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**INICIANDO LA LECTOESCRITURA EN INGLÉS
COMO LENGUA EXTRANJERA EN EL PRIMER
CURSO DE EDUCACIÓN PRIMARIA**

**IMPLEMENTING WRITTEN SKILLS IN ENGLISH AS
A FOREIGN LANGUAGE IN YEAR 1 OF PRIMARY
EDUCATION**

**TRABAJO FIN DE GRADO
EN EDUCACIÓN PRIMARIA**
Mención Lengua Extranjera, Inglés

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RESUMEN

Este Trabajo de Fin de Grado demuestra la utilidad de la música y la dramatización como recursos para el desarrollo del aprendizaje de otras lenguas de manera significativa. Además, presenta una propuesta para introducir la lectoescritura en inglés en primero de Primaria, partiendo de las rutinas orales creadas a través de la música en un contexto de centro no bilingüe.

PALABRAS CLAVE

Música, dramatización, lectura, escritura, contexto no bilingüe.

ABSTRACT

This Final Degree Project demonstrates the use of music and dramatization as resources for a significant development of foreign language learning. It also presents a proposal to introduce the written skills in English in Year 1 of Primary Education, starting from the oral routines established through music in a non-bilingual context.

KEY WORDS

Music, dramatization, Reading, Writing, non-bilingual context.

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1. INTRODUCTION

This document presents the design of a proposal, including its background and the conclusions obtained from it, dividing it into different sections and highlighting in bold the most important words.

The proposal is based upon my experience during my teaching internship, that took place from February to May of 2024 in a non-bilingual state school. Through my observations and experiences in collaboration with my mentor, I could certify the success of a method based upon constant interaction and participation centred around the students and the usefulness of music and dramatization to develop the oral communicative skills.

The written skills were developed too, especially reading, but nonetheless, they were not the main focus. For this reason, I suggest some possible interventions centred on including more reading and writing throughout the lessons, while oral interaction and musicality are still the basis of the method.

Considering this, I carried out research about the teaching and learning of a foreign language, especially English writing, as well as the multiple pros of using music and dramatization in the classroom. Supported by this, I establish the hypothesis that both of them, coupled with additional resources, can be used to develop the Reading and Writing skills in the English classroom.

Based on this hypothesis, I designed a proposal complimentary of the work done in the classroom during my internship, focused on including the written skills, by deepening the oral routines and proposing different resources to do so.

Finally, I analyse the limitations of the proposal and its possible development in the following years, and I suggest other possible improvements that were out of my reach.

2. OBJECTIVES

The objectives and competences selected and established for this proposal are related to those of the Degree in Primary Education at the University of Valladolid.

Degree objectives:

- To design, plan and assess teaching-learning processes, both individually and in collaboration with other teachers and school professionals.
- To efficiently tackle language learning situations in multicultural and plurilingual contexts.
- To design and regulate learning spaces in diverse contexts that attend to gender equality, equity and respect the human rights that are part of civic formation values.
- To promote conviviality inside and outside the classroom, solve discipline problems and contribute to pacific conflict resolution. To encourage and value the students' personal effort, constancy and discipline.
- To acquire habits and skills for autonomous and cooperative learning and promote it among the students.
- To understand the function, possibilities and limits of education in today's society, as well as the fundamental competences that affect Primary Education schools and their professionals. To know models of quality amelioration with application to educative centres.

General competences of the Degree:

1. To demonstrate knowledge and understanding about Education at a level where, even though it is supported by advanced textbooks, it also implies knowledge from the forefront of the area.
2. To recognize, plan, carry out and assess good practices of teaching-learning and to critically analyse and argue for the results of decision making in educative contexts.
3. To effectively collect and interpret essential data, derived from their observations in educative contexts, to express their judgement and reflections about the aim of the educational praxis.
4. To share information, ideas, problems and solutions to a specialized and non-specialized public in the Spanish language, in a foreign language, through the Internet and through interpersonal skills associated with teamwork.

6. To develop democratic values like tolerance, solidarity, justice, respect and peace towards different social groups and cultures, and be aware of the intercultural reality, as well as valuing human rights.

Specific competences of the major in Foreign Language - English:

- 1.a. To acquire linguistic and socio-cultural knowledge of the foreign language.
- 1.b. To consider the cognitive, linguistic and communicative bases of language acquisition.
- 1.c. To use drama and corporal expression techniques as communicative resources in the corresponding foreign language.
- 2.a. To consider the main didactic currents of foreign language teaching for children and its application in the foreign language classroom according to the different curriculum levels.
- 2.b. To consider the Primary Education curriculum and the curricular development of the foreign language area.
- 2.f. To progressively develop the communicative competence through the integrated practice of the four skills in the foreign language classroom.
- 2.g. To be able to plan the teaching-learning process of a foreign language by selecting, conceiving and elaborating teaching strategies and types of activities and resources depending on the students' diversity.

Specific objectives of the proposal:

- To analyse classroom interventions to improve and innovate teaching practice.
- To present the benefits of using music to enhance literacy skills, highlighting the oral skills.
- To establish a method to integrate and develop all the literacy skills of the foreign language.
- To introduce the written skills in Year 1, starting from the previously acquired oral foundations.
- To set the basis to develop the writing habit within the students by relating the texts to themselves and their interests.
- To present different resources and activities to support reading and writing skills.
- To reflect about the limitations and possibilities of English teaching nowadays.

3. JUSTIFICATION

Through the work developed during my teaching training, I could certainly note and confirm the positive results obtained through the implementation of oral routines and focus on English language learning as a communicative tool. Considering all the skills that unfold in the students thanks to this method, I would like to propose an improvement focusing on the Reading and especially the Writing skills.

3.1. LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK

This amelioration is centred on creating communicative situations where the students have the need to use English to achieve their goals within a context that is relatable for them. This is part of the Action-Oriented approach proposed in the Common European Framework of Reference (Council of Europe, 2001). As established, the tasks must be solved through the application and development of the key competences, as well as social and thinking skills and certain communication and learning strategies. These ‘tasks’ are defined as *“any purposeful action considered by an individual as necessary in order to achieve a given result in the context of a problem to be solved, an obligation to fulfil or an objective to be achieved”* (Council of Europe, 2001).

On the other hand, the Spanish curriculum of Primary Education (Royal Decree 157/2022) establishes that the acquisition of these skills and key competences must be done through the creation of learning situations focused on the interests of the students, contextualized and adapted to their level in an increasing complexity.

In addition, the Decree 38/2022 establishes that in Year 1, which is the target of the proposal, the students need to acquire the basic and elemental orthographic conventions of the foreign language too. However, as Dombey (2013) expresses, English spelling is certainly complex, so we should not dismiss invented spellings in the early stages, when they are just starting to write. To develop this ability further, as the curriculum requires, both a visual approach by reading the words over and over, as well as remembering their sound are necessary. Children who read more also write more, and as a result, write better, because they can make the connection between text and context through repeatedly experiencing it.

3.2. SCHOOL CONTEXT

The school for which this proposal has been created is a multicultural state school that does not have a bilingual program, but English lessons are part of the curriculum both in Infant and Primary Education. In Infant Education, the school established a project, implementing one hour and a half per week divided in two sessions, while in Primary Education there are two hours and a half established by the curriculum. It is not a lot of time, so it is essential to profit from it. Some disadvantages can be found to do this, the main one being the lack of an English classroom to keep resources and establish a fixed learning space for the foreign language.

In this situation, the foreign language specialist must reach an agreement with the main teacher of the group and ask for their own space where they can show their own displays and the students' works in the English subject. However, most of the resources used during the lessons would be carried around by the English teacher, so they must be versatile and significant, because the space and weight is limited.

As a result of the lack of an English classroom, the oral interaction project implemented in previous years disappeared too, because there is not a separate space where it can be carried out. In this project the students had one extra hour per week, divided in two halves to attend to the class in two smaller groups and improve their speaking skills. For this reason, as demonstrated before, it is essential to use the few available hours to dedicate some time to every skill.

Students in Years 2 and 3 had some difficulties in the development of Reading and Writing skills, so the focus of my work was creating new routines that focus on them and can be linked and mixed with the oral routines too, as well as carried on in these following Years by expanding their complexity little by little. This way, the process of portraying what they are expressing orally in written form will be easier for them, without mixing the Spanish graphemes for the English phonemes that they are sounding. While having perfect grammar and spelling is not the aim of literacy education, they have significant importance when reading and writing continuous text (Fountas & Pinell, 2017), which is something that the students will be required to do through Primary Education (Decree 38/2022).

This proposal focuses on the start of the school year in Year 1, because this is the point in time where these skills are introduced to the students. When children are around six

years old, they are able to connect sounds to symbols and read small books by themselves (Chall, 1983) in their first language. In the foreign language, they mostly understand concepts through concrete resources and pictures of them, so the use of significant realia and flashcards that they can manipulate is essential. The inclusion of their body and their closest environment will help them too, because it is not an abstract concept for them.

In addition, even though in their mother tongue they have already started to read and write in Infant Education, the phoneme-grapheme associations created in their mind are those from the Spanish language, not the English language, which they have not seen in writing before. In Infant Education, the focus during the English lessons is the introduction of the language through oral routines and establishing the need of constant communication in English, using a variety of songs, TPR techniques and rhythmic patterns. Their Reading skills are focused on the connection of the spoken word with its visual image, but no Writing is introduced yet.

3.3. EARLY INTRODUCTION TO READING AND WRITING

Regardless of their English oral interaction skills, however, as the students enter Primary Education they meet written English for the first time, so the introduction to the different orthographic and spelling rules is an essential step to establish the basis of their foreign language learning. Their oral basis can be reinforced with a variety of written activities too.

One of the reasons for the need to start the Reading and Writing learning process as soon as possible is the increasing use of English in countries where this is not the traditional first language, like Spain, due to the geopolitical situation established around the world in the last few decades. As Kroll (2003) expresses, if we want our students to be able to enter and succeed in the higher education system, where most international relations and access to research from abroad is done in English, we must guarantee the acquisition of the language, especially Reading and Writing skills. This is incredibly important when working with children from different sociocultural backgrounds, because every single one of them has the right to have access to the same learning opportunities.

4. THEORETICAL FOUNDATION AND BACKGROUND

4.1. FROM ORAL INTERACTION TO WRITTEN INTERACTION

First language acquisition is a process carried out by children all over the world in a similar manner. From the production of repetitive sounds to combining their first words into telegraphic sentences and then longer ones (Lightbown & Spada, 2010), in their first three years children involuntarily learn to speak at incredible speeds through constantly listening to their mother tongue. The written skills, however, need a conscious effort made at school.

Although oral interaction is the prioritized skill when learning a foreign language too, the pupils must also acquire proficiency in its written form. Thus, the writing skill must be integrated not only with the reading skill, but also with listening and speaking. This can be done through communication activities and other tasks that require both skills. Practicing both the oral and written skills permits the students to express themselves through the language they have acquired (Byrne, 1981).

In the early stages, it is essential to use the phrases and routines that have been acquired orally as a starting point, recreating these short dialogues through writing simple sentences (Byrne, 1981). These reinforcement activities use their prior knowledge to link what they express orally to its written form, helping the students to recognise the words and structures in other contexts.

One of the difficulties of English writing is spelling, because there are many spellings that correspond to the same phoneme, but the same grapheme can also be associated to different phonemes in different words (Harmer, 2019). Phonemes are the basis of our speech. They are abstract, but the English language has an established set of them, studied by the areas of phonetics and phonology (Roach, 1983). Graphemes, however, are just the 26 letters in the English alphabet, corresponding to those that the Spanish students already know and work with, as the Spanish alphabet is the same, just including the letter “ñ” too.

As established by Fountas & Pinell (2017), phonological awareness can be taught orally, but when teaching it in connection to the letters, it is called phonics, included in the Letter-Sound Relationships area of learning. So that the students are able to match sounds and letters effectively, they need to recognize the units made up of combinations of consonants or vowels too. These combinations create spelling patterns or phonograms that the pupils can see repeated on different words or word parts, helping them recognize those units and easily write them down. The same happens with words that appear frequently on their texts. Working on a collection of similarly spelled words can help them to improve misspellings (Dombey, 2013).

One of the approaches that relates to this idea is Jolly Phonics, “*a fun and child centred approach to teaching literacy through synthetic phonics*” (Lloyd et al., n.d.). In it, the letter sounds are divided in seven groups to teach them in a non-alphabetical order, designed so that children can start building words as soon as possible. In total, there are 42 main letter sounds that include the alphabet sounds and various diagraphs like *er*, *ai*, *ee*, *sh*, or *th*, and they are taught with multi-sensory methods, like writing on the air, on sand or other materials. Each of the sounds has a sentence to sound it out and an assigned gesture, due to the importance of non-verbal language.

Together, the sounds included on the first group (s, a, t, i, p, n) make simpler, three-letter words than any other combination with the rest of them. Some examples from the Word Bank are *sit*, *sat*, *is*, *nap*, *tip* or *ant*. Pupils are taught how to blend the sounds together when facing new words too, both when reading and writing and when listening.

4.2. DEVELOPING WRITING SKILLS

Even though the Writing skill in any language is essential, it is not often practiced in class because it is also very time consuming. However, investing this time, especially at the starting levels, will set the foundation of a writing habit.

The way to develop the writing habit is different whether we want to focus on the product of writing, on the written genre or on creative writing. When the focus is on genre, usually the students will be presented with different model texts before creating their own, but the process can be inverted by letting them create their own and then comparing its characteristics to those of the model text, adding anything that might be missing and rewriting it (Harmer, 2019).

On the other hand, according to Harmer (2019), creative writing is an engaging task for students, even though it requires more effort from them, they are more motivated to do it, because they produce the texts from their own experiences. This boosts their imagination and motivation too. Another way to improve motivation is to let them share their creations with their classmates, with students from other groups or even sharing it on social media, so that they can have an audience to address. This audience must be taken into consideration when writing, so it adds another difficulty layer. To encourage them through this process, we as teachers must provide them with short, clear tasks and encourage them to have fun with them.

Although usually this would create a one-way communication where the audience is just a “reader” who cannot respond to the message, we can always transform it into a two-way interaction (Lynch, 1997), giving the audience the opportunity to reply by asking the students-writers to include questions addressing the audience, for example, like in a spoken dialogue.

Another important distinction of types of writing in the classroom is “writing for learning” and “writing for writing”. The second one has a purpose outside of using a specific kind of grammatical structure or verb tense (Harmer, 2019). This means that it considers the structure of the text, its coherence and cohesion, as well as the fulfilment of its aim. For example, if the students are asked to create a type of explanation text, it must present the facts in a way that is easy to understand. The text is given a context and a specific relevance for the students, creating diverse learning situations.

The aim of these learning situations in the English class will always focus on learning how to communicate with others through the foreign language, because language develops through social interaction with the environment (Vygotsky, 1978). This purpose focuses on a specific kind of writing.

Children read and write more about topics they are interested in, so focusing on their self-expression is important, as well as valuing their home experiences, which could be drastically diverse from one student to the other. Choosing these topics considering how to engage the pupil’s interest and involving them in choosing and writing down the words establishes a shared writing dynamic where the student is the focus of the learning process. By constructing these texts in front of the class, while recounting the process out loud,

the teacher is modelling the writing process, showing the type of decisions that they need to make too (Dombey, 2013).

4.3. NATURAL APPROACH

With communication and the development of communicative skills being one of the axes of this proposal, it is clear that techniques based on an example of a communicative approach are included.

The founders of the Natural Approach, Krashen and Terrell (1988), established that the approach was based on navigating communicative situations in the foreign language without using the native language. Because language is viewed as a vehicle for sharing messages and meanings, the acquisition of the foreign language can occur only when the learners understand them.

According to Richards & Rodgers (1986), the focus of this approach is exposure to the foreign language, or input, establishing a period of attention where the students listen before they start producing language, respecting their silent period. The teacher is the primary source of this input by speaking in English the whole duration of the lesson, and even outside of it if the situation arises, providing at the same time nonverbal and visual context clues to help them infer the meanings. There is an inclination to introduce different resources, sometimes written ones, as sources of comprehensible input too.

This approach is designed so that beginner level learners can become intermediate level learners, so it is adequate for students of the first levels of Primary Education. The general aim is that the students can understand speakers of the foreign language and convey their own ideas when replying. To achieve these replies, it is essential to create a comfortable environment from the start, where they do not fear making mistakes, and to consider once they start producing that the details of their syntax or vocabulary being perfect is not important, just creating a comprehensible message.

However, because this is applicable to a wide variety of situations, the specific objectives will depend on the level and interests of the learners, and the skill targeted. In this case, the children start developing first their oral skills and then the written skills, both to communicate basic personal information.

4.4. MUSIC AND DRAMATIZATION THROUGH TPR

Music is one of humanity's oldest forms of culture, expression and communication. Its relevance and omnipresence still nowadays cannot be denied but, at school, it is not heard or used often outside of Music class. However, the use of music in the classroom has many advantages. The two major ones that Alan Maley (Murphey, 1992, p. 3) states are that music is highly motivating, and highly memorable.

Music is highly motivating for everyone, but especially for children and young learners. Due to the omnipresence of music thanks to technology nowadays, it is easy to relate to our students' interest in it through their favourite songs and artists. In the first years of Primary, however, these tastes are heavily influenced by what they listen at home and their closest environment. This means that their music knowledge is probably limited to what plays on the radio, usually in their mother tongue. For this reason, to use music as a tool in the foreign language classroom, it is important to select catchy songs that can create in the students an interest to listen to them outside of it. They must be significant too, because a song is a text in itself, so the language used in relation to word and sentence level must be adequate to the understanding skills of the students.

Another advantage that music has is related to the improvement of pronunciation and intonation in the foreign language, by imitating the rhythms and melodies of the singers. As Roach (1983) expresses, even though it might be difficult to teach intonation due to its various overlapping functions, it is an essential part of a language. Speakers of any language use it to convey their feelings and beliefs, as well as to give importance to a specific word or words by stressing them. This can be done by changing voice qualities, like pitch, or using rising or falling tones.

Tone is a clear example to use with young children because, as a general rule, both in English and in Spanish, falling tones indicate closure and definiteness, often related to simple affirmative or negative sentences, while rising tones show questioning. This kind of melodic patterns are intrinsic to music too. However, this is also usually partnered with non-verbal language, because we use different face expressions, gestures and body movements to add nuances to interactions. Affect displayers, illustrators and emblems can be used on the dramatizations of songs in class too.

On the other hand, because music is highly memorable, everyone has suffered from "getting a song stuck in the head", so this phenomenon can be used by teachers to create

inner speech in the students. Inner speech is the internalization of the discourse made by children to self-regulate their behaviour (Vygotsky, 1962).

This inner speech is also induced when pairing the songs to gestures and the dramatization of the lyrics. Showing the movements first and introducing the lyrics second helps the students to pay attention to them better, because they already know the gestures, so they feel confident making them. This causes that when a song has been introduced more than once, the students start predicting the lyrics, saying them inside their heads.

This is a technique based on a Total Physical Response (TPR) approach. “*The strategy of the total physical response is to have the students listen to a command in a foreign language and immediately obey with a physical action*” (Asher, 1969, p.4). Moreover, by not demanding the pupils to produce verbally immediately, we are respecting their silent period while still improving the listening and oral interaction skills. Lightbown & Spada (2010, p.20) affirm based on Piaget’s theories that the knowledge created from children’s physical interaction with the environment can be represented by their language.

4.5. PRIOR KNOWLEDGE

Before entering Primary Education, the students that have coursed Infant Education at the school have worked on different areas that relate to their closest environment and daily life in English class. Their welcoming routine included salutations to everyone present and a sequence where they share love, remember the shapes, and observe their surroundings. Another routine focused on the numbers, counting all together how many people were in the class, and one that was done weekly worked with the weather through songs with gestures based on TPR techniques. Another one is used to describe where we can find something by remembering the prepositions and the children are used to asking to go to the toilet in English when they need it too.

They also recognized “mummies and daddies” as the closest members of their family and the colours of the different objects that were used in the lessons. They worked on other topics that were close to their reality too, such as the animals in the farm, healthy food like fruits, or the basic emotions and feelings, and the wide variety of songs and communicative situations created reach diverse topics like actions (sing, run, jump, walk, eat, fly, swim...) or body parts.

Considering all this knowledge, the students' learning can be built on a consistent basis, taking into account the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) by Vygotsky (1978). The ZPD is the imaginary area between what the children already know and know how to do and what they are not ready to learn yet. When teachers propose activities within this area, the students are able to develop their competences by completing challenges with minimal guidance, obtaining the maximum learning profits and improving their self-esteem, because they see themselves as capable and competent. The guidance and support can be provided by the teacher or by another, more advanced student. This is part of Vygotsky's Scaffolding.

For this reason, the welcoming routine stays the same throughout Primary, but the rest get more complicated as the years go by. When counting, they need to recognize both the numerical form and the word form of the numbers, and in the weather routine they must recognize the picture and word on the roulette without anyone saying it out loud. More prepositions are added to the song too, and the topic of the family gets wider in Year 1, as brothers, sisters, grandmothers and grandfathers, aunts and uncles and cousins are included now. Other food, the body and the senses and the animals from the jungle are talked about too, as well as using the colours, numbers, and prepositions to give basic descriptions.

4.6. IMPORTANCE OF ASSESSMENT

The students must be conscious of this improvement and learning process through time, so carrying out the two types of assessment is essential.

- **Assessment *of* learning:** Dedicated to establishing learning objectives and registering the learning outcomes produced by the students, in relation to the assessment criteria established previously by the teacher. Taking this into account, timely and focused feedback must be offered to the students (Dombey, 2013).
- **Assessment *for* learning:** Dedicated to initiate the process of self-assessment through the modelling of the teacher, using positive verbal reinforcement or emblems like the thumbs up, that encourages the students to reflect on their attitudes and learnings.

5. METHOD OR DESIGN

5.1. WRITTEN SUPPORT IN THE ORAL ROUTINES

When starting the school year in Year 1, it must be considered that most of the students have just started to write in their mother tongue, and some of them could still be facing difficulties to do that. However, most are able to write with capital letters and lowercase, even though they might make mistakes even when copying something directly. Due to the diversity of learning rhythms that can be found in a classroom of this level, creating a secure environment where everybody can participate without fear of making a mistake is essential, especially when the main methodology focuses on oral production and interaction.

During the welcoming period in September, the oral routines acquired on Infant Education must be remembered and reinforced. In addition, the new rules and new routines need to be clearly introduced too, so that they get used to them and internalize them. Including reading and writing in these areas does not need to be a direct process. Having a visual support that includes the key words paired with a picture to represent them is an easy way to induce the students to read and remember the shape of the words, so that when they encounter it again in another context, they can recognise it, and when the time comes to write it themselves, they can recall the spelling unconsciously.

As we established that there is not a lot of space in the classroom and the assembly routines are used in all the levels, this could be carried out through a special resource to make displays portable. Designed as a big book that opens in vertical form and that can hold itself up like a table calendar (*see appendix 1*) so that it can be placed in front of the students during the assembly, this resource has different pages that represent each of the routines through its key words and their visual representation. These pages can be turned, added or taken off from the base of the “book”, so that it can be modified as necessary. Having one page per routine also helps to structure the sequence of the lesson, as the activity must continue until we change the page.

The first three pages are related to the **welcoming** routine. First, with the salutation; then with visual and written support of the four shapes that are included in the welcoming sequence that they learned in Infant Education as stated above, to highlight them, because they are included in the Primary Education curriculum; and finally with the visual support

necessary so that when the teacher asks “Who is not here today?” they can reply with the names of their missing classmates and either of the sentences “One person is not here” or “Two/three/four/etc. people are not here”, distinguishing the singular and plural forms.

The fourth page has the question that the pupils ask to the first of the students who take onto a responsibility role, the Translator, who is in charge of the **retelling** of the activities from the previous day. The question is “Do you remember the activities from the last...?” and in the blank space, the Translator must stick the card of the day of the week where we had our last English lesson. Then, they will recall as many activities as they can and, if they forget any, the rest of the students can raise their hands to help.

The fifth page is for the **date** routine. As this resource will be used in every Year, it includes the day, month, season and year, but the Year 1 students only work with the days of the week and the months. After remembering which day of the week it is through a song coupled with a TPR technique and pointing it out on the date roulette, the Date responsible will stick the corresponding card. After we remember which month it is, they stick it too. Because this resource is used in higher Years too, it also includes the season, which are introduced in Year 2.

The sixth page is for the **weather** routine. This one is carried out in Infant Education too, so it can be used by asking them to stick only the picture of the weather of the day. In Year 1, the responsible must stick both the picture and the word. The sentence written is “Today it’s...” because it is part of the weather song that is sung before pointing out the weather of the day on the roulette.

The last page is to help the students distinguish between the **items** that help us to open the magic bag, where the surprises for the students are kept. To activate these items, the students must tell the teacher their name, so having a visual representation can help them to recognize them better when they forget their name and cannot recognize the options given by the teacher orally.

5.2. DISPLAYS

Not every resource should be portable, because each group and level have different needs. In Year 1, it is important to have a continuous presence of the English language that they can read. Even if not a lot of focus is given to it, the continuous presence of the words will help them recognise it and replicate it later. It can also serve as support to

reinforce their confidence, because they know that if they doubt about how to spell something, they can copy it. All these texts that will be displayed in our designated corner of the classroom must be significant for them, and relevant within the context of the classroom.

- **Classroom rules:** They could be written down and have a representative picture to understand their meaning, so that we can reference that little display when one of these rules is not followed. It can be placed next to the positive reinforcement ranking, because going up in it is a result of participating in class and following the rules, while going down can be caused by inappropriate behaviour in doing the opposite. Placing the rules next to the ranking is an indirect way of reminding the students of this, and closely relate the rules to the consequences of following or not following them. That is why it should be placed there during one of the lessons, in front of the students while explaining its purpose to them.
- **Ranking:** It must have its own writing too. In it there are ten levels that the students must go through to reach the top, and these numbers must always be referenced in English, but we can add encouraging words that are often used out loud in written form every three or so levels. Placing “start” at the bottom of the ranking, “good” at number three, “very good” at number five, “great” at number seven and “excellent” at number ten.
- **Frequently asked questions:** It is a permanent display used to show some common structures used to compensate for their gaps in knowledge, like “How do you say...?”, or to ask for permission, like “Can I go to the toilet, please?”. These questions will come up repeatedly throughout the whole year, and they are part of the most basic communicative situations that the students must solve through their communicative skills, so it would be positive to have them in written form on the classrooms too.
- **Unit topic:** It is changed every unit to fit the topic. At the top it must have the main question of the unit and, under it, its possible answers, as well as the key words and pictures of them.

Throughout the year, the topics of the units and many songs, as well as the flashcards from the teacher’s resource kit, are selected from the curriculum and the textbook used at the school, as well as completed with cross curricular topics to develop all the key competences in the students.

The topics are the following:

- Unit 0: Introducing yourself including your age and favourite colour.
- Unit 1: School objects and asking for permission to borrow them from your classmates.
- Unit 2: The parts of the body and their relation to the five senses.
- Unit 3: Introducing your close family and extended family.
- Unit 4: Food preferences and where do these foods come from.
- Unit 5: Animals from the jungle and their capacities, relating to our own capacities.
- Unit 6: Most common toys and what are they made of.

5.3. INDIVIDUAL TASKS

To recognise the efforts that each student has made throughout the school year, it is important that they can keep all their work together and take it home with them, where they can show it to their family and use it as a basis for the years to come. This will be collected in two formats, the glossary and the song book.

At the end of every unit, each student will add at least one to their song book and two to their booklet. Then, at the end of the school year, they can take both things home, to show their work and effort and keep it for the years to come.

A) Song book

It is designed as a tool to help the students focus on the lyrics of the songs, so that they relate what they sing by heart to the way it is spelt. The first ones to be added would be some songs used for classroom management, like the one representing the order in which they are allowed to stand up and sit down on the floor for the assembly or the congratulations song. On the other hand, whenever a song is played on the smartboard in class, the video must include the lyrics and, at the end of every unit, we will add the songs that have been worked on the most throughout the unit to the book, in their entirety or just the chorus or a short version of them. Every song is presented to the pupils with most of the lyrics written down, but with gaps in them. To complete them, the music will be stopped when it gets to one of the gaps, so they can have time to fill it in. This will be done at the end of the unit, after they have listened and danced to the song for weeks, so they will predict what word is missing and write it down easily.

B) “My Year 1 booklet”

As an individual resource to keep and record their progression in English Writing, each student will have their own booklet. It also has a secondary purpose: to share their experiences with their classmates. Because of this aim to be shared, it needs to follow some basic rules, so that it can be understood by everyone else.

When writing the questions and answers, they need to consider the importance of closing the questions with the question mark and the answers with a full stop, while in the continuous texts they need to make sure to start with capital letter at the beginning and after a full stop. They will need to consider the spaces between words too.

On the cover of this little dossier each child must write their name and draw a picture of themselves. Inside, it is formed by two pages per unit. The first one, placed on this left side, is a personal version of the unit display, where they can have the main question of the topic written down, leaving a blank space where they can place the different mini flashcards that they can find and cut from the end of their textbook. These mini flashcards only have the pictures, but they should write the key words under them too. So that they do not lose their mini flashcards, an envelope can be made from a paper sheet and stuck in every page. This way, even when the unit display is changed, they can find reference of the previous topics all year long. These questions will be added at the same time that they are placed on the big classroom display, so that they are built at the same time throughout the unit. On the right side, they will add the corresponding text written by them, so that they can see both things together and reference it later too. The text will be written down at the end of the unit, all the class together at the same time, through the guide and modelling of the teacher. The chart that relates the unit topics and subtopics with the questions and texts can be found on *appendix 2*.

These texts added on the booklet will be the final task of each unit, usually focused on a descriptive text or an explanation text (Ministry of Education, 2015). This final task will be prepared throughout the unit and then, during the next one, each day one of the students can show it in front of their classmates at the start of the lesson, after the welcoming and before the assembly.

In the first units, the pupils will be given the lined pages with the start of the questions and answers already written, so they must write over it and complete it with their own data. The texts, however, must be written by them by coping both the model text the

teacher will place on the blackboard and the data they added to the previous answers. Through time, they will have less and less part of the text written down previously, so that they do it more autonomously, even though they will always have the displays as a model to copy from them.

In Unit 0, the task is a descriptive text about themselves, their introduction. In it they must include a greeting, their name, their age, their favourite colour and asking the class how they are that day. For each one, a question related to what they need to say and its corresponding answer will be added to the unit display: first, “What’s your name?” “My name is...”; second, “How old are you?” “I’m ... years old”; third, “What’s your favourite colour?” “My favourite colour is...”; and fifth, “How are you today?” with a classmate replying with one of the six feelings that were worked on in Infant Education.

In Unit 1, it is a descriptive text about what we can find inside their pencil case. They must count the school objects that are in it, starting with “In my pencil case...” and remembering to use “there is” when it is just one and “there are” when it is two or more. This relates to the assistance routine. At the end they must ask one of their classmates for something that is not in their pencil case.

In Unit 2, it is a descriptive text about their own physical appearance showing a picture of themselves and using qualificative adjectives like the colours, big or small and long or short. If they mention any of the body parts related to the senses, they must include them too. For example, “I’ve got long hair. My hair is brown. I’ve got two eyes. My eyes are blue. I see with my eyes. I’ve got two hands. My hands are small. I touch with my hands. I’ve got two legs. My legs are long.”

In Unit 3, it is an explanation text, presenting the members of their family through pictures of them, saying their name and who are they. For example, “This is my mom. Her name is Susan. This is my dad. His name is John. This is my sister. Her name is Mary. This is my brother. His name is Michael.”

In Unit 4, it is an explanation text, expressing what food they like, what food they do not like, and where do they come from. For example, “I like chicken. Chicken is meat. Meat comes from animals. I don’t like carrots. Carrots are vegetables. Vegetables come from plants.”

In Unit 5, it is a descriptive text about an animal they like, saying its colour, size, what it can do and if they can do it too. For example, “This is a frog. The frog is green. The frog is small. The frog can jump and swim. I can jump and swim too!”

In Unit 6, it is a descriptive text about their favourite toy. They could bring it to school or show a picture of it. They must describe it though its colour, some distinctive part and its material. For example, “This is my car. The car is red. The car has four circle wheels. The car is made of plastic.”

At the end, the students will draw a picture of their summer plans, to celebrate the end of the school year, and some of their expectations for Year 2. They can describe it to their groupmates using the language that they have acquired through the year. An example of how one of the students could make their booklet can be found on *appendix 3*.

C) Sub-tasks

To prepare for these final tasks, previously the students will tackle different sub-tasks. The starting point will always be oral interaction, progressively introducing reading and writing throughout the year. However, every time a new word is introduced, before writing it with a pen or pencil, the students will raise their index finger and **write** the word **on the air** while sounding it at the same time. Once they are accustomed to the movements that draw the word, they can take the pen and write on a surface to complete other sub-tasks. Some of these sub-tasks will be:

1. Who am I?

One volunteer stands up in front of the class, picks a flashcard (first with pictures and later with words) and mimics to represent the word. The rest of the students must raise their hands and say what they are mimicking out loud. Afterwards, they will have to write down the word on their group’s mini whiteboard and raise it first. If they guess it, they must put it in a sentence and say it out loud.

Pairs variant: Putting the flashcard with the picture on the forehead of a student thanks to a hat and a gripper, they must face their classmate and guess what they are mimicking. They could say the key word out loud, write it down on one of the mini whiteboards and, in higher years, they might have to guess by saying a whole sentence or even write it down.

2. Ghost words

The students must find what is missing, first in a sequence of pictures, then of words, and then in a sentence. These sentences could often be part of the lyrics from the songs that are usually used in the classroom. At first, they only need to raise their hands and say it, but afterwards they will have to write it on their mini whiteboard by groups.

3. Wordinary

The teacher will write a word letter by letter on the blackboard. After each one, the students have an opportunity to raise their hands and say the whole word. Once the students understand the dynamic, the letters do not need to be written down in order, instead we can write the first letter and the last, for example, so that they focus on how the word starts and how it ends. If they guess the word right, they can come to the blackboard and write it so that their classmates can see. Some students might be volunteers to pick another word and write down the letters themselves in higher levels.

Whenever they need to write during these sub-tasks, the students can look back to the unit display, where they will be able to find all the key words of the topic, so they do not need to feel pressured if they cannot remember the spelling, because they can copy it. In addition, when they write on the mini whiteboards in groups, they can help each other and learn cooperatively.

In addition, at the end of every lesson, a new routine to **review** will be established. Each day, the students will vote for their favourite word learned on that class, and one volunteer will write it on the corner of the blackboard, where it will stay until the next lesson.

5.4. ASSESSMENT

The assessment is an essential part of the teaching-learning process and must be considered and carried out continuously throughout the years. In addition to the teacher's classroom diary, used to register the participation and learning process of the students, there are other options related to the previous sections.

First, the revision of the student's **individual works** (song book and glossary) every unit. Both its completion and its quality should be considered, and feedback on its improvement must be given when required.

In addition, the **ranking** is a positive reinforcement tool that must be used through the lesson when the students follow the rules to complete a task successfully. They go up one number at a time but can do so multiple times per lesson. Every time they reach one of the numbers with a word attached to them, it must be highlighted too, to focus their attention on it and profit from the reading opportunity as well. When the students reach the top of the ranking, they get a little toy or another surprise, to encourage them to keep working hard, because once they finish on number 10 they go back to the start at number 1, so they are motivated to reach the top again.

Another tool for reinforcement is the **congratulations song**. At the same time, it is part of the teacher's modelling, because it is a rhythmic pattern repeated every time a pupil completes a responsibility successfully and, little by little, the rest of the class can pick it up and use it to reinforce their partner's work without the teacher's initiative. Here, it becomes a type of peer assessment, as well as social approval, which is motivating for students who might not receive a lot of it in other situations.

Finally, from the start of Year 1, the children should receive a tool to signal when they do not understand something, which can help them to start reflecting on their knowledge and learning process. Each student will be given a **green card** and a **red card**, so if they have doubts about a task or need help, they can lift the red card, but if they think they will be able to do it alone when the teacher checks in with the class, they can lift the green one.

6. CONCLUSIONS

Considering the link between the theories and the method designed to use music and dramatization to learn a foreign language, the veracity of the initial hypothesis and its utility to develop Reading and Writing skills have been confirmed.

This conclusion is reached starting from the creation of a friendly and motivating environment that encourages the children's learning. By presenting the reading and writing tasks as challenges that they can complete by themselves, they do not feel threatened by the prospect of engaging in them. Their intrinsic motivation comes from their interest in both the topics, as they are related to themselves and their experiences, and the use of songs that they can enjoy, because they can participate in the collective classroom experience of singing and dancing them.

Within this positive environment the pupils can be fulfilled emotionally and confidently interact in the foreign language. It is clear that once they can easily navigate oral communicative situations, they can easily relate them to their written form and develop their written skills.

Setting this basis as the starting point, in the following years their written skills can be developed even more by extending the depth of the proposal in the communicative area. In a multicultural context like this one, sharing things that specifically pertain to their culture with their classmates gives an opportunity to add nuance and complexity to their texts, in addition to valuing and respecting diversity within the classroom. This way, when the topic is food, for example, instead of each one writing their own recipe and adding it to their personal booklet, a recipe book could be written by including everyone's traditional recipes to it. Other examples could be a toy catalogue or a bestiary (a book about animals).

On the other hand, while in Year 1 they are writing on the whiteboards by groups to support each other, in Year 2 this could be done in pairs and from Year 3 onwards, they should be able to do it individually.

In later years, the use of technology as another medium for writing could be incorporated too. The students could be more involved in the school's social media when their projects are being shared, starting by recording a video where they show their books or texts while they read it aloud and even suggesting captions to add to the posts in the latest Years of Primary.

However, there could be some further improvements in the proposal for Year 1. As already established, developing the writing skill takes a lot of time and effort both on the teacher's and the student's part, and considering the need to enhance the Reading, Listening and Speaking skills at the same time too, more hours dedicated to English class are needed. Ideally, the students would have at least a short period every day if possible.

As a proposal for next year's school plan, it would have a greatly positive impact to reintroduce the oral interaction project and extend the English lessons, to provide the students with more time to practice and develop their speaking skill. Time is a big limitation for foreign language learning, because it requires constant exposure to the target language, so by dedicating extra time to the oral skills, the students could dive deeper into their written skills too.

Another limitation could be the lack of a proper English classroom, but as established here, this can be circumvented through different methods and resources. However, it cannot be denied that having a specific space has a lot of advantages, like the number of resources that can be accessed at different times and the possibility to go back to review them later on, as well as the wider possibilities for grouping.

Through the research and development of this proposal I achieved the objectives targeted and reflected on other possibilities that the methods applied during my internship can offer. I have also realized the importance of continuously updating and furthering our learning as teachers, keeping up to date with educational innovation as well as developing our own methods and resources through this research process.

Ensuring the quality of your teaching skills is the first step towards guaranteeing the quality of the education you provide. However, it must not be forgotten that the students are the centre of their own learning process, so the focus must be on their interests, their capacities, their needs and their context.

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APPENDIX

Routines

Hello, everybody!

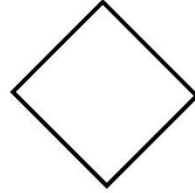


Hello, teacher!

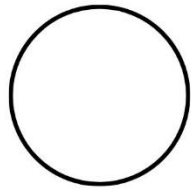




Heart



Diamond



Circle



Rectangle

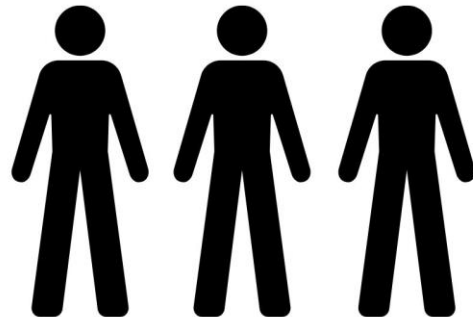
1

person



2,3,4...

people



Do you remember 
the activities from
last ?

Day:

Month:

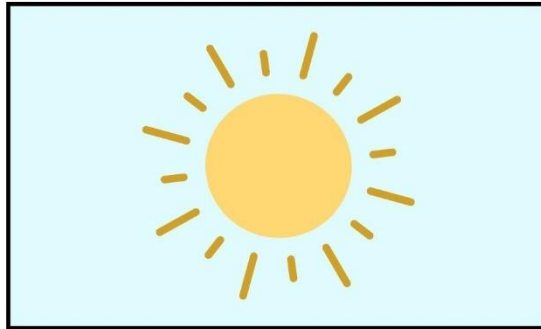
Season:

 Spring

Year:

2024

Weather:



Today it's

sunny

Magic
wand



Magic
ball



Magic
sword



Appendix 2. Topic chart.

UNIT CONTENTS						
UNIT	TOPIC	SUB-TOPIC	PRIOR KNOWLEDGE	MAIN QUESTION(S)	KEY WORDS	TEXT EXAMPLE
0	Introducing yourself	Greetings, age, colours. Weather, date.	Greetings, numbers, colours, weather, feelings.	What's your name? My name is... How old are you? I'm... years old. What's your favourite colour? My favourite colour is... How are you today? I'm...	Numbers 1-10 Red, yellow, green, purple, blue, pink, black, white, brown. Happy, sad, angry, shy, sleepy, scared, sick.	My name is Inés. I'm 6 years old. My favourite color is yellow. How are you today?
1	School objects	Asking to borrow them	What to do at school write, draw, colour, sing, play.	Can I have a..., please? Yes, you can. Here you are.	Bag, pencil, rubber, pencil case, pen, crayon, ruler, sharpener. Write, draw, colour, sing, play.	In my pencil case there is one pencil, there are four pens and there is a rubber. Can I have a ruler, please?
2	Body parts	Five senses	Head, body, feet.	Do you... with your...? I ... with my ...	Eyes, nose, mouth, ears, arms, legs, hands, head. Smell, touch, see, listen, taste.	I've got two eyes. My eyes are blue. I see with my eyes. I've got two hands. My hands are small. I touch with my hands.
3	Family	Extended family	Closest family: mom and dad.	Who is that? That's my...	Mother, father, sister, brother, baby, grandpa, grandma, aunt, uncle, cousin.	This is my mom. Her name is Susan. This is my dad. His name is John.
4	Food	Where does the food come from	Fruits, water, milk.	Do you like...? Yes, I do. / No, I don't.	Peas, eggs, mushrooms, sausages, potatoes, milk, carrot, cheese. Fruit, vegetables, meat, fish. Animals, plants.	I like chicken. Chicken is meat. Meat comes from animals. I don't like carrots. Carrots are vegetables. Vegetables come from plants.
5	Jungle animals	What can the animals do	Farm animals	Can the animal...? The ... can ... Can you...? I can ...	Parrot, elephant, giraffe, snake, frog, monkey, crocodile, mouse. Fly, run, climb, swim.	This is a frog. The frog is green. The frog is small. The frog can jump and swim. I can jump and swim too!
6	Toys	Materials: wood, plastic, metal, paper.	Games	What is the... made of? The ... is made of ...	Computer game, kite, scooter, doll, bike, skateboard, board game, car. Wood, plastic, metal, paper	This is my car. The car is red. The car has four circle wheels. The car is made of plastic.

Appendix 3. Example of how one of the children could design the booklet.

Maria's Year 1 book



What's your name?

My name is Maria.

How old are you?

I'm 6 years old.

What's your favourite
colour?

My favourite colour is

red orange black green purple
blue yellow white brown

How are you today?

I'm 😊 😞 😡 😳 😷
happy sad angry shy sick

My introduction

My name is Maria.

I'm 6 years old.

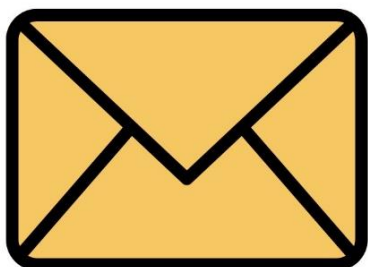
My favourite colour
is yellow.

How are you today?

Can I have a

, please?

Yes, of course.



My pencil case

In my pencil case
there is one pencil,
there are four pens
and there is a rubber.

Can I have a ruler,
please?

Do you

with your

?

Yes, I do. /

No, I don't.

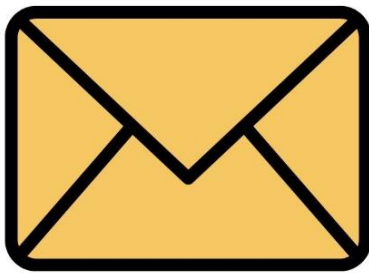


My body

I've got two eyes.
My eyes are blue. I
see with my eyes.
I've got two hands.
My hands are small.
I touch with my hands.

Who is that?

That's my



My family

This is my mom.

Her name is Susan.

This is my dad.

His name is John.

This is my brother.

His name is Michael.

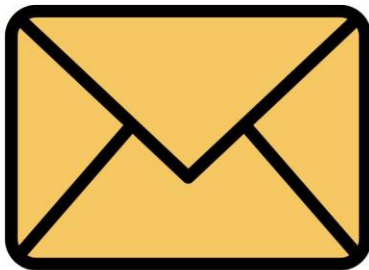


Do you like

 ?

Yes, I do. /

No, I don't.



My favourite food

I like chicken. Chicken

is meat. Meat comes

from animals. I don't

like carrots. Carrots

are vegetables.

Vegetables come from

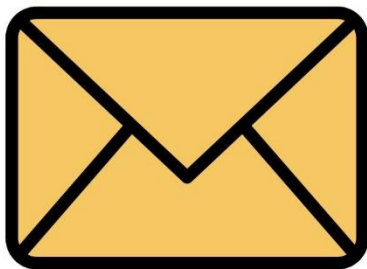
plants.

Can the

 ?

The

can



My animals

This is a frog. The
frog is green. The
frog is small. The
frog can jump and
swim. I can jump
and swim too!

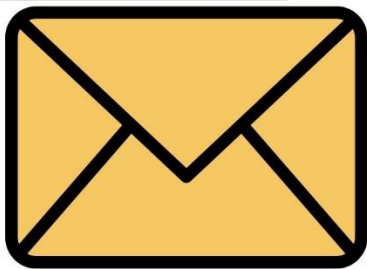


What is the

made of?

The

is made of

 .

My toy

This is my car.
The car is red and
green. The car has
four circle wheels.
The car is made of
plastic.



