

# **The use of TPR games to acquire English vocabulary in Infant Education.**

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## **Abstract**

This study wants to evaluate if children of Infant Education learn and acquire some English vocabulary and structures from games and specifically Total Physical Response games. These consist on reproducing the language from physical actions instead of verbal in order to acquire a language, in this case, a foreign language.

Because of this fact, I realized seven sessions in a school doing TPR games with 26 children about 5 and 6 years old. I also introduced different topics like animals or the food to motivate children to learn this vocabulary because is very attractive for them. During these sessions I could observe that every time children were improving and they were acquiring more vocabulary with this kind of games.

With that, we can say that games and specially TPR games are a really useful tool to teach English to children.

**Key words:** Infant Education, Total Physical Response, foreign language, acquisition.

Aquest estudi pretén demostrar si els alumnes d'Educació Infantil aprenen i adquireixen vocabulari i estructures en anglès a partir de jocs i més concretament a partir de jocs de Resposta Física Total (RFT). Aquests consisteixen a reproduir el llenguatge a partir d'accions físiques enlloc de verbals per adquirir una llengua, en aquest cas, estrangera.

Per aquest motiu, vaig realitzar set sessions en una escola fent jocs de RFT amb 26 infants de 5 i 6 anys tot presentant diferents temes com el menjar o els animals per motivar-los a aprendre aquest vocabulari ja que són temes atractius per a ells/es. Durant aquestes sessions vaig poder observar com cada cop els infants anaven millorant i anaven adquirint cada cop més vocabulari a partir d'aquests jocs.

Així doncs, podem dir que els jocs i, sobretot, els jocs de RFT són realment una eina molt útil per ensenyar l'anglès als infants.

**Paraules clau:** Educació Infantil, Resposta Física Total, llengua estrangera, adquisició.

## 1. Introduction

The topic that I chose to do my research of my TFG was TPR games and the hypothesis is that if using this kind of games children (in that case children about five and six years old) learn some English vocabulary and some English structures.

I chose the topic of games because during my career I learned that they are one of the most important ways to motivate children and because while they play they learn a lot of things.

But, the topic of games is very extensive so I decided to concentrate on a specific kind of games and I chose TPR games which ones were developed by James Asher and consist on saying instructions to children in the foreign language. The teacher does the action first while he/she is doing the action and then asks children to do it. In this way they know the meaning of everything because they can see it and little by little they acquire the English language.

So, once I chose the topic and the hypothesis and they were been accepted I started to search authors who talk about the topic of games in general, about only TPR games, also about EFL/ESL classrooms or about English as a second or third language, etc. in order to do a good theory framework.

As for the practical part I did some sessions in Sant Gervasi's school in Mollet del Vallès (it was also the center where I did my placement) with children of P5 who have five and six years old and I did some activities among others different TPR games in order to prove my hypothesis.

Infants of this school start to do English in P3 so they have a very good English level and I also had to plan the activities according to their English level.

During the first week I observed the interaction of pupils with the teacher in the English lessons and I took notes about their vocabulary and grammar contents. Then, I started to do my sessions where I did some classic games and I also

introduced new ones and in order to evaluate them I took notes of all the sessions. After that, I did a grid with all the names of the pupils in order to know if they get or not the objectives that I designed and also to compare if they improved their English vocabulary or not.

To complement the taken notes I also took some photos of some moments while children were playing TPR games in order to get easier the evaluation to prove if they knew it or not.

This will be an action research because I want to do a research on a specific topic of the classroom. I will also implement new practices like introducing new games and vocabulary and, finally, I will evaluate the results of this research and I will prove if it benefits students or not.

It will also be a qualitative research because I want to obtain information about this theme in a small group (26 children). I also know more less what I want to search and I can change some things during the investigation. I will collect the dates by myself and I can prove it before in order to know if it is useful or not.

So, from the evaluation where appears if children acquired or not the objectives that I planned I wrote the finals conclusions where it will appear if finally I could prove the hypothesis of my research or not.

## 2. Framework

### 2.1. Theories about how children learn a language.

There are several authors, who made theories about language acquisition like Piaget (1967), Vygotsky (1962), Bruner (1967), Chomsky (1975) and Crystal (1981).

Piaget's theory is based on the idea that all children pass through three periods or stages in order to build their knowledge and to understand their world.

These three stages are:

- Sensory-motor period (from birth to 18 months approximately).
- Pre-operational period (from 18 months to 7 years old approximately).
- Operational period which is divided in two parts: the period of concrete operations (from 7 seven years old to 11) and the period of formal operations (from 11 years old to 15).<sup>1</sup>

During the sensory-motor period, children's language is "egocentric" because they only talk for themselves. In the second period Piaget observed that children improve their language because they start to use single words to construct simple sentences. So, they start to represent their world with their own words.<sup>2</sup>

In the period of concrete operations their thinking passes from immature to mature, and from illogical to logical. And in the last period their thinking passes from concrete to abstract and they start to formulate hypothesis.

Bruner (1967) and Vygotsky (1962) gave more importance to language than Piaget. Both Vygotsky and Bruner defend that the language and learning

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<sup>1</sup> BRUMFIT, Christopher; MOON, Jayne; TONGUE, Ray. *Teaching English to children: from practice to principle*. London: Nelson, 1994, p. 2.

<sup>2</sup> ROTH, DANIEL. *Ehow: Jean's Piaget theory on child language development* [en línea]. USA: Demand Media, 1999. [Consulta: 14 de gener del 2013]. Disponible a: <[http://www.ehow.com/about\\_6587239\\_jean-theory-child-language-development.html](http://www.ehow.com/about_6587239_jean-theory-child-language-development.html)> Based on the book: PIAGET, Jean. *The language and thought of the child*, 1926.

development can be possible thanks to the social interaction with other children or adults. The human development is not guaranteed by inheritance or genetics but the interaction.

So, Piaget defends that a child can developed by himself and Vygotsky defends that a child needs other people to developed their skills, so he established the ZPD (Zone of Proximal Development) and he defined it like the distance between the real development level, in other words, all that children can do by themselves, and the level of potential development, all that children can do with help (BRUMFIT, Christopher; MOON, Jayne; TONGUE, Ray. 1994, p.271).

In the other hand, Chomsky (1975) defends that language is determined by genetics and is an innate ability so children have this inherited capacity to learn any language. He also established the **Universal Grammar** in order to explain that all languages have similar patterns and because of this fact all children start to learn a language in the same way (HIRSH-PASEK, Kathy; MICHNIK, Roberta. 2005, p.114). And he was against that children only learn by imitation because languages have a lot of irregularities (BRUMFIT, Christopher; MOON, Jayne; TONGUE, Ray.1994, p.223).

According to David Crystal (1981)<sup>3</sup> there are some stages for children to acquire a language.

<i>Stages</i>	<i>Characteristics</i>
9 to 18 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Imitation has a great influence for the pronunciation development.</li> <li>-At 12 months children know to say at least one word.</li> <li>-Children have a particular intonation, tone of voice and rhythm.</li> <li>-They formulate sentences using only one word.</li> <li>-Children are more capable to understand than to express.</li> </ul>
18 months to 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Make sentences using two words.</li> </ul>

<sup>3</sup> CRYSTAL, David. "Lenguaje infantil, aprendizaje y lingüística". Dins: CRYSTAL, David. *La adquisición del lenguaje*. Barcelona: Ed. Médica y Técnica, 1981, p.33- 67.



years old	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Start to use articles and prepositions.</li> <li>-Start to understand the gerund form (-ing), the past form (-ed) and the plurals (-s).</li> <li>-Improve their vocabulary.</li> </ul>
2 to 3 years old	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Make sentences using three words.</li> <li>-Start to use personal and possessive pronouns.</li> <li>-Start to use auxiliary verbs.</li> <li>-Know more vocabulary.</li> </ul>
3 to 4 years old	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Use four or five elements to make a sentence.</li> <li>-Nominal sentences are more complex.</li> <li>-Use conjunctions to link two sentences.</li> <li>-Use comparative structures.</li> <li>-Use relative clauses.</li> <li>-Start to understand and use irregular verbs.</li> </ul>
4 to 5 years old	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Start to understand and use the passive voice.</li> <li>-Use some adverbs connectors like: actually, really, however...</li> <li>-Know more vocabulary.</li> <li>-Make more complex sentences.</li> </ul>

In conclusion some of these authors coincide on the fact that all children pass through some stages to acquire a language. Others defend that children learn and acquire a language by the interaction with other people (adults, parents, teachers, other children, etc.). And other theories affirm the idea that exist an universal patterns or common aspects in all languages so all children can learn them.

But the most important thing is that all children have an innate ability to learn languages but they require the help of an adult to improve their language skills.

## 2.2. Second language acquisition

According to Muriel Saville-Troike (2006, p.13) humans are born with an innate capacity to learn languages, because children can talk and construct very complex sentences and nobody tell them any rules.

Coinciding with many researchers there are some universal patterns that children use to learn the first language and to learn the second or a foreign language. Moreover, they suggest that children construct rules for a second language using the rules that they already know from their first language. But, sometimes, this first language interferes in the acquisition of the second language, so adults, parents and teachers, are the ones who will help children in order to notice which rules are different and which are similar in both languages. (Dulay and Burt,1978).<sup>4</sup>

Coinciding with Christopher Brumfit, Jayne Moon and Ray Tongue (1994, p.6) the principle aspect is to be exposure to the foreign language and receive a good and comprehensive input.

In Catalonia most of children are only exposed to the foreign language at school so, all depends on the language that teacher uses and the activities that he or she presents to them to learn and acquire the foreign language (BRUMFIT, Christopher; MOON, Jayne; TONGUE, Ray.1994, p. 7). It is very important for children that the teacher provides good learning experiences in order to help them to use the foreign language.

Children naturally need human interaction and linguistically this interaction occurs through using the mother tongue. So, in order to children can use the language naturally, the teacher has to give an example that English is another way to communicate with other people as same as their mother tongue. And to give this example the teacher has to speak most of the time in English and also can use mimics and gestures to facilitate the communication, and to facilitate to

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<sup>4</sup> BRUMFIT, Christopher; MOON, Jayne; TONGUE, Ray. *Teaching English to children: from practice to principle*. London: Nelson, 1994, p. 219.

children the comprehension of the foreign language. (BRUMFIT, Christopher; MOON, Jayne; TONGUE, Ray. 1994, p.129).

Some children, especially early years, will remain in silent at first and this is called the “Silent Period”.<sup>5</sup> But when they gain more confidence with the foreign language they start to answer some words in this language, or they repeat exactly what the teacher said, etc. In conclusion, they start to use the foreign language. (BRUMFIT, Christopher; MOON, Jayne; TONGUE, Ray. 1994, p.137).

According to Joan Tough,<sup>6</sup> parents use some strategies when are talking with children in their first language like: try to speak slowly, articulate carefully, use mimics and gestures and use a soft voice of tone in order to children become familiar with the sounds, the intonation, the rhythm, the stress pattern, etc. So teachers could also do these things but using the second language in order to children can acquire the second language in a better and significative way.

According to Krashen (1983)<sup>7</sup> there are five stages in the process of a second language acquisition.

<i>Stage</i>	<i>Characteristics</i>	<i>Duration</i>
1.Silent Period or preproduction	-Minimal comprehension -No verbalization -Nod “yes” and “no” -Unable to communicate	0 to 6 months
2.Early production	-Limited comprehension -Participates using key words and familiar phrases -Uses present tense verbs	6 months to 1 year old

5 The “Silent Period” is defined on page 14 by Vanessa Reilly and Sheila M. Ward (1997).

6 BRUMFIT, Christopher; MOON, Jayne; TONGUE, Ray. *Teaching English to children: from practice to principle*. London: Nelson, 1994, p.221.

7 MADRID, Daniel; HUGHENS, Stephen. *Studies in Bilingual Education*. Bern: Peter Lang, 2011, pgs. 27-28.

	-Reads environmental labels and easy stories	
3.Speech emergence	-Good comprehension with pictures -Produce simple sentences and texts -Makes grammar and pronunciation errors	1 to 3 years old
4.Intermediate fluency	-Good compression -Makes some occasional errors -Limited academic writing skills	3 to 5 years old
5.Advanced fluency	-Near native level of speech -Initiates and sustains conversations -Responds with elaborate language -Reads quality children literature -Edits own writing	5 to 7 years old

Now we know that human including children have the innate ability to learn and acquire languages. So, they can learn one, two, three and more languages but, generally they apply the rules from the first language to the second or foreign language and sometimes they make some mistakes.

Trying to avoid these errors the teacher has to provide children using comprehensive input and trying to speak all the time in the second or foreign language, because the main difference between the first and the second or foreign language is the context.

So, they receive a lot of input of their first language everywhere but they just receive input from the foreign language only in the school or maybe in extra scholar activities. So, that's because it's so important that teacher has a good level of the foreign language in order to be a good model for children.

### **2.3. The importance of bilingualism**

Nowadays many people speak more than one language and that's defined like bilingualism or multilingualism. The first one is the ability to use two languages fluently and to be competent in both languages (MADRID, Daniel; HUGHES, Stephen. 2011, p. 20) and the second one is the ability to be competent in two or more than two languages (SAVILLE-TROIKE, Muriel. 2006, p.8). So, both are equal and children can both when they want so, there is no one stronger than the other.

According to Peal and Lambert (1962) bilingualism it was related to high intelligent quotient because bilingualism helps mental agility (MADRID, Daniel; HUGHENS, Stephen. 2011, p.33). And coinciding with Lasagabaster, 2007, bilingualism helps to learn a third language (MADRID, Daniel; HUGHENS, Stephen. 2011, p.34).

But, in order to get this bilingualism or multilingualism effectively, the school needs good materials, sources, spaces, reducing groups of pupils (MADRID, Daniel; HUGHENS, Stephen. 2011, p.34) and also teachers who have a very good level on the second or foreign language in order to be a good model for children and to give them a good and comprehensive input.

Because many times, for example in Catalonia, the English teacher uses the L1 or L2 to communicate with children so in this way multilingualism it cannot be effective. But, at those moments this fact is changing and improving so in some Catalan schools English teachers are speaking to children in English most of the time and only use the mother tongue in specific moments.

Other studies of bilingualism suggest that it's better to use those languages in separated contexts (BRUMFIT, Christopher; MOON, Jayne; TONGUE, Ray. 1994, p.223).

For example to speak with mum in Spanish and with dad in Catalan or speak in some subjects in Catalan, in others in Spanish and in others in English. So that allow to children to associate the languages with particular adults or particular subjects and they know perfectly which language have to use and when. And in the future, they could choose the one that they prefer or which one they feel more comfortable.

## 2.4. The role of games to learn a foreign language

“A game is played when one or more players compete or cooperate for pay-offs according to a set of rules” (Jones, 1986).<sup>8</sup>

I always found games a very useful tool to use it in Infant Education because according to Gordon Lewis and Günther Bedson (2004, p.5) games are not only a fun activity; they are also educational for children development. And there are also activities that children naturally and universally engage in (Julia Khan, 1994).<sup>9</sup> Games also facilitate social relations and are a process that favours the integral development of the child. According to Julia Khan (Teaching English to children, 1994) children learn through playing and interacting with other children and in interacting they develop language skills. And coinciding to Kathy Hirsh-Pasek and Roberta Michnick (2005)<sup>10</sup> “El lenguaje se aprende en el contexto de la interacción, es decir, en el contexto del almuerzo, el juego...”. Moreover, according to Vanessa Reilly and Sheila M. Ward (1997) games teach social skills such as cooperating and obeying rules.

According to Wells (1981)<sup>11</sup> and relating with something I mentioned before in other chapter games provide children with opportunities to communicate using the foreign language.

Gordon Lewis and Günther Bedson (2004, p.5) also affirm that through games children experiment, discover and interact with their environment. There are essential tools for understanding their world. They also affirm that for many children between 4 and 12 years old, especially the youngest, language learning will not be the key motivational factor. Games can provide this

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<sup>8</sup> BRUMFIT, Christopher; MOON, Jayne; TONGUE, Ray. Teaching English to children: from practice to principle. London: Nelson, 1994, p. 142.

<sup>9</sup> BRUMFIT, Christopher; MOON, Jayne; TONGUE, Ray. Teaching English to children: from practice to principle. London: Nelson, 1994, pgs. 142-143.

<sup>10</sup> HIRSH-PASEK, Kathy; MICHNIK, Roberta. “Einstein nunca memorizó, aprendió jugando”. Dins: HIRSH-PASEK, Kathy; MICHNIK, Roberta. *El lenguaje: sobre el poder del balbuceo*. Madrid: ediciones Martínez Roca, 2005, p. 112.

<sup>11</sup> BRUMFIT, Christopher; MOON, Jayne; TONGUE, Ray. Teaching English to children: from practice to principle. London: Nelson, 1994, p. 144.



stimulus. The game context makes the foreign language immediately useful to the children.

So I asked myself if TPR games help children to learn English at this level, and also which difficulties they can find.

Ersöz (2000) holds that games are highly appreciated thanks to their amusement and interest. Teachers can use games to help their students practice more their skills of communication. Coinciding with Gordon Lewis and Günther Bedson (2004, p.5); Vanessa Reilly and Sheila M.Ward (1997) they say that games are motivating in themselves.

In addition, Maria Toth (1995, p.8) also affirms that TPR games provide the teacher with many opportunities for using English to communicate ideas to the class, gives also the opportunity to learn more vocabulary and instructions so children not only play a game, but they are also exposed to “real” English.

Gordon Lewis and Günther Bedson (2004, p.7) remark that exist two kinds of games: the “rousers” games and the “settlers” games. Rousers games are used to wake a class up. There are movement games like guessing games or competitive games. And settlers, on the other hand, calm a class down, because there are relaxed games like art and craft or listening activities. Sometimes the difference between “rousers” and “settlers” games is not very clear and depends on how the teacher decides to play the game.

Some of those authors like Gordon Lewis and Günther Bedson (2004, p.14) or Maria Toth (1995, pgs.7-8) coinciding on the fact that sometimes teacher can help children using the mother tongue. But to avoid it Maria Toth (1995, p.8) proposes that sometimes children need a demonstration to understand the game so the teacher can use volunteers to give a demonstration in front of the class in order to allow the other students to see the game action, but she also consider that even though this demonstration they don't understand the teacher can use the mother tongue.

However, Vanessa Reilly and Sheila M. Ward (1997) propose some strategies to avoid the use of the mother tongue. They also agree to use some words in the mother tongue if pupils don't understand something, especially the

youngest, but they explain that is better to use gestures with the body or facial expression to communicate or even do mimics to show the meaning in order to avoid the mother tongue. Another of their strategies is to use English words which are similar to the mother tongue. And the last strategy that they propose is that the teacher can dress up or pretend to be a foreign person who only speaks and understands English, so children can only speak English with him/her and vice versa.

Vanessa Reilly and Sheila M. Ward (1997) also talk about the concept of “silent period” which consists on children spends a lot of time absorbing language before they produce anything. It is not a good idea to try to force them to speak the target language if they don't feel comfortable to use it yet. If a child doesn't speak the target language that's not very important because he/ she understand the teacher but doesn't react orally yet, so the teacher has to wait for students speech to emerge naturally. By doing games children will produce language without the stress of having to speak individually.

There are also some types of games like for example Total Physical Response, which was developed by James Asher and consists on giving students some English structures. First of all the teacher has to say and do the action and then, children have to repeated, altogether or individually. This method respects the “silent period” because the pupils don't have to speak, they simply have to carry out, and so they learn through actions. An example of Total Physical Response could be: “Alexander, open the door, please”. And Alexander goes to open the door.

James Asher (2000, p.3-26) focuses on the importance of language and body movements because the combination of both things permits to internalize information. He also affirms that children have long-term retention, so if their training is discontinued (maybe because of holidays or when they finish high school and don't use the foreign language as before) the comprehension skills that they internalized through the body can be rapidly retrieved.

Other authors like Christopher Brumfit, Jayne Moon and Ray Tongue (1994, p. 51) also talk about TPR and they said that the teacher at first has to start with simple structures like “stand up” or “sit down” and he/she has to complicate it gradually.

So, an example of TPR game could be Simon Says which consists on giving instructions to children. These instructions always are said in an imperative form. Like for example: “- Jane open the window please”. With this game children can learn a lot of vocabulary of any topic, some grammar, etc. So, also the teacher can use this game in order to observe if children acquired the vocabulary which she previously worked with them (BRUMFIT, Christopher; MOON, Jayne; TONGUE, Ray. 1994, p.146).

Other games focused on language are for example “spelling bee” which consists on spelling a word, so it’s useful to work on vocabulary.

There are also routine and repetitive games which consist on repeat or imitate some words or sentences that teacher or other players said (BRUMFIT, Christopher MOON, Jayne; TONGUE, Ray. 1994, p.149). And there also exist cooperative games which ones consist on playing in group or in pairs. It was demonstrated that playing in peers involve more children in oral interaction (BRUMFIT, Christopher MOON, Jayne; TONGUE, Ray. 1994, p.147) and working in groups involve children to use the language in order to negotiate with other pupils (BRUMFIT, Christopher MOON, Jayne; TONGUE, Ray. 1994, p.148).

In conclusion, all these authors coincide that games are a good source to learn a second or a foreign language because there are a funny activity for children which also motivates them to learn. Games also facilitate the interaction and communication with other children. Using games the teacher gives a good and comprehensive input of the foreign language to children.

### 3. Practical part

From the introduction of a topic like animals, food, clothes, etc. I realized some games to link all the activities related to the topic about animals (the one that I chose) and also to relate all the vocabulary.

So, first of all, I introduced the topic about animals taking the advantage of the fact that they were the elephant's classroom so I introduced that topic, explaining them a story which was "The very hungry caterpillar" and, then, we worked all the vocabulary with flashcards.

At first, I looked how the children interact with the English teacher and I could see that she always spoke to them in English and she also did a lot of TPR games so it was easy to me to introduce some other TPR games to children.

In the first session, I asked the children to sit down on the floor in front of the whiteboard and I told them a story about "The very hungry caterpillar". With that story, I wanted to remind some vocabulary food and also to introduce the topic of animals.

After telling them the story, I showed to children a flashcard about one animal and I asked them if they knew which animal was, if they knew it because they said the name of that animal correctly I stack the flashcard on the whiteboard but if they didn't know it I told them the name showing them the flashcard and, after that, I asked them to repeat the name of that animal altogether.

In these pictures we can see the animal's flashcards that I used:





Also that day, while I was showing the flashcards I asked them which sound produces the pig, the horse, the cat... in order to they could learn the English animals sounds. And, in this way, little by little with the help of the pictures they were acquiring all the vocabulary.

In these pictures we can see the children sitting in front of the whiteboard and looking the animal's flashcards.





But, in order to prove if everyone was really acquiring the vocabulary I called out them one by one to come to the whiteboard and touched one animal so for example I said:

-Maria, can you touch the pig, please?

And Maria stood up, came to the whiteboard and touched the flashcard about dolphin. I continued doing like that and all of them did it very well as we can see in these pictures.









Then, I also asked them one by one if they had an animal in their houses and one child told us that she had a dog called Baloo, another little girl explained us that she had a dog called Byron, another little boy said that he had a cat called Nena and another little boy told us that he had a rabbit called Bugs Bunny. Everyone of them explained which animal had and pointed at the correct picture.

After that, we reviewed all the animals again because I pointed with my finger to each flashcard and next we played a game. I asked them to close their eyes because I was going to take off one of the flashcards that were on the whiteboard and they had to guess which one was missing. So, I took off one flashcard and when I said three they opened their eyes and they guessed that dolphin was missing.

We did that game many times because they played very well, even I called one little boy to take off one flashcard and in one turn I took off two flashcards in order to motivate them and also to see if they noticed or not and they also guessed the two flashcards that were missing.



The only animal which name they didn't remember very well was the squirrel because it was the first time that they listened that name but they knew all the other animals so they did it very well.

Next session, we reviewed the vocabulary again also using the flashcards and that time they remembered all the names of the animals even though the squirrel. We also reviewed the sounds of the animals and in order to acquire these sounds better we sang the "Old McDonald's had a farm" song altogether.

After that, we played an animal's bingo which they painted in the previous session. Like we can see in this picture:



I gave out to each one their bingo card and also the plates with different crayons to each table and, then, I told them to take only one marker and when I say one animal if they had it in their cards they had to circled. So, that time I said the name of the animal but without showing them the picture so it was more difficult for them but I could see who knew the vocabulary by themselves and who hadn't known. Most of them remembered perfectly which animals had to circle but some of them looked to the one who had next to him or her in order to know which animal had to circle. Here we can see how they did it:



We were playing since some children won and then we played again. I told them to take another crayon with a different colour from the plate and that time they had to do a cross if they had got the animal that I said. And, that time all of them did it by themselves. Here we can see other examples:





Even so, they dominated a lot the topic about animals because they had been worked before but they didn't dominate the topic about food which one I introduced during my placement and they acquired a lot of food vocabulary and some English structures with the games that I introduced.

At first, I used the same technique that I used to introduce the topic about animals. I was showing them the flashcards about food with the difference that it was me who said all the time the names of the food and they just repeated altogether. They only knew a few words like banana, apple and fish.

But, that was only in the first session because the second time that I showed them the flashcards they remembered practically all the names of the food.

Then, I did some TPR games like Simon Says or the Pictionary which one I called out one little girl and I asked her to draw a banana on the whiteboard and the others had to guess it and they did it very well because she draw the banana and another little girl raised her hand and guessed the food.

Again, it was more difficult for them because they hadn't got the help of the picture. They had to remember the food and the name of the food but in general they did it very well. Only some of the children that I called out in order to draw a food, didn't remember pretty well the food that I said, so I had to show them the picture and then they could draw the food on the whiteboard. While I showed them the flashcard, I also repeated the name of the food in order that they acquired better the vocabulary and didn't forget it.

With that, we can see that TPR games really respect the Silent Period because children don't have to speak; they only listen at first and later they reproduce by imitation. When I called them one by one they only just to do actions they haven't got to say nothing so that allows that children could acquired this foreign language. By playing they learn this language and then they will use that language automatically because they had been interiorized it.

In other sessions I also did the “rock, paper, scissors” game. I took one box and I put inside some flashcards about food. I divided the children in two groups (like they were sitting in their tables) and then I called out one child of one group and I said him to close his eyes and he also had to take one flashcard from the box without looking and then, he had to guess the name of the food and he guessed it.

The problem was when one child didn't know the name of the food that appeared on the flashcard. Then, I called another child of the opposite group and they had to play “rock, paper, scissors” and the one who won had the opportunity to guess the food and win one extra point for his/her team. That game was really funny and they reviewed a lot of vocabulary.

Then, I did another game called “Fruit Salad!” which consisted on first of all, doing a circle with the chairs on the top of the classroom in front of the whiteboard. When all of them were sitting in their chairs I gave to each one a little flashcard about food as we can see in this picture



but they couldn't show the flashcard to anyone because they had to think themselves which food it was.

All of them had pairs so when all children had a little flashcard then I asked them:

-Who has apples?

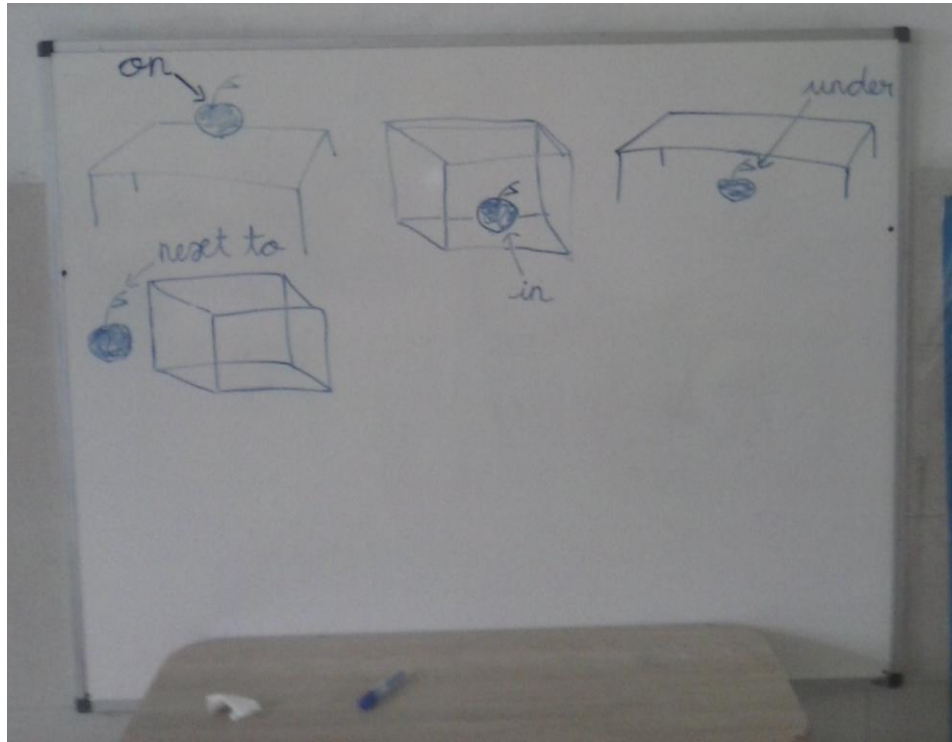


And the children who had apples raised their hands and showed me the flashcards and I explained them also doing gestures that they had to change their seats and they did it. We repeated twice with other food in order to everyone could understand it and, after that, I explained them that when I said “fruit salad!” all of them had to change their seats.

They did it very well and even though I modified the game a little bit because I took off some chairs and some of them were eliminated in order to do the game funnier and also in order to they could enjoy more.

Another of my objectives was that children with that game could learn some English structures or in that case I wanted that they acquired some English prepositions and I also related with the topic of food. I wrote some easy prepositions on the whiteboard as we can see in this picture:





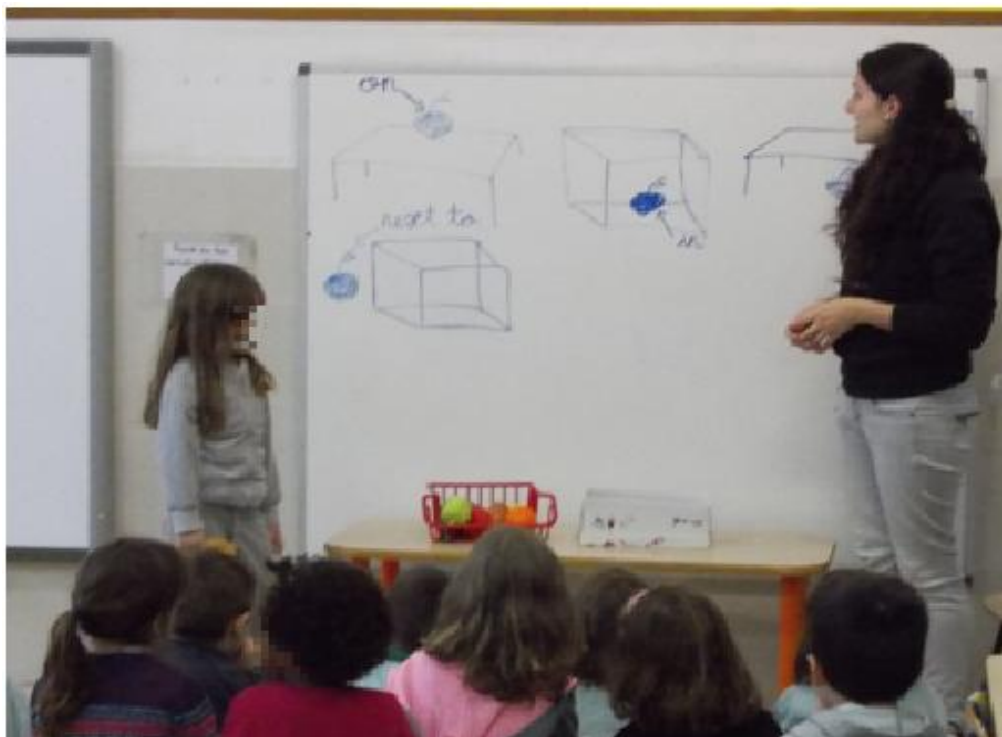
I also drew an apple in order to link the prepositions to the vocabulary of food and to make it more visual to children. Then, I took a plastic apple and I put it on the table and I explained them that the apple was on the table and I remarked the preposition on. After that, also using the plastic apple, I put the apple in a box, under the table and next to the box and while I was doing that action I said it and I asked children to repeat it with me several times in order to they could acquired these prepositions.

Then, in order to evaluate if they had learnt the food vocabulary and if they also knew the prepositions I put that basket on the table with some kind of plastic food and I asked them one by one to take one food and put it **on** the table, **in** the box, **under** the table or **next to** the box.



So, for example I said:

-Martina, please, take the lemon and put it under the table- and she did it, as we can see in this picture.



All of them took the right food even the children who had more difficulties in all areas and most of them also put the food where I asked them to put it. Only some of them doubted a little but I helped them repeating again the sentence and also pointing on the right picture that appeared on the whiteboard so they finally did it well.

TPR games allow that children acquired a foreign language little by little without the stress of having to speak individually because they only have to do some actions and children learn through those actions.

They learn altogether because at first all the time I tried to make participated them altogether to get that all of them were more confident and had more security in themselves.

But, at least I also wanted to see if they got my main objective that was to learn the animal's vocabulary so, in order to evaluate if they really acquired or not the animal's vocabulary I did a grid with all the names of the children of the elephant's classroom and all the animals that I introduced to them.

After that, I called them one by one and showing them a picture of an animal I asked them if they remembered the name of the animal or not and like we could see in the grid most of them remembered the name of all the animals, some of



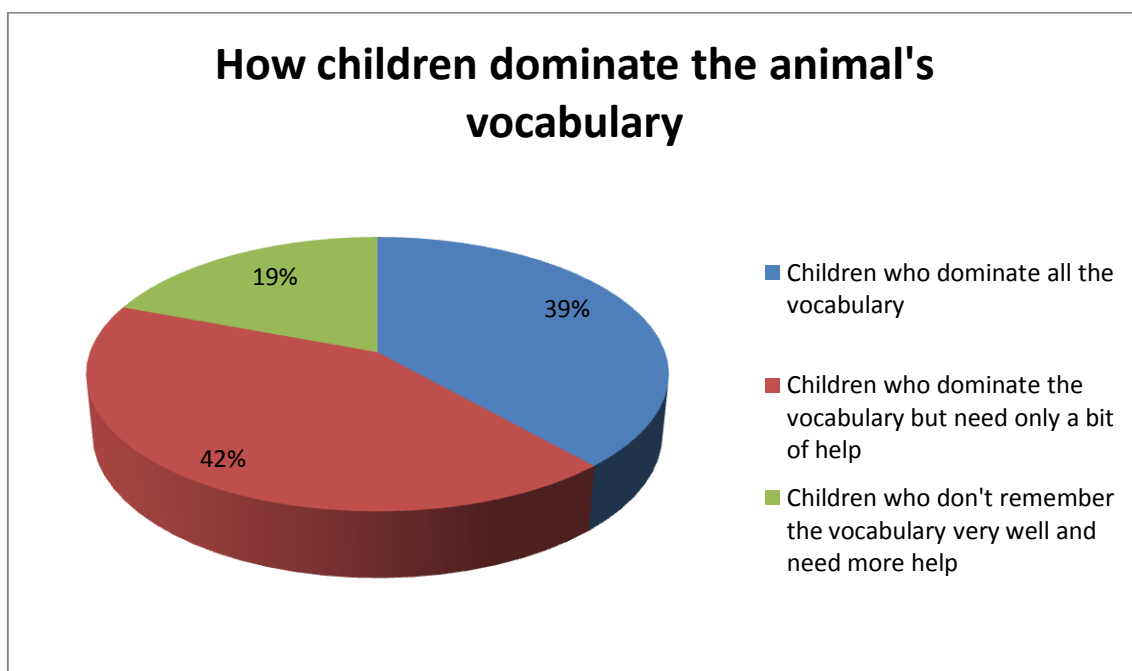
them needed a little of help in one or two animals but when I said the first syllabus they remembered the whole name. And only few of them didn't remember very well the name of the animals. Those children who didn't remember all the animal's names agreed with the ones who presented difficulties in the rest of areas.

One child instead of saying the name of the animal told me the sound of the animal because I showed him the flashcard of the horse and he said me:

-Neigh. No, horse.

So, at first he said me the correct sound of the animal but then he rectified by himself. So, I also noticed that they acquired not only the name of the animal but also their English sounds.

Here, we can also see the graphic about the results extracted from the grid about how children dominate the animal's vocabulary. We can notice that the 39% of the children acquired perfectly all the vocabulary, the 42% of the children also dominate very good the vocabulary and only need some help to remember some words and the 19% of the children don't remember the vocabulary very well and need so much help.



How children dominate the animal's vocabulary (detailed):

<b>Names</b>	<b>Cat</b>	<b>Dog</b>	<b>Dolphin</b>	<b>Rabbit</b>	<b>Elephant</b>	<b>Monkey</b>	<b>Pig</b>	<b>Squirrel</b>	<b>Lion</b>	<b>Horse</b>	<b>Giraffe</b>	<b>Tiger</b>
1.Miriam	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes, but with help	Yes	Yes
2.Martina	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
3.Sergi	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	He first said the sound but then said the right name	Yes	Yes
4.Mamadou	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
5.Aitor	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	No	No	Yes, but with help
6.Aina	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes, but with help	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes, but with help
7.Gerard	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
8.Marina F.	Yes	No	Yes, but with help	Yes, but with help	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	No	Yes	No
9.Ferran	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
10.Marc	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes, but with help	Yes	Yes	Yes, but with help	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
11.Maria	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes

12.Nil	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
13.Marina G.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
14.Nekane	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
15.Bereket	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes, but with help
16.Noah	Yes	Yes	Yes, but with help	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes, but with help
17.Aya	Yes	Yes	Yes, but with help	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	No	Yes, but with help	No
18.Sergio	No	No	Yes, but with help	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes, but with help	Yes	Yes, but with help	Yes	No
19.Izan	Yes	No	Yes, but with help	Yes, but with help	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	No	Yes	No
20.Hugo	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
21.Xènia	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
22.Àlex R.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes, but with help
23.Pau	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes, but with help	Yes	Yes
24.Irene	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	No	No
25.Aitana	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes, but with help	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
26.Àlex V.	Yes	Yes	Yes, but with help	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes, but with help	No

#### 4. Conclusions

During the sessions that I did in the school with children I could prove that they really assume the vocabulary very fast because they repeat like parrots but then they remembered all that you said before even if you said it only one time. At these ages they have the ability to retain a lot of information so it is very important to speak to them all the time in English in order to they can acquire this language. So, according to Chomsky, children have the innate capacity to learn any language.

It's true that in some specific moments I also used the mother tongue but I think that it's really necessary to engage children again into the activities, to attract again their attention and also to give the opportunity to the ones who have more difficulties in order they can also follow the activities.

So, I agree with Maria Toth because in some moments it's important that the teacher uses the mother tongue. Even more in a place where children only listen and learn English in the English class because this language doesn't belong to their usual context.

I also said all in English at first, but in some specific moments I used the mother tongue repeating the same sentence but in Catalan. So, for example, while I was telling the story about "The very hungry caterpillar" at first I said all the sentences in English and after said in English I said "i ja no va tenir més gana" because even doing gestures they didn't understand so I had to say it in Catalan. Or when I explained them the game about "Rock, paper, scissors" I asked them if they ever played a game called "Pedra, paper o tissores" in order for them to associate the game with the one they knew although I changed a little.

I also gave examples of the rules of the games asking some volunteers to show to the others what they had to do or how to play and I also did mimics and gestures in order everyone to could understand but I think that saying some words or sentences in Catalan in some specific moments in our mother tongue

help children to understand better the rules of the game and also motivate them to follow the activities.

I also could see that they apply the rules from the first or the second language to the foreign language because sometimes they said some sentences like: “tomato red” instead of saying “red tomato”. Because they put the adjective after the noun like in Spanish or Catalan.

In other activities one child said the word “cebot” and I asked him first in English, but then in Catalan:

-Vols dir ceba, Marc?

-Si- he answered.

-Ohh, it's not a cebot. In English ceba is onion.

And he learnt the correct word. Another day he said “sendi” instead of saying “watermelon” because the second one was very difficult for him. So, I could observe that this child changed the English words and mixed them with the Spanish and Catalan language.

I also saw that TPR games are a good source for children to acquire a language because, as Vanessa Reilly and Sheila M. Ward say, they respect the silent period because children haven't got to speak, they just listen and then, they do the actions by imitation until they acquired and internalized the English language through these actions and finally they reproduce the language automatically.

I also saw that TPR games also respect the pace of every child because some children learn quicker than others so, while some of them are reproducing the language because they say the vocabulary perfectly, they also repeat some sentences, for example, others rest in silence and don't say anything because they are still assimilating the language but, all of them will externalize the English language at last.

Also, doing at first activities in which they could participate altogether and then individually, helped those children who are less confident in themselves. This also helped those children who have more difficulties to get more security with the English language.

Some games also help children to obey rules like for example “Rock, paper, scissors”, Bingo, etc. Because with “rock, paper, scissors” they start to respect the turn of everyone because when I called one children in order to guess the name of the food that appeared on the flashcard, the others had to rest in silence. And with that game and with the bingo too they also learn that there are only games and sometimes they can win or they can lose.

Moreover, games really motivate children to learn because they enjoyed them a lot and always when I said that we were going to play a game their faces changed and they were very happy. For example, the day that we played the bingo when they saw the bingo cards they asked me:

-Jugarem al bingo?

And when I said yes they started to clap their hands and started to say things like:

-Bien!

They really like to play games and they get involve very easily to them and they really learn a lot of vocabulary through TPR games like I could see when I evaluated them.

To conclude, at the beginning of this research I questioned if by using TPR games children (about five and six years old) learn some English vocabulary and structures. And now I would answer that of course children learn and acquire the English language from that kind of games because the 39% of the children of that class acquired all the animal’s vocabulary; the 42% acquired quite well the vocabulary and only needed a little of help to remember some words and the 19% of the children had more difficulties to remember the vocabulary.

With that, I can say that games are a really good source to teach and motivate children to learn and, with the English language, TPR games are a great help to children in order to acquire little by little this foreign language.

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