

Is Soft-CLIL the solution to Spaniards' low level in English? A suggested planning model

¿Es la introducción de AICLE moderado la solución para el bajo nivel de inglés de los españoles? Sugerencia de modelo de planificación

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Abstract

The consolidation of English as the *lingua franca* of today's society has meant that its learning is no longer a choice, but a requirement due to the importance it now reflects in our educational system and the subsequent growth of different teaching approaches.

Among the wide variety of methodologies, in the last few years, Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) has been positioned as one of the most important teaching approaches. However, the lack of cohesion among the authors about its teaching practices and the application of the model, as well as the training CLIL requires in mastering both content and language, have made their introduction in our educational system difficult. For these reasons, a good alternative to solve this problem is the combination of the so-called "soft-CLIL" and Project-Based learning (PBL).

As a result, it is the aim of this article to suggest a model that combines both of these learning approaches in the Majorcan setting where, although CLIL is quite extended, PBL is almost nonexistent at a secondary-school level.

Key words: soft-CLIL, task-based learning (TBL), project-based learning (PBL), Majorca, EFL.

Resumen

La consolidación del inglés como *lingua franca* en nuestra sociedad actual ha dado lugar a

que su aprendizaje ya no sea una elección si no un requisito en nuestro sistema educativo dando lugar a un fuerte crecimiento de diferentes métodos de enseñanza.

En los últimos años, el Aprendizaje Integrado de Contenidos y Lenguas Extranjeras (AICLE) se han posicionado como uno de los métodos de enseñanza más importantes. Aun así, la poca cohesión entre los autores sobre sus prácticas y la aplicación del modelo, además de la necesidad de formación en lenguaje y contenido por parte del profesor, ha hecho que su aplicación en nuestro sistema educativo sea complicada. Por estas razones, una buena alternativa para solventar este problema, es la combinación del llamado “soft-CLIL” y la enseñanza por proyectos.

Por consiguiente, es la intención de este artículo sugerir un modelo de planificación de unidades didácticas que combine estos dos métodos de enseñanza en Mallorca, donde aunque AICLE está bastante extendido, la enseñanza por proyectos a nivel de secundaria es prácticamente nula.

Palabras clave: soft-CLIL, aprendizaje por tareas, aprendizaje por proyectos, Mallorca.

1. INTRODUCTION AND JUSTIFICATION

Globalization’s impact has spread across our society so deeply as to even change the conception of what should be included in our educational system and how it should be taught. Consequently, once the status of English changed internationally, the methodologies applied to its learning had also to evolve.

A more communicative approach is currently preferred since it “[provides] context for authentic, meaningful communication as well as [...] opportunities for learners to gain exposure to more foreign language (FL) input and become engaged in more active learning” (Ioannou, 2012: 495). One of these methodologies is the currently popular CLIL in which, contrary to typical English as a foreign language instruction (EFL), students not only drill on language structures for possible usage outside the classroom, but language is contextualized by the subject content and is needed to follow the session and to do the tasks. Students are not only shown the use of the target language in a clear context, but required to use it in order to fulfill the task. Therefore, it becomes a necessity to learn it and enhances the student’s motivation, contributing to a more meaningful instruction. (Ioannou, 2012: 496)

In our context, Majorca, students are exposed to English around three or four hours a week, depending on the educational level they are at, a time span which is not sufficient for a language to be mastered. Therefore, CLIL poses an effective alternative for meaningful acquisition since it provides more vigorous exposure to the language and more

opportunities to use it in a rich and effective manner (Borrull et al., 2008: 108). Although there have been attempts by the Balearic Islands' educational administration to include programs using CLIL, the following challenges have made its establishment in our educational system difficult.

To begin with, several authors agree with the difficulty of achieving a rigorous balance between content and language since both skills should be targeted equally (Dalton-Puffer, 2007; Coyle, 2008; Mehisto, 2008). This problem leads into the second one, the lack of formal instruction given to CLIL teachers, which is not offered on a regular basis (Šulistová, 2013: 50). Nowadays, the only requirement for CLIL teachers, according to Decreto 98/2009 (*Boletín Oficial de las Islas Baleares*, BOIB 2009), is to have a B2 English level (according to CEFR). Due to this lack of specific training, most of the time, content teachers need to rely on an EFL teacher to support the language instruction. Moreover, another problem arises as a consequence of the lack of cohesion among authors concerning its pedagogy, approach and theory considering that "there are no fixed models which pre-determine how CLIL will develop", making its application in the educational centres difficult since there is not a clear model to be followed (Coyle, 2012: 245).

What is more, the Project-Based method is non-existent in secondary education at the foreign language level, although its use is clearly encouraged in the Balearic Islands curriculum. This approach, however, seems to go perfectly hand in hand with CLIL since all the content and language learnt can be used to create a final project that combines their whole knowledge, giving the students a clear stated purpose for learning the language and a context in which to see how it applies in a real situation. Taking stock of this vacuum in our educational context, and of the non-existent fixed CLIL model, it is my aim to combine both the Project-Based approach and the CLIL continuum in EFL class instruction in order to boost the students' motivation and to create a naturalistic environment for the acquisition of language in which the teacher can easily integrate the mixed-ability of the classroom. For this purpose, I will focus on the first column within the CLIL continuum from the chart provided by Dale and Tanner (2012).

Figure 1: CLIL ad CBI compared (from Dale& Tanner, 2012: 4)

	← CBLT	CLIL		→
				More content: Immersion
Who teaches?	language teachers	CLIL language teachers (in language lessons)	CLIL subject teachers (in subject lessons)	Immersion subject teachers
What kind of language work do they do?	work on language through content	work on general language while supporting subject-related topics and language related to them in their language lessons	work on the language as it comes up in the subject teaching	little or no attention to language per se as teaching is done in another language
What is the aim?	to teach language	to teach language	to teach content and some language	to teach content
What do they teach?	non-curricular subject matter (extra topics) in another language	the language curriculum as well as the language of the subject to support subject teachers	subject matter and subject language	subject matter

Taking this chart as the CLIL continuum, we find what is known as “soft-CLIL” (Harmer, 2002; Bentley, 2010; Dale & Tanner, 2012). This CLIL variant refers to taking “topics from the curriculum as part of a language course” (Bentley, 2010: 6). This means that CLIL is, therefore, language-led and not content-led, reducing the latter to a mere content topic used to teach a specific target language. In this case, CLIL has mainly linguistic objectives rather than content ones. Hence, this CLIL variant can be fully adapted to EFL class instruction taking the best of both sides, and thus being a more realistic implementation for our educational system since it will take place in the already established EFL classes and will “challenge the student’s cognitive maturity and engage their critical thinking.” (Mas, 2015: 24)

2. DEVELOPMENT OF THE PROPOSAL

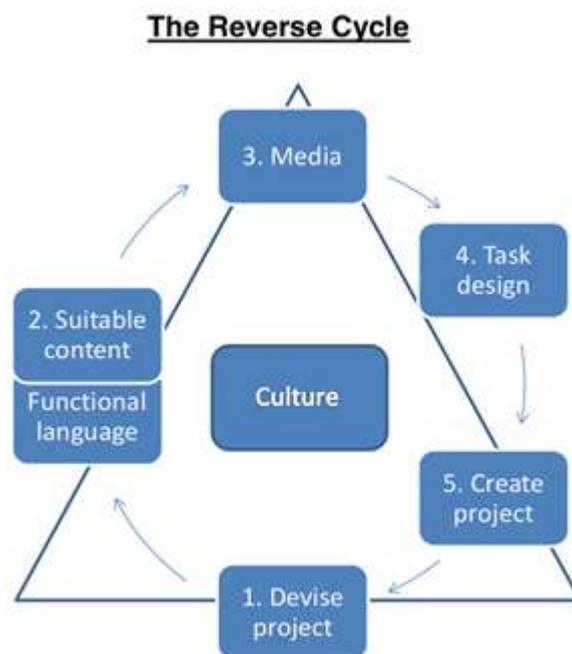
a. Suggested lesson-planning model: The Reverse Cycle

It is my aim then to suggest a didactic unit-planning model or tool, based on projects, with the intention of introducing content in the classroom which culminates in a skills’ integrating project. Therefore, an adaptation and implementation of the challenges posed by CLIL will be attempted together with the use of the Project-Based method. For this purpose, after analysing five different existing CLIL planning models (Willis, 1996; Coyle, Hood & Marsh, 2010; Meyer, 2010; Dale, Van der Es & Tanner, 2010 and Mas, 2015), I came to what I have labeled as the Reverse Cycle model, which aims at the creation of final-unit projects inside EFL instruction that are both content and language driven. In order to understand it better, first a brief explanation on how it was devised will be discussed, and then a real example of the designed and implemented model unit in a secondary state school in the Majorcan setting will be presented. The topic that will illustrate how the model I propose works concerns the combination of a study of the

Victorian times (content) and the past simple tense (language), which culminates in the creation of a video magazine that reflects a Victorian high street, the characteristics of its workers and some interactions of the shopkeepers of the period.

As we can see in the diagram, this model is centered around devising a project, an end-product that the students will have to create as the result of the knowledge acquired from the unit.

Figure 2: Miriam Garcia's model proposal



Consequently, the starting point for planning the unit is for the teacher to decide the project that (s)he wants the students to achieve at its end. This first step is the most important one, since the rest of the lesson planning will be based on the necessities that our students will need to fulfill the devised project. Therefore, it “serves to organize and drive [the class] activities; [which] will culminate in a final product” (Blumenfeld et al., 1991 in Helle et al., 2006: 288). There are several reasons why the choice of a project as the starting point has been included.

First, projects, as well as CLIL, provide contextualization for the learner, and hence, it provides a more valuable and stimulating learning context (Helle et al., 2006: 293). Students are learning for a clear aim; they need all the knowledge presented to create a final product that is going to be useful for their future life since they “partake in authentic tasks for authentic purposes”, which enhances the students’ cognitive processes and their interests (Stoller, 2006: 24). Moreover, by creating the project “students gain deeper

understanding of a topic” (Beckett, 2006: 58) and they are using the input provided in a clear and tangible context that could be later recalled if they find themselves in a similar situation (Dale et al., 2010: 209).

Furthermore, projects have been argued to prompt the students’ motivation and, therefore, their engagement in the learning process (Stoller, 2006; Dale et al., 2010), and thus provides the perfect opportunity “for ESL teacher[s] to teach the English language, school and social cultures, curriculum content, and various skills” at the same time (Beckett, 2006: 58). The latter is especially relevant for the purpose of this article since, as will be seen later, all skills are given the same amount of importance by “nurturing the naturalistic acquisition through meaningful use” that this approach fosters and thus being closer to the acquisition of their L1 language (Moore & Francisco, 2015: 336).

Once the project is devised, the selection of suitable content and functional language that suits our needs is chosen, as suggested by Mas (2015). In this case, the choice of content is of crucial importance since, as this scholar claims, the theme will provide the context in which the students will build upon the functional language (Mas, 2015: 25). It is important here to remark that when we refer to the functional language, we refer not only to grammar structures, but also to the textual typology that is going to be worked on, the lexis used or the functional language related to the topic provided, for instance, fixed expressions such as “Can I help you?” when going shopping. The model proposed is aimed at our educational system. Therefore, these two aspects, the content and the grammatical structures selected, should be included within the educational curriculum of our region and not chosen randomly by the teacher without any criteria.

Whereas content provides the context, language is also an essential part of the lesson, and it should also be in line with the requirements of the project that we are aiming at. Contrary to CLIL, in this model, content is not given more importance than language, and although when planning the unit, they are at the same level, in practical terms, as this unit is intended for a “soft-CLIL” situation, when applied in the EFL class, content will be seen more superficially than language.

Once the topic and language needed for the project have been selected, the third step is the choice of media. Just as inferred by Meyer (2010), the third step is to compile potentially useful multi-modal input that suits the needs of our project, and that can be adjusted to the level and requirements of our students. This media should be as varied and as real as possible in order to accommodate the different learning styles and multiple intelligences of our students. Consequently, the whole diversity of the class is being included in the lesson without making any distinction between the students.

As Meyer (2010: 24) puts it, “the nature of the selected input, [written, visual, audiovisual, auditory, etc.], [...] determines the skills that need to be practiced with the students so they can successfully cope with that input [and adapt it to the final project requirements]”. Therefore, all the media selected will be then distributed evenly within the task design, and classified in different skill sequences that will contribute to create the students’ output for the final project. First, the receptive skills are introduced (reading and listening) and finally, the productive ones (writing and speaking). The receptive skills are introduced first to activate the “different kinds of knowledge, experiences and language that [the students] already possess and use these to build on [...] [and] help learners to learn both the language and the content more effectively” (Dale, 2010: 27), since the productive ones need to be more scaffolded and worked on. In each of these sequences, the content and language needed for the final project is introduced through input, practiced through tasks, and finally brought into the end-product. By doing this, the project is being broken into simple steps to make it easier for students to analyze, understand and acquire both the information and the target language. Therefore, the project can be considered as what Nunan (2004) calls a “maxi-task” where sequenced and integrated tasks are used to later create the final project, similar to the task-based approach.

The design of the tasks is one of the key steps for the model to succeed, since they all have to be carefully planned having the demands of the project in mind so as to be cohesive and coherent with the output that will be later demanded from the students. The tasks that the students are doing are used as a kind of drilling for students to internalize all the new knowledge they are exposed to and to later create their own. The “project [...] is student-centered and driven by the need to create an end-product. However, it is the route to achieving this end-product that makes [the] project work so worthwhile” (Fried-Booth, 2002: 6). Consequently, the task step should be very carefully outlined since it has to be completely defined by the project’s requirements. In a nutshell, the tasks are adapted to the material that we have first gathered in the media step, and not the other way round since the input we provide to our students is the key to success and is what is going to be used to build up the end-product.

Finally, once the four different skills have been practiced and the knowledge needed to complete the project has been appropriated by the students, it is time for them to create the project. The role of the teacher is as a guide that helps the students understand and internalize the knowledge, helping them and redirecting the lesson when necessary to make sure that they are on the right track and do not lack any angle for the fully

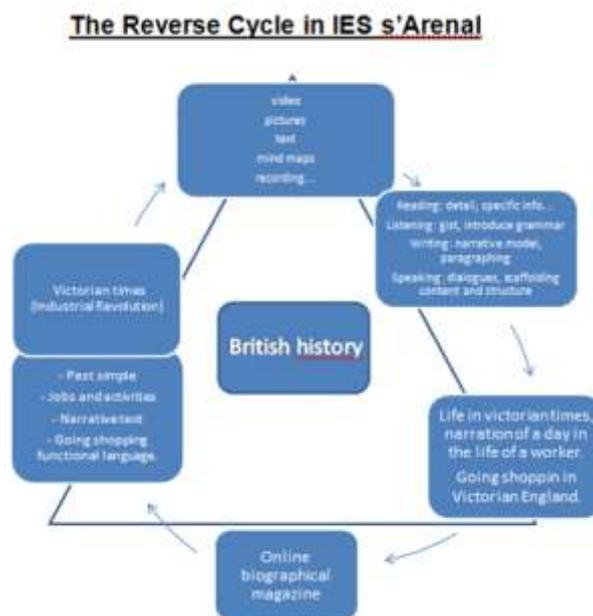
comprehension. Finally, once the project has been created, the students will be asked to give feedback on their opinion about creating a project. The feedback provided by students will serve as new intake to devise another project, which makes the model cyclical; with the new intake, a new project will be devised and the planning model will go around again and continue indefinitely. Moreover, similar to the cyclical process proposed by Dale et al. (2010), the activities are designed to meet the final project that will determine the language and content outcome to be assessed.

The final piece to give shape to the model is the triangle that encloses the cycle, which recalls one of the building blocks from Coyle et al.'s 4C's Framework (2010), culture. Culture is intrinsically attached to language, as previously stated, and students must have a connection with the heritage, traditions, values, and lifestyle of the foreign society they are studying. The EFL teacher is the one giving shape to their thought on the myriad of different territories belonging to English-speaking society, determining how they are going to perceive them. Culture not only shapes their perception of the English-speaking world, but also as suggested by Coyle et al., it helps students to understand the world globally and also to discover their own selves, helping them to position themselves against 'otherness' (2010: 55). Personally, I think that if you do not have some background knowledge of the peculiarities in which the language that you are learning is framed, it will never be fully acquired or understood.

b. Teaching proposal, a classroom experience

Once the model was conceived, it had to be put into practice to prove its efficacy. The centre, IES s'Arenal, is located in the South-East of the island, and it stands out for the high quantity of multicultural students in their classrooms due to immigration from mainland Spain, as well as other European and non-European countries.

Figure 3: Miriam Garcia’s model proposal in context



I got the opportunity to test my model in a first of ESO classroom (Educación Secundaria Obligatoria) thanks to the collaboration of my tutor in the school.

As soon as I knew the group, a half class following the law’s decision to split classes, I decided that the project they were going to create was a video magazine in which they could see their work, and which could also be included in the European Portfolio to which IES s’Arenal participates in. For this, the past simple was chosen as the functional language to be acquired, and the Victorian times was thought of as the perfect scenario for it to be contextualized. More specifically, the Industrial Revolution and the different jobs associated with the period, showing the learners the different lifestyle people had in the past. Taking everything into account, the final project proposed was to create a performance and organizational project through a journal/documentary magazine that reflected a Victorian street. Each student would be assigned a job from the time, with a traditional name and a profile associated with the job. Then, they would have to create a narration of how the life of that person and their daily life (routines, type of work, timetables or free time activities among others) was. To this short explanation, a video of the students interacting in the shops of the time would also be included. This way, learners would go through a real experience of how life in the past was.

Once the project was clearly devised, long and scrupulous research was done in order to find the materials needed to create the task that would result in, in this case, the Victorian magazine. A wide array of multi-modal materials was found that ranged from videos of the

time, to voice recordings with workers' testimonies, or text explaining the main facts of the period. Once the input was selected, and graded when necessary by the teacher, it was distributed between the four different skills (reading, listening, writing and speaking). Personally, I do not consider the use of English (grammar and vocabulary) as a skill that should be presented to the students straight away. On the contrary, it is to be prompted from the skills mentioned above. Apart from distributing the material within the different sequences, the tasks that the students were going to carry out had to be conscientiously designed considering what the students would need to create, (in this case, a narration of a day in the life of a Victorian worker), and to be able to express; a dialogue in a shop.

c. The task creation step

Here you have a table summarizing the main tasks achieved in each skill and their function within the unit:

Table 1: Main tasks achieved in each skill and their function

Task	Skill	Student's task	Role Teacher
Introduce topic and vocabulary	Reading	Activate prior knowledge (content and topic)	Present input, prompt from SS, motivate and create curiosity
Introduce job description	Reading	Receive input and introduce writing model	Present/Guide writing model
Introduce past simple tense	Listening	Appropriate past tense	Introduce functional language
Introduce text typology (narration)	Writing	Analyze and internalize narrative model	Present writing model (scaffold) and guide
Going shopping interaction	Speaking	Acquire specific vocabulary and conceptions related to going shopping	Introduce speaking practice (scaffold) and guide

First, the reading sequence was used to **introduce the topic and the vocabulary of the unit**, serving as both useful input to put the students in context and to activate their previous knowledge. For this purpose, a video from the era was projected and skinny questions were prepared to prompt the students' previous knowledge. By doing this, they

were forced to spot the differences and to start creating some knowledge on the period and on the type of society they had. After creating curiosity in the students through the video, I used a concise PowerPoint presentation to explain to them the main facts of the period through pictures of, for instance, their clothes, the different jobs that people did or where they lived. To have a closer look at the era, the students did a short comprehension activity in which they had to read for gist and complete a spider diagram. A spider diagram was used since it has been argued to be “an excellent tool for creating an overview, and remembering” (Cooke, 2013).

Once the theme was clear and our lesson was contextualized, the different jobs of the era were introduced through a reading comprehension that would later serve as the content for scaffolding the writing practice since tasks have to be in cohesion with the final project. This way, we are overcoming problems that might occur in the future, as well as saving time not having to create new worksheets later.

In this second part of the reading comprehension, each learner was given a **job description**. These jobs included a factory worker, a chimney sweep and a mine worker, among others. Each student became an expert in a type of work, and then they had to ask the other students for the other worker’s information. Students not only had to overcome the communication gap to obtain the missing information, but they also become experts in a specific Victorian job. However, modern jobs were also introduced and studied in comparison to the ones people had in Victorian times to make them reflect upon the differences and follow the curriculum requirements.

Once the reading sequence served the purpose of introducing the topic and the vocabulary, the listening sequence began with the main purpose of **introducing the students to the past simple tense**. The recording was used to practice listening for gist, detail and specific information, from a more general understanding to a more specific one, at the same as the students were introduced to the destitution of Victorian children. As regards the specific information activity, the gaps selected were those whose missing word was specifically relevant for the learner to remember. Then, the transcript was used to introduce the grammatical content they were going to need in the project, the past simple tense. In it, students had to discern between the regular and irregular forms of verbs and to find the pattern that regular verbs used to form the past. To do this, they were provided with a list of verbs in the infinitive form that had to be found in past form in the transcript in order to find the correct answer. Therefore, they were active in their learning process. Subsequently, an irregular verb list was provided to them with a selection of those verbs that were required by the curriculum, and also those that they

were going to need for the project, as for example, *sweep*. Following this activity, some exercises to practice irregular verbs were provided combining both the content of the unit, the Victorian setting, and the functional language to be acquired, past simple.

As far as input skills are concerned, they served the purpose of activating the student's previous knowledge, setting the context for the content and introducing the grammatical structures and lexis required. Subsequently, the writing and speaking sequences were introduced to acquire output from the students and to provide them with a model to create the final end product. The writing sequence did not only introduce **the narrative typology**, but also sequence connectors classified in two groups, those that implement the reading sequence (*first, then, after that* and *finally*), and those referring to the content of the narration (*in the morning, in the afternoon* and *at night*). Secondly, it was important to show the students a narrative model that was not arbitrary for this specific type of narration they had to create, but that it could be used in the years to come with any other topic. Moreover, scaffolding in two levels was needed: in terms of content, which was directly linked to the information that they had gathered about the Victorian times during the previous sessions, and language scaffolding, linked to the functional language introduced in the unit.

The model for the structure, as said before, was the reading comprehension text from which students had to analyse the type of information included and the structure of the text. This activity was carried out in heterogeneous groups so learners could nurture one another and take advantage of the reading comprehension activity that had already defined some of the parts that were included in the narration. However, this exercise was not only for scaffolding the structure of a narration, but also the language used, since learners had to first put the verbs in the correct tense. It served to make sure they associated the period of time with the functional language used and that the past simple form was already acquired.

Finally, after some drilling on sequence words, the **main writing activity** was given out. For this activity, I created a blog (<http://thevictoriansblog.wordpress.com>) in which an entry that included information on five different types of jobs from Victorian times (a textile mill worker, a blacksmith, a chimney sweep, a maid and a trapper) was created and assigned to the students depending on their aptitudes. Each entry had multi-modal input for the students to analyze, evaluate and use to create their own narration on their worker. Hence, students were provided with some more content scaffolding, bearing in mind that this unit is aimed at a soft-CLIL situation, and therefore language is more important. Although plenty of scaffolding and input was provided to the students, given

the diversity of learners, further content scaffolding was provided for those that were in need. Although at first sight it seemed an easy task for them to do and was very carefully guided, it was hard for them to evaluate the information they had in the blog to create their own product.

Having corrected the compositions, a delayed-error correction exercise was used to make them aware of the typical mistakes they had made. The treatment of error was dealt through gamified exercises. This way, they do not see mistakes as something bad, but instead they take an active role in their learning. Once the students handed in the corrected compositions, the teacher had to record them reading their texts aloud to include them in the final project. For this purpose, the students worked on narrating events aloud. An adjective associated with their job was assigned to each student, and they had to read using that adjective while the rest of the class had to guess which one the student was acting out, forcing students to work on their intonation skills.

The last part of the unit was the video of the **students' interaction in a going- shopping situation**. This output was simpler to illustrate, and the students did not take long to acquire the functional language associated with going shopping. In order to scaffold it, the students had activities that ranged from a very controlled to a freer practise. To help the students with the recording of the interaction, a role-play activity in class was used as a rehearsal. In this activity, the class was divided between shop keepers and buyers. Each shopkeeper had different items with a fixed price, and the buyer had a list of object (s)he wanted to buy. However, shopkeepers did not have all the items on the list, and the buyers had to find the one that the shop assistant did not have, providing a communication gap. This activity was similar to what they had to do when being filmed, giving the students some real and meaningful practice. For the recording, the students were characterized with costumes resembling their characters, and using the intonation assigned in the writing step. This created a scene closer to the Victorian reality.

With all the material gathered from the narrations and the interactions between the students, the final project was created, an online magazine on Victorian England presented in the form of a video. You can see the final product in the following link: https://youtu.be/jrtMZcS_yys.

d. Taking diversity into account

Nowadays, diversity is one of the main characteristics associated to any educational institution, and this class had a wide variety of students with different aptitudes, those with a curricular adaptation, early finishers and average-level ones. In order to accommodate the different types of learners, learning styles and aptitudes without leaving

anybody behind, the worksheets provided to the students had to be graded in terms of the cognitive level of the group to fulfill the tasks. Differentiated learning was then used to keep fast finishers engaged and give slow learners some extra time. For example, fast finishers were not given the verbs that they required to complete the sentences, and slow learners had simpler sentences to order, or the open questions were changed for multiple choice questions, simple gradations that can involve the student in the lesson, or lose him/her along the way.

Group work and cooperative learning were also fostered in the majority of the activities to favor the insertion of learners in the class. However, not only content was taken into account when dealing with the diversity of the class, but also the format of the worksheets that I provided to the students. For example, I used dyslexia-friendly fonts, for instance *Arial* or *Verdana*, I avoided underlining sentences which may cause chaos to the student and I also tried to include input through images in the worksheets to make them more visual (Farag and Harris, 2016).

e. Problems carrying out the model

When applying the model, some flaws arose. For instance, it was hard to find a suitable task for every skill, bearing in mind the purpose of the unit. For example, I could not find a listening comprehension that suited the project's needs, and consequently, a reading comprehension had to be used in the form of a recording. In connection with this, the creation of adequate tasks that suit the purpose of the final project is a time-consuming task in which a lot of hours have to be devoted looking for the media that suits our needs and to assure everything is correctly guided and clearly connected. Moreover, sometimes it is very hard to find material that is adapted for non-English students, and as a consequence, the teacher might spend a lot of time adapting, selecting and composing it to be incorporated in the tasks. For this reason, it is important to adapt the tasks to the material that we have and not the other way round, as has been previously stated.

Another problem that derived from applying the model is that most secondary schools do not contemplate projects in their assessment criteria. However, far from being a weakness for the model, it turned out to be a strength. Given that the project is underpinned by the four different skills, and not by content, the implementation of a soft-CLIL situation is easier in any educational institution which does not explicitly base their education on working by projects. Therefore, this type of model that promotes working by projects can be introduced in any context due to its adaptable nature.

When referring to more practical problems with activities planned, there were only two setbacks. First, the exercise from the writing practice in which they had to analyze the

information and create their own narration took longer than expected. However, in my view, this was due to the students' lack of training in these types of activities during their primary education, and sometimes even in secondary school where these types of activities are not practiced. These types of exercises are important for them because in the future they will be forced to do them in their academic and working life, and the sooner they know how to address them the better. And the other "problem" was with the voice recording for the online magazine. Speaking is a skill to which not enough time is devoted in our educational system and, therefore, most of the students do not feel comfortable speaking. Consequently, most of the recordings were very plain, and an exercise to prompt the students and demand them to make an effort to make them more joyful was requested, as explained above.

f. Feedback provided by students

One of the most important parts when carrying out this type of planning, and in order for the model to continue, is to request feedback from the students, to weigh if the project was successful in terms of knowledge acquisition, and also if they liked these types of classes. In this case, students agreed that what they had liked the most was doing a short play in class; they liked being dressed up and having to act out a role. They also liked having their voices recorded for a project, and when they saw the end-product, they were delighted with what they had achieved and with having done something so different in class. Moreover, they did not only like the different types of activities because were dynamic and entertaining, but also some students claimed that they found it interesting to study some history of Britain because as they declared, they only studied history from Spain, and it was fascinating to learn some culture and history of another country. Therefore, by having the students claim this, it can be argued that content was also an important part for the project to be fully successful.

However, there were also some negative comments. All of them agreed that they did not like to have so many photocopies because it was hard for them to study from them. This might be due to the fact that most of the teachers follow the book and do not implement it by providing further information and activities to the students. A solution to this problem might be to provide the students with all the photocopies of the unit at a time, simulating a book, instead of giving them a photocopy in each lesson. This way it might be easier for them. In addition, some of them found the level of the information provided complicated to understand in some occasions. It is true that it was hard to find, as explained above, adapted material, and it had to be leveled by the teacher. For this reason, the material might not be as adapted as needed to some of the students. To solve this problem, a

diagnostic test with the contents to be learnt in the unit should be done before starting the unit in order to adapt the materials more if possible to the needs of the students.

3. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, although being a very time-consuming task for the EFL teacher, I think the time spent in preparing the material is worth it since the students have the opportunity to have a more meaningful learning experience that involves not only the four skills the language provides, but also to put the language in context, and work also with the culture surrounding the language. Furthermore, having the students carrying out a final project set in a real-life context that is not driven by the superficial topics usually found in English-as-a-foreign-language textbooks allows them to put together all their knowledge, which will be much more profitable for them in the future. Moreover, those students who had been diagnosed a curricular adaptation likewise favor from this methodology since they are part of the main teaching activity and do not feel left behind and are not given different activities from the other students as is usually the case. Therefore, it prompts their motivation favoring a full acquisition.

Furthermore, thanks to the versatility of the model proposed, it can be introduced in our educational institutions without having to change all the organization of the departments. What is more, since the model is framed in a soft-CLIL context, the EFL teacher does not need to seek for any further training or qualification, which is usually the case when trying to combine both content and language.

Of course, the model has some flaws, and further testing should be carried out to fully affirm its educational benefits. However, I think it is a good start to have this type of methodology implemented in our secondary schools and to start taking advantage of the benefits that working with projects provides to our learners, teachers; and ultimately to our educational context since projects can latter be shown to the whole educational community and thus used to give a message and to show what is being done in the schools and how the students are acquiring the knowledge. This way, the families could learn a bit more about what their children do at school and maybe, it would make the job of the teacher better viewed by society.

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