

Master's Dissertation/
Trabajo Fin de Máster

THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE LEARNING CORNERS METHODOLOGY TO A CLIL CLASSROOM OF INFANT EDUCATION

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1. ABSTRACT – KEYWORDS

In this MA dissertation or final master's project, we intend to show the great benefits and the contribution of the methodology of Learning Corners to the CLIL (Content Language Integrated Learning) approach and specifically in the educational stage of Infant Education. This methodological approach encourages the creation of environments for interaction, communication, discovery, experimentation and cooperative learning, which facilitates the participation and motivation of students in the construction of their own learning of both content and language (in this case the foreign language to be developed is L2 English - second foreign language) from early childhood. In summary, Learning Corners follows a constructivist approach, in which students have an active role in their learning.

Therefore, we are going to present a didactic proposal, in which we highlight the theoretical framework that defends the benefits of carrying out a methodology based on Learning Corners within the CLIL approach. Then, we are going to provide a practical example of the implementation of this methodology to a CLIL classroom of Infant Education, emphasizing its contribution to the significant and quality learning in students. In addition, we would like to clarify the compatibility of this approach with others, such as task-based learning, cooperative learning and multiple intelligences, among others.

Keywords:

CLIL approach, Infant Education, foreign language learning: English, Learning Corners Methodology, teaching approaches, communicative competences and didactic unit.

RESUMEN

En este trabajo fin de máster (TFM), tenemos la intención de mostrar los enormes beneficios y la gran contribución de la metodología basada en Rincones de Aprendizaje al enfoque AICLE (Aprendizaje Integrado de Contenidos y Lenguas Extranjeras), concretamente en la etapa educativa de Educación Infantil. Este enfoque metodológico fomenta la creación de entornos en el aula que favorecen la interacción, la comunicación, el descubrimiento, la experimentación y el aprendizaje cooperativo, lo que facilita la participación y la motivación del alumnado en la construcción de su propio aprendizaje tanto del contenido como del lenguaje (en este caso, el idioma

extranjero a desarrollar es L2 inglés - segunda lengua extranjera) desde edades tempranas. En resumen, la metodología de Rincones de Aprendizaje sigue un enfoque constructivista, tomando el alumnado un papel activo en su aprendizaje.

Por consiguiente, presentamos una propuesta didáctica, en la que se destaca el marco teórico que defiende los beneficios de llevar a cabo una metodología basada en Rincones de Aprendizaje dentro del enfoque AICLE. Luego, proporcionamos un ejemplo práctico de la implementación de esta metodología en un aula AICLE de Educación Infantil, enfatizando su contribución al aprendizaje significativo y de calidad del alumnado. Además, se resalta la compatibilidad de este enfoque con otros métodos o enfoques educativos, como el aprendizaje basado en tareas, el aprendizaje cooperativo y las inteligencias múltiples, entre otros.

Palabras clave:

Enfoque AICLE, Educación Infantil, lengua extranjera: inglés, metodología basada en los Rincones de Aprendizaje, enfoques de enseñanza, competencia comunicativa y unidad didáctica.

2. INTRODUCTION

We live in an increasingly globalized society, in which foreign languages learning is increasingly widespread. Thence, schools should be a reflection of this society and adapt to its social demands; that is why the implementation of a bilingual education is more and more commonplace. The educational field should cover this linguistic challenge to prepare students to be competent in their labour and personal future. Nowadays, learning foreign languages is considered an unquestionable need. And as a result, according to Lorenzo, Trujillo, and Vez (2011), great linguistic policies have emerged at European level (Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: learning, teaching, evaluation - CEFR or the Erasmus+ Program) and concrete actions have been implemented in schools, for example the elaboration of the School Linguistic Project-SLP, CLIL approach, among others.

Over time, the teaching-learning process of languages has evolved (Martín, 2009) and efforts are constantly being made to find an approach that provides better results, in the

evaluations carried out by the INEE (Spanish National Institute of Educational Evaluation). Thus, we are trying to change the wrong course of traditional educational approaches, based on the memorization of structural patterns, forgetting to develop skills such as speaking, interaction and listening. And as Martín (2009: 67) points out, “the mechanical reception of structures is not useful for an effective and complete learning of a foreign language”. Therefore, the need for an educational change in the teaching-learning of foreign languages is evident.

In most schools in Europe and Spain, a new bilingual education approach emerges as the solution: CLIL (Content and Language Integrated Learning), a generic term used to refer to "a dual-focussed education approach in which an additional language is used for the learning and teaching of both content and language" (Marsh and Langué, 2000:2). This approach becomes an effective way to enhance the linguistic proficiency (L2-English) of students and, at the same time, to strengthen the learning of the content matter (Dalton-Puffer, 2014). Also, the acquisition of a second language is carried out in a more natural and meaningful way by the students in the CLIL subjects.

In addition, as Carol Read (2003) and many other authors advocate, there is no “magical” or perfect age to start learning a foreign language. Nevertheless, the students of Infant Education stage show magnificent qualities for it (Varela, 2003). They are in a crucial formative phase (Piaget, 1969) of their social, psychological, physical, emotional and cognitive development, which positively influences and benefits language learning in formal language teaching situations (Pérez Cañado and Ojeda-Pinar, 2018). However, in order for teachers to take advantage of this situation, we should be aware of the importance of providing a natural, motivating, communicative, playful and meaningful learning in our students. The Infant Education curriculum establishes a progressive introduction to the foreign language, a first approach especially in oral communication skills (in Andalusia: Order of August 5, 2008, which develops the Infant Education curriculum; and Order of June 28, 2011, which regulates bilingual education in schools), in this case L2-English.

For all these reasons, I recommend, as a teacher of Infant Education, the use in CLIL classrooms of the Learning Corners methodology from an early age, since it is a student-based method and it stimulates oral communication competences.

Consequently, the purpose of this project is to demonstrate that the Learning Corners Methodology in Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) contexts can be a very appropriate, useful and beneficial educational approach in Infant Education, defending it through a theoretical and practical analysis. In conclusion, the TFM focuses on using the Learning Corners as a basis for teaching and learning English at early ages. Thus, we include a didactic unit evidencing how to implement this approach appropriately in CLIL classrooms of Infant Education.

3. JUSTIFICATION AND MOTIVATION FOR THE CHOICE OF TOPIC

The main reason that has led us to carry out a Master's Dissertation focused on CLIL classrooms of Infant Education has been to observe, during the development of this master's degree and in my first years as a teacher, the extent to which Infant Education stage is very commonly forgotten in the educational landscape. Most of the educational research and proposals are aimed at higher education stages (Primary and Secondary Education), being this one of the main gaps that we find in the implementation and research of CLIL approach.

We would like to emphasize the importance of this educational stage, which represents a great psycho-evolutionary and pedagogical value for students. In this stage, the educational foundations are formed and the skills and abilities, which are developed in these ages, will mark the acquisition of later competences. Even if it is a voluntary stage in our national educational legislation (LOE 2/2006, Organic Educational Law and LOMCE 8/2013, Organic Law for the Improvement of Educational Quality), we want to defend that Infant Education should receive the same attention as any other educational and training level. Moreover, it is necessary to overcome the beliefs that Infant Education is a stage of preparation for Primary Education (as it is a cycle with its own character and autonomy), or that it is only a resource for the balancing of work and family, given that this stage is a key educational moment and, schooling at an early age helps to compensate for inequalities and prevents failure and early school-leaving.

As we previously mentioned, the first great cognitive, affective and motor challenge of students takes place in the Infant Education stage, thus constituting the basis of all intellectual learning and the foundations for subsequent academic success. However, another aspect should be taken into account, as stated in Carol Read's article (2003, 6):

"As Shelagh Rixon said, it is not an 'optimal age' that counts, but 'optimal conditions.' These include not only things like how the target language is valued within society, but also what happens within the classroom."

This makes us reflect on the importance of carrying out an adequate methodology in our classrooms to favour meaningful and functional learning in our students. Accordingly, for learning a foreign language from a CLIL approach, in this dissertation we propose a methodology which is commonly used in children's classrooms, but which has not yet been adapted to this new bilingual educational approach.

For that reason, we submit this didactic proposal of Learning Corners in CLIL classrooms for Infant Education, in accordance with the Order of June 28, 2011, which regulates bilingual teaching in schools in Andalusia. This Order establishes for this educational stage the use of methodological proposals of a communicative nature and a globalized form, aimed at the production and oral comprehension of students, as mentioned in the article 9.5 "el uso de propuestas metodológicas de índole comunicativa orientadas a la producción y comprensión oral del alumno o alumna relacionando los contenidos lingüísticos con los correspondientes a las restantes áreas del ciclo."

In addition, we also take as reference the Strategic Plan for the Development of Languages (2016), based on the Andalusian Plurilingualism Promotion Plan (2005) "a CLIL programme launched in 2005 by the Andalusian educational authorities which has had a great uptake since its beginnings and which continues to foster plurilingualism amongst students year after year all over the region" (Milla Lara and Casas, 2018: 161).

4. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

In this section, we present the conceptual or theoretical framework that guides the practical development of my didactic proposal regarding Learning Corners, showing it as an adequate methodology for the CLIL classroom in Infant Education.

4.1. CLIL approach: characteristics and principles

In the first place, it is necessary to define the concept of CLIL (Content and Language Integrated Learning) in English or AICLE (*Aprendizaje Integrado de Contenidos y Lenguas Extranjeras*) in Spanish which, according to the authors Marsh

and Langué (2000:2), consists of “a dual-focussed education approach, in which an additional language is used for learning and teaching of both content and language”. This new pedagogical current of foreign language teaching proposes a bilingual turn in education, considering monolingual teaching (teaching through a single language), as a “second-rate education” (Lorenzo, 2007: 35). The CLIL approach is proposed as a solution for change and success in foreign language learning, which implies improving Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL). Furthermore, it is in harmony with the current social demands of a globalized and multicultural society, as we have mentioned before.

This definition shows two aims in the comprehension of bilingual education: subject and language. Learning the foreign language is no longer the sole purpose of bilingual education, it also becomes the means of learning. The new language is the vehicle to teach the content and language. Therefore, a hallmark of CLIL is the fact that it combines these two aspects of learning: subject content and foreign language, which were previously fragmented in the educational curriculum, giving rise to integrated learning (Pérez Cañado, 2013).

Some of the main characteristics and principles that define the CLIL approach, in the methodological and pedagogical proposals, are:

- According to Coyle, Hood and Marsh (2010: 6), it supposes the “planned pedagogic integration of contextualized content, cognition, communication and culture into teaching and learning practice”. This same author, Coyle (2007: 551) refers to “the 4 C’s framework: content (subject), communication (learning and use of language), cognition (learning and thinking processes) and culture (intercultural understanding and global citizenship).”

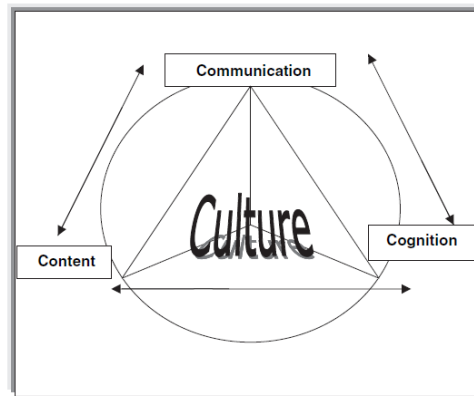


Figure 1. The 4Cs Framework for CLIL (Coyle 2007: 551)

- Language is the main learning instrument, so the foreign language or second language (L2) is used as a means of instruction. Language is the vehicle through which the content of the subject is learned and, as Dalton-Puffer (2014: 215) states, "CLIL is programmed as content lessons". Therefore, language is used to teach new information and communicate, which increases linguistic exposure (Lorenzo, Trujillo and Vez, 2011). This was exposed by the Council of Europe:

...the traditional view is that language is only important in language lessons. Today however, language is no longer seen as a goal in itself, but also as a tool through which students interact with friends and peers in schools, and through which they learn content matters in subjects (European Centre for Modern Languages of the Council of Europe, 2019).

- Students can improve their academic and cognitive development while acquiring command of the foreign language, thus learning BICS (Basic Interpersonal Communicative Skills) and CALP (Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency) (Cummins, 1999).
- Coyle and Baetens Beardsmore (2007) determine CLIL is a triptych linguistic approach, which involves developing the language *of* learning, *for* leaning and *through* learning.
- CLIL favours meaningful and motivating learning for the student, thanks to its great participation and involvement. Students play an active role in their

learning. CLIL benefits learning by doing, supporting the social-constructivist approach to education.

4.2. CLIL in Infant Education

Infant Education covers the period from 0 to 6 years of age and, although it is not a compulsory education, it is undoubtedly essential for children. Children's earliest years are very important for their further development, since in this vital period many neural connections will be registered, which will subsequently translate into learning and evolution of social, emotional, motor, cognitive and linguistic skills. The school should promote the harmonious progress of students, respecting their individual differences, in a flexible educational process.

Teaching of a foreign language at an early age favours the early stimulation of students, who are exposed to linguistic and intercultural experiences and rich communication environments. It promotes children's language development, but also their personal, socio-affective, cultural and cognitive development. Thus, the main objective of Infant Education, according to LOE 2/2006, is achieved: the integral development of students.

According to Varela (2003: 102), children mainly learn a foreign language through motivation, self-esteem, confidence, joy, relaxation and stimulation. Moreover, in the teaching-learning process the use of a structured form (constant revision) together with the active participation by the students can be very useful (De Andrés, 2001).

Early language learning and Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) are both strategies promoted by the European Commission ("Promoting language learning and linguistic diversity" 2007 and "Language Learning at Pre-primary Level" 2011) along with national and regional governments. At a regional level in Andalusia, the Plan Estratégico de Desarrollo de las Lenguas (2016)- (Strategic Plan for the Development of Languages) recommends facilitating the contact with a foreign language at an early age, "durante al menos dos módulos semanales en el segundo ciclo de Educación Infantil", and Order of August 5, 2008 which develops the Infant Education curriculum, establishes that "el acercamiento a una lengua extranjera se realizará a través de situaciones habituales de comunicación, y en contextos de vida cotidiana... valorándola

como instrumento de comunicación y favoreciendo una actitud positiva hacia su aprendizaje." Therefore, it is argued that it is beneficial to carry out an introduction to the foreign language from a socio-communicative approach in Infant Education.

In the first years of learning foreign languages, listening and speaking become the key objective; they are the basis for the further development of the five main language skills: listening, speaking, reading, writing and conversing, to achieve effective development of communicative competence at the end of compulsory education. That is the reason why, in this didactic proposal, we follow a communicative and socio-constructivist approach to language learning, focusing on its oral dimension given the age of the students. In summary, if as teachers we want children to develop a bilingual competence, it is necessary that the contact with the second language starts as soon as possible and continues throughout the years. The earlier a student starts learning it, the more likely that he or she will achieve a meaningful and functional learning of the language (Abdelilah-Bauer, 2011: 65), supporting the positive assessment of the implementation of bilingualism at an early age.

4.3. Most appropriate methods for language development in Infant Education

As we previously mentioned, given the age of these students, most English as a Foreign Language (EFL) programmes for Infant Education, emphasize oral language development. A set of general guidelines to teach languages to young children that teachers can take as a reference are the following (as established by De Andrés (2001: 1-2):

- **Long-term curriculum development**, with connections and continuity between stages, preparing a School Linguistic Project. It is useful to divide the overall yearly objectives into integrated didactic units, such as the one we present.
- The organization of daily lessons should follow a **regular routine**, with great exposure to the second language and using **simple words and short sentences**.
- Another important consideration involves **motivation**. It is important to have the interest and attention of the students. Teachers can use praise, some puppets and attractive activities.
- **On-going positive communication with parents**. Another crucial agent in the development of students, schools and families should work in union and harmony.

Furthermore, according to Varela (2003: 102), students of these ages need to use their psychomotor skills and their senses to achieve significant learning. On the other hand, imitation in language learning is a very effective technique at an early age. Songs, rhymes and games are successful at this stage.

Taking these aspects into account, magnificent educational approaches have emerged for Infant Education related to the teaching of foreign languages, among which the following stand out due to their pedagogical interest:

- Total Physical Response (TPR) is an effective approach for young children. According to Crosse (2007: 143): "Young children need to be active and involved in their learning." The most relevant teaching principles of this pedagogical model are: understanding precedes production, psychomotor actions make it easier to understand the message and they promote a safe and relaxed atmosphere, reducing anxiety (Tejada, Pérez Cañado and Luque 2005, cited in Cortina-Pérez and Andúgar Soto 2018: 55). Besides, young children learn through direct experience via the five senses (Reilly and Ward 1997: 9).
- Task-based language learning (TBLL) revolves around a task, which students should perform. That task has a communicative purpose (Cortina-Pérez and Andúgar Soto 2018: 51). Willis (1996, cited in Cortina-Pérez and Andúgar Soto 2018: 52) proposes an adaptation of the approach for the Infant stage, with the performance of manipulative tasks that promote oral interaction of the students, in safe and stimulating environments.
- Gamification or games, with fun activities that can be done physically or interactively. Young students have fun while they learn (Bona, 2015). It also increases student-student communication that provides fluency practice.
- Cooperative Learning is a methodological approach that, according to Cortina-Pérez and Andúgar Soto (2018), offers multiple opportunities for social interaction. For this reason, it is considered one of the most specific educational techniques for teaching a foreign language. In cooperative groups, the chances to

communicate increase, using language as a tool for learning and daily interaction (Moruno Torres, P. & Varas Mayoral, M. 2017).

- Multiple Intelligences. Howard Gardner grouped all the capabilities into eight categories, which are the following: logical-mathematical intelligence, kinetic intelligence, naturalistic intelligence, intrapersonal intelligence, interpersonal intelligence, linguistic intelligence, visual-spatial intelligence, and musical intelligence (Gardner, 1993: 6). Through the educational method of multiple intelligences, the integral development of students from an early age is encouraged, promoting globalized education (Morilla and Pavón, 2019). It is a useful methodological strategy for learning the foreign language in an integrated and natural way.

All these methodological approaches can be included in a didactic proposal that uses the Learning Corners methodology. Hence, the great educational value and pedagogical benefits that this educational methodology provides for Infant Education, respecting the needs and learning style of students of these ages.

4.4. Learning Corners Methodology

The Learning Corners methodology has a great tradition in most Infant Education schools in the Andalusian region (in public, in private and charter schools). It emerged with the new ideology of the pedagogical movement of the New School model (in Spanish *Escuela Nueva*), in which students are considered the centre and protagonists of the educational process. Authors of this tendency, such as Dewey (1859-1952), were the promoters of this educational innovation movement, in which the active role of students is encouraged. Students are the builders of their own learning through experimentation and manipulation. Therefore, the educational vision of learning by doing arises. In addition, the division between traditional pedagogy (the passive role of students) and cooperative pedagogy (active role of students) is drawn, which is the pedagogy that derives in Learning Corners (La Guía and Vidal, 1987: 19).

There are various definitions of this educational methodology which present it as a didactic model that favours autonomy, creativity, play and experimentation, motivation,

group and individual work, attention and constructivism. One of the most complete definitions is the following:

... es una práctica educativa que se fundamenta en el constructivismo social, cuyo punto de partida es el aprendizaje en interacción, la importancia que tiene el contexto cultural para el desarrollo humano. Partimos de que los niños y niñas aprenden a través de su propia actividad, no sólo manual, sino también, y a la vez, mental; pero aprenden mucho mejor, más y más profundamente en contextos ricos y diversos de interacción; es decir, junto con otros y, por supuesto, aprenden si aquello que se les ofrece es interesante, relevante y tiene sentido para ellos. (Ganaza, 2001: 6)

The Learning Corners is presented as a learning opportunity through a constructivist-social approach, in which the activity and interaction of the students, in areas prepared by the teacher, achieve significant and functional learning by the student based in motivation and interest. According to La Guía and Vidal (1987:17) “es un intento de mejorar las condiciones que hacen posible la participación activa del niño en la construcción de sus conocimientos”; in other words, it benefits the active and participative learning of the students, through the interaction between individuals and their environment, taking into account the needs of the children in the classroom. Besides, it implies the organization of the classroom in spaces delimited by the teacher. This methodology offers a positive atmosphere in the classroom, with a cooperative and orderly work climate, which favours attention to diversity and self-confidence, providing autonomy and freedom of choice-management to students.

In the Learning Corners, students work on their individualization and socialization processes (Vazquez, 2004), inviting children to participate, play, act, explore and discover in these multipurpose spaces. Equally, thanks to the great value of play in this methodology, children are happy in schools, enjoying while learning. Thus, education needs to be a pleasure for students (Bona, 2015).

On the other hand, the teachers' role is to stimulate and observe the process, appearing as an assistant or scaffolding in the student learning process (Ibáñez Sandín, 1988). In short, the Learning Corners methodology creates delimited areas of the classroom, with freedom of choice for the students. In these different areas, the student develops habits

of personal autonomy and sociolinguistic skills, by using these spaces and their materials to carry out various individual or group tasks of a different nature (logical reasoning, verbal development, symbolic play, creativity or, psychomotricity, among other educational dimensions).

5. DIDACTIC UNIT

The educational proposal of the Learning Corners in Infant Education has been theoretically presented as an efficient and appropriate educational methodology for 4-year-old students. Seeing that, the Learning Corners methodology encourages student interaction, peer communication, socialization, active learning, autonomy, experimentation, collaboration and fun with several activities and tasks in their different work-learning areas.

This method can be perfectly combined with other methodological methods such as Task-based Language Learning (TBLL) and Total Physical Response (TPR). In addition to this, in its practical implementation in the classroom educational approaches such as multiple intelligences' theory, gamification and cooperative learning can be used, as previously mentioned. Even though, at first it seems that it is almost impossible to unify and implement all these methodological approaches together in the same classroom. In this didactic proposal we are going to demonstrate how this methodological unification is not difficult to implement in a CLIL classroom through the Learning Corners.

In order to display this practical proposal, with reference to CLIL learning at an early age through Learning Corners, in a clear and concise manner, we will present an example of the development of a specific didactic unit whose main educational methodologies are the Learning Corners and Task-based Learning (TBL). This didactic unit is geared towards a classroom of 20 four-year-old students (2nd Cycle of Infant Education) to achieve the integral development of all the students, together with the linguistic and communicative stimulation of the second foreign language (English) in a meaningful, fun and functional way. Nevertheless, given the age of these students, the mother tongue and the foreign language should be combined to facilitate the comprehension of the contents by the student.

5.1. Title and subject

The didactic unit of this proposal is designed for a classroom of the 4-year level of Infant Education, as explained below. It will take place during the first quarter of the school year with an approximate duration of 3 weeks, during the month of October.

The topic of this didactic unit is Prehistory, due to the great interest and motivation that a topic involving cavemen or troglodytes tends to create in children of this age. Furthermore, there is a wide range of resources and materials on this topic for its implementation in the classroom. At the same time that students approach the knowledge of this historical stage, they can develop knowledge, abilities and skills in the different educational fields (cognitive, social, linguistic, affective, physical, motor and logical). Therefore, the unit starts from the students' enthusiasm for the theme to achieving functional and fun learning. That is why we propose the development of a project on the historical stage of Prehistory, through Learning Corners with the title: "We travel to Prehistory". It will culminate in the performance of a final task, which will consist of the recreation of the life of cavemen in our own prehistoric cave in class. In addition, we will invite family members and children from other Infant classroom to discover our immersive creation, turning the students into guides.

The subject that will be mainly dealt with is the Área Conocimiento del Entorno, to know the lifestyle of the ancient cavemen. However, because of the globalized and integrating approach of the Infant Education stage, the contents and skills of the two other educational areas of this stage are also worked on: Lenguaje: comunicación y representación and Conocimiento de sí mismo y Autonomía personal.

Considering everything, we are going to propose an Integrated Didactic Unit that deals with Prehistory topic to teaching English as a foreign language. This unit follows a language integrated curriculum linked to the methodological principles of CLIL and it uses the Learning Corners methodology for Infant Education.

5.2. Justification

In this section, the pillars on which this didactic unit is based are exposed, highlighting the normative framework, at both national and autonomous levels. Along with the curricular framework, this normative has the competence of organizing and

planning school activity. Finally, we point out the didactic framework related to this specific CLIL class of Infant Education.

5.2.1. Normative framework

The law which currently regulates our Infant Education is LOE 2/2006, Ley Orgánica de Educación de 3 de mayo (since LOMCE 8/2013, Ley Orgánica de Mejora de la Calidad Educativa de 9 de diciembre, it does not repeal the LOE 2/2006, but it modifies certain of its sections or articles. However, it does not make significant modifications at the Infant Education stage). This educational law shows that the main purpose for this stage is the contribution to the physical, emotional, social and intellectual development of all students. The State has regulated the minimum education through Royal Decree 1630/2006, for the second cycle of Infant Education. In addition, the Order of June 28, 2011, which regulates bilingual education in schools in the Autonomous Community of Andalusia, is taken into account for the design and application of this integrated didactic unit. According to this Order:

El profesorado del segundo ciclo de educación infantil especialista en la L2 o habilitado para impartir la L2, en coordinación con los tutores y tutoras, introducirá dicha lengua de forma globalizada, procurando que se produzca un acercamiento de los niños y niñas al idioma (Order of June 28, 2011, BOJA article 9.5: 8)

Consecutively, the Autonomous Community of Andalusia has full competence in Education, establishing its own educational law: LEA 17/2007, Ley de Educación de Andalucía, de 10 de diciembre, which is specified for Infant Education in Decree 428/2008, which establishes the ordination and teachings for this stage, and in Order of August 5, 2008, which develops this curriculum. This Decree determines that “los contenidos... se plasmará en aprendizajes relevantes, significativos y motivadores” (Decree 428/2008, BOJA article 5.1: 8).

5.2.2. Curricular framework

The educational curriculum, according to LOMCE 8/2013, refers to the regulation of the elements that determine the teaching and learning processes for each of the educational levels. César Coll presents an explanation which is useful to understand this definition:

...entendemos el curriculum como el proyecto que preside las actividades educativas escolares, precisa sus intenciones y proporciona guías de acción adecuadas y útiles para los profesores que tienen la responsabilidad directa de su ejecución. Para ello, el curriculum proporciona informaciones concretas sobre qué enseñar, cuándo enseñar, cómo enseñar y qué, cómo y cuándo evaluar. (Coll, 1991:30-31)

On the other hand, our curriculum is open and, furthermore, intended to be decentralized. The Autonomous Communities and the schools have autonomy to develop and complete the curriculum design and ensure its implementation, undergoing a process of adaptation, accommodation and contextualization. Thus, the curricular development will materialize at different levels of concretion to adapt to the unique characteristics of each school and classroom, which are seen in the following explanatory table:

Educational Administration	LOE 2/2006 - LOMCE 8/2013	Level of concretion: Legislative
	R. D. 1630/2006 (national level)	
	DECREE 428/2008 - ORDER 5/08/2008	Each school
	ORDER 28/6/2011 (autonomous level)	
School	School Plan: - School Educational Project - School Language Project	Each cycle and classroom
	- Pedagogical Cycle Proposal - Educational Programming	
Teacher		

Table 1. Levels of curricular concretion, own elaboration following the educational normative.

Therefore, we have prepared our teaching programme following the aforementioned school documents. In consequence, this didactic unit is carried out in accordance with our teaching programme to provide a quality and continuous education to the students.

5.2.3. Didactic framework

In the Infant Education stage, teachers should follow a teaching method that encourages the imagination and motivation of students, in order to make learning an adventure. This objective is achieved through the Learning Corners methodology, from a globalized and constructivist perspective. In addition, the differentiation of learning zones in the classroom promotes the development of the different multiple intelligences of the students. Moreover, it achieves the integral development of all the children in the classroom.

By the same token, the Learning Corners pursue the attainment of meaningful and functional learning, involving socialization and cooperation between equals. To achieve this pedagogical intention, the preparation and elaboration of each corner is based on the interests and the previous knowledge that the students possess. Therefore, in the Learning Corners, knowledge is presented as an active construction by the students, not as a mere passive reception of information. In these corners, students learn by manipulating, experimenting, playing, communicating and interacting with material and personal resources.

The topic of this didactic unit emerged during an initial assembly on a Monday, in which the children discussed their experiences during the weekend with their families. A girl told us about a film she had seen with her family about cavemen, called *The Croods*. This topic arose great interest in students, who began talking about some cave visits with cave paintings, dinosaur tracks, and stone utensils, among others. Most of the students wanted to participate in the debate, showing a great motivation. For this reason, we decided to take advantage of this didactic opportunity to focus the learning content on this theme, in coordination with the Teaching Team.

Consequently, this unit deals with the Prehistoric Age for the acquisition of learning objectives and content in the different Learning Corners of a CLIL classroom of Infant Education. Finally, we want to highlight that the Learning Corners methodology is complemented by other educational methods such as Task-based Learning, as stated above, to achieve a quality education with this multi-method approach.

5.3. Contextualization

According to the information described in the previous section, it is essential to know the context in which teachers are going to work in order to adapt the general guidelines established by educational legislation to the specific characteristics and needs of our students. As Delval (2000: 34) affirms: "La escuela no puede llegar a cumplir su misión educativa sin problematizar sobre el contexto social que la rodea, si bien ha de armonizar esta sociedad y, desde ella, seguir trabajando activamente para la mejora de la vida personal y comunitaria." This means that it is necessary to analyse the external and internal factors of the school environment and start from them to achieve a quality education.

5.3.1. External environment of the school

This school is located in a rural environment close to the city of Granada, specifically located in the Vega de Granada, a village where the Genil River goes through. That is, it provides direct and close contact with nature and a wealth of environmental educational experiences to take advantage of during the school year. In addition, this village offers the following public institutions as educational resources for the school: a municipal library, a theatre, a farm-school, a house of culture, a sports centre, the Town Hall, a health centre and a market. As Tavernier (1987: 56) stated "detener el proceso educativo a las puertas del aula sería totalmente nefasto y paradójico"; that is, making schools open to the environment is crucial to achieve educational quality.

Regarding the socio-family context, an average middle-class socio-economic level stands out. On the other hand, the cultural level is medium. In most cases, families have basic studies together with some medium and higher degrees. It is worth noting the significant number of immigrant families, generally of African and South American origin. As a consequence, we can draw the presence of poorly developed linguistic registers. This leads the school to influence and give priority to the work of stimulating languages, both mother tongue and other foreign languages. Besides, most families have a great disposition and positive attitude towards the collaboration with the school and the teachers.

5.3.2. School characteristics

This Infant and Primary Education School has one classroom per level (line 1), that it, the school has 9 class units with an approximate ratio of 20-25 students per classroom. With respect to the physical aspects of the school, it complies with the conditions of Royal Decree 132/2010, which establishes the minimum requirements for schools where the second cycle of Infant Education, Primary Education and Secondary Education is taught. The school has wide differentiated playgrounds for each of the educational stages, a gym, a school garden, a school meal area, a library, an assembly hall and a multipurpose room (for educational activities such as theatrical performances, arts and crafts, workshops, audio-visual displays, among others).

On the other hand, the teaching team is formed by professionals who are graduates in Education, in the field of Infant and Primary Education. Some of them hold a mention in English and others a B2 or C1 language certification diploma, taking the reference of the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) in English. The School has other specialists such as a Foreign Language Teacher Specialist (English), a Physical Education teacher, a Music Education teacher, a support and reinforcement teacher, a Religion Education teacher, a Therapeutic Pedagogy specialist teacher and an Auditory and Language teacher specialist. Also, there is an Education Orientation Team (E.O.E. - Equipo de Orientación Educativa in Spanish), which is itinerant with other schools. In short, the organigram of this school is as follows:

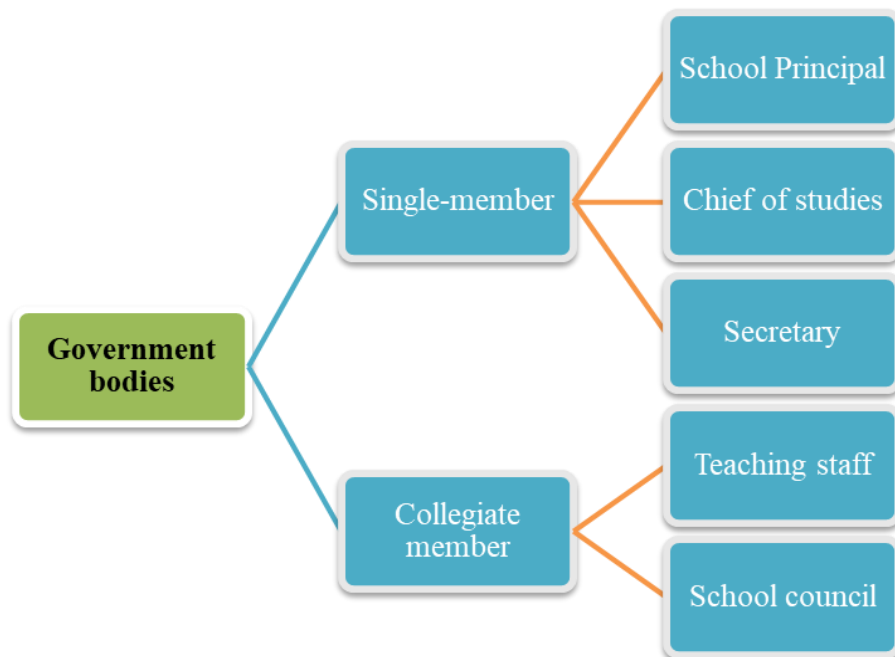


Figure 2. Organigram. Source: Own preparation based on the current legislation.

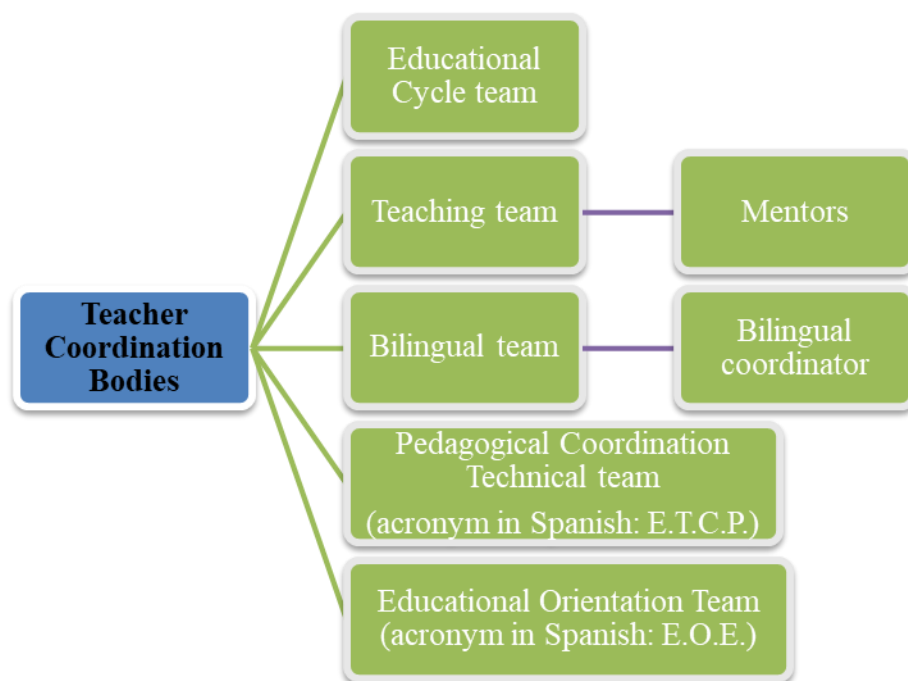


Figure 3. Organigram 2. Source: Own preparation based on the current legislation.

This school develops the following educational programs and plans proposed by the Junta de Andalucía: Plan de Igualdad (coeducation), Environmental Education, Healthy Habits of Life ("Crece en salud"), Escuela de Paz (peaceful conflict resolution) and support for families, which provides a complementary of before-school care and dining service. In relation to Bilingual Education, this school has a School Language Project (Proyecto Lingüístico de Centro, in Spanish) made up of the following plans and programs: Plan de Lectura y Biblioteca, European Language Portfolio, Project Bilingual-CLIL (AICLE), language support and reinforcement plan and European Erasmus+ program, with the association to other European schools with the use of educational platforms such as eTwinning and School Education Gateway, alongside the incorporation of a native Irish conversation assistant.

5.3.3. *Student profile*

If it is important to diagnose the context of action to adapt the educational approaches to it, as it is equally vital and valuable to describe the learning subjects, who are the protagonists of the educational act. Therefore, special importance should be given to the initial evaluation of the students, to achieve truly meaningful, effective and productive learning through the teaching-learning process of the school.

This didactic unit is programmed for a classroom of level 4 years in the second cycle of Infant Education, with 20 students (9 boys and 11 girls) enrolled. This class has great cultural diversity. There are three Moroccan students, two Senegalese students and one English student, who have been enrolled in this school since they were 3 years old. All students generally show excellent psychomotor and cognitive development. However, some students present a slight linguistic delay to compensate in the classroom with early linguistic stimulation, which is carried out in the school bilingually together with Spanish (L1, mother tongue) and English (L2, foreign language). Students are motivated by activities that require movement, experimentation, and active manipulation. This will be taken into account when preparing the Learning Corners.

The curricular elements we are presenting in the following lines are designed and developed based on the methodological proposal of Learning Corners in a CLIL class of Infant Education, and taking the Pedagogical Proposal of the Cycle as a reference.

5.4. Objectives

It is important to start an educational project pointing out the specific didactic objectives that we plan to work on in the didactic unit, taking as a reference the general objectives of the stage and cycle (Order of August 5, 2008, Junta de Andalucía). The educational objectives provide us with security and guide, but at the same time, they are open to changes and adaptations throughout the educational process. Every educational project requires serious and flexible planning.

The didactic objectives developed in this didactic unit are:

1. Participating actively in the proposed activities and learning to work in a group, asking for help when needed and offering support to others.
2. Discriminating some parts of the body (head, arms, legs...) in the second language and discovering its motor possibilities through activities in the Learning Corners.
3. Gaining autonomy in the participation and the organization of the Learning Corners in the classroom students self-regulate their emotions and behaviour.
4. Feeling interest and discovering how and where humanity lived during Prehistory, analysing different social realities.

5. Recreating lifestyle in the caves of our most primitive ancestors in a playful and creative way, with plastic crafts and musical performances.
6. Identifying and representing circle-shaped objects, such as the great invention of Prehistory: the wheel.
7. Understanding and expressing feelings and ideas orally in English, to promote the improvement of the phonetics and social relations of students.
8. Using the written language in the second language as a means of information, fun and communication through storybooks or digital tools, assimilating its importance in society.
9. Bringing students closer to some real artistic manifestations of Prehistory with the interactive whiteboard and learning to recreate cave paintings, discriminating the name of the main colours used in English: black, red and brown.
10. Orally transmitting the contents and skills learned to others, through a presentation in English.
11. Expanding vocabulary in English about Prehistory, in relation to clothing, lifestyle and environment.

5.5. Key Competences

The key competences pursue the personal, social and professional development of the students, for them to become functional people in society, adjusting to current social demands. These competences are essential and try to transmit the “know-how”, being a learning focused on the practice and the usefulness of the acquired knowledge. These begin to develop from an early age in school teaching, but their training will be continuous throughout adult life.

In Infant Education, the educational legislation in the Community of Andalusia does not mention the key competences for this stage (taking as reference the LEA 17/2007, Educational Law in Andalusia; and the Order of August 5, 2008, which develops the curriculum of Infant Education in Andalusia). However, to favour continuity between stages and functional learning, the competence teaching-learning process begins from early ages.

The following key competences (collected in Order ECD/65/2015, which describes the relationships between competences, content and evaluation criteria in schools) will be developed in this unit’s activities:

- Language Communication Competence. Students work the comprehension and expression of thoughts, feelings and facts orally, along with a fun approach to written language. In the classroom, students and teachers use language (mother tongue and second language) in the construction and communication of knowledge.
- Mathematical competence and basic competences in science and technology. In the classroom, ordinal numbers and spatial aspects are used in significant situations, such as in the organization of Learning Corners. Besides, most activities promote problem solving with logic and reasoning.
- Digital competition. The classroom's computer and interactive digital whiteboard are used for research and learning in an immersive and fun way, to bring reality closer to the school.
- Learn to learn. Arising the desire of the students to know the aspects of life during prehistory and asking questions (reflection). Carrying out activities to acquire skills and abilities to gain autonomy.
- Social and civic competences. To enrich the social relations of boys and girls by favoring situations of dialogue and exchange of opinions, in addition to understanding the social reality of a different time: prehistory.
- Sense of initiative and entrepreneurial spirit. Promoting research activities and the active role of students, while teaching them to be constant and autonomous in the tasks.
- Cultural awareness and expression. Bringing students closer to the relation of some artistic manifestations with Prehistory and promoting awareness of caring for our environment.

5.6. Contents

Taking as reference the specific regulations of the Infant Education stage in the Autonomous Community of Andalusia (Decree 428 and Order of August 5, 2008), it can be indicated that the contents are integrated in areas of knowledge and experience in a cross-sectional way to provide significant experiences in an experienced, interactive and integrated way by the students. This curriculum, for both cycles, is organized into 3

areas, which correspond to specific areas of childhood experience and development. These are addressed through meaningful learning situations. The Infant Education areas are as follows:

- Self-knowledge and personal autonomy – henceforth: SA
- Knowledge of the environment – henceforth: KE
- Languages: Communication and representation – henceforth: L

The organization in areas is carried out through a global approach, given the need to integrate the different experiences and learning of the students at these ages. Because of this, all the contents are worked in an interrelated way, although there is this division. In this didactic unit, the pursued contents are:

SA	KE	L
- Active and group participation with confidence, developing initiative, interaction and collaboration skills. - Knowledge of some bodyparts in English. - Initiative to acquire new motor skills for handling prehistoric tools. - Control of tone, balance, movement and breathing to imitate and represent life in Prehistory with dances or dramatizations. - Enjoy the activities and satisfaction for the adequate performance.	-Use of ordinal numbers to establish turns and work groups. -Discovery of the lifestyle in Prehistory: diet, home and clothing. -Recreation of life in Prehistory with the learning of songs, stories and symbolic games. -Identification of the circular shape and association with the prehistoric invention of the wheel. -Awareness about caring for the environment, environmental change from Prehistory to	- Use of the language to express ideas or feelings, promoting group dialogue. - Oral transmission of knowledge, as guides of a prehistoric museum. - Participation and active listening of English through stories and songs about Prehistory. - Development of phonetic skills in a fun way. - Progressive learning and use of English vocabulary in relation to Prehistory. - Approach to external reality with the use of audio-visual media. - Appropriate use of the rules of linguistic exchange,

- Use, organization and proper management of the Learning Corner areas, generating habits of autonomy and effort. - Acceptance of the rules of behaviour established in the classroom.	today. -Identification of some changes in the current lifestyle with respect to Prehistory. -Art in Prehistory: cave paintings. -Initiation to archaeology with some prehistoric sites and caves of Andalusia.	- respecting the turns to speak. - Understanding the global idea of oral texts in the foreign language and approaching the written language with fun stories and digital tools. - Elements of prehistoric art: the human body and animals, basic colours (brown, black and red) and rudimentary painting instruments. - Performance of characteristic situations in Prehistory, with songs, dramatizations and symbolic games. - Exploration of the sound possibilities of our body and elements of nature. - Elaboration of crafts for the representation of life in Prehistory, such as our cave.
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Table 2. Contents of the didactic unit by areas, own elaboration following the educational normative.

In line with the CLIL approach, it is also relevant to highlight that the contents are developed from the 4 C's framework (Coyle, 2007) in the classroom, specifically:

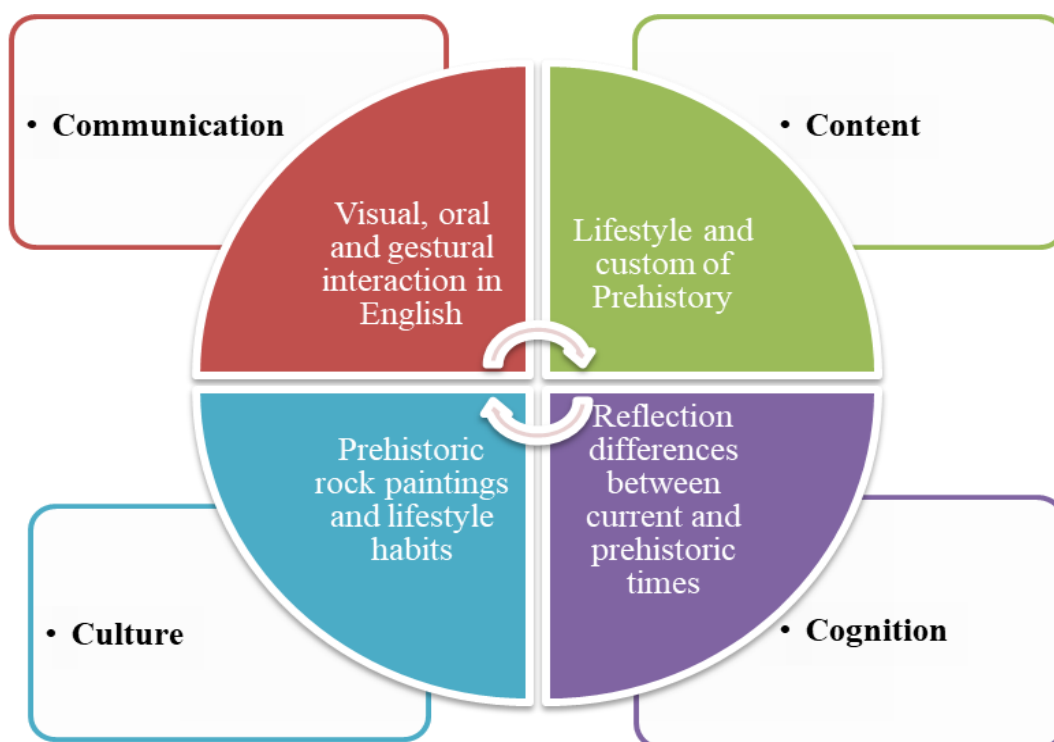


Figure 4. The 4C's framework of this didactic unit, own elaboration with reference in Coyle, 2007.

5.7. Timing

Firstly, it is essential to highlight the need for timing flexibility in the Infant Education stage, given that the times should adapt to the individual rhythms of the students, offering moments to play, laugh, meet, explore and learn. Another essential aspect is to establish daily routines in the classroom, providing students with security and stability (Gallego, 1994).

This didactic unit about Prehistory lasts approximately 3 weeks, during the first school term in October. In doing so, the methodology for Learning Corners is incorporated from the beginning of the school year for the 4-year CLIL classroom. The timing of this CLIL unit consists of 3 weekly sessions of 30 minutes each, working on it a total of approximately 90 minutes. To clarify the temporal distribution of this didactic unit, the timing is presented in the following chronogram:



Figure 5. The timing of this didactic unit, own elaboration.

5.8. Materials and Resources

The value of the material resides fundamentally in the possibilities of action, manipulation, experimentation and conflict that it provides to the students (Gallego, 1994). Moreover, they should be developed according to the educational intention and the objectives that have previously been defined.

In the classroom, a wide variety of teaching materials are used, which we will be showing in detail in the explanation of the activities. However, we would like to highlight the use in my classroom of digital resources that open the classroom doors to the outside and transport us to other realities; text materials such as stories that promote the development of language skills from the motivation of the students; language resources for the approach to the second language such as songs, cartoons and vocabulary posters; recycling materials for awareness from an early age towards caring for the planet; and other manipulative materials that stimulate children's activity and play such as paintings, clay, magnifying glasses, etc.

On the other hand, the organization and arrangement of the materials should facilitate the autonomy of the students and favour the creation of habits of order and responsibility. For this reason, the didactic unit works on the Learning Corners methodology.

In relation to personal resources, students are the protagonists of their learning (individual and group work) and teachers as guides or mediators, coordinated to guarantee educational quality with families (Bona, 2015).

5.9. Classroom Organization

5.9.1. The Learning Corners

Teachers have to intentionally plan the different places and spaces in the classroom; attending to the main educational needs of students, such as: movement, autonomy, affectivity, socialization, play, exploration, communication, relaxation, and physiological needs. Therefore, we tend to organize my classroom through the Learning Corners methodology, which we consider the most appropriate method to promote the integral development of my students. In this quote by Jose M.^a Toro (2014: 46) " la organización de los espacios no es algo añadido, sino que conforman todo un entorno o ámbito energético y vibracional que afecta a quienes están en él", we can see emphasized the importance of carrying out a good organization of classroom spaces to promote meaningful student learning.

In the classroom, there are the following corners for this didactic unit (although these are flexible and variable during the school year):

1. I.C.T. corner	Approach to digital tools and external reality.
2. Experiences corner	Observation, manipulation and investigation.
3. Music corner	Active listening and body movement in harmony.
4. Symbolic Game corner	Role play, performances and free play.
5. Maths corner	Logical-mathematical reasoning and concepts.
6. Plastic corner	Crafts and creativity with plastic resources.
7. Assembly corner	Dialogue, debate and exchange of ideas and emotions.
8. Words corner	Linguistic development in both languages (English and Spanish) with fun activities focused on oral communication.

Table 3. Learning corners used in the classroom, own elaboration.

In the following image, the representative map of the classroom can be seen, with its organization by corners:

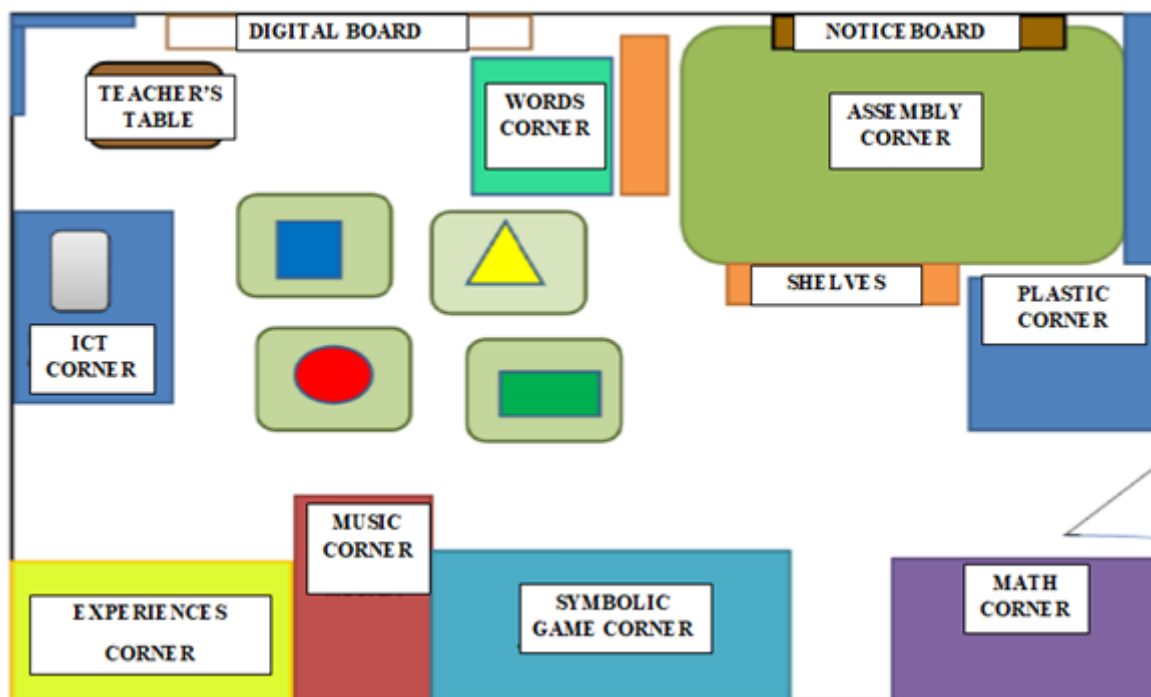


Figure 6. The organization of the classroom, own elaboration.

➤ **Operating dynamics:**

The Learning Corners should have an operating dynamic to promote the passage of students through various corners. Besides, they have to stimulate the initiative and autonomy of the students. For that purpose, we use two control techniques: the double entry table (with the student's photo-name and the different active corners for that week) and medals distinctive of each corner (to determine the maximum number of students per corner), marking the passage of each student through the corners.

The methodology of corners begins in the daily assembly. Here, we remember the basic rules of the corners, for example: not always going through the same corner, respecting the number of students per corner, always pointing in the control table for the corner we have passed, finishing everything that is started, not moving materials from one corner to another, respecting the work of other classmates, taking care and ordering the materials in each corner, making sure that at the end of the week all the students have gone through all the corners, and some others. In addition, the teacher explains to the children what the materials are in each corner and how they should be worked.

Hence, it is understood that the role of teachers is to revitalise and guide the Learning Corners methodology, encouraging and motivating students with possible proposals for

activities, as well as evaluating the methodology itself, the materials, the group-class (in an individual and group way) and our own role as teachers. As for the role of the students, it is based on building their own learning in groups or individually according to the activities of each corner.

5.9.2. Grouping of students

The grouping of students is carried out following the indications of Vygotsky (2010), who highlights the importance and value of shared learning. In this unit, group activities are performed with some individual ones. It encourages group work in large groups (assemblies, video viewing, workshops ...) and in small groups in the different learning corners. In the classroom, I form the cooperative work base groups, following the analysis of the sociogram carried out on the social relations between students. The groups (4 groups of 5 students) are differentiated by assigning a characteristic symbol. In this case, they are geometric shapes: Circle, Square, Triangle and Rectangle.

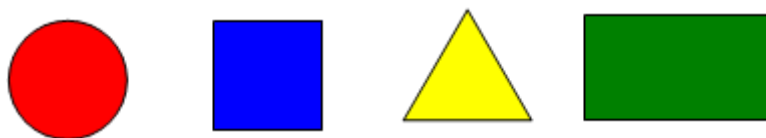


Figure 7. Workgroup symbols, own elaboration

These groups are heterogeneous and mixed, to promote co-education, and they can be modified according to the interests of the classroom. That is, as their teacher I am attentive and observe the relationships established between the teams, and if I detect any problem, I modify them.

5.10. Sessions development and activities

As aforementioned, this teaching proposal is divided into 9 CLIL sessions that are organized over three weeks. In each week 3 sessions are carried out through the Learning Corners and with a duration of 30 minutes. As an example, we are going to present in-depth the first week of the Integrated Didactic Unit with the title “We travel to Prehistory” for my classroom of 4 years of Infant Education. We are going to show the organization of tasks and activities in the different corners and sessions of the didactic project carried out. However, we will only mention the purpose of those sessions, to make the work more fluid.

During the first week of this didactic unit, the sessions and their corresponding activities are the following:

SESSION 1:

- **Motivational Activity: “We are Archaeologists!” - (15 minutes)**

Description	As a classroom teacher, I present the students with a map that will reveal to us where there are prehistoric remains that we should discover. We follow the route, which leads us to the sandbox of the playground where we dig and find different objects such as: fossils, stones with dotted shapes, animal bones and necklaces. We found a prehistoric site! We take all the objects we find in the classroom, we analyse them and propose possible uses in ancient times.
Learning Corner	Experiences Corner.
Skills	Listening, understanding, discovering, motor skills and speaking.
Materials	Map, objects related to prehistory, brushes and shovels to dig.
Interaction	Whole class group.
Scaffolding	Students can ask or answer in their mother tongue, but I make corrective feedbacks in English, which students should repeat. The most advanced students can describe the found objects with simple phrases or descriptive adjectives in English.

Table 4. Activity 1 lesson1, own elaboration.

- **Previous knowledge activity: “What do we know?” – (15 minutes)**

Description	The objective of this activity is to dialogue with my students in assembly. To do this, I use two posters with the initials WALT (We are learning to ...) and WILF (What I am looking for ...), as tools to assess the students' prior knowledge and interests on the theme of Prehistory.
Learning Corner	Assembly corner
Skills	Listening, speaking, debating, sharing ideas, respecting others and understanding.
Materials	Posters WALT (We are learning to...) and WILF (What I’m looking for...)
Interaction	Whole class group - Classroom arrangement: horseshoe

Scaffolding	Students can debate in their mother tongue, but the teacher will gradually introduce the mentioned and useful vocabulary in English. The most advanced students will be able to write the words that have been mentioned on the board in English, with the help of the other students and the teacher.
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Table 5. Activity 2 lesson 1, own elaboration.

SESSION 2 - 3:

Explanatory note: in these sessions, the students will be the one who decides the corners they are going to do freely. But they will be controlled by the medal and the double entry table systems explained previously. Students should go through all corners of the classroom during the week.

• “Once upon a time ... Prehistory ” - (10 minutes)

Description	In this activity we carry out the reading of the children's book “ <u>Cave baby</u> ” in a large group, then in the words corner in groups carry out the following sub-activities: - We place the parts of the body of our cave baby in its corresponding place (arms, legs, feet, head, hands...), associating the written name as well. - We arrange the scene of the story associating the numbers written in English in their ordinal form (first, second, third).
L. Corners	Words Corner.
Skills	Active listening, understanding, logical skills, communication skills, assimilation of a story and the vocabulary of body parts.
Materials	The children's story book "Cave baby" by the author Julia Donaldson (example of reading in the link: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-3Md0E8uUKQ . Source: YouTube channel - The little piggy), a worksheet with the body parts and images of three scenes from the book.
Interaction	Whole class group - Classroom arrangement: horseshoe / Teamwork of 4 students.
Scaffolding	The reading of the children's story is accompanied by large images and gestures that improve their understanding by the students. Sub-activities are carried out in groups, encouraging peer support and help to complete the proposed tasks.

Table 6. Learning Corners Activity 1, own elaboration.

- **“We leave a mark: cave paintings” – (10 minutes)**

Description	This plastic activity uses the technique of stamping paint, using the typical colours of cave paintings: black, red and its mixture (brown). Children stamp their hands, arms and feet creating their Prehistoric mural, using their imagination and creativity. In addition, we use natural dyes to learn how cavemen painted in the past.
L. Corner	Plastic Corner.
Skills	Assimilation of vocabulary related to colours, motor and plastic skills, teamwork, understanding the lifestyle in Prehistory.
Materials	Finger paints, natural dyes such as pepper, paprika and mud, mural with brown continuous paper,
Interaction	Groups of 4 students.
Scaffolding	In the classroom there are colour-vocabulary flashcards for consultation by students. Positive verbal reinforcement, highlighting that the most important thing is the process, not the result of the artistic work.

Table 7. Learning Corners Activity 2, own elaboration.

- **“Let's move caveman!” – (10 minutes)**

Description	First, we listen and dance freely to the song “ <u>Haka-Tata</u> ”. After, we place ourselves in front of our partner in the activity, a member of the couple moves a part of his/her body in harmony with the music and his/her partner should imitate him/her. Students also use movement signs in English to guide their partners. Then, the role of active and imitator is changed.
L. Corner	Music Corner.
Skills	Moving the body in harmony, listening, imitating and following the musical rhythm.
Materials	Song “ <u>Haka-Tata</u> ” (link : https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rq-9EDuUxQY - source: YouTube channel Kizboom).
Interaction	Partner work.
Scaffolding	The more advanced students mention the part of the body they are going to move in English, practising the vocabulary and helping their partner in their learning. Peers help each other and students make corrective feedback to their partners.

Table 8. Learning Corners Activity 3, own elaboration.

- **“Cineforum: Sticks and Stones” - (10 minutes)**

Description	Firstly, the group of 4 students visualizes on the digital whiteboard the short animation: “Sticks and Stones” (link: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A-ingqFJf8g Source: YouTube channel CGMeetup) which shows us the main tools that cavemen used in Prehistory, knowing more about their lifestyle in a fun way. Then, as a group, they carry out the following digital worksheet in groups, related to the simple vocabulary about Prehistory. On this sheet they listen to the word in an audio and associate it with the appropriate image, working on their phonology and oral listening in English. (link: https://es.liveworksheets.com/ln291753xh Source: Liveworksheets Author: Ccamposj89).
L. Corners	I.C.T. Corner.
Skills	Listening, speaking, associating, teamwork, understanding vocabulary, memory and attention.
Materials	Animated short film about life in Prehistory (link: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A-ingqFJf8g Source: YouTube CGMeetup channel), the interactive whiteboard or the classroom computer, a digital worksheet (link: https://es.liveworksheets.com/ln291753xh Source: Liveworksheets Author: Ccamposj89).
Interaction	Teamwork - groups of 4 students.
Scaffolding	Visual support to improve understanding, simple and easy vocabulary about Prehistory, the teacher encourages peer help (cooperative learning), stimulation of English in various ways with new technologies and instant corrective feedback.

Table 9. Learning Corners Activity 4, own elaboration.

- **“Look at my beautiful prehistoric jewels!” – (10 minutes)**

Description	Through the task of making prehistoric necklaces we work in the classroom on the serialization of shapes and colours. In the mathematical corner we find a bowl with long and short macaroni and another bowl with coloured balls. Students build their own prehistoric necklace with these materials following a pattern marked by maths series cards.
L. Corner	Maths Corner.

Skills	Fine motor skills, series creation and monitoring, association, assimilation of concepts, reading and attention.
Materials	Long and short macaronis, coloured balls, strings, and seriation pattern cards.
Interaction	Partner work.
Scaffolding	Elaboration of work partners on my part. I will join more advanced students with others who need more support, to create compensated groups.

Table 10. Learning Corners Activity 5, own elaboration.

- **“The life in caves” - (10 minutes)**

Description	Play and dramatization of some scenes that we have seen about life in Prehistory. The corner has elements and toys that sum up the lifestyle in Prehistory, for example, students collect fruits to eat, they try to make a fake fire with dry twigs and red glossy paper, they stay in a small cave made of paper and cardboard. In addition, I show students the main elements used at this epoch.
L. Corners	Symbolic Game Corner.
Skills	Listening, speaking, imitation and representation, association, understanding the lifestyle of another era, social relations and interaction.
Materials	Natural elements (branches, rocks, herbs ...), toys and elements related to Prehistory, red glossy paper, continuous paper and cardboard.
Interaction	Teamwork - groups of 4 students.
Scaffolding	Students can interact in their mother tongue, but I make corrective feedbacks in English, which students should repeat. The most advanced students can describe the prehistoric elements which we use in this corner, with simple phrases or descriptive adjectives in English.

Table 11. Learning Corners Activity 6, own elaboration.

In the second week, the tasks and activities to be carried out are:

- **Sessions 4, 5 and 6:** We carry out different activities in the aforementioned corners of the classroom to discover more details of the Prehistoric period.

In the third week, the tasks and activities to be carried out are:

- **Sessions 7 and 8:** Preparation of the classroom and the various Learning Corners for the elaboration of an exhibition with the compilation of everything learned about Prehistory, working in groups of 4 students.
- **Session 9:** Completion of the final task - prehistoric museum. We show families and remains of Infant Education classes our exhibition or museum about Prehistory. Students in groups act as guides, demonstrating their knowledge of Prehistory and the English language.

5.11. Methodology

The main methodology used in this Infant Education classroom is, as mentioned, the Learning Corners, for its enormous educational benefits. According to Moll and Pujol (1988), students get a greater integration in the group-class and achieve the guidelines to obtain a good socialization with the help of this method. With these corners, free participation, imagination and creativity, interrelation and communication are promoted in the kids. Moreover, for Fernández (2009) working through this methodology fosters the child's intrinsic motivation to learn and enhances their autonomy, helping them be more responsible (both with the work they do and with the materials in each corner). Likewise, according to Sanz (2001), thanks to the fact that the work in corners is done through play, we find happy boys and girls in schools, enjoying what they do.

Furthermore, this method can be complemented with other methodological approaches or methods that enrich student learning. As can be seen in the exposed session plan, the various multiple intelligences are worked with different activities in the corners that encompass different intelligences in the student (linguistic-verbal, logical-mathematical, visual-spatial, musical, corporeal-kinaesthetic, intrapersonal, interpersonal and naturalistic), active and physical activities related to the TPR method, group activities that follow the guidelines of cooperative learning, activities with a final task (in relation to the TBLL method) and activities based on play or gamification. Therefore, we can observe that the Learning Corners method proposes an organization of the classroom which is open and flexible to other methodologies that favour and enrich the significant learning of students, in accordance with the psycho-evolutionary characteristics of students of the second cycle of Infant Education, which requires active, manipulative, playful, routine and social learning. In addition, the Learning Corners is compatible

with the CLIL approach, promoting the integrated learning of content and language of a second language through an oral, communicative and natural way at these ages.

Finally, it should be noted that students have an active role in teaching; they build their own learning through play and interaction with materials and peers. In turn, the teacher maintains an observer, support and guide role for the students, as well as families collaborate with the school to offer coherent and quality education to their children.

5.12. Attention to Diversity

Attention to Diversity is regulated by the Order of July 25, 2008, for basic education in public schools in Andalusia. This attention is essential, so it guarantees equal opportunities to all students. Diversity can be of different types: educational support due to high intellectual capacities, students who have joined the educational system late, others with compensatory needs or with special educational needs.

According to Del Carmen and Viera (2000), it is very likely that there is a wide diversity among students in the Infant Education stage, given the great and rapid evolutionary development that children live at these early ages. Young students show different levels of development according to the stimulation received and their personal characteristics (age, gender, intellectual capacity, maturation delay, different learning rhythms, language problems, affection, behaviour or the motivation of each one). Other decisive aspects are family factors (which include characteristics such as being an only child or having siblings, having separated parents, parenting style or excess/lack of rules at home) and socio-cultural factors (origin of foreigners or immigrants, belonging to an ethnic minority and the level socio-economic-cultural environment of the students).

For these reasons, there is no homogeneity in the classroom. Each student has a different learning style, different cognitive styles, learning experiences and dissimilarities in skills, abilities, and interests (Gardner, 1993). Therefore, heterogeneity is a source of wealth and a learning engine, given that students themselves can help each other in the process of language acquisition. In turn, teachers take advantage of this rich diversity in their didactic planning a range of various educational activities.

The measures of Attention to Diversity used at a general level are the following: flexible groupings, support through a second teacher in the classroom, preparation of the School Linguistic Project, teaching collaboration and with the family. At the classroom level, these measures are: an initial evaluation and follow-up of tasks based on the students' prior knowledge, use of the cooperative method, support for explanations using the mother tongue when required, preparation of extension and reinforcement activities, favouring a good climate in the classroom, positive reinforcement of the self-esteem of the students, use of a CLIL approach for bilingual teaching and the implementation in the classroom of the methodology by Learning Corners. We would like to explain these last two aspects in depth for their relevance in this work.

The Learning Corners methodology responds to Attention to Diversity, considering that “los rincones son una forma de organización donde cada niño y cada niña pueden actuar con autonomía y elegir la actividad en función de sus necesidades e intereses” (Del Carmen and Viera, 2000:25). The Learning Corners are specifically concerned with the classroom environment and the climate of security, which causes children to work and feel in harmony in their classroom. These corners offer the possibility of carrying out different activities with various materials, in which the learning rhythm and the choice of space of each student are respected. Hence, the individualised attention and the development of all multiple intelligences are possible in the corners. In addition, no boy or girl has a feeling of failure in working with the Learning Corners, since they are not compared to others and each one acts according to their possibilities and limitations to achieve their own goals.

Regarding the CLIL approach, it pays attention to diversity and to different learning styles and rhythms, based on the scaffolding process and the students' prior knowledge. Moreover, CLIL encourages a collaborative learning, which favours peer help. It follows the theory of Coyle (2007: 551) which refers to the 4 C's framework: content, communication, cognition and culture, as previously mentioned, getting to carry out a holistic and integrated approach to learning, which benefits the attention to school diversity. It should be noted that cognition is based on Bloom's well-known taxonomy (Cummins, 1999), which ranges from lower order thinking skills (LOTS) to higher order thinking skills (HOTS). CLIL methodology allows students to learn a foreign

language almost unconsciously and contextually, achieving significant and functional learning.

In summary, various work alternatives are presented in this didactic proposal to assist the teaching-learning process of each and every one of the students, attending to their diversity.

5.13. Transversality and Interdisciplinarity

The CLIL Project was born in our school with the intention of promoting linguistic diversity and learning of the integrated English language from the joint work of various subjects. Consequently, we would like to motivate students to appreciate the importance of English in today's world and improve their language skills, along with the rest of teachers.

Teachers should be aware that "la transversalidad es un reto que implica una nueva manera de organizar y planificar los aprendizajes" (Torres and Sala, 2011: 64). Thus, new techniques should be designed, urging teamwork and coordination among teachers. For this reason, the need to work in coordination with teachers and on various topics in an interdisciplinary way, have emerged in the school. It seems to me that betting on a cooperative methodology makes us grow professionally and directly affects the quality of our CLIL sessions and of our teaching practice. In turn, this approach allows students to acquire meaningful and integrated learning.

Therefore, it is not about working the contents of each subject separately and framing them under a common project without interaction or consensus, but rather harmonizing the knowledge of various subjects to build knowledge. In the integrated curriculum, the contents are related to each other and to real life. On the contrary, in the disciplinary curriculum the topics are plots of reality, unrelated and isolated (Arteaga, 2005: 205).

In this didactic proposal we work through interdisciplinary projects (Coyle, Hood and Marsh, 2010) taking place in the different Learning Corners of the classroom. In them, the teaching-learning process of the CLIL content is carried out in an active, interactive, communicative and autonomous way. Moreover, different areas of the curriculum are worked on, such as Science, Mathematics, Literature, Plastic Arts, Music or Languages. According to the Order of June 28, 2011, which regulates bilingual education in schools

in Andalusia, the most appropriate pedagogical method for learning the second language in the classroom is globally, linking the linguistic content with the content corresponding to the other areas of the cycle.

In addition, it should be noted that the Order of August 5, 2008, which develops the curriculum corresponding to Infant Education in Andalusia, in its article 3 establishes “las áreas del currículo se organizarán desde un enfoque globalizador y deben entenderse de manera interdependiente y planificarse, consecuentemente, de forma integrada y contextualizada, acomodando su desarrollo a las características, intereses y necesidades de los niños y niñas”. Hence, the different areas of the curriculum transversally integrate the development of “valores democráticos, cívicos y éticos de nuestra sociedad, la diversidad cultural, la sostenibilidad, la cultura de paz, los hábitos de consumo y vida saludable y la utilización del tiempo de ocio.” All these aspects have been taken into account when planning and developing this teaching proposal.

In conclusion, teachers leave behind the way to enhance understanding of education as an artificial and decontextualized practice of content belonging to different areas or disciplines. On the contrary, Infant Education is oriented from a globalized perspective to both the teaching and learning processes. For this reason, we support interdisciplinarity and transversality by implementing the Learning Corners method in this CLIL classroom.

5.14. Assessment

According to Le Grange & Reddy (1998: 3) “assessment occurs when judgments are made about a learner’s performance, and entails gathering and organizing information about learners in order to make decisions and judgments about their learning.” Educational assessment is the systematic process of documenting and using empirical data on the knowledge, skill, attitudes, and beliefs to refine programs and improve student learning. Therefore, the assessment is an integrative and fundamental component in education and a necessary tool to see the evolution of the students when acquiring the language and the contents.

Assessment procedures give a response to the questions of when and how we need to assess. We will also mention the strategies, techniques and tools we are going to use for the assessment of the teaching and learning process.

- Initial assessment: To check the students' level and previously acquired knowledge in relation to the unit. Students will do some activities so that we get information about how they can deal with this unit.
- Formative assessment: It will be covered by the systematic observation of the progress in the learning of individual students; by means of the daily work at class, the tasks in the Learning Corners, their homework, their notebooks, and the active participation in class.
- Final Assessment: At the end of the didactic unit we carry out an assessment rubric analysing the achievement or lack thereof by the students of the assessment criteria in relation to the didactic objectives set. Thus, we observe the evolution and learning of the student, and analyze the possible changes in other units.

The application of methods and techniques that makes possible the Continuous Assessment requires some tools in order for teachers to keep data systematically and to adapt the learning process according to the students' needs and achievements. The essential tools that are going to be used are the following: self-assessment forms so that learners benefit from keeping an ongoing record of their learning; checklists and rubrics so that teachers can observe the students' attitudes and assimilation of contents throughout the unit; teacher's diaries in which class incidents are recorded (performance and participation by the students); questionnaires and tests are also very useful; and the European portfolio that is an open document developed by the Council of Europe in which language learning experiences are recorded and reflected.

On the other hand, CLIL supposes the planned pedagogic integration of contextualized content, cognition, communication and culture into teaching and learning practice. So Coyle (2007: 551) refers to "the 4 C's framework: content, communication, cognition and culture." This CLIL framework should be taken into account in the assessment of its educational process.

Below, an example of three assessment tools for this teaching unit:

- **Assessment of the Learning Corner:** It is very important that teachers know the educational utility of the corners and their resources to reuse, adapt or

replace them in subsequent lessons. As an assessment tool, we use a simple and practical checklist:

<u>Criteria</u>		
1. Do materials build on the knowledge and skills of students?		
2. Do materials build on the interests of students?		
3. Is the material's topic/language information children-friendly?		
4. Do the Learning Corners and materials include different learning styles of students?		
5. Are the Learning Corners and resources challenging for students, but not daunting?		

Table 12. Checklist for assessing of the Learning Corner, own elaboration.

- **Teacher self-evaluation:** Another aspect to take into account in an efficient assessment is the role played by teachers. They are an educational agent of vital importance for students. Teachers can assess their performance with the following rubric:

Aspects	Aspects to be highlighted	Aspects to improve	Self-improvement proposal
Timing of the teaching units			
Development of teaching objectives			
Integration of the 4Cs			
Management of content			
Methodological strategy selected			
Resources			
Effectiveness of assessment tools			
Attention to diversity			

Table 13. Teacher self-assessment rubric, own elaboration.

- **Final task assessment rubric:** This didactic unit culminates with the exposition of our prehistoric museum, in which we assess the knowledge acquired by students individually, using a rubric organized according to Coyle's 4Cs.

Criteria of each category	Descriptor/ Standards			
	1 (0-25%)	2 (25-50%)	3 (50-75%)	4 (75-100%)
Cognition The student understands and identifies the differences between prehistory and today.	The student does not appreciate the differences between the current era and the prehistoric era.	The student appreciates some differences between the current era and the life in prehistory.	The student knows and identifies some differences between the prehistoric era and the current era.	The student is aware of the multiple differences between the prehistoric era and the current era.
Content The student knows the main characteristics of Prehistory.	The student does not appreciate the characteristics of the lifestyle in Prehistory.	The student shows a basic knowledge of the lifestyle in Prehistory.	The student shows a wide knowledge of the lifestyle in Prehistory.	The students show a complete knowledge of the lifestyle in Prehistory.
Communication The student uses the adequate vocabulary about Prehistory and simple phrases for the description of its elements.	The student does not know the basic vocabulary about Prehistory.	The student knows some elements of Prehistory and makes mistakes in the sentences.	The student uses a lot of vocabulary about Prehistory and makes correct sentences, with a few errors.	The student has an extensive vocabulary and elaborates sentences correctly.
Culture The student elaborates and knows how to describe cave paintings.	The student has shown no interest in cave paintings.	The student makes cave paintings, but does not know how to describe them.	The student makes cave paintings and describes them with some errors.	The student makes cave paintings and describes them perfectly.

Table 14. Assessment rubric of a task on Prehistory, own elaboration.

6. CONCLUSION

We consider that the learning of a foreign language in a classroom of Infant Education should follow a natural approach (Pérez Cañado and Ojeda-Pinar, 2018). Children immerse themselves in the language with topics that are of interest and motivational for them. As teachers, we should not forget that children of these ages learn through game and doing. Therefore, the learning process should be fun, active and participatory; definitely, a pleasure for students as César Bona (2015) defends. The Learning Corners is a student-based methodology that is perfect for Infant Education. This methodology achieves an integral development in the students, and the acquisition of a second language in a meaningful and functional way, fulfilling its quality integrated learning from an early age.

The purpose of this TFM is to show the methodological usefulness, which the classroom organization in Learning Corners has for the CLIL lessons in an Infant Education classroom, specifically 4 years old. Through this methodological approach, teachers not only start from the motivation and interest of the students, but also we promote interaction, teamwork, content acquisition, autonomy and linguistic development in both languages (L1 and L2) of our students. As it has been shown, learning through Learning Corners allows using different types of innovative methodologies in the education of children, achieving a global and quality education.

Through the implementation in this CLIL classroom of the Learning Corners methodology, it has been possible to observe a greater participation, motivation and positive results in the oral linguistic development of the second language (English) of the students. In these Learning Corners, a better interaction between students and the achievement of meaningful learning of content in English and other curricular areas has been observed, in a natural, practical and fun way. So the success of the implementation of this methodology in a CLIL classroom is confirmed in practice.

In summary, the Learning Corners is a successful and useful methodology that can be implemented in CLIL lessons with young students, due to their flexible, active and motivating nature. In them, teachers can carry out activities of various kinds that achieve an integral development of the students. And even, we can carry out in later stages promoting the methodological continuity between stages.

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