially games, favor the improvement of communicative competence in an interactive and individualized way. It allows them to adapt the activities proposed, favoring the individualization of teaching and paying attention to diversity. This is supported by Young (2003) who states that using computers for learning gives the learner a chance to be in control of their own learning thus enhancing engagement and confidence.

Finally, Apps make it easier to practice the language in real contexts. The language is not presented in isolation, but in a real linguistic and cultural environment. According to Arnell (2012) "ICT is used to facilitate communication with teachers, other learners and people outside a particular school setting" (p.10).

Using mobile learning also has some negative aspects such as technical problems (lack of battery and internet access), the lack of teacher training in terms of functionality and academic applications and the inadequate use by students since it has easy access to other resources or lack of control.

Moreover, cases in which not all students will have the necessary financial resources to have a mobile phone or tablet are frequent so that the concept of *"Bring your Own Device"* applied to certain environments might not work conveniently. In some cases, students are not allowed to take devices to the school, which limits the use of Apps in the classroom.

EFL teachers find it difficult to spend enough time in the classroom for students to develop digital skills without forgetting about the main subject of study. In many cases, the feeling of failure and lack of confidence for not completing a lesson in time or having issues in class because of the implementation of Apps, leads to not using them again. Kale and Goth (2012) state that Internet resources are changing too fast and teachers do not know the criteria to follow when choosing tools appropriate for a language classroom.

When implementing Apps, the role of the instructor changes to being the role of facilitator, finding Apps that meet the ends and purposes of the students, encouraging them to fully participate and ensuring they use them appropriately. The teacher is not only the transmitter of knowledge but the guidance of students to the best use of technology. Therefore, the learners´ main tasks are guiding students and designing activities that support App use. This role contrasts with the traditional model in which the teacher is in control of the learning process. Some teachers perceive technological innovation as an intruder and, consequently, they implement teaching practices that affect the effectiveness of the devices and Apps.

For a successful integration of technologies in the teaching-learning processes, teachers must focus their attention not so much on technological resources, but on the experiences of learning that they design and for which the technologies are suitable. If teachers know how to implement resources, individual and group work can be stimulated equally.

When it comes to the assessment, both receptive and productive skills are easily and effectively assessed using ICTs. The teacher may decide and design relevant materials to test students' achievement in all skills. As for the role of the student, he/she must be devoted to the process, participating and using technology efficiently to optimize the results. They should be compromised with an efficient use of technology in order to receive its positive results.

1.3.3. English Language Apps

Mainly, the methodology used in Apps is a combination of gamification employing reinforcements and attractive rewards after achieving goals made at different levels and in augmented reality, that allows to create enriched, flexible, interactive, dynamic and attractive environments.

New technologies give the possibility of building knowledge of the foreign language through different sources (videos, chats, blogs, shared work, social networks). A good way to start introducing them in the classroom is by exploring the useful tools for English class with students.

There are many Apps useful for acquiring the language:

-The video applications such as YouTube, or the viewing of series and movies in the original version are a suitable tool for boosting listening skills. TED talks are also a reliable resource of short videos about different topics and adapted to several levels. Due to its exploitability, it can be used for listening comprehension questions, debates, discussions, writing activities etc.

-Quiver and Chromville: language teachers can work in spontaneous and directed language, through the description of the characters and objects of the classroom environment in 3D using the language in question. At the same time favors motivation and creativity, encourages the invention of stories based on the various characters and objects that the pictures show.

-British Council Apps such as Learn English Sounds Right, Learn English Videos and Learn English Podcast are ideal Apps for improving listening skills and oral production. Johnny Grammar Word Challenge and Learn English Grammar are used for complementary grammar exercises.

-Classcraft, Minecraft Education, Celebriti and Trivinet as gamification tools. In Classcraft students create a world of characters who must collaborate to win points and complete missions while learning. Minecraft Education incorporates the concept of video games in the classroom. Celebriti is a similar tool in which students can create their educational games and play others about all subjects. Trivinet allows teachers to create online Trivial games in a collaborative way.

-Quizlet, Quizziz, Kahoot, Toovari and Quizbean as aid for revision and evaluation of learning Apps. They allow learners to review material, create digital flashcards and interactive quizzes, and design opportunities to repeat exposure to vocabulary and concepts in order to commit them to memory. One of the most popular of these Apps is Quizlet, which allows users to create their own study and review materials while also allowing users to browse through the extensive collection that others have made. Kahoot and Quizizz are game-based Apps that are easily customized for language learning. Students and teachers can design games, including videos, images, and text, to support any lessons they teach. Students really enjoy the competitive nature of Kahoot and can use it as part of a team or individually. Toovari is a multiplayer platform that mixes communication with assessment for creating a relaxing classroom environment. These Apps can also be used to check students' prior knowledge, providing the instructor with notions of how to introduce a new topic.

-ClassDojo combines gamification and a learning management system (e.g., Blackboard, Moodle, Google Classrooms, etc.). It supports classroom management, gamification, tracking of student performance and various forms of communication with learners, and parents and other stakeholders.

-Oxford and Cambridge dictionaries enable students to learn how to use dictionaries using technology as an alternative to the traditional paper dictionaries.

-Genially, Padlet and Canva for content creation. Students create presentations using layouts and templates and share them with other students and the teacher. It is specially used by teachers as an alternative to PowerPoint presentations.

-Mentimeter, Popplet and Mind Meister as brainstorming and mind map creation Apps. The first is used for creating interactive pools, quizzes, and world clouds. The students are given a code to answer questions with their phones. Popplet is a similar App for creating mind maps collaboratively. Mind Meister allows students to create presentations, mind maps, brainstorming online, taking notes and planning projects.

-Social media as a tool for developing reading and writing skills. It engages with the ability of using authentic language in ways that are socially and pragmatically appropriate. Students communicate with people from different cultural backgrounds and learn about social conventions and language registers. Because most of the students have social networks, it provides the opportunity to connect their personal life with class activities in a motivating way. It is important teachers make sure students use these sites efficiently and are aware of the dangers of social media.

PART II

METHODOLOGICAL ASPECTS

2.1. Context

The following EFL teaching proposal is outlined for a group of 26 students, studying Year 3 of Secondary Education. The high school taken as a reference is located in the outskirts of Valladolid, in the region of Castilla y León. It is a private school that receives public funds and offers all the educational courses prior to university including bilingual primary education. The location of the center and its facilities are essential for the different activities that take place there and it allows students to be in contact with nature. It has several pedestrian and vehicular accesses since most of the students arrive by car or by school transport due to the absence of passable areas and the distance from the center. It is worth mentioning its proximity to residential areas in which some of the students reside.

Regarding the socioeconomic profile of the students, they come from the middle social class of traditional two-parent families whose parents have studies and have the same educational expectations for their children. Therefore, families, in general, care and are involved in their students' learning. It can be defined as a homogeneous school, since hardly any students come from different countries. Most are of Spanish origin and come from Valladolid, either the capital or province. A significant number have been studying there since primary school and others, to a lesser extent, attend from other schools that do not have secondary education.

The secondary school is made up of several buildings interconnected by a common corridor. All the classes of secondary education are located in the same corridor so students can move from one class to the other easily. Among the facilities available at the high school there are: the library, laboratory, paddle tennis courts, swimming pool, theater, covered pavilion, soccer field, computer room and church. These facilities are used for some extracurricular activities such as; Spoken English, skating, soccer, theater, paddle tennis, rhythmic gymnastics and karate. The sports facilities have enough resources for the students to exercise and spend the breaks between classes.

Classes will be taught mainly in the classroom, since that is where the teacher has the necessary resources. The classrooms are large enough to guarantee social distance and are technologically equipped with traditional blackboards as well as electronic whiteboards that have been installed this year. They are well lit, cozy and accessible, without distractions, which makes the classroom a meeting place and encourages student learning. In addition to

that, the classroom is equipped with posters of the English culture, holidays, famous people, a map, etc., which make up peripheral learning. Due to the pandemic, the school space is not modified to avoid the manipulation of material. Students remain in their assigned places throughout the week. The school's extensive facilities allow groups to come together (each group was separate) to work with security and autonomy.

For class work, students have a wide variety of academic materials such as books, educational magazines or encyclopedias. Most of the teachers use books (both physical and interactive) and other resources such as videos or online activities. The electronic book is especially useful in those cases in which a student has not brought the book and cannot follow the class and to facilitate the follow-up of it. The digital blackboard is often used to work with apps and search for tasks in case extra practice is needed. All in all, despite the lack of a bilingual section in Secondary Education, it has all the necessary resources, both materially and professionally, for the correct acquisition of English as a foreign language by students.

The communicative interaction of the students has been limited by the impossibility of getting up from their seats during class hours. They usually interact with their colleagues sitting next to them during breaks and during activities to share their answers. They usually do group work with the same people they are comfortable with. Overall, there is a good and relaxed classroom environment in which students participate, respect each other's opinions and help. When it comes to the English subject, the level most of the students have is A2 (Council of Europe, 2002). Students communicate to a great extent with the teacher and with their classmates, thus favoring interaction and group work in the classroom, something that is essential for achieving communication skills and therefore, acquiring a second language.

2.2. Aspects for designing the proposal

2.2.1 Key competences and Learning objectives

The teaching proposal set out below, seeks to address some of the contents, as well as the key competences that are developed in Order EDU/362/2015, of May 8, which regulates the curriculum of Secondary Education (ESO) in Castilla y León.

The *Recommendation of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 December 2006 on key competences for lifelong learning* (European Union, 2006) includes a series of key competences which should be developed in the students. The objective is the acquisition

of competences to support lifelong learning in all educational systems of the European Union member states. The key competences appear in the *Order ECD/65/2015, of January 21, which describes the relationships between competencies, content and evaluation criteria of primary education, compulsory secondary education and high school* (Head of State, 2015). With the introduction of the LOMCE, the number of basic competencies was modified from 8 to 7 as well as being renamed key competences. At present the key competences have been updated (European Commission, 2019), however, they have not been included in the curricula yet.

Since it is compulsory to include them in curriculum of foreign languages, this proposal includes the following key competences:

1. *Linguistic competence*: It is applied in the classroom through communicative activities such as role-play, writing about personal opinions or listening to conversations in the foreign language.

2. *Learning to Learn*: The proposal includes this competence in decision making for the final task and the development of self-assessment sheets.

3. *Digital competence*: students can make good use of technology for several educational tasks. More specifically presenting the final task in a podcast, doing research of the final topic, searching for words they do not know in online dictionaries and communicating information safely with others through social networks.

4. *Conscience and cultural expressions*: students respect and value other cultures and artistic expressions by expressing their opinions and feelings through creative artistic projects in groups or reading about traditions from other countries.

5. *Civic and social competences*: This is developed through social interaction between the members of the groups so they learn how to express their opinions, respect others, reach agreements and make decisions valuing different opinions.

6. *Sense of initiative and entrepreneurship*: it implies developing abilities such as planification, organization and development of ideas to accomplish the final task with the help of creativity and motivation.

At the end of every educational stage, several objectives must be achieved in order to develop essential capacities for the professional and personal lives of students. These are included in the *Royal Decree 1105/2014, of December 26, establishing the basic curriculum*

for Compulsory Secondary Education and high school, specifically in the second chapter, in the article number seven.

Therefore, the following *stage objectives* have been selected from the legal disposition previously mentioned in Chapter 11 as the essential capacities students will achieve through the implementation of the teaching proposal:

i) Understand and express themselves in one or more foreign languages appropriately. (p. 177)

b) Develop and consolidate habits of discipline, study and individual and team work as a necessary condition for an effective performance of learning tasks and as a means of personal development. (p. 177)

e) Develop basic skills in the use of information sources to critically acquire new knowledge. Acquire a basic preparation in the field of technologies, especially those of information and communication. (p. 177)

g) To develop the entrepreneurial spirit and self-confidence, participation, critical sense, personal initiative and the ability to learn, plan, make decisions and assume responsibilities. (p. 177)

The *aims* that students must acquire at the end of the teaching proposal are detailed below. Students should be able to:

a) Familiarize themselves with editing apps and the topic of travelling in order to use appropriate communicative features for the podcast creation.

b) Write short texts in different technological resources, being able to transmit personal experiences and opinions to the interlocutor.

c) Make use of authentic language and adapt their speech to different real-life contexts in a fluent and coherent way as a tool for enriching their podcast.

d) Decodify and understand oral instructions on the creation of a mind map and podcast using Mind Meister and Web Pad while being involved in group work.

e) Developing reading strategies and identify the main ideas and details of texts about holidays that contain simple structures and a commonly used lexicon.

2.2.2. Teaching context

This proposal is planned for a class of 26 students of 3rd of ESO from a high school taken as a reference in the city of Valladolid. This proposal aims to be flexible as it is subject to improvements and possible changes, primarily to promote and encourage more meaningful acquisition and to adapt to COVID-19 measures.

Due to the current situation of the pandemic, a well-planned distribution of the students is required in order to respect social distance. Work will be carried out individually or in small groups of 5 students formed by the teacher according to the arrangement in the classroom, that is, depending on the distance between their seats to respect the measures taken to prevent COVID-19. The purpose of creating heterogeneous groups is to avoid having students that have no group and give them an opportunity to interact with their peers and complement each other.

It is recommended that students stay in the same classroom the majority of time. Therefore, the classroom will be used as the main workplace since it has the technological resources needed for some classroom activities. Students will not be able to move around the class or change seats to do the tasks since, according to the protocol, they must respect the distance at all times. Because of that, the tasks designed will not require movement, touching each other's materials, gathering in big groups or standing up from their seats. Every resource needed by the students will be provided individually by the teacher. The final task will be done during class time and at home so students do not have to meet unnecessarily. In other circumstances natural spaces around the school would have been used for some activities so students could come together respecting social distance.

In normal circumstances, there would be fewer changes and activities could be done in different spaces, with students gathering in bigger groups chosen by the teacher. Students could move around the class, change their seats and manipulate the space and materials to make it more interactive. Other classrooms or spaces in the school could be used such as the multimedia room or the library.

2.2.3. Foundations of the teaching proposal

As mentioned above in the curricular guidelines, the first foreign language in the 3rd Year 3 of Secondary Education is taught 3 hours a week. For this reason, the teaching proposal will be carried out on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays, that is, three hours a week except the final week, in which there will only be two sessions. In total, it consists of 8 sessions scheduled from 9 to 25 of March, during the second trimester of the academic year.

Regarding methodological decisions, a proposal supported by the communicative approach and mobile learning will be implemented (Willis, 1960; Beacco, 2007). Both are combined to give rise to a communicative proposal in which group work and cooperation are essential. The completion of tasks involves the student, developing their autonomy and motivation, essential for them to maintain a low *affective filter* (Krashen, 1982). During the tasks the students are acquiring the contents exposed in the curriculum so that, when carrying out the final task, they are able to prove their knowledge. The tasks are related to the real world so that students see the usefulness of learning the language as an essential means of communication in today's society. They are sequenced in order of complexity and organized in a way that the first sustains the following in the achievement of the final objective. In order to accomplish the tasks, the students will work in groups so they learn to dialogue, come to an agreement and reach conclusions, thus promoting the social and civic competence and sense of initiative and entrepreneurship.

The student has an active and central role in managing his/her own learning, being able to carry out an action through communication in the target language. Students feel in control of their own development which fosters their confidence and involvement. On the other hand, the teacher acts as an observer, mediator and organizer, since s/he only intervenes when the students need help. In other words, the teacher adopts the role of a *facilitator*.

In this type of learning, constructivism predominates. Correcting mistakes is part of the acquisition since it means correcting understanding. The teacher must maintain a natural and calm attitude in the face of errors so that students lose their fear of being mistaken. That is, when correcting a mistake, the teacher must avoid creating a punishing environment. In this way, students will gain enough confidence to participate actively and motivation to express themselves. Mistakes must be corrected in a didactic way whenever necessary without interrupting the communicative exchange. The student will not be corrected

constantly since gaining fluency and allowing him to acquire confidence is sought. In sum, *error tolerance* will be promoted.

All this makes the development of meaningful language learning possible through the five communication skills (written comprehension, written production, oral comprehension, oral production and oral/written interaction). For this, *authentic materials* (Prabhu,1987; Breen, 1985) adapted to their level that address issues related to the customs of countries, history or technology will be used. The aim is to acquire meaningful content by relating it to the daily lives and interests of students.

This proposal is interdisciplinary and contains cross-cutting themes. *Interdisciplinarity* makes it possible to link the knowledge acquired in other subjects such as technology and music to maximize the students output. It also includes *cross-cutting topics* such as environmental sustainability and technology.

Regarding diversity outreach in the classroom, additional measures have been developed. The task-based approach is ideal to adapt to the needs of the students as it plays with different types of learning (Gardner's Theory of Multiple Intelligences). The creation of tasks is a flexible process that encompasses all levels and needs of students. The teacher will adapt the tasks to different difficulty levels by: planning tasks that adapt to the capacities of the students, creating a variety of activities for the same content, facilitating individual attention through extracurricular activities and proposing different evaluation methods. In the same way, those students who are more adapted to learning languages than the rest of the class will be given more complex tasks so that they are challenged and do not lose interest.

To conclude, the evaluation of students will be done through *formative, summative and continuous assessment*. Since TBL is the chosen methodology, the final and daily tasks are equally important. The teacher will take notes of the work during the sessions, considering the students' behaviour towards the other classmates and teacher, cooperation, classroom environment, coexistence and group work. The teacher will record the reflections product of student observation in order to construct a critical view. The final task will be evaluated using a rubric and taking into account several elements to provide extended data. Not only will content be taken into account, but also skills, competences and cognitive processes. Moreover, students will do *self-assessment and co-assessment* to become aware of their progress and the results of their efforts. Both will be taken into account by the teacher.

2.3 Planning the teaching proposal

2.3.1. Sequence of sessions and activities

This section deals with the description of eight sessions and the activities and tasks that belong to each session. There will be 3 sessions during the first week, another 3 sessions the second week and two sessions during the last week which will last for 50 minutes divided into five different activities. The main topic throughout the sessions will be holidays, especially in English speaking countries, raising awareness on the importance of using English to communicate with others and respect foreign traditions and opinions. Each session will deal with elements that are taken into account when visiting a country and that students should use for their radio programs. Students will be motivated to acquire common language that can be applicable to their lives.

Session 1: Discovering the World of Travelling

The teaching proposal begins with an introduction (first task) to the theme of the holidays to activate the previous knowledge of students and introduce them to new language contents. The teacher will ask students to describe some images and try to guess the unit's theme and key concepts. Students will develop communication skills in an orderly manner and respect their classmates' turn to speak.

In the second task, they will listen to an example of a travel podcast from the App Podcast they can use as a guide to do the final task and then, they will be asked to summarize the key ideas of the listening. The teacher aims to familiarize them with the type of information to include in their podcast and familiarize themselves with the communicative functions suitable for the theme of travel. Once they have finished, their answers will be checked by sharing them with their peers. The teacher will make sure the key ideas are understood and that students have acquired basic knowledge on the notion of podcast.

In the third task, a travel trivial will be done in which they will be divided into pairs. For this activity, students will use the app Trivinet with their phones so that they will only need a phone per group. They would prove their knowledge on the topic and raise awareness on cultural facts and traditions by communicating with their peers. Each question will have a different scoring. The group that, communicating in English, obtains the most points in different categories of questions will win.

In the next task, the students will share their answers using expressions of opinion and encouraging reflection and critical thinking. Each group will answer a question and the errors will be explained with the help of visual support so that the students associate concepts.

At the end of this session, instructions on what to do for the final task will be explained. The final task consists of the creation of a podcast and the reopening of next year in a country assigned for the teacher. They would have to search for information about the countries to provide an overall description of what people can find in these countries and create a tour around the country. It is very important that students try to convince the audience to visit their countries with well-structured arguments that support the main statements. In order to organize the ideas, they will also have to create a mind map. The teacher will assign each one an English-speaking country and will resolve any doubts they may have about the structure of the final task. It is crucial that students have clear instructions and evaluation criteria so that the work process is easier for them. They will be given a few minutes to form groups, organize themselves and brainstorm.

The table below sums up the activities of session 1 with the timing assigned:

Introduction + Prior knowledge	5 minutes
Listening to a podcast	5 minutes
Summary of ideas	10 minutes
Trivial game / Cultural awareness	15 minutes
Answer sharing	5 minutes
Instructions for the final task	10 minutes

Session 2: Adventure travel

In this second session, the topic of travel will be explored in depth, more specifically, adventure travel will be discussed. It is intended that they gain confidence when presenting their opinion orally, using specific vocabulary with clear pronunciation.

The first task will serve as a review and introduction of the topic. The teacher will summarize the topic of yesterday´s class and then, students will watch a video from You Tube about extreme sports. Students will have to guess the name of the sports as well as understand the expressions used and the general message.

During the second task, an information-gap activity will be done in order to explain vocabulary related to adventure travel in the most communicative way possible. The teacher hands out flashcards with vocabulary concepts and definitions. The classroom will be divided in two groups, one will have cards with concepts and the other with sentences in which the terms are used or descriptions of those terms. The students have to match the words paying attention to the context in which the word is used, communicating in English at all times and with the least possible help from the teacher. Once they have linked the terms with their definitions, they will have to create a glossary incorporating the new words.

The third task will be an application activity in which students will be given a text about adventure trips with its own comprehension questions. First, they read the text using skimming techniques and then, they complete the comprehension activities to prove they have understood the main ideas. They will do it in pairs with the partner they are close to and communicate at all times in the target language. This task is intended for students to dive into the concepts by means of a written text. Finally, there will be a brief discussion about this type of vacation: have they been on a trip like this, if they like or would like to do them, which ones do not attract their attention, where would they want to do this type of trip, with whom etc. In this way, the teacher will bring the subject closer to the students' own lives which will be useful for the following sessions. On the other hand, students will practice the language by recounting their personal experiences. In this task, fluency and strategies to compensate for communication breakdowns will be assessed.

As a final activity, students will have a few minutes to relieve tension and stress by talking with their classmates or relaxing while listening to white noise.

The table below sums up the activities of session 2 with the timing assigned:

Introduction	5 minutes
Video about extreme sports	10 minutes
Information gap	10 minutes
Reading: adventure trips	15 minutes
Discussion	10 minutes

Session 3: Would you travel around the world?

In this session, the topic of travel will be considered from a more personal perspective. The session begins with an introductory activity in which the teacher interacts with the students on different aspects related to the topic, promoting the oral expression of the students. The teacher will direct the questions to the students, making sure that the largest number of them participate. It will also be used to clarify doubts about the final task.

In the following task, as a development activity, students will watch a TED Talk about the youngest girl to travel to every country in the world. In the video she tells the story of her to inspire others and step out of their comfort zone. Students should write down the main ideas in their notebooks and then present them in front of the class. They will only write keywords as they must listen carefully and understand the general content of the video.

Next, the students will create a mind map based on those main ideas that they have taken from the video since they will have to make one to organize the ideas in their podcast using the App Mind Meister. The teacher will give them general guidelines on how to do it, in this case on paper. Students should connect the ideas in the video from the general to the specific so that someone who has not seen it can guess what it is about. The teacher will go around the tables to guide the students.

In the fourth activity, the teacher will divide the class into two groups for a debate. One group will defend the advantages of traveling to all the countries of the world as the protagonist of the video and the other the disadvantages of this. It is about the students getting involved in the subject and empathizing with what is in the video, using the mind map they have developed. There will be no spokespersons in each group, all students must speak in an orderly manner and respecting the speaking time and opinions of their classmates. They should use the language during the sessions and formulas to express their opinion. The teacher will be in charge of giving each group a turn to speak to avoid interruptions, make sure all the students participate and ask extra questions in case the groups do not provide further arguments.

Finally, as a relaxation activity, they will watch a video about world landscapes. By hearing the peaceful sound, students will relax and release tension, creating a calm environment.

The table below sums up the activities of session 3 with the timing assigned:

Leading questions + doubt checking	5 minutes
Ted Talk + Note taking	10 minutes
Oral presentations	10 minutes
Graphic organizer (mind map)	15 minutes
Debate (turn taking)	8 minutes
Video about world landscapes	2 minutes

Session 4: Podcast creation

This session will deal with the search for information for the final task. Students will be taught to collect information about their countries and to use the Web Pad program to edit their audios. In addition, the students will have time to develop their ideas and advance in the final task. This session will take place in the multimedia classroom since students are required to work with computers. The students will be distributed in the room so that all the members of the groups sit in the same row to facilitate communication among them, respecting the COVID norms.

The first activity consists of a TED talk review. It will serve as a review of the TED talk from the previous session and an introduction to the contents of the session. The teacher will ask questions about the Web Pad app to check whether the students have ever used it or not.

For the development activity, the teacher will give a brief explanation of the program instructions with the help of a video. Students will need to understand the instructions to apply the acquired knowledge to the next task. At the end of the tutorial the teacher will solve doubts students might have in order to make sure the instructions are clear.

In the application activity, students must edit an audio following the previous instructions as they must do for the final task. They will work with an audio as an example chosen by the teacher and they will have to edit the fragments so that they are in podcast format. Each student will work with their own computer individually and the teacher will approach the students to see their progress and answer questions.

The next application activity will consist of creating a mind map with the help of the Mind Meister application, the application they will have to use for the final task. This application allows all members of the group to develop the mind map in a collaborative way so that each student on their computer can contribute ideas. Students will use this activity to organize the content of their podcast and collect information. The teacher will answer questions about the application, guide the students and make sure everyone gets involved in the task.

To conclude the session, there will be a relaxation activity in which the students will close their eyes while listening to relaxing music. In this way, they take a break from the computer work after a session in which the work with ICT has prevailed.

The table below sums up the activities of session 4 with the timing assigned:

Collection of information	10 minutes
Ted Talk review	3 minutes
Questions about Web Pad App	5 minutes
Programme instructions (tutorial)	5 minutes
Audio editing (rehearsal)	12 minutes
Mind Meister App	13 minutes
Listening	2 minutes

Session 5: What is the weather like?

Within the fifth session of the lesson plan, five tasks related to the weather in different countries will be developed. Students will be asked to download the resources needed before the session so they can use their phones for several activities.

Firstly, in order to familiarize students with the topic and activate previous schemata, the teacher will introduce it by doing brainstorming with the APPs Mentimeter. The teacher gives the students a QR code and, after they have scanned it with their phones, they can start adding ideas related to the topic of weather. The words students write will appear on the screen of the digital blackboard. By doing this, the teacher makes sure most of the students participate since they are not afraid of being exposed for making a mistake. The teacher will be reading the words, making sure students understand them.

In the second task, the students will read a text about the effects of the weather around the world, highlight key ideas and deduce the meaning of the words highlighted by looking at the context. Once they have done this, they will share their answers with the nearest classmate and try to guess the definitions of the words they do not know. The students will benefit from peer work since the words they may not know could be easy to recognize with their partner. At the end, the students will prove their understanding of the text by sharing their ideas and definitions with their classmates. The teacher will check the answers and support communication at all times.

During the third task, students will check their reading comprehension, paying attention to details of the text and reach conclusions based on evidence. For this application activity, they will use Kahoot. They will have 10 true/false or multiple choice questions created by the teacher. The student who guesses correctly the majority of questions wins. At the end, the app shows the questions students found most difficult. This will be used for the teacher to revise those questions and explain to students why their answers were wrong.

In the fourth task, students will be asked to work in pairs and make a list of the things they will pack in their suitcase to go to a destination selected by the teacher. They will have to search for the weather forecast using the BBC Weather APP using their phones and plan what type of clothes, shoes or other things they may need for visiting that place. In the meantime, the teacher will be checking if students use the APPs appropriately. They should be able to gather ideas using ICT in order to create a coherent oral speech. Some students will be selected by the teacher to present orally their list of items to the rest of the class with the help of the weather forecast.

To conclude the session, students will calm down and release the tension while listening to a song. The table below sums up the activities of session 5 with the timing assigned:

App Mentimeter + QR code	10 minutes
Reading: effects of weather	5 minutes
Sharing ideas and meaning negotiation	5 minutes
Kahoot	10 minutes
Check the BBC Weather App to make a list for a packing	10 minutes
Oral presentations	8 minutes
Listening to a song	2 minutes

Session 6: Food

The sixth session deals with typical food from different countries. The aim is that students understand the richness of the world´s diversity. In order to introduce the topic with the first task, the teacher will ask the students some questions about typical dishes you can eat in countries they are familiar with. Then, the teacher shows images of food they probably have not eaten and asks students if they would like to try them and if they can guess from what country they are from.

In the second task, the students will watch a video about american kids tasting typical breakfasts from around the world. Then, the teacher will ask students some questions about the food in Spain and in other countries. The aim is to make students share their personal experiences and preferences by communicating in the target language, forming a debate. The teacher will act as a mediator, participating when necessary and formulating back-up questions.

During the third task, the teacher will use the APP Quizlet for creating content for this next activity. The students will be shown photos of similar breakfasts as the ones in the video and they will have to guess the ingredients used for these dishes and where they think they eat it. For every ingredient they guess they get a point and if they guess the country they get two points. The student who gets the most points wins. Since some of the ingredients are the same as previously mentioned, the students should be able to prove they have understood the video and have acquired related lexicon.

In the fourth task, students are grouped in pairs with their closest classmate. Students will be given flashcards with characters and situations. One of the students has to request information about traditional dishes from a country and the other has to explain ingredients, how to make it etc. They have to elaborate a dialogue and present it orally in front of the class. They must be able to use authentic language and appropriate speech, exchanging ideas in an orderly and coherent way.

For the final task, the students will ask their peers questions about their favorite and least favorite foods, exchanging opinions about the topic of the session.

The table below sums up the activities of session 6 with the timing assigned:

Eliciting questions + picture showing	10 minutes
Video: testing breakfasts + questions	5 minutes
App Quizlet (guessing ingredients and countries)	15 minutes
Requesting information through flashcards + dialogue	10 minutes
Opinion sharing	10 minutes

Session 7: What you can't miss

This seventh session deals with monuments or places tourists should visit in every country. The aim is that students gather ideas on how to describe places and what to mention about them in their podcasts. As a warm-up activity, the teacher asks questions to students about what they have done, doubts they may have and how they are in the process of creating the podcast.

For this second task, students will have to bring an item from a country or city they have visited and they would like to talk about. Each student will have to explain to the rest of the class what the item is, where it is from, what it represents, if people would like to visit that place and why. The teacher will encourage participation and make sure the most number of students present their objects. Students should be able to present their item fluently in a clear and coherent way.

During the third task students will have to create a travel brochure in groups of 4 using an online template with the app Canva. They will have to choose one of the seven wonders of the world and describe the place they chose, mentioning important information for visitors such as time open, location, prices, general information ect. They can add any details and photos they like. Students will search for information in the official websites of the places they chose, articles or magazines. The aim is to familiarize students with the search for information using technology. The teacher will guide students on the use of Canva, help them when needed and check they use the resources effectively. Once they have completed their template, they will upload it so the rest of the class can see the result.

In the fourth task a jigsaw activity will be done. One student chooses a destination he or she would like to visit. The rest of the class takes turns to ask questions to guess the destination. The student can only answer with a yes or no. They can ask about the weather,

food or other topics they have reviewed in the previous sessions. The game finishes when someone guesses the destination and that student is the one who has to think about another place so the game starts again. The teacher will make sure everyone participates and respects the turn to talk. They must be able to describe accurately using aspects most of the students would know to make the game more dynamic.

For the final task students will have time to ask doubts about their podcast since in the following session they will have to present it. The teacher will ask students to send their podcasts by the following day so they can be played in class.

Check-up with students	3 minutes
Souvenir Presentation	10 minutes
Travel brochure	20 minutes
Jigsaw activity	15 minutes
Final doubts	2 minutes

Session 8: Final Task

Within the final task, students will present their podcasts in class. The aim is that students develop listening comprehension strategies and critical thinking when assessing themselves and other groups. As an introductory activity, students will do a unit recap talking about matters such as what they liked the most and the least, what they would like to continue doing, things to improve, how they found working in groups for the podcast etc. It is crucial the teacher is open to changes and encourages student participation and feedback since he/she can adapt the methodology to their learning strategies.

For the second task, students will hear the podcasts and complete a questionnaire through Quizbean in which they have to value different characteristics of each work in order to vote for their favorite group, the one that has convinced them to visit that country. Students should be able to understand the podcast and form a critical opinion based on facts. Once they have listened to all the podcasts, the winner will be chosen based on the students´answers.

For the third task, students will do a brainstorming on the importance of these podcasts for understanding the richness of the cultural diversity of the world and the need to be tolerant and respectful to each other. They will share their ideas using the app Popplet with

their phones. The aim is that students self-reflect and gather ideas of the topic for the following group discussion. The teacher will value creativity and originality while encouraging the further development of these ideas in the debate.

For the fourth task, students will explore the intercultural dimension of the podcast creation through a debate. The students are aimed to reflect on the idea of cultural diversity and tolerance, expressing their visions and what they have learnt during the sessions about this matter. The teacher must promote the exchange of opinions in a respectful way, allowing students to express freely while reasoning their own thoughts and their peers. She/he will propose some questions to make sure students do not change the topic drastically and maintain the main ideas of discussion. Some of these would be: why should we be tolerant and accept other cultures? What do you understand as culture? and cultural diversity?, what role does diversity have nowadays?, what comes to your minds if I say "United States?,why do you think so?, where did you get them from?, are they true?.

As a final activity, in order to close the unit and teaching proposal, students will have some time to relax and disconnect from the work they have done throughout the weeks.

Unit Recap	5 minutes
Podcast Presentation	23 minutes
Brainstorming	5 minutes
Debate: the importance of cultures	15 minutes
Calm down	2 minutes

2.3.2. Assessment considerations and tools

When it comes to assessing the students' progress, this teaching proposal has taken into consideration the evaluation criteria established at the beginning of the document, as indicated by Real Decreto 1105/2014 in Block 1,2,3 and 4. These are based on the production and comprehension of oral texts in a variety of contexts and registers, on the correct use and application of functional language in accordance with a communicative purpose, and on a comprehensible pronunciation that enables communication. Moreover, the criteria mentioned has been set in relation to objectives i, b, g, and l, which focus on communicative skills in a

foreign language, discipline and autonomous learning, critical thinking, and artistic expressions.

The marking of the students will be done through continuous and formative assessment so as to take into account the methodology applied. There, through formative evaluation so as to record their daily performance and take into account their daily work and not just the final one. Evaluation will be continuous as it is understood as a process in which the teacher detects difficulties along the way and implements measures to improve the results. In order to reflect the individuality of every student, group and individual work will be assessed separately. The students should be able to prove to what extent they have acquired the content taught throughout the lessons. They will be evaluated according to the following criteria. Students will be able to:

a) Acquire information about the topic of travelling and podcast creation to produce authentic language in several contexts in a fluent and coherent way.

b) Write texts respecting conventions of style, expressing ideas and experiences to the interlocutor.

c) Communicate orally using appropriate strategies in conversations or simulations in which the topic is travelling.

d) Apply knowledge acquired through oral instructions as a base for creating the podcast using Mind Meister and Web Pad.

e) Identify the main ideas and details of texts about holidays for the purpose of acquiring vocabulary and recognize speech patterns.

Furthermore, the student will prove they achieve the following learning outcomes. The student:

a) Obtains knowledge on the topic of travelling and creating a podcast with the aim of producing an understandable discourse adapted to the communicative context.

b) Produces written texts following conventions of style to describe ideas and experiences.

c) Conveys oral messages appropriately in conversations or simulations in which the topic is traveling.

d) Uses information taken from oral instructions to create a podcast using the apps MindMeister and WebPad.

e) Locate the essential information of a text about holidays in order to acquire specific lexicon and identify speech patterns.

In an effort to do so, several evaluation tools will be necessary. Firstly, a diary on pupil performance will be kept, thus their daily work will be recorded, including whether or not they have completed their homework, participated, and behaved correctly in class. Direct observation in class will also nourish the diary. Furthermore, their improvements and weaknesses will also be written down. The final task will be assessed using a rubric in which a variety of elements have been included to provide extended data of their final project paying special attention to communication skills. These elements being: preparation, final podcast, fluency (avoidance of communication breakdowns, use of the appropriate language functions), and several linguistic aspects such as pronunciation and intonation and grammar.

2.4. Ways to improve the lesson proposal

Taking into account the flexible and open nature of the proposal presented, a series of options are contemplated to improve it. By implementing different methodologies, results would be obtained on the most effective approaches and the teacher could observe how students adapt and evolve.

The Task-based approach in a wider perspective would be one method to consider for its value in the EFL classroom. It is one of the most useful and beneficial approaches in compulsory education and in the process of acquiring a second language due to its focus on the completion of tasks, which involve creativity and interaction in pair or group work. The tasks could integrate technological resources to become independent and competent language and technology users. Both TBL and action-oriented approaches are closely related in the sense that TBL´s priority is cooperation and interaction and students are perceived as part of a social group, in which they play a role to achieve the final task. Moreover, it takes into account the emotional aspect the action-oriented approach contains.

Had it not been for the current situation of the COVID-19 pandemic, the proposal would be planned in a more interactive way in which students could gather together and have a more personal contact with each other so as to develop the classroom activities. The students would not feel pressure to speak and would develop self-confidence, very useful for later discussions or role-playing. Finally, more stimulating activities in which students manipulate objects and move around the classroom could be done.

CONCLUSIONS

Throughout this paper, the importance of acquiring a Foreign Language using ICT and, more specifically, Apps, in Secondary Education has been demonstrated.

Likewise, receiving an adequate amount of input is essential in that process, since that -as has been verified- students must understand the message to process the information and develop language skills. Those students who are exposed to an important amount of input acquire language more quickly and show more significant progress.

The process of acquiring a foreign language must be based on the communicative approach. This approach is essential in acquisition of a language, since it allows us to use it in a real context effectively. For this reason, as it has been explained, students must do activities in which they communicate with others as it would happen in real-life situations.

In addition, the five communication skills: oral comprehension, oral production, written comprehension, written production and interaction, must be the element on which the acquisition of second languages sustains. As it has been carried out in the planning of the teaching proposal, the contents are based on the mastery of the communication skills in order to improve Fluency over Accuracy.

The revolution of new technologies has allowed that learning of foreign languages is easily accessible to everyone and produced, making the process interactive and dynamic. The use of ICT brings a number of challenges for teaching, for both teachers and students, since both must adapt to the use of different methodologies. Therefore, it is necessary to help students to learn the correct use of these tools. This new way of teaching English has different advantages, but also certain disadvantages. In order to implement ICT into the classroom, it is necessary to develop new learning strategies so that these new technologies can encourage students´ motivation and develop their full potential in oratory skills within real environments.

All the aforementioned has been reflected in the planning of the teaching proposal, which seeks to achieve the objectives set following the use of Apps and communicative approach, which is considered ideal to acquire the foreign language in an effective and real way.

The implementation of the approaches allows communicative exchange and cooperation between students. It contributes to meaningful learning and creating autonomous learners, able to decide and put into practice their own learning techniques or strategies so as to acquire the required level of the language in the third year of Secondary Education.

In the process of designing the teaching proposal, several conclusions have been reached regarding decision-making to make the language acquisition process as efficient as possible. These conclusions being:

-The relevance of analysing European recommendations and dispositions in order to make decisions during the planning process.

-The importance of exploiting European recommendations so as to ensure an effective language acquisition.

-The necessity of creating a flexible proposal adapted to the context and needs of the students through authentic materials.

-The fact that the teacher must be familiar with the notions of the planning process in order to achieve learning objectives.

-The need to implement communicative and ICT approaches in order to motivate students to interact in the target language while developing real-life activities.

-The use of Apps enhances students' digital literacy and develops the communicative competence and learning autonomy, encouraging out-of-school lifelong learning.

-The foreign language teacher must take into account content planning, learning standards and assessment criteria so that students know what it is expected from them.

To conclude, this work has made the development of general and specific teaching competencies possible that enable teachers to exercise in compulsory education. The skills are expected to continue being developed as part of the lifelong process established by European institutions. To study the notions of a curricular planning process, the European recommendations and guidelines have been put into practice. The design of the proposal has contributed to the creation of tasks that promote the communicative approach in a group or individual way, the adaptation to the students' needs, the mastery of assessment strategies, the use of ICT and self-reflection on possible improvements.

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