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Trabajo Fin de Grado

Methods and Approaches for Primary English Teaching

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ABSTRACT

Over the years, Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL) has evolved and suffered numerous changes thanks to the multiple contributions of renowned psychologists, linguists and pedagogues. This leads the teachers to choose between a wide range of possibilities what they should teach and how they should perform their work.

The present Degree Dissertation aims to compile information about methodologies of Total Physical Response (TPR), Competency-Based Teaching (CBT), Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), The Natural Approach (NA) and Cooperative Learning (CL) in order to help teachers of English as a foreign language to incorporate some of these methodologies in their teaching.

Apart from this, I will attach a didactic proposal with these methodologies to demonstrate how they can be brought easily to the classroom and with are the pros and cons of each one.

Key words: *Language Teaching, Method, Approach, Didactic Proposal.*

A lo largo de los años, la enseñanza del inglés como lengua extranjera ha evolucionado y sufrido numerosos cambios gracias a las múltiples aportaciones de renombrados psicólogos, lingüistas y pedagogos. Esto lleva al profesorado a tener que elegir entre un amplio abanico de posibilidades el qué deberían enseñar y como deberían llevar a cabo su labor.

El presente Trabajo Fin de Grado busca recopilar información sobre las metodologías de Respuesta Física Total (RFT), Enseñanza Basada en Competencias (EBC), Enfoque del Comunicativo (EC), el Método Natural (MN) y el Aprendizaje Cooperativo (AC) para ayudar a los profesores de inglés como lengua extranjera a incorporar algunas de estas metodologías en su actuación docente.

Además de esto, adjunto una propuesta didáctica donde las ya citadas metodologías aparecen, para así demostrar cuán fácilmente pueden ser llevadas al aula y cuáles son los pros y los contras de cada una.

Palabras clave: *Enseñanza de Idiomas, Método, Enfoque, Propuesta Didáctica.*

1. INTRODUCTION

Through this Degree Dissertation I will talk about some of the information that I have compiled over my years of studying the Primary Education degree, and more precisely in the Language Teaching area. The objective of this project is to collect information of some methodologies that I would like to work with in the future, specifying some of their main characteristics, such as when they appeared, their author, the approach that they embody, their objectives, their contents, their syllabuses, the roles that this method assigns to teachers, the role that it gives to students, some observations and opinions about them, etc.

After that, I have elaborated a didactic proposal that shows in a practical way the information obtained about the theoretical background and transform it into active teaching. This proposal combines most of the characteristics of the chosen methodologies in order to procure an interesting and useful proposal.

I have decided to focus my Degree Dissertation on this topic because of the wide range of options that appears in front of teachers when they face the challenge that suppose programming for Foreign Language Teaching entails, in order to widen my knowledge about the topic and to share my ideas about this.

2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1. Fundamental concepts of language teaching

Before we start analysing the information, I have searched information about the different methods that I have chosen as the most interesting to incorporate in the classroom, I would like to clarify some previous ideas.

Over the years, linguists all over the world have been in search of the new and perfect method which could meet the challenge of teaching a foreign language. Although this method has not been discovered, it seems that linguists have not desisted from searching it, since the last century witnessed the birth and death of numerous methods. This fact is positive, because the new methods aim to give solutions to the changing necessities of the society, taking some aspects of the previous ones and improving their performance. On the other hand, Sánchez (2009: 13) points this fact as negative, and suggests that these continuous changes of methodologies respond to three main reasons:

- 1) The frustration caused by the process of learning a new language to the students, which does not seem to disappear despite the efforts of linguists and teachers.
- 2) The general assumption that getting successful results on the process of learning a new language is based on the method selected on its teaching and/or learning.
- 3) The tendency to underestimate the complexity of the learning process and the impossibility of facing this problem in a unique and closed way.

This last idea fits perfectly with some of the main concepts of Foreign Language Teaching and how these concepts were settled in a closed and specific hierarchy. I am talking about the elements of a method and the different model proposals that linguists created. In this way we find proposals made by Anthony (1963), Bosco & Di Pietro (1970) or Richards & Rodgers (2001).

Anthony (1963, in Sánchez 2009: 16) creates a clear hierarchy between the different elements of a method, these being approach (it refers to the nature of learning and teaching process), method (it refers to the materials, procedures and ways that can be used to follow a specific approach) and procedures (it refers to the activities that are going to be done in class). Bosco & Di Pietro (1970, in Sánchez 2009: 17) propose to analyse methods according to a list of characteristics. Richards & Rodgers (2001: 33) talk about approach (theoretical background that explains the nature of language and learning/teaching), design (materials, activities, objectives, teacher's role, student's role and materials' role) and procedure (how are methods and approaches are applied in the classroom).

These proposals help us to understand what a method is and what characteristics make them different from the others, helping us to choose which ones are better according to our beliefs, our capacities and our knowledge. However, we have to consider that these methods give a simple and close answer to what should be done, and they do not take into account the different realities in the classroom, so we should not follow this or these chosen methods blindly. Sánchez (2009: 18) remarks that methodology and the way that these methods are analysed is evolving into a laxer way. We have to avoid simple solutions and start to think of a multidisciplinary way, using our expertise in areas such as linguistics, pedagogy, psychology and sociology to give answers to questions like

when/where/how a foreign language is learnt, what we are going to teach, why and for what we are going to teach those things and what we are heeding to make those choices.

In addition, we should be aware that language teaching is not something that can be easily classified into methods.

Since language learning and teaching needs, wants and situations are unpredictably numerous, no idealized method can visualize all the variables in advance in order to provide situation-specific suggestions that practicing teachers sorely need to tackle the challenges they confront every day of their professional lives.

Kumaravadivelu (2003: 29, in Madrid & Hughes 2006: 43)

Lastly, we need to know that good language teaching is a difficult concept to define. Normally theorists and teachers have different points of view about this concept but we should combine these different ideas, integrating them in a mutual enriching way, as Brown points.

We are all practitioners and we are all theorists. We are all charged with developing a broadly-based conceptualisation on the process of language learning and teaching. We are all responsible for understanding as much as we can on how to create contexts for optimal acquisition among learners.

Brown (2000: 289, in Madrid & Hughes 2006: 45)

After speaking about these previous ideas, I am going to talk about those methods that I find specially interesting to bring into the classroom. Those are Total Physical Response (TPR), Competency-Based Language Teaching (CBLT), Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), The Natural Approach (NA) and the Cooperative Learning (CL).

2.2. Total Physical Response

Total Physical Response is a language teaching method that tries to achieve learning through physical activity. It was developed by James Asher, who was a professor of psychology at San Jose State University in California. This method shows a grammar-based point of view of language teaching with a clear humanistic nature. Asher (1997:4, in Richards and Rodgers 2001: 73) states that “most of the grammatical structure of the target language and hundreds of vocabulary items can be learned from the skilful use of

the imperative by the instructor”. This method can be also related to the “trace theory” of memory in psychology, which says that the more often or the more intensively a memory connection is made, the stronger the memory association will be, as it will make it easier to recall. In this way the combination of verbal indications with motor activity will strengthen this connection, which will have learning as a result.

After this we could relate Asher’s Total Physical Response as a “Natural Method”, as Asher sees first and second language learning as parallel processes. For Asher (2001: 74) there are three main processes in common:

- 1) Children develop listening competence firstly, and then the ability to speak. At the early stages of first language acquisition, children can understand oral messages that they are not capable to produce by themselves. In this way, students of a second language can understand simple messages that they cannot produce spontaneously.
- 2) Children’s ability in listening comprehension is acquired because of the necessity to respond to the spoken language in the form of simple commands coming from an adult. In the case of second language students, it works in a similar way, since understanding oral inputs is essential for communication and learning.
- 3) Once the children have laid the foundation on listening comprehension, speech evolves naturally thanks to that acquisition. In the case of second language students, they can develop their speaking skill in a meaningful way once they have created a cognitive map which is created thanks to the oral messages and indications of the teacher and the interconnections made with their mother tongue.

Seeing those processes, we can emphasize the importance of the listening skills over the speaking skills in first or second language acquisition. In this way, the Total Physical Response method follows a natural way of learning since it focusses on the listening skills, comprehension that is tested by the students’ motor actions, which could be considered as a perk. Another advantage of this method lies on the fact that the acquisition of the language is reached in an stress-free environment that will help the student to overcome their fears and relate language learning with a pleasurable and motivating process, which will lead to real learning, since they will be able to recall those meaningful language units thanks to the movement and retain them longer thanks to that special learning environment created in class.

Once we have seen some of the main characteristics of this model, we will focus on the design of syllabuses under this method.

To begin with, we must bear in mind that the main objective of this method is to reach oral proficiency at an initial level. In order to do that, oral comprehension plays a key role because the settled goals must be attainable using action-based drill commands, which tend to come in the imperative form. In this way objectives are settled around the specific contents that the teacher has marked as important, giving an answer to the specific needs that the students are trying to solve at that moment.

This makes the syllabuses be based on the comprehension, production, and performance of some sentences or commands, focusing on the meaning instead of the grammatical elements of the language. For Asher there is a fixed number of items that the student can learn and integrate into their cognitive maps, so it is important to prepare and have clear which are going to be the new elements taught in a class beforehand, since the fast dynamics of the class will not let us improvise. “In an hour, it is possible to assimilate 12 to 36 new lexical items depending upon the size of the group and the stage of training” (Asher 1977: 42, in Richards and Rodgers 2001: 76).

Learners in Total Physical Response play the primary roles of listeners and performers. They must pay attention to the teacher commands and respond to them through physical actions. The difficulty of these tasks will evolve gradually with the incorporation of new items to those already known. In this way, the learning process will start with the acquisition of some basic items that will lead to complex commands, performance of roleplays and, finally, the practice of conversational dialogues, always avoiding stressing students. Meanwhile, teachers have an active and direct role in this method. They are those who decide what the students must learn and the items that will be necessary to achieve this learning by assimilation. Materials and realia have an important role in the latest stages, since in early stages the commands and gestures of the teacher are usually enough for the purpose of teaching. These materials go from classroom materials to pictures and realia. We must also consider that the correction process in this method goes in a similar way to that when parents are teaching their kids. In an early stage the correction is mainly avoided, since we want to encourage students to produce as many utterances as possible while we keep that stress-free learning environment.

In conclusion, Total Physical Response is a very interesting method to bring to the class since it respects the natural way of learning a language, while it creates a stress-free environment that lets the students use the language being less self-conscious, thus making the language learning process a motivating and pleasurable task. It has proved to be very useful with students with low level in the target language, but in my opinion, it should be combined with other methods as the students develop a wider cognitive map to supplement some deficiencies like the appearance of some linguistic abstract issues that are needed to be learned and cannot be taught just by commands or gestures, like tenses.

2.3. Competency-Based Language Teaching

Competency Based Education (CBE) appeared in the United States in the 1970s and refers to an educational movement which tries to define educational goals in terms of precise and measurable description of the knowledge, skills and behaviours students should possess at the end of a course of study. Competency-Based Language Teaching (CBLT) is an application of this teaching method to language teaching. This approach was widely adopted by the end of the 1970s, highlighting programs for adults and it was considered as “the most important breakthrough in adult ESL” by the Center for Applied Linguistics (1983).

The main difference between this method and the others that I have selected is that CBLT focuses on the final product that we are supposed to obtain, in this case, the acquisition of competences, instead of focusing on the process that we should follow to accomplish the objectives. Taking competences as the main focus has some really interesting advantages. Once we have established the competences, they will clarify what is supposed to be learned and that will help the students to achieve the knowledge, skills and behaviours expected from them, so it is appropriate to say that this method has a clear constructivist nature.

While giving students the knowledge of what is expected from them could be easy in areas like industrial work or sales, in humanities, and specifically in language learning, is a difficult process. Firstly, because as I explained in section 1, we should avoid close and simple answers to face the challenge that teaching a new language is. Secondly, the abstraction that characterises language learning requires their competences to be established in relation to some complex factors:

- 1) Which communicative skill are we aiming at (speaking, listening, writing or reading).
- 2) The scope of language in which communication is happening (e-mail, postal, newspaper, novel...).
- 3) The use of language in the interchange of information (colloquial, formal).
- 4) The stylistic level of communication (academic, use of figures of speech).
- 5) Establish the list of words and structures necessities to master these competences.

Thirdly, working with this method needs to make the assumption that teachers can predict the totality of vocabulary and structures that tends to appear in each particular situation and that he or she can organise in clear units of teaching/learning.

Now that we have a main idea of what this method is, I am going to talk about how the syllabuses following this method are programmed. Normally, the syllabus is designed around the notion of subject knowledge but, in this case, it would be done around the notion of competency. The focus moves from what students know about a language to what they can do with that knowledge in a situation either close to real life or a fiction based on real life. Because of that we will analyse the student's capacity to show their skills, knowledge, attitudes and behaviours while they complete the different tasks proposed by us, instead of focusing on the acquisition of theoretical inputs, like grammatical rules or reaching some objectives established on the basis of theoretical contents. It does not mean that we are going to overshadow grammatical contents in order to focus on real life use of L2, but we will have to embed its teaching into a more contextualized environment, fostering real-like situations and simulations or even applying L2 in real contexts.

Aurback (1986, in Richards & Rodgers 2001: 145-146) elaborated a list of objectives that syllabuses have to meet to follow the CBLT method.

- 1) Focus on successful functioning in society: we should not forget that this is the final goal of the whole methodology.
- 2) Focus on life skills: as we are instructing learners to use L2 properly in a real or simulated environment, it is logical to think that the aim of this method is to be able to manage the common life scenarios.

- 3) Task-centred orientation: this method does not rely on expositive explanations as they do not let students show their achievements. It is preferable to give them different tasks to motivate and improve the real use of L2.
- 4) Modularized instructions: L2 can be subdivided into smaller “chunks” which have to be acquired by the students. It also happens with objectives, which can be split into subobjectives.
- 5) Outcomes that are made explicit a priori: students should know what is expected from them in order to meet the established competences. This helps to focus the process on the outcomes.
- 6) Continuous and ongoing assessment: the method has a progressive way of teaching and improving students’ L2, in order to accomplish a meaningful learning.
- 7) Demonstrated mastery of performance objectives: the students will have to demonstrate their mastery by the use of L2 in real-like situations that will make them show a different group of skills, knowledge and behaviours.
- 8) Student-centred instruction: every educational action taken in this method is centred on specific students. Thus, the same way of teaching cannot be applied to every student, if we want to guarantee the efficiency of this method.

The teacher’s role is to establish what is going to be worked in class, giving clear explanations and indications of what is expected from students, but always avoiding to push students into certain ways of acting, this means that students should be able to choose what is preferable to do with their capacities, skills and knowledge in L2. That process will be the main point, giving less importance to the result. In conclusion, the teacher has to keep in mind that proficiency is more important than efficiency. In order to do that, the teacher takes the observer role and helps equally both to students with difficulties and advanced ones, adapting the difficulty of the task and the level of required adequacy to each learner, in order to achieve significant learning.

On the other hand, the student is the absolute protagonist of the procedure of learning, assuming an active role in this methodology. This lets students incorporate the new inputs and show their already gained skills and knowledge, following their own natural learning rhythm. They also have the responsibility of giving and receiving feedback from their teachers and partners. In this way, the student’s necessities are covered in a closer way, since they are the ones who decide how to acquire the L2, and what they have to do with it, making the process of learning an inner choice, which means positive and meaningful learning.

In conclusion, this method proposes a really interesting way of learning, since the students are those who are meant to reflex about the use of L2 and how they will acquire the different knowledge that will let them perform the skills and behaviours that are expected from them. However, I do not recommend to use this method in Primary Education, at least not in an integral and isolated way. My reasons to think like this are the following ones:

- 1) The great difficult that establishing the competences and the language “chunks” that compose them entails, in a way that they do not condition the students’ learning, since students that can show a higher skill with language could worsen their performance in order to adjust to what is specifically required to accomplish the competence.
- 2) In Primary Education, the maturity of the students may not be enough to let them be in charge of their learning process, so teacher monitoring will be needed.
- 3) This method was thought initially for adults, where groups are made according to the students’ levels, making it easier for teachers to create tasks adapted to the group. In Primary Education groups are made according to student’s age, which normally means that those groups will be heterogeneous.

Because of that, my proposal will take some of the main features of this method, combining it with other methods to compensate its defects.

2.4. The Communicative Method

Before I start talking about this methodology, I want to make a distinction between the Communicative Method and the Communicative Approach. Both terminologies are correct, and the main difference lies on what we are referring to. The Communicative Approach refers to the pedagogical movement which focuses its attention to a process of learning a foreign language in order to develop communicative skills. This approach includes some methods which follow its final goal, and, between them, I have chosen the Communicative Method as the most interesting.

The ideas of that Method started to have an impact in the 1960’s when British renown linguists began to doubt about the standard tendency, which was Situational Language Teaching. Chomsky (1957, in Richards & Rodgers 2001: 153), in his book *Syntactic Structures* points that this tendency fails into analysing some important aspects

of language such as creativity and uniqueness of individual sentences. British linguists pointed another breakdown of this tendency, the functional and communicative potential of language.

This way of thinking was also reinforced by the rise of pragmatics in language studies. Pragmatics has a great importance for this method, since the communicative approach highlights the necessity to study language by its use, not by formulation of abstract linguistic theories. In this way, aspects that were downplayed as context, speakers' capacities, speakers' intentions... were considered, giving solutions to some of the main problems of Situational Language teaching.

In this way, language begins to be studied in a global way, where structures and sentences analysis also includes suprasentential elements. In this way, interest in linguistics forms decreases in favour of the communicative process that takes part with the use of language, focusing on used language and leaving the idea of "perfect language" behind.

However, this openly communicative nature should not obscure completely other linguistic aspects that are important too. In this way, teachers must find a way to hierarchise all linguistic components in order to include them in the teaching process, always thinking of the main objective of this method, which is helping students to acquire all the knowledge, strategies and skills that will help them to communicate in the target language. In order to do that, teachers should know a list of characteristics proposed by Sánchez (2009: 110-111) that give us perfunctory information about what a communicative activity is.

- 1) Communicative activities focus on the content of the message and its transmission from one person to other, since language is understood as a tool for communication.
- 2) Communication always happens within a context that helps participants and those who study this communication to fully understand the message.
- 3) Communication happens because there is an interest or intention between interlocutors.
- 4) Communication pursues a specific objective.
- 5) The code chosen by interlocutors helps to communicate in an efficient way, but its study (grammar) has not a real interest per se. Grammatical knowledge is a tool to facilitate communication and not an objective of language teaching, which is the tendency in more traditional classes.

According to these characteristics, teachers should program activities that focus on the communicative process that our students will have on their learning process that will help them to acquire relevant contents for them and not on language formal aspects, participating actively on classroom dynamics, in order to achieve something.

In relation to objectives and the contents that will lead us to reach these objectives, they will be considered the delimiters of activities, their selection being one of the most important and complex steps of this method. In order to do that, the teacher has to select and establish which will be the semantic fields and topics that will be used in class, in what situations they will be used, the function of the communicative process, and those linguistic aspects considered by the teacher like grammar, structures, pragmatics, etc.

According to this, we can say that the teacher's role is guiding the class, establishing the ideal conditions to help students to communicate in order to create their own knowledge and adding it to what is already known about the target language, and intervening only when it is required. On the other hand, students take the role of protagonists of the educational process, participating actively in classroom dynamics.

After talking about these roles, I would like to stress an idea that will take an important role in my didactic proposal. When we teach in Primary Education, we cannot forget that we are working with children, which means that we cannot expect a proficient use from English, or any other second language, coming from people that are still developing their cognitive structure. In fact, it is too pretentious to expect this proficiency from people that are still learning and acquiring knowledge in their mother tongue. In order to achieve the skills, knowledge and behaviours necessary to communicate, students are exposed to the target language thanks to the communicative situations that teacher has planned. The truth is that students do not learn most of the communicative inputs that they receive until they have been exposed to them plenty of times, and many of them are just there to give form to language. It does not mean that they are not important, just that they are not strictly necessary. That creates a hierarchy between what inputs are expected to be learnt by the students and which of them acquire a secondary character in students' outputs.

This characteristic of the Communicative Method meets some of the problematics of the Competency-Based Method, since teachers have to choose what to teach and establish some contents that must to be acquired, leaving total freedom to the students

when they have to face a communicative situation. It also takes some of the ideas of Natural Learning, because when students are exposed to the L2, they must analyse, understand, acquire, and use those inputs in order to communicate successfully, respecting their own process of learning.

In conclusion, using this method to meet the challenge that is teaching a new language seems to be a good option due to its nature, which bets for communication in a society that is more globalised over time. Although it requires a high preparation beforehand to be implemented, it facilitates the acquisition of real learning of the target language. As Shazi Shah Jabeen (2014) explains in her article “Implementation of the Communicative Approach” a gap between theoretical aspects of language and practical ones still exists in language teaching nowadays due to factors like overpopulation in classrooms, the difficulties that teachers have to face in order to follow the premises of Communicative Language Teaching Method, etc. It requires a big compromise from teachers and students and brings a wide range of choices, allowing its use in combination with other methodologies, allowing students to enjoy of a varied and motivating learning process, which, in my opinion, is the key to success in teaching a foreign language at such an early stage of formal education.

2.5. The Natural Approach

In 1977 Tracy Terrel, a teacher of Spanish in California elaborated and proposed several ideas based on his experience and teaching activity. Thanks to the collaboration with S. Krashen, his theory saw the light: Terrell & Krashen (1983). On their joint work “the Natural Approach”, they show important news on Language Teaching that became quite relevant. This work includes a theoretical section and classroom procedures to illustrate the ideas developed by this method.

Natural methods have in common the fact that the main objective of Language Teaching is to be likened to how children acquire their mother tongue, modifying some aspects related to this acquisition and establishing some inputs that will have a higher relevance. In this way Krashen & Terrell focus on the process that allows the acquisition of the target language, and not on the language nature and then establish a procedure based on that.

Krashen (1982b: 17, in Sánchez 2003: 129) propose several hypotheses backed by many studies and empirical evidences, that gives us information about the whole

Natural Method and its characteristics. In this way, I am going explain and analyse them in the following paragraphs.

The first hypothesis is the *acquisition/learning hypothesis*. Krashen distinguishes between two very interesting concepts of didactics, which are the acquisition and the learning of a language. In this way acquisition is understood as the natural process that allows children to incorporate a language to their cognitive system in an unconscious and involuntary way, thanks to the exposure to significative communicative situations. Meanwhile, learning is considered as conscious and deliberated, since it requires reasoning from students, and an incorporation to their cognitive system in an artificial way. Acquisition is better than learning because those inputs that are acquired last in time and are easily brought to communicative situations.

The second hypothesis is the *input hypothesis*. This hypothesis highlights that the key to acquire a language is to expose students to a lot of meaningful communicative situations, which means that they have to be relevant and interesting for the students and at the same time be comprehensible because this exposure will not have a positive effect. In this way, we have to guarantee a simple exposure to the language, in order to facilitate its acquisition, and when those simple inputs are acquired the complexity of the inputs increases in a gradual way in order to acquire the new elements that appear in the communicative situation, although they are unknown, since the students have a linguistic background that will help him to improve. In this case the sender must adjust the message to the knowledge of the student and add complexity to its productions when they have been acquired by the receptor. The order in which communicative situations appears in the classroom is also important. The first to appear will be those that require oral comprehension, followed by those that require reading comprehension. The students have to be exposed to several of these situations before being able to produce their own utterances, appearing first orally and then in written form.

The third one is the *monitor hypothesis*. The main idea of this hypothesis is that the students' utterances are based on his acquired linguistic system. In this way, the conscious learning of the language takes the role of analysing and correcting their utterances, but only when they have time to use a learned rule in their utterance and following the linguistic form required. This does not happen in real communicative situations: this conscious learning is not very useful when it comes to language acquisition.

The fourth one is the *affective filter hypothesis*. Krashen points that the mental state that the learners have when they are facing a communicative situation works as a filter that regulates the acquisition of the language, facilitating or impeding it. This belief has a clear humanistic nature and could be applied in any method that follows this approach. At the moment of acquiring the mother tongue, the learner does not have any filter that impede the acquisition of the language. When he or she grows up these filters start to appear and to stay longer. The main filters that condition the acquisition of language are motivation, anxiety and self-esteem.

The last one is the *natural order hypothesis*. This hypothesis defends that linguistics elements have a natural order of acquisition. This order depends on facts like the frequency of appearance of these elements, the proximity to the learner's context, their complexity etc.

When we want to bring this method to our classroom, we have to remember that the main objective of this method is to allow students to improve their linguistic system exposing them to communicative situations. We cannot expect that students understand every linguistic element that compose an utterance, to have a rich and varied lexicon and with a perfect pronunciation or spelling, but to be able to communicate in an understandable way. On the other hand, the specific objectives depend on students' necessities. This results in the biggest difficulty of this method, which is to establish objectives which are achieved following a process that fits with the necessities of each student.

In this method teacher and student have an active commitment with the language acquisition process. The teacher must create a class climate where students feel confident and unjudged by their partners and the teacher and that respects their acquisition process. In this way, it is advisable to do some relaxation activities and techniques that humanistic methods like suggestopedia or cooperative learning use in their process. We also have to choose those inputs that are easily comprehensible for our students, using visual and real materials that facilitate their comprehension and bringing varied and motivational activities that let students to show their knowledge and skills in the target language in a natural and spontaneous way. If there are any errors or mistakes in students' performance, the teacher should correct them in the most respectful and positive way as possible and only when students have finished their performance.

In conclusion, we can consider this method as a revolutionary method that wants to break with the generalized idea of giving grammar more importance than language, as the communicative method already does. In my opinion if we decide to combine both methods, we can improve the advantages of both and palliate their problems, like the passive role of the teacher in the communicative method or the overload of responsibilities that student has in that method too. In any case, it seems that it is the unique method able to achieve a proficiency level similar to a native speaker. However, the main problem that this method has is that it needs a lot of time to start to work. We cannot obtain enough level of exposure to the language to achieve the total acquisition of the inputs remarked from the whole class in the 3 or 4 weekly sessions that we have with our students in Primary Education. That is why I think that it is important to combine its use with other methodologies that, although they bring back the concept of learning instead of acquiring, can fasten the process of learning the language.

2.6. Cooperative Language Learning

Cooperative Language learning is part of a more general instructional approach, also known as Collaborative Learning:

Collaborative is group learning activities organized so that learning is dependent on the socially structured exchange of information between learners in groups and which each learner is held accountable for his or her own learning and is motivated to increase the learning of others.

(Olsen & Lagan 1992:8, in Richards and Rodgers 2001: 192)

The early twentieth century U.S educator John Dewey promotes the idea of basing class on cooperation as a systematic basis for education. Educators realise that the current model rewards competition over collaboration and leaves back students with more difficulties to follow class level. Cooperative Learning from this tradition does the following things:

- 1) Raises the achievements of all students, including those who are gifted or academically handicapped
- 2) Helps the teacher build positive relationships among students
- 3) Give students the experiences they need for healthy social, psychological and cognitive development
- 4) Replace the cognitive organizational structure of most classrooms and schools with a team-based, high performance organizational structure.

This method is characterised for being a learner-centred method and it has some clear advantages over teacher-fronted classroom methods. First of all, it is a good way to provide students with natural communicative situations that will lead students to the acquisition of language. Secondly, its structure allows teachers to freely combine this methodology with others, giving a wide range of choices and opportunities to be applied in classroom. Thirdly, its interactive tasks allow students to work in a motivating way with particular lexical items, structures and communicative functions. And lastly, it helps to provide a stress-free and motivating environment for students, helping them to acquire the target language and to develop successful communicative strategies.

In this way, the main objective of this method is creating communicative situations that promote language acquisition, thanks to its collaborative nature. The success of this method depends on the nature and organization of group work. Olson & Kagan (1992, in Richards & Rodgers 2001: 196) made a list of elements that group-based learning should grant in order to be successful:

- 1) Positive interdependence: It occurs when members of a group stop thinking in an individual way and realise that problems and achievements of a group's member are seen as problems or achievements by the other members.
- 2) Group formation: it influences on positive interdependence and depends on the characteristics of the group members, like age, their characteristics, the size of the groups, how they will be created, the student's role inside the group etc.
- 3) Individual accountability: refers to individual and group performance on task, giving space to individual evaluation and groups evaluation.
- 4) Social skills: which determines the way students interact with the rest of members of their groups, other members and the teacher.
- 5) The characteristics of interactions and how they will appear in class.

From all this information, we can deduce that the main role of students is to participate actively in group dynamics, developing their teamwork skills and monitoring their learning process and their teammates' ones as well. Meanwhile, teachers have to create a highly structured and well-organized learning environment into classroom, select the goals to pursuit, decide which will be the task to do, organise the grouping and class distribution assigning different roles to each student, selecting the materials used and

organise timings. All that while he monitors the students' performance in order to evaluate and help them whenever it is needed.

In conclusion, the use of discussion groups to work in class is something common and used in many other subjects. These groups allow students to face the communicative situations with more confidence and less fear, and helps them to learn values as teamwork, respect, empathy etc. As Rot (2015) points out in her article "Forms of Cooperative Learning in Language Teaching in Slovenian Language classes at the Primary School Level" that the tendency nowadays seems to be the creation of passive listeners. With this method we are going to reach the main goal of language, which is acquiring all the necessary skills, behaviours and knowledge to communicate, preparing our students for the future, since the skill to communicate per se is not enough for a world that relies on teamwork and social skills.

3. PRACTICAL APPLICATION

3.1. Introduction

Once I have finished with the theoretical framework I am going to show a didactic proposal that will use the information collected before. My didactic proposal aims to serve as an academic reinforcement, consolidating what children may have acquired during the second term, thus it can be considered as a review didactic unit. The purpose of doing this as a review didactic unit is because it will let me work with a wide range of contents and methodologies in a more superficial way than if I had chosen to work these contents from the very beginning. Doing that would require of much more activities and time to acquire them in a realistic way, which would be impossible to do in this end-of-degree project due to its limitations. However, with the proper modifications, this unit could be used to work in class from the start. The main idea of this proposal is to show that, with the appropriate methodological knowledge background, we can use and combine different current methodologies to provide our teaching action with a rich variety of tasks that will accomplish the established objectives in a natural and real way while they enjoy this process which, in my opinion, is the ultimate goal of a good teacher. The name of the didactic proposal is "the mystery of Zootopia". In this proposal I am going to review the previous contents, basing the teaching process on the creation of communicative situations and games that will let students reinforce their learning of the chosen contents in a stress-free environment that will arouse the student's motivation.

3.2. Contextualization

C.E.I.P San Marcos is a state school that offers Pre-scholar Education and Primary Education in Mancha Real, which is a village from the Spanish province of Jaen. This village is characterised by its industrial and agricultural activity. This centre counts with 24 teachers in addition to personal that renders it services in a temporal way, like a nurse, a speech therapist, lunchtime teachers, etc. It counts with three connected playgrounds, where students are divided depending on their age, a gym, a library, a multiple use room and it also enrolls 485 students. There are currently considerable differences between these students in sociocultural and economic aspects since this centre enrolls students from medium-upper zones, working-class zones, and a peripheral area really marginalized, with social, economical and cultural problems. Because of this, the centre has to pay attention to each student necessities, trying to offer them the more individualized teaching that is possible in the classroom.

The class where I am going to work with my proposal is a class of the fourth year in Primary Education. This class has 24 students and most of them have an average level in English class, according to what is expected from them at their current stage. There are only 4 students that stand out among their partners thanks to their private lessons. No special adaptations are required in this class, but if they were necessary, the flexibility of the proposal could easily meet their necessities.

3.3. Competencies

The competencies worked in this proposal are the following ones:

Competencies	Description
Competency in linguistic communication (CLC)	Through participation in the communicative and use of language to do written productions and communicate with other students.
Learn to learn (LL)	By organizing time and cooperating with their partners to achieve a certain goal. The exchange of learning strategies among students will help to build their own

	strategies and how to manage their own resources.
Social and civic competence (SCC)	By participating in different activities with their partners, in a democratic and respectful way. The resolution of conflicts (frequent in the classroom) in an appropriate way will also be of importance.

Table 1: Competencies worked in the proposal

3.4. Objectives

As this centre is in Andalucía, I am going to adapt my didactic objectives to those claimed by the regional laws (“Orden de 17 de Marzo de 2015, por la que se desarrolla el currículo correspondiente a Educación Primaria en Andalucía”). Every didactic objective of the proposal will be related to a subject objective described in the law document, and to a specific competence which should be worked with the appropriate activity, which will be developed later in the activity section.

Nomenclature	Didactic Objective
O.D.1.	To show their capacity to express their thoughts and opinions in English
O.D.2.	To show their master on the contents reviewed
O.D.3.	To understand oral and written productions, acting in consequence
O.D.4.	To speak and read with a proper pronunciation and intonation
O.D.5.	To interact in a respectful way
O.D.6.	To work collaboratively in group tasks and practising fair play in competitive tasks

Table 2: Didactic Objectives of the proposal

3.5. Contents

The contents of this didactic proposal are the general reflection of those studied previously during the second trimester, and depending on how children have acquired those contents we will work with them in one way or another, as we have to take into account that not all the contents worked in class should be necessarily mastered. Nevertheless, there are some contents that I have selected as the most relevant for the student and these ones will be worked.

I have classified the contents into three main branches: speaking & listening, writing & reading and linguistic knowledge, dividing them as the Competency-Based Method would do. We could include a fourth one in the form of social contents, but the problem of doing that is they are already covered by the different objectives, themes and competencies worked along the sessions, and due to the highly varying profiles that are usually found in classroom, I think it is unnecessary. Instead of doing that, I prefer to work on social values using English as a way to work and acquire them, using group disposition in our advantage, which also connects with the Communicative Method, The Natural Approach and Cooperative Language Learning.

In the next table I have included the complete list of contents, with sub-contents that helps to clarify what we are working in them.

Type of content	Content	Sub-contents
Speaking & Listening	S.L.1. Giving and asking for directions and pointing to places	S.L.1.1. Direction expressions (to the left, on your right, straight ahead...) S.L.1.2. Prepositions (behind, in front of, next to...) S.L.1.3. Structures (Where is the...?, is there a... in the city?, how can I go to...?)
	S.L.2. Making descriptions	S.L.2.1. Describing animals S.L.2.2. Describing people S.L.2.3. Descriptions of places
	S.L.3. Sharing opinion with other people	S.L.3.4. Turn taking and polite formulae
Writing & Reading	W.R.1. Understanding different written texts	- Mainly, reading comprehension and writing exercises related to the contents

	W.R.2. Doing written productions	- Mainly written exercises and the composition of simple texts
Linguistic Knowledge	L.K.1. Grammar	L.K.1.1. Present Simple
	L.K.2 Vocabulary	L.K.2.1. Directions L.K.2.2. Prepositions L.K.2.3. Places L.K.2.4. Daily routine L.K.2.5. Time L.K.2.6. Hobbies L.K.2.7. Animals L.K.2.8. Adjectives
	L.K.3. Phonetics	L.K.3.1. Improvement via delayed corrections and feedback in oral productions
	L.K.4. Function	L.K.4.1. Descriptive function L.K.4.2. Giving directions L.K.4.3. Communicating opinions L.K.4.4. Communicating personal tastes

Table 3: Contents of the didactic proposal.

3.6. Methodology

As I have explained above, the methodology which characterises this proposal is a product of the combination of compatible methodologies that appear together when it comes to activities and tasks carried out in class. In this way these methodologies work in a synergistic way improving their advantages and compensating for their inconveniences. Since I have already talked about the methodologies that will be used for this proposal in the theoretical framework, I will just talk about some of these synergies that I have found interesting.

The first synergy appears between Total Physical Method and the Natural Learning Method. Their synergy is interesting because Total Physical Responses establishes a stress-free and motivating environment that lets student acquire knowledge without prejudices. In addition, these two methodologies make a good combination since toddlers start to communicate by movement and gestures. This relates with Natural Learning since physical answers help to activate the brain's area of language, as I pointed on the theoretical section. Another advantage of using these methods together is the fact that Total Physical Response activities are a good way of exposing the students to the language and to controlling their level of acquisition before asking them to produce utterances.

Another interesting synergy is the one that the Communicative method and Competency-Based Language Teaching have, since both put students in communicative situations or tasks that demand the use of their acquired and learned language from them. The fact of letting students know what is expected from them is also interesting, since these expectations reach practically the best level of English that they can show due to their maturity.

The last synergy that I want to point out is the one that happens between Cooperative Learning and the other methodologies. Letting students interact and learn from their equals is one of the best choices that teachers could take, since it grants motivation and a stress-free work dynamic, letting students lean on their partners and creating emotional bonds between them.

Another aspect that I would like to clarify from my methodology is the use of the mother tongue in language teaching. During my proposal, Spanish is going to appear in some of the written materials such as the vocabulary list, or it will be allowed at specific moments. I think it is important for three main reasons:

- 1) The first one is related to timing. Due to the necessity to work a lot of contents in a relative short time, using Spanish at specific moments such as the explanation of some unknown concepts or when we give feedback, helps to save a lot of time and that lets us expose students to language in other communicative situations that could be more fruitful.
- 2) The use of the mother tongue considered as a last resource in Language Teaching is in my opinion something necessary. If it is true that the ideal

situation for the language acquisition is to be exposed to inputs in the target language and to produce utterances in that language as well, some students have not acquired that level of proficiency at the moment when the proposal is been developed. In this way, some students will need Spanish as a support to be able to acquire the target language. In my opinion, having support from the mother tongue will not affect to those students with a significant high level negatively. Furthermore, it will help slow learners to understand the input and to acquire them in a meaningful way, since the key to acquire language is to understand it, thus avoiding in this way creating situations of stress and frustration for those students.

- 3) The third one is related to communicative strategies. Since students are already skilled speakers in their mother tongue, letting students transfer the skills and strategies that they have already acquired to the target language could have beneficial consequences for them. However, these strategies could lead to errors in the target language, so they have to realise what elements of their communicative system in the mother tongue could be useful and which not, thanks to the language used and the feedback received from their teacher and their partners.

3.7. Timing

As I have explained, this proposal will be used in the last weeks of the second trimester and will need seven sessions to be developed. The sessions will be divided in the following way:

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Week 1 (from 25th to 29th March)	Session 1		Session 2		Session 3
Week 2 (from 1st to 5th April)	Session 4		Session 5		Session 6
Week 3 (from 8th to 12th April)	Session 7				

Table 4: Timing of session

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
9:00-9:45					
9:45-10:30	English				
10:30-11:15					English
11:45-12:30	Break	Break	Break	Break	Break
12:30-13:15			English		
13:15-14:00					

Table 5: English weekly hours.

3.8. Sessions

Session 1: Discovering Zootopia				
Description	Objectives	Contents		Competencies
During this session we are going to explain to students the nature of this proposal. In order to do that we are going to explain the classroom dynamics that is going to be used. The idea is to organise a travel to a mysterious village called Zootopia. The mayor of this city has invited us to experience to visit his town, know its people and discover its mysteries. After this explanation, which tries to arouse curiosity in our students, we are going to give them the invitation of the mayor that has the first support item, which is a list of animals and adjectives and the main structures that are used at this level to give and ask information of about these animals students will glue to their notebook. Then, we are going to establish the groups that will be used, keeping in mind the differences that our students have in order to create balanced teams for work. Then we are going to ask our students to prepare a section in their notebooks for the different activities	O.D.2.	S.L.2.1.	S.L.3.4.	LL
	O.D.3.	W.R.1.	L.K.1.1.	SCC
	O.D.4.	L.K.2.7.	L.K.2.8.	
		L.K.3.1.		
Activities and timing - Explanation of the proposal (25 min) - Distribution of the letter and written inputs (5 min) - Practice of the inputs with different games (15 min)				

that are going to be done. After that, we are going to review the vocabulary that appears on the mayor's letter until the class finishes with mimic games, guessing... Meanwhile, we will monitor their performance and will evaluate them with an observation scale.	
Materials and resources	Blackboard, notebook and the mayor's first letter
Attention to diversity	In this class there is not any student with special necessities. If this was the case, modifications can be easily done due to the flexible nature of the activities.

Session 2: My favourite animal				
Description	Objectives	Contents		Competencies
During this session we are going to give our students an exercise sheet where they have to put into use what they practised at the end of the last session. They have to make a description of their favourite animal and do a drawing of it. After that they will have some time to talk with their group partners about their animal, giving and asking for information. Meanwhile, we will monitor their performance and will evaluate them with an observation scale. After that, they will read their description aloud and will play a game called "who is who". In this activity we will divide the class into two groups. Each group has a secret member that the other team has to guess making questions related to the description read before.	O.D.1.	S.L.2.1.	S.L.2.2.	CLC
	O.D.2.	S.L.3.4.	W.R.1.	LL
	O.D.3.	W.R.2.	L.K.1.1.	SCC
	O.D.4.	L.K.2.7.	L.K.2.8.	
	O.D.5.	L.K.3.1.		
	O.D.6.			
	Activities and timing - Description and drawing of their favourite animal (15 min) - Small group speaking exercise (10 min) - Reading their production aloud (10 min) - "Who is who" (5-10 min)			
Materials and resources	Activity sheet, notebook			
Attention to diversity	In this class there is not any student with special necessities. If this was the case, modifications can be easily done due to the flexible nature of the activities.			

Session 3: The mystery of Zootopia

Description	Objectives	Contents	Competencies
This session starts with our arrival in Zootopia. The teacher is going to read a text where he explains what they see in the city, but something weird is happening. Villagers are transforming into animals. While the teacher reads the different animals that they find, students have to imitate those animals and their characteristics. After this game students have to remember how many animals they found in their visit to the city and write them on their notebook, with all the characteristics that they remember, the group with more animals wins the game. Once they have finished, they will receive another letter from the major, which explains what is happening in the city. The letter says that there is an antique relic in the ruins of the temple that can be causing this. He also says that he knows we are cursed too, and we have a month before transforming into animals too. He asks us to stay, but first we have to find the city council to give us a map of the city. The letter also has the second input support item that is a list of prepositions, places of the city and structures to ask about directions. To practise them, they will have to ask each other in pairs about directions and places of Mancha Real. The teacher will keep on evaluating their productions with his observation list.	O.D.1.	S.L.1.1. S.L.1.2.	CLC
	O.D.2.	S.L.1.3. S.L.2.2.	LL
	O.D.3.	S.L.2.3. S.L.3.4.	SCC
	O.D.4.	L.K.1.1. L.K.2.1.	
	O.D.5.	L.K.2.2. L.K.2.3.	
	O.D.6.	L.K.3.1.	
	Activities and timing - Performing the text (10-15min) - Memory game (15 min) - Conversation about their village (Mancha Real) (15 min)		
Materials and resources	Oral text read by the teacher, the mayor's second letter and notebook.		

Attention to diversity	In this class there is not any student with special necessities. If this was the case, modifications can be easily done due to the flexible nature of the activities.
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Session 4: The broken map				
Description	Objectives	Contents		Competencies
When we arrive at the city council the mayor's secretary gives us another letter with a broken map. The mayor asks us to locate, the hotel, the ruins and the library to find information about the curse with some indications on where they are. Each group will have the same map but with different information in them. By asking members of other groups, they will place those elements in their maps. Grouping will be made by combining two groups, each of the initial groups with a different map. They can only ask for information asking to the other group's members. If it is necessary, the teacher will give students clues to finish the activity. Once we have finished the activity, the teacher will make questions about the city, and students have to answer them in their notebooks.	O.D.1.	S.L.1.1.	S.L.1.2.	CLC
	O.D.2.	S.L.1.3.	S.L.2.3.	LL
	O.D.3.	S.L.3.4.	W.R.2.	SCC
	O.D.4.	L.K.1.1.	L.K.2.1.	
	O.D.5.	L.K.2.2.	L.K.2.3.	
	O.D.6.	L.K.3.1.		
Activities and timing - Map reading (30 min) - Teacher's questions (10-15 min)				
Materials and resources	The mayor's third letter, questions about the city and student's notebook			
Attention to diversity	In this class there is not any student with special necessities. If this was the case, modifications can be easily done due to the flexible nature of the activities.			

Session 5: The ruins' trap

Description	Objectives	Contents	Competencies
After discovering the hotel, the library and the ruins, we receive another letter from the mayor that asks us to go to the temple in order to investigate if something has happened to the relic. It also includes the third input list that has information about time and daily routine activities and hobbies. To do that, students have to write on their notebooks how to go from the hotel to the library and from the library to the ruins. After that, we arrive at the ruins and to access inside them, students have to guess a list of riddles about animals, places and activities and write the answer on their notebook. Once they have guessed them the doors will open and close immediately behind us, it was a trap! After that we are going to practise the inputs of the list asking partners about their daily routines.	O.D.1. O.D.2. O.D.3. O.D.4. O.D.5. O.D.6.	S.L.1.1. S.L.1.2. S.L.1.3. S.L.3.4. W.R.1. W.R.2. L.K.1.1. L.K.2.1. L.K.2.2. L.K.2.3. L.K.2.4. L.K.2.5. L.K.2.6. L.K.2.7. L.K.2.8. L.K.3.1.	CLC LL SCC
	Activities and timing - Going to the library and the hotel (10 min) - Riddles (15 min) - Asking partners about their daily routines (15-20 min)		
Materials and resources	Maps, notebooks, riddles and the mayor's fourth letter		
Attention to diversity	In this class there is not any student with special necessities. If this was the case, modifications can be easily done due to the flexible nature of the activities.		

Session 6: Scaping from the ruins			
Description	Objectives	Contents	Competencies
To escape from the ruins, students, must create utterances related to the inputs reviewed through this proposal. To do that, they will have some dices that have some drawings on their faces. Each group will have 3 different dices with daily activities, animals and places and they will have to order them in a specific order pointed in a piece of paper. There will be a total of 18 dices and 6 clues. When all groups have completed the 6 clues	O.D.1. O.D.2. O.D.3. O.D.4. O.D.5. O.D.6.	S.L.1.2. S.L.1.3. S.L.2.1. S.L.3.4. W.R.1. L.K.1.1. L.K.2.2. L.K.2.3. L.K.2.4. L.K.2.5. L.K.2.6. L.K.2.7. L.K.2.8.	CLC LL SCC
	Activities and timing - The dices lock (10-15 min)		

with their respective dices, students will face the second task. We will go to the playground, where 49 squares have been drawn beforehand. Each student receives a clue about where he should stay to open the door and escape. The problem is that their clues depends on the positions of other students. For example. A. is behind I. and I. is two squares to the left of the teacher. In this way, they have to discover where they should place themselves to open the door asking their partners and helping each other. The teacher will keep on evaluating their productions with his observation list.	- The square pad (30-35 min)
Materials and resources	Dices, clues, chalk and wide space.
Attention to diversity	In this class there is not any student with special necessities. If this was the case, modifications can be easily done due to the flexible nature of the activities.

Session 7 Unmasking the thief			
Description	Objectives	Contents	Competencies
Once our students have escaped, the mayor comes to see what has happened. After we explain that the relic has been stolen, he asks us to find clues to find the thief and gives us a clue “the thief stole the relic in the morning. A golf ball and a card are hidden in the classroom”. Students have to find them, because they are clues to unmask the thief. Then, we are going to give students an exercise sheet, where all the daily routines and hobbies of the villagers and the hours when they do their activities appear. With all these clues students have to decide who is the thief and explain why they think that. Once	O.D.1.	S.L.1.1. S.L.1.2.	CLC
	O.D.2.	S.L.1.3. S.L.2.1.	LL
	O.D.3.	S.L.2.2. S.L.2.3.	SCC
	O.D.4.	S.L.3.4. W.R.1.	
	O.D.5.	W.R.2. L.K.1.1.	
	O.D.6.	L.K.2.1. L.K.2.2.	
		L.K.2.3. L.K.2.4.	
		L.K.2.5. L.K.2.6.	
		L.K.2.7. L.K.2.8.	
	Activities and timing - Finding the clues (5 min)		

they have finished, they will be given a medal by the mayor for saving his town. After that the teacher will make some questions to students related to the contents practised through the proposal the teacher will keep on evaluating their performance in both activities with his observation list.	- Discover the thief (20 min) - Round of questions (20 min)
Materials and resources	Clues, sheet with the routines and hobbies, and notebook
Attention to diversity	In this class there is not any student with special necessities. If this was the case, modifications can be easily done due to the flexible nature of the activities.

3.9. Evaluation

Acronym	Instrument	Achievement indicator	Percentage
A.I. 1	Observation list	Makes the effort of using English instead of Spanish for their oral productions	15%
A.I. 2	Observation list / Notebook	Makes a good use of the language in his/her productions	40%
A.I. 3	Observation list	Shows motivation and participates actively in the activities proposed	15%
A.I. 4	Observation list	Collaborates with his/her partners in cooperative activities and respect the rules and the other groups on competitive activities	10%
A.I. 5	Observation list	Tries to improve his/her performance, considering the	20%

		advice of the teacher and his/her partners	
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Table 5: Achievement indicators.

Observation list					
Achievement indicator	Always	Often	Sometimes	He needs to improve	Observations
A.I. 1					
A.I. 2					
A.I. 3					
A.I. 4					
A.I. 5					

Table 6: Observational list.

4. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, teachers' knowledge about methodology is a strong weapon when it comes to improving their they of teaching. However, this knowledge is not enough to grant an efficient teaching process. To facilitate the acquisition of a language, using modern methodologies giving them a critical role on our proposals while we repudiate the traditional ones instinctively is a great mistake.

Firstly, every methodology is useful when they are used wisely. For example, Direct Method materials can be useful for slower students to understand certain contents and face communicative situations with more confidence.

Secondly, we have to respect students characteristics and learning styles. If a shy with self-esteem issues student is forced to acquire language by means of communicational tasks and performances, this student will associate language learning with stressful and traumatic situations. This will cause that this student will not be able to acquire the language and to fail in language learning.

In this way teachers have to find a balance between students' necessities, and their own preferences, in order to work in the best way that they can and with the final goal of help students to acquire the target language.

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