

**THE DEVELOPMENT OF COMMUNICATION  
SKILLS IN EFL THROUGH DRAMA  
TECHNIQUES IN PRESCHOOL**

Final Dissertation

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## **Abstract**

This study has its main objective to discover if drama techniques promote the development of communication skills in English as foreign language in preschool. The research has been developed following the action – research methodology, through the implementation of a programming guideline of drama activities in English in a Catalan preschool. Then, since the sessions were recorded, these were observed and analysed. Moreover, an interview was done to three preschool English teachers who usually use drama techniques. The results of this study are presented in the thesis.

**Key words:** communication skills, drama, English as a foreign language, preschool, teacher's management.

## **Resum**

L'objectiu principal d'aquest treball és descobrir si les tècniques dramàtiques promouen el desenvolupament d'habilitats comunicatives en anglès com a llengua estrangera dels infants d'educació infantil. La recerca ha estat desenvolupada seguint la metodologia investigació – acció, a través de la implementació d'una guia de programació d'activitats dramàtiques en anglès en una escola d'educació infantil catalana. Seguidament, com que les sessions van ser gravades en vídeo, van ser observades i analitzades. A més a més, una entrevista va ser realitzada a tres mestres d'anglès d'educació infantil que utilitzen tècniques dramàtiques habitualment. Els resultats d'aquest estudi són presents a la tesis.

**Paraules clau:** habilitats comunicatives, drama, anglès com a llengua estrangera, educació infantil, gestió de la mestra.

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# 1. Introduction

This research is a final dissertation of the 4<sup>th</sup> course of the Double Degree in Early Childhood Education and Primary School Teaching (Majoring in English) of the University of Vic – Central University of Catalonia, focused on early childhood education.

Teaching English to very young learners is nowadays a reality in some Catalan schools and there are many resources to introduce the foreign language at this stage. Going in depth in some techniques to introduce English as a foreign language in preschool can be useful for a future teaching practise. Consequently, this project is focused on the development of communication skills through drama techniques. Thus, this topic was chosen because drama is a playful process through which children can practice the language actively and in a meaningful way. Besides, with the use of drama techniques, language skills are integrated naturally through both “verbal and non-verbal aspects of communication” (Maley & Duff, 2005, p.1). This brings up the question whether drama activities really provide preschool children with opportunities to develop their communication skills in the foreign language or not.

There is not much research about the use of drama techniques to learn English as a foreign language in preschool. Thus, the main aim of the study is to design, apply and analyse a programming guideline of drama activities in English in a Catalan preschool, focusing on the children’s communication skills, and secondly, to interview three preschool teachers who use drama techniques to contrast and support the research literature and practical implementation.

The study presented is divided into three parts. To start with, the theoretical framework is presented to contextualize drama in preschool education, its effect in learning a foreign language, and the development of communication skills through drama techniques. Secondly, the study presents the main objectives and research question of the study, the paradigm and methodology followed, and finally, the instruments used and participants that took part in the study. Then, the results of the study are analysed and discussed in relation with the theoretical framework. Finally, the conclusions of the study are presented with an answer to the research question, the limitations of the study and some reflections and ideas for future research.



## 2. Theoretical Framework

### 2.1. An overview of drama in education

The term *drama* or *dramatic play* has been studied and described by many authors, but, do we always talk about drama? Some authors, as Motos (2013 – 2014), explain the differences between dramatic play and theatre, as they may be ambiguous terms. For that reason, we can see authors using different terminology to refer to drama, for example, dramatic play<sup>1</sup>, creative drama<sup>2</sup> and theatre<sup>3</sup>, but always referring to an educational context. Nevertheless, it is important to keep in mind that the term dramatization makes reference to the subject included in the Primary Education curriculum (Motos 2013 – 2014).

Eines and Mantovani (1997) make a direct relationship between drama and the creative expression of the individual, and similarly, Athiemoalam (2004), defines drama in education as “an improvisational, non-exhibitional, process-centred form of drama in which participants are guided by a leader to imagine, enact and reflect upon human experiences” (p.4).

To start with, Tejerina (1994) claims that children discover drama in games. She relates this statement with the capacities of making representations and using dramatic language to express themselves. According to Dolci (2010), one of the first games that appear are pretending to be someone or something, which can be the basis for future creative developments. In these situations, children select the most important elements to them, instead of reproducing exactly the reality.

These types of non-performative representations, as Tejerina (1994) defines, go naturally related to symbolic play and have a pedagogical relationship with dramatic play. As she argues, the difference between these two dramatic formats is that symbolic play is spontaneous and dramatic play or theatre are organized. She suggests that playing is the fundamental activity of the childhood dramatic expression, as an exploratory, open and dynamic activity. Dolci (2010), refers to the first signs that reveal

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<sup>1</sup> Motos (2013 – 2014); Piaget (1962), as seen in Mulker and Brouillette (2013).

<sup>2</sup> Eines and Mantovani (1997) and Athiemoalam (2004).

<sup>3</sup> Hazar (2019) and Dolci (2010).

a conscious intentionality of wanting to be observed by some spectators as theatre scrawls<sup>4</sup>. He says that we can find these cases when children, with a communicative purpose and to make their expression noticeable, play fiction games exaggerating their gestures and modifying their voices. Following Tejerina's (1994) ideas, playing is a learning tool and it contributes to the development of very young child, so, the type of games needs to be different and adapted to their psychological evolution.

### **2.1.1. Developmental stages in drama**

Talking about drama in education, some authors have classified the different dramatic formats into stages by age periods, as in each developmental stage children have different capacities and abilities. Phillips (2003) argues that "Dramatizing is part of children's lives from an early age: children act out scenes and stories from the age of about three or four" (p.6). Similarly, Motos (2013 – 2014) differentiates some dramatic formats, which can be associated to the developmental stage of each child and which go from a more spontaneous and playful format to a more technical one, understood as an artistic production. Moreover, he states that the drama techniques classification is not exclusive of an age, but goes from less to more complexity.

According to Phillips (2003), it is important to take into account children's age when planning, apart from the group organization, since for younger children, guided and whole-group activities may be more suitable for them.

When we talk about preschool, as Dolci (2010) explains, children express these theatre scrawls which will be part of the process before dramatic play, and, following Phillips' (2003) idea, "The more dramatization the children do, and the more they reflect on what they have done, the better they will become at it" (p.8). Eines and Mantovani (2007) also talk about a preliminary stage, which comprises children from about 2 to 4 years old. During this stage, children develop their imitative capacities, such as pretending to do something that they see from other people, and they also put in practice symbolic play, which, as Tejerina (1994) states, is the first spontaneous and dramatic expression of the child, since it is a dramatic format that occurs when children play without rules

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<sup>4</sup> Literal translation for "gargots teatrales" (Dolci, 2010).

under the principle *as if...*, while they change the reality by applying fictitious qualities to objects.

In addition, during the preliminary stage, as Eines and Mantovani (2007) state, children can also start exploring role-play games, for example, when they play as if they were parents or as if they were doing some jobs. On the other hand, Motos (2013 – 2014) explains that this activity is carried out with older children, as it is a dramatic format that takes place when children receive a written document with a described situation and the characteristics of a character, which they have to represent using improvisation in front of their classmates. However, following Eines and Mantovani (2007) and Dolci (2010) ideas, in preschool, there are some theatre scrawls of role-play.

On the other hand, when children are about 5 years old, they have a clear understanding of their social roles and the rules they are expected to follow (Eines & Mantovani, 2007). Motos (2013 – 2014) exposes that dramatic play can appear at this stage, as it is a dramatic format that appears when we establish some rules to symbolic play and without a written script, so that children can improvise in relation to the chosen topic. Additionally, Maley (1983) as seen in Gaudart (1990) claims that drama “is never intended for performance (...), since it depends on the spontaneous inventions and reactions of people involved in it... drama involves the participants themselves” (pp. 230 – 231).

## **2.2. The use of drama activities to teach English as a foreign language**

Many authors agree that implementing drama in preschool education could be a very effective tool to teach English as a foreign language. Since children are involved in the process, they are able to express themselves freely and realize the importance and usefulness of communication (Hazar, 2019), achieving with that, as some authors agree (Athimoolam, 2004; Phillips, 2003; Rai, 2012), learning English in a meaningful way. As Tejerina (1994) states, using drama techniques to learn a foreign language is more meaningful when focussing on expressive development.

Talking about the benefits of drama activities in foreign language learning, teachers have a significant role. Following Phillips’ (2003) idea, teachers are a model for

children, since they “encourage them to be active in the classroom” (p.9), so, children need to notice their enthusiasm and enjoyment while doing the activities. Nevertheless, Gaudart (1990) states that the role of the teacher has changed over the years, and nowadays he or she is the facilitator, because the education has become learner-centred. In order to carry out drama activities successfully, as Maley and Duff (2005) say, “teachers themselves need to be convinced that they will work” (p.4), because if they are not convinced or reluctant to do them, it will not be rewarding. For that reason, teachers need to create a relaxed atmosphere by showing confidence with a well-prepared organization, using body language and the appropriate voice tone (Maley & Duff, 2005).

The planning and the type of activities are really important aspects to consider, since, if teacher do not involve all the students “undesired situations such as boredom and nervousness may occur” (Hazar, 2019, p.26). In that sense, drama activities which are focused on communication can help when these types of situation occur (Hazar, 2019, p.33). On the other hand, Phillips (2003) says that dramatizing can change the mood of the classroom and the children in a positive way, since the activities can bring a more lively environment to the classroom, and promote “a supportive and collaborative classroom environment” (Greenfader & Brouillette, 2013, p. 176).

### **2.2.1. Advantages of using drama activities**

Apart from the general advantages previously mentioned, some benefits of using drama techniques in preschool can be identified, which may not only contribute to foreign language learning, but also to the children’s development. Talking from this preliminary stage, drama techniques promote the enrichment and development of the dramatic play process of the children.

To start with, drama activities promote the development of creativity and imagination of the children, and with that, increase “the skill of taking decisions, thinking independently and the motivation to discover” (Tombak, 2014, p.376). Athiemoolam (2004), Belliveau and Kim (2013) and Rai (2012) also support this idea, as drama stimulates creative thinking and enables children to practice some skills such as, “inventing, generating, speculating, assimilating, clarifying, inducing, deducing,

analysing, accommodating, selecting, refining, sequencing and judging” (Katz, 2000), as seen in (Athimoolam, 2004, p.4).

Another thing is that drama, as Tombak (2014) and Maley and Duff (2005) agree, promotes self-awareness, self-concept and confidence. Thus, children are able to understand themselves better and develop motivation, and, consequently, “explore emotions, attitudes, opinions and relationships” (Athimoolam, 2004, p.4).

Thirdly, Tombak (2014), states that drama has a positive influence on group cooperation, since children develop their responsibility, empathy, and social skills. This stems from the fact that drama techniques are often co-operative, as children need to take responsibilities and work together to achieve their objectives, so they “have to make decisions as a group, listen to each other, and value each other’s suggestions” (Phillips, 2003, p.7).

Additionally, children may develop some abilities such as coordination, flexibility and agility, increasing with that, their psychomotor skills (Tombak, 2014).

In the fifth place, another benefit of drama in learning the foreign language is that children “develop their intercultural communicative competence” (Byram, 1997) as seen in (Belliveau & Kim, 2013, p.11). The author affirms that they put in practice some critical attitudes that promote the acquisition of sociocultural knowledge and other abilities that are learned through interaction.

Last but not least, the role of drama in developing communication skills has been object of study by many authors, both regarding verbal and non-verbal skills. The process of verbal communication skills starts, as Tombak (2014) says, when children talk to each other. Phillips (2003) states that language learning comes because children are encouraged to participate, so, to communicate “even with limited language, using non-verbal communication, such as body movements and facial expressions” (p.6).

### **2.3. The development of communication skills through drama**

One of the advantages aforementioned of using drama techniques is that these can contribute to the development of communication skills of children when they are

learning a foreign language. Using drama in education may provide ideal conditions for foreign language acquisition, since, as Hazar (2019) and Tejerina (1994) agree, those activities let children try without giving importance to error, as mistakes have no consequences, so there is an elimination of prejudices and children can communicate and express freely.

With reference to the foreign language acquisition in preschool education, Piquer (2006) argues that the main objective of learning English at this stage is to raise awareness among the children and to start guiding them to the target language learning. Following this idea, as Kang (2006) says, “one goal of foreign language instruction is to expose students to new languages and new cultures in order to prepare them to become global citizens in the future” (p.5). In most cases, very young children will not have the need to learn the foreign language, as they will not use it outside the English lesson, but it can become a need later on, so, it is important to choose suitable activities, so that the foreign language becomes part of their lives naturally (Cameron, 2001). As Lobo (2010) says, introducing English as a foreign language in preschool classes “is a wonderful idea and a great opportunity to lay solid foundations for future stages” (p.33). Thus, using drama activities in preschool education provides opportunities to use the language actively and to use it as an oral communication tool. (Tombak, 2014).

When carrying out drama activities in preschool, children need to be situated in a context where they can see English as a tool for communication, where materials and activities are suitable for them, regarding their language proficiency and their interests, since their experience regarding the target language may be completely new or very limited (Kang, 2006). For that reason, as some authors agree (Breckenridge, 2006; Cameron, 2001; Hazar, 2019; Kang, 2006), it is important to offer familiar contexts to the children, which they can relate to their own cultural experiences, and with that, boost the language acquisition process. When children are exposed to a new language, they try to bring their previous knowledge about what they already know about the world, which can “help children find social purpose that can be used as a key to understanding. It will also help children understand the foreign language *as a means of communication*, as words and phrases are learnt to fit familiar contexts” (Cameron, 2001, p. 39).

In some occasions, as Cameron (2001) and Ellis and Brewster (2014) (2001) agree, although the core activity or the story is told in English, as the class shares another first language, this can be used in some occasions to promote the learning of the foreign language. As these authors claim, teachers can use children's first language when giving instructions or explaining the activities, predicting some parts of the story, checking understanding, during informal talk with the children and when giving feedback.

Using different techniques such as songs, story dramatization and greeting, together with spontaneous communicative and expressive opportunities in preschool, can be a very advantageous opportunity to develop English as a foreign language naturally, bringing out a meaningful learning (Piquer, 2006). Piquer (2006) claims that using facial and body language and voice modulation to accompany the verbal message can offer children a great opportunity for meaning construction. Because of this, "Drama is an ideal way to encourage children to guess the meaning of unknown language in a context which often makes meaning clear" (Phillips, 2003, p.8). Thus, drama is a communication and expressive tool that works indirectly, not only for the children but also as a teacher.

Accordingly, Locke (1993), as seen in Cameron (2001), states that children interact with each other, even though the limited understanding of the language that they receive orally, which contributes to develop communication gradually. This interaction appears during drama, because children focus on doing and the context promotes meaningful learning, so they can practice with contextualized language and connect the decontextualized language to their previous experiences (Brouillette, 2013; Gaudart, 1990; Greenfader & Brouillette, 2013; Maley & Duff, 2005). Talking about language, Tejerina (1994) says that the development of verbal expression may also be produced because of interaction between peers and the imitation of the older ones. On the other hand, Tejerina (1994) highlights the importance of offering a meaningful context in addition to some individual and concrete factors, because communication also occurs because of other non-verbal features.

Not only verbal language is important, but also the development of diverse languages has been object of study of diverse authors. The integration of non-verbal communication abilities when learning a foreign language can help on "restoring the balance between physical and intellectual aspects of learning" (Maley & Duff, 2005,

p.1). Widdowson (1978) highlights the importance of helping children to see that they can transfer language abilities that they already have in their first language to the foreign language, so that they can use non-verbal communication skills. In order to achieve that, teachers need to carry out activities where not only the spoken language is important, but also movement and free expression.

In that way, preschool is the perfect time to benefit from these kind of activities to learn a new language, because children, as Kang (2006) and Uysal and Yavuz (2015) agree, tend to have short concentration spans but a lot of energy, so they like to engage in dynamic activities. In addition, Dolci (2010) quotes Malaguzzi when talking about non-verbal languages. He claims that using non-verbal techniques with very young children is a great resource because they are malleable and less prescriptive, so these can function well as a tool for expressing themselves, increasing their awareness and for communicating with others.

Tejerina (1994) talks about strategies that can be developed through drama techniques and which foster free expression, imagination and participation, such as the development of gestures, movement and spoken language possibilities and the communication with the group. Similarly, Uysal and Yavuz (2015) point out some activities which are also beneficial when learning a foreign language, such as “walking, running, jumping, dancing and climbing” (p.21), in addition to using concrete materials that help them to construct the meaning.

In other words, using drama activities may be an effective tool to teach English as a foreign language because “it helps students to promote their comprehension of the verbal / non-verbal aspects of the target language” (Rai, 2012, p.78). As Tejerina (1994) states, apart from developing some specific language elements, the key issue of foreign language learning is to achieve communication.

### **2.3.1. The use of stories**

When we talk about drama activities, stories can be a useful resource to support them, both through the teacher’s presentation and through children’s participation, such as doing storytelling, pantomime and story dramatization, among others (Page, 1983).



During this preliminary stage, as Eines and Mantovani (2007) point out, a great way to introduce children into drama is using a motivational story and acting out some actions.

Similarly, Breckenridge (2006) pinpoints that familiar stories are a useful resource to use in English as a foreign language classes, as these engage children's "language skills and also encourage them to participate in the learning process" (p.129). Despite the fact that children do not understand every single word, these drama techniques help them to comprehend some of the input they are receiving, for example the plot or the characters, as they can go into the story and use their inner dramatic narrative sense (Greenfader & Brouillette, 2013). Besides, comprehension occurs because there are some factors that benefit meaning construction, which, as Cameron (2001) claims, should be the focus of the learning practice. These factors include the pictures of the books and facial and body gestures, among others (Cameron, 2001; Ellies, n.d; Ellis & Brewster, 2014). Moreover, Ellis and Brewster (2014) claim that while using these techniques, "children become aware of the rhythm, intonation and pronunciation of language" (p.7). As some author agree (Cameron, 2001; Greenfader & Brouillette 2013), it is also an opportunity for vocabulary development, as children hear words that they enjoy and, with the added non-verbal factors, they can comprehend and use them in their discourse. Nevertheless, as Maley and Duff (2015) argue, drama techniques are not specially thought to teach new language, but to use what children already know, which will bring out incidental learning, both from the teacher's input or from another children knowledge.

Another thing is that "Children enjoy listening to stories over and over again" (Ellis & Brewster, 2014, p.7), so, telling the same story in various occasions can be a great opportunity to keep their attention and to offer comprehensible input, as stories can be told one and one and another time and can also be complemented with related activities or materials (Kang, 2006). Furthermore, Ellis and Brewster (2014) highlight that the repetition of the narrative promotes children's motivation and participation, so that learning becomes meaningful. In order to keep their attention and interest alive, "Stories may thus include unusual words, or words that have a strong phonological content, with interesting rhythms or sounds that are onomatopoeic" (Cameron, 2001, p.163).

In addition, the content, structure, characteristics and topic of the story is another thing to care about. As Cameron (2001) states, "A good story for language learning will have interesting characters that children can empathize with" (p.168). Furthermore, he says

that the plot must be clear and have repeated patterns, with combination of dialogue and narrative. Story illustrations can also be combined with the text, and those need to be seen by all the children to support their understanding (Cameron, 2001; Ellis, n.d). According to these statements, it is important that the content includes surprise and humour and that promotes interest and “opportunities for involvement, prediction and participation” (Ellies, n.d, p.97). Finally, stories can be complemented with follow-up activities, such as comprehension activities and drama activities, so that children can see the language of the story in other contexts.

Teachers need to create a positive environment where all children can participate and offer them the best conditions while adding a dramatic effect to storytelling, eye-contacting with all the children, offering them opportunities to participate and modelling the voice according to the story (Ellies, n.d). As follows, all these mentioned factors, in addition to the body expression of the teacher, foster children’s comprehension, so, teachers need to use these drama techniques to become a positive model. Thus, children will have a great opportunity to understand what they are listening to, will become aware of the different verbal and non-verbal possibilities of language and, in addition to the physical movement that dramatization implies, they will be able to practice and develop their communication skills (Breckenridge, 2006).

### **3. Study**

#### **3.1. Objectives and Research Question**

The research question that this study tries to answer is: Do drama activities provide preschool children with opportunities to develop their communication skills in the foreign language?

On the other hand, the specific objectives of this study are:

- To design and implement a programming guideline using drama techniques in English in a Catalan preschool.
- To identify if drama techniques promote the development of children's communication skills in the foreign language.
- To know some teachers' experiences and opinions in order to support the theoretical framework and the practical implementation.

#### **3.2. Methodology**

##### **3.2.1. Paradigm and methodology**

The research was done following the socio-critical paradigm, using the action research methodology with the aim of analysing the effects of drama techniques in the development of children's communication skills in English as a foreign language.

With the action research methodology, the researcher has a double role: to do research on the area of study and to be self-investigated. Regarding Elliot's (1990) research, Bárcena (1990) states that action research has a significant impact on the professional development of teachers, since, both going in-depth with theoretical information and putting the research into practice, it leads to a better self-reflection and action-reflection. Therefore, with action research, educators transform the reality with their actions, and they can build a better understanding of their research and practice. The Interaction Design Foundation (2016) also supports this issue, determining that "theory without practice does not make any difference to the world around us". To implement the action

research, it is important to take into account the planning of the action, the action itself, the observation and data collection, and finally the analysis and reflection.

### **3.2.2. Instruments**

In order to do the action research, a programming guideline using drama techniques (see Appendix 1) that lasted 3 sessions was implemented in a Catalan preschool and was analysed through three different observation grids (see Appendix 2), to check if drama techniques have a significant effect on the development of communication skills in preschool in English as a foreign language.

Direct observation was chosen because, as Taylor-Powell and Steele (1996) argue, it enables documentation of different aspects such as activities and behaviour. Moreover, when observing the children's progress, it is important to focus the gaze and determine what to observe and how (Servei de Currículum d'Educació Infantil i Primària, 2020). In order to analyse the observations, an observation grid for each session (see Appendix 2) was created, so that data about the process and the results of the activities could be collected, since, as Institut Obert de Catalunya (n.d) says, systemizing the data can be useful for further analysis. Furthermore, following Taylor-Powell and Steele (1996) belief, the sessions were recorded in video, in order to promote a more accurate analysis and interpretation, because, as the authors say, recording the session is necessary for the evaluation program to be useful and credible. "The camera makes a record that can be analysed later and may be used to illustrate your evaluation report." (Taylor-Powell & Steele, 1996, p.4). The videos are not attached in the project for ethical reasons.

Apart from the observed items regarding the children's communication skills, Cloutier et al (1987), as seen in Taylor-Powell and Steele's (1996), say that it is also important to observe different things such as the characteristics of the participants, in this case, as a group, the interactions between them, the non-verbal behaviours and the physical space. Furthermore, the program leader management was also observed through an observation grid (See Appendix 3), that was self-created and self-analysed. This observation was done, since the teacher's attitude and role are really important to offer the suitable conditions to children, and to boost their learning and development (Ellies, n.d; Maley & Duff, 2015; Phillips, 2003; Widdowson, 1978). Regarding the observation grids for

the children, and according to Institut Obert de Catalunya (n.d), as this study is qualitative, in order to check the different items and to analyse the results, an estimate scale was created (See Appendix 2) in order to observe and identify the children's behaviour and capacities.

Regarding the practical implementation, before each drama activity, a relaxation technique<sup>5</sup> was carried out in order to provide a relaxed atmosphere, coordination and concentration in the classroom. One session per week with each group (2 groups) was held, so, a total of 3 sessions per group. As drama is seen as process (Dolci, 2010), sessions were different one from each other, going from more structured activities, to a freer and more spontaneous one. The first one was about miming different actions and listening to a story which contained these actions while a song was playing and doing the actions' movements when they appeared in the story. The second session was the storytelling of *We're going on a bear hunt*<sup>6</sup>, done with a lot of body expression by the storyteller, and presenting the bear character using a teddy bear at the end of the session, who appeared in the next session. The third and last session was focused on dramatic play, starting with a collective recreation of the story *We're going on a bear hunt* through different spaces, which was organized previously by the activity leader, and then letting the children play freely through the spaces. At the end of this session, children were able to express their feelings and explain their experiences.

The other instrument used was an interview (See Appendix 4) to preschool English teachers who use drama techniques in order to know how they use drama techniques and their opinion about using those techniques as a communication tool in the foreign language. Thus, to support the theoretical framework, the activities carried out in the school and its corresponding observations. This decision was made following The Evaluation Research Team (2018) idea, since they point out that interviews are useful "to get more in-depth information about perceptions, insights, attitudes, experiences, or beliefs" and "as a follow-up to other methods".

In order to mention the different observations and the interviewed teachers, a code was created to use in the results and discussion (See Appendix 5).

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<sup>5</sup> The relaxation technique is explained in Appendix 1, before the programming guideline.

<sup>6</sup> Rosen, M. (1989). *We're going on a bear hunt*. London: Walker.

### **3.2.3. Participants**

The participants of the action-research study were 2 groups of 5 years old children from a preschool in Vic, which will be mentioned from this point forward as “school”. This school was chosen because it is where my internship from January until March was carried out, and also because they are used to learn through stories in English. In one group there were 27 children and in the other 26, and those were heterogeneous and just a few of them native English speakers. Furthermore, in the school, English is introduced during the second semester in P3 through the learning environments, and in the 2 following years, so, P4 and P5, they learn English not only through the learning environment, but also through workshops and English lessons, where they work through stories. Thus, they receive a lot of input in the foreign language. Nevertheless, in the school, as far as I am concerned, they do not normally use drama techniques in their foreign language sessions.

The programming guideline was implemented during the English lessons, once a week with each group for about 30 or 45 minutes. These sessions were carried out in the motor skills room, which is their usual English lesson space. This space was suitable for the first two sessions, but a little limited for the third one, since the different spaces (created with different materials from the school) were too close one with each other. For that reason, the third sessions were carried out with a smaller group of 9 children in the first class and of 10 children in the second class, which were selected randomly by their English teacher.

In order to record the activities carried out in the school for a further analysis, each family of the children was asked to sign a permission document (see Appendix 6) that the university provided us with, related to ethical questions. Moreover, another permission document was signed by the school (see Appendix 7).

On the other hand, the profile sought for the interviewees was English preschool teachers who use or have ever used drama techniques to teach English as a foreign language. In order to find them, all classmates were contacted to know if some teacher in the school where they were doing their internship followed the profile sought. After that, 3 teachers from Catalan preschools schools were contacted and a written interview was sent via email due to the situation caused by COVID-19.

## 4. Results

In order to analyse the data collected and obtain the results, the videos were watched several times in order to fill in both the children's and the teacher's management observation grids. After that, the information on the observation grids and the interviews was analysed in order to highlight the common and most important topics. The relevant topics were 22 and were grouped in 6 main categories: verbal skills, non-verbal skills, comprehension, children's interest and participation, game conditions, and teacher's management. These categories were selected as main topics in which the 22 sub-topics could be encompassed, and which also coincided with relevant aspects of the theoretical framework. Consequently, the results of the current study have been organized in these 6 blocks, including information of the different instruments, as the interviews provided value and information to the main instrument, the observations of the practical implementation.

### a. *Block 1: Verbal skills*

Regarding the practical implementation, children were able to answer simple Yes or No questions, for example, in S2-G1, when the teacher asked "Do you want to listen to the story of the bear hunt?" they said "Yes" or when asking "Did you like it?" in S3-G1, they answered "Yes" enthusiastically. Furthermore, they answered questions using structures that they already knew, such as when the bear asked them "How are you today?" they some said "Fine, thank you", as they said this structure in each English session.

Talking about specific vocabulary of the story, they memorized repeated expressions and vocabulary related to actions and places. In S1-G1 and S1-G2, some of them repeated the sentences with or after the teacher such as "Swim around the circle" or "Tiptoe around the circle" while doing the activity. In S2-G1 and S2-G2, children repeated expressions of the story after the teacher modulating their voices, such as saying "We are going on a bear hunt" or "A beautiful day". Regarding the teachers' interviews, and in relation to the previous results, all of them agree that children memorize the stories and with that, they are eager to talk, repeating what the teacher says, for example. Accordingly, T2 says that "The child memorizes everything, and before the teacher says anything, he knows what he has to say in English".

Furthermore, they could say vocabulary related to places both when they saw the pictures of the book in S2-G1 and S2-G2, for example saying “The river” and “Snowstorm”, and when they saw the materials related to spaces in S3-G1 and S3-G2, since when asking “What is this?” and pointing to the spaces, they could say the names of them, such as “Grass” or “Mud”. During the recreation of the story in S3-G1 and S3-G2, most of them were telling the story with the teacher, while saying some repeated structures such as “We are going on a bear hunt” and “A Big one” using intonation. The same happened with the expressions used when crossing the different spaces, as “Swishy, swashy” when crossing the grass. Some of these repeated structures or sentences and even they said some of them before the teacher did. They were also answering the repeated questions that the teacher was asking them during the story, such as “Are we scared?” and they answered “No”.

During the second part of the activity in S3-G1 and S3-G2 children were using the expressions corresponding to the different spaces, such as “Stumble, trip” and “Tip, toe” when crossing the spaces and also the names of the spaces, such as “River” or “Cave”. Moreover, they were also saying some repetitive expressions of the story, for example “Back to the river”. On the other hand, they were using some vocabulary in other communicative situations, for example, A in S3-G1 said “Som bears, el baby bear, la mummy bear, la sister i la otra sister”. The word “Bear” was often used in these two last sessions, they were repeating “It is a bear!” using intonation to make it scary. When they were playing pretending to be the bear, they were modulating their voices, making them stronger. Furthermore, some of them in S3-G1 used the spaces’ vocabulary to create other meanings: A said “Jo soc el monstre de mud”, M “Jo soc el monstre snow” and P, who was the grass monster, said “Qui gosa molestar el meu grass”, all of them using their voices to command respect. At the end of the S3-G1, during the assembly, most of them explained something about their experience and what they liked the most in Catalan, but using some key words in English, such as “Grass” or “Mud”. The things they enjoyed the most were the invented and new situations. On the other hand, in S3-G2 just a few of them wanted to explain it, since the conditions did not lead to do it, as will be explained later on.



b. *Block 2: Non-verbal skills*

During all the sessions children used their bodies a lot for communicating. During S1-G1 and S1-G2 children imitated all the actions that the teacher did and said, miming all the movements. They also imitated the classmates that knew the vocabulary reproducing their actions. Moreover, in some occasions they used non-verbal skills to answer questions, for example in S1-G2, when the teacher asked, “What did you see?” talking about the story activity, AB moved her hands as if were waves, referring to the river. Likewise, during the storytelling, in S2-G1 and S2-G2, children were representing some expressions from their places, such as “A big one” and some actions like “Swishy, swashy” or “Splash, splosh”. In this sense, T2 establishes that when telling stories “children spontaneously accompany me” when doing the gestures. Nevertheless, in the storytelling sessions in the school, they did not have a lot of chances to use their non-verbal skills.

S3-G1 and S3-G2 lead to the use of non-verbal skills, since children had more space for it. During the first part of the session, all children were doing the gestures of the expressions and also the actions in each space. Some of them did the actions and said the expressions before the teacher, so that they remembered them. During the second part of S3-G1 children used a lot their bodies and did lots of actions through the spaces, as opposed to S3-G2, since they did not do many actions. When they were performing to be a bear, they were rising their arms to seem big and scary and were running after their classmates following the path of the story in some occasions. Some children in S3-G2 were expressing cold in the snowstorm with their bodies, disgust in the mud and fear in the cave. Most of the time they were playing tag: one of them adopted the role of being the bear, representing its characteristics with body language and voice modulation and the others were running in front of him or her. Hence, T2 states that “Through storytelling and story dramatization children are learning not only the verbal language, but also the non-verbal one”, since children imitate the teacher’s body language.

c. *Block 3: Comprehension*

Children followed the teacher’s instructions most of the time, since they were doing her commands, such as “Stand up”, when guiding them during the relaxation activity or

when changing the activities. Moreover, they were following the teacher during the story recreation in S3-G1 and S3-G2. Nonetheless, in the first part of the activity in S1-G1 children could not follow the teacher's instructions because of the bad conditions, but when changing the group organizations, they did it. Furthermore, some children understood simple Yes/No questions, for example "Do you know how to swim?", when they knew the actions' vocabulary in S1-G1 or when asking "Are you a bear" in S3-G2.

Moreover, as children already knew the story, they understood some vocabulary. Nevertheless, with the gestures and actions of the teacher, the vocabulary, instructions and input given was much clearer, and some of them retained the information and understood some words. For example, in S1-G1 or S1-G2, when asking them how to reproduce the actions, most of the time they did not know it, but when doing the action, they instantly understood it and reproduce it, for example, when asking "Can you show me how to walk?" in S1-G2, one child answered "No, no sabem que dius", since they were not familiarized with the word, and when doing the action they understood it, or when asking "what did you see?" at the end of the session, when representing a cave with the teacher's hands, children could identify it.

Children comprehended the story, and, as they already knew it, they could anticipate what was going to happen when they saw the pictures, which helped to understand the meaning, since they were big and clear. T1 says that she uses big story books because the pictures help children to understand the stories. Another thing is that children in the school could relate the materials to their meaning, such as when taking the bear in S2-G1 and S2-G2, they instantly said "The bear", and in S3-G1 and S3-G2 they all could say the name of all the spaces of the story. Moreover, some of them could answer the simple questions that the teacher was asking them when was giving voice to the bear, using voice modulation, for example when asking them "Did you like my story?" or "Do you want to be my friends" and they answered "Yes" in S2-G2. During the second part of S3-G1 and S3-G2, children were reproducing parts of the story or the whole story in very few cases, since they remembered it and they could identify the spaces. Similarly, they understood specific questions of the spaces, such as when asking "Are you climbing a tree?" pointing at the wall bars, and AR said "Yes" or when asking to P "Are you in the grass?" and the child said "Sí, soc el monstre de l'herba".

d. *Block 4: Children's interest and participation*

Children were really interested and participative in most of the sessions. Regarding the relaxation activity, children were focused when doing it. Nevertheless, in the first part of S1-G1, children did not show a lot of attention nor interest in the activity, but when changing the group organization, their interest and participation increased. During the story activity with music in S1-G1 and S1-G2 children were very interested and actively listening and participating. During the storytelling in S2-G1 and S2-G2 they were also very interested and some of them participated by acting out the actions or saying some expressions of the story. Accordingly, T2 and T3 agree on the fact that stories are motivating for children and promote active listening and participation.

Regarding S3-G1 and S3-G2, during the collective recreation of the story, children were very participative, both using verbal and non-verbal skills. About the second part of the session, they liked a lot the idea of playing through the spaces of the story and participated a lot. Some of them invented new situations, we could see some theatre scrawls of role-play when A, AR and S were playing to be bears inside the cave in S3-G1, or when in S3-G2, one child was the bear and was running after other children, who were the family that was going back home. Children also used their imagination to create completely different situations, for example when in S3-G1, P, A, M and O took the different fabrics to become the grass monster, the mud monster and the snow monster. At the end of the session, they all said they enjoyed the activity, and it was visible during it. What they enjoyed the most was to be the protagonists and play freely. Moreover, materials were also really engaging for them, specially the teddy bear.

e. *Block 5: Game conditions*

The relaxation activity carried out before starting each session was a really useful tool to promote a calm and appropriate atmosphere for the activities. Nevertheless, in S1-G1, because of the lack of time to prepare the space and because it was the first time that the teacher was leading an activity, conditions were not appropriate, and the relaxation activity did not promote a suitable atmosphere. Moreover, during this session, the group organization did not work, since children saw the activity as a motor skills one. After seeing that, group organization was changed and conditions were much better, children

were more focused, and the activities could be carried out. Regarding the storytelling in S2-G1 and S2-G2, the story was related to their experience, since they already knew it, and they liked it. Moreover, it was an English story and according to T3, these type of stories “help them to enjoy the music, the rhythm and the illustrations”.

Regarding S3-G1 and S3-G2, the small group enabled them to follow the instructions, to play freely, enjoy the session, and to be attended in a more personalized way. On the other hand, the space maybe was not the best, as it was their motor skills room and they associate it to their previous experiences, so a space to run and to move. Even so, some of them were playing tag but taking into account the story, since one was the bear and the others were running, trying to escape. Another thing is that at the beginning they were not sure about playing freely, and when they saw they could, they started using more their imaginations, bodies and voices. This could be seen when they were playing and also before the activity, since in S3-G1 some of them asked questions about how to play like P “Podem voltar per la neu, mud...?” and A “Podem anar tots al mateix lloc alhora?”. Finally, in S3-G2, conditions were not the best since the relaxation activity could not be carried out because of lack of time, and they were coming from the playground, so they had a lot of energy.

Moreover, in S3-G1 and S3-G2, the small group and space conditions enabled children to play together and stablish communicative situations between them. At the beginning of S3-G1 the game was quite individual, but as the activity was going on, they started to make little groups and play together. On the other hand, in S3-G2, the game was collective from the beginning, and most of them were playing together.

f. *Block 6: Teacher's management*

In general, the instructions and language of the teacher were clear, since she used known structures by the children and also contextualized vocabulary. T1 also agrees that when using drama techniques, “the words are in context and we do not use isolated words with nonsense”. Nevertheless, in TO-S1-G1 and TO-S3-G2 instructions did not seem to be very clear, since children could not follow them a lot. In some occasions, when some children did not understand something, instead of using L1 of the children, the teacher put some examples, so that children could understand what she was asking,

for example in TO-S1-G2, when she asked “Where did we go?”, and children did not understand it, she said “We went to the mountain” emphasizing the word and doing gestures, so they could understand it and said other places, such as “A river”.

In some occasions, the L1 of the children was used to promote communication and a more natural interaction, for example when giving instructions in TO-S3-G1 and TO-S3-G2, and also to manage the third part of both sessions, giving the word turn or some feedback and comments to the children. Furthermore, some comments that the children made were translated in English by the teacher, to offer comprehensible input in a more natural way. Besides, some questions in TO-S1-G1 or TO-S3-G1 were occasionally translated in the children’s L1, for example, when the teacher asked “Are you a bear” to AR, she said “Què?”, and the teacher translated the question “Ets un ós?”, and AR could answer “Yes”.

The teacher used a lot of body expression to support her verbal skills in all sessions, which helped a lot to engage children and to enhance comprehension. For example, by using body language, the children could understand the new vocabulary in TO-S1-G1 and TO-S1-G2. Moreover, during the storytelling in TO-S2-G1 and TO-S2-G2 she was all the time supporting the story with non-verbal skills and using intonation for the repetitive expressions, and children were really interested and focused on the story. The same happened when recreating the story in TO-S3-G1 and TO-S3-G2, since she was using a lot of body language, the same gestures for the repetitive structures and exaggerating movements with the help of voice modulation. With that, children were motivated to join her and to use their bodies too. Accordingly, T2 states that the tone used to tell a story and the gestures are really important to help children to understand the story, so she uses them when doing storytelling. Moreover, she explains that when doing so, children accompany her through the story.

Another thing is that the teacher had a positive attitude towards the activities and the children, being dynamic and inviting children to participate except from TO-S1-G1, since she had difficulties to manage the session and was not very confident about herself. During TO-S1-G2 and the second part of TO-S1-G1 the teacher was involving children and giving positive feedback both during the session and at the end of it. Talking about TO-S2-G1, she did not give a lot of feedback during the storytelling, but in TO-S2-G2, she did. Moreover, in both sessions, she asked questions and gave

feedback after the storytelling. In the same way, T1, says “I also make questions during the story, before or after reading it”. Regarding TO-S3-G1 she was giving feedback and making children part of the story during the collective recreation of it. In TO-S3-G2, she was not giving a lot of feedback, since they did not have a lot of time, but she was involving children in the story, asking questions and telling the story together with them. During the second part of TO-S3-G1 and TO-S3-G2, the teacher intervened occasionally to promote communication and to check comprehension, for example when in TO-S3-G1 she asked AR “Are you climbing a tree?” while pointing at the wall bars, and she answered “Yes” moving as if she was in a tree. At the end of both sessions, the teacher asked to all the children what did they like the most or what did they do, so that they could feel protagonists and share their experiences. Nevertheless, during the third part of TO-S3-G2 the teacher could not attend a lot to the children since it was time to finish the session.

In TO-S1-G1 and TO-S3-G2 the teacher had difficulties to manage the sessions and she also had some difficulties to keep children’s attention at the end of most of the sessions, since it was lunchtime and they wanted to go. Nonetheless, she could manage the rest of the sessions properly and carry out all the activities. During TO-S3-G1 and TO-S3-G2, when it was time to move from the second to the third part of the session, children were having fun playing and it was difficult to catch their attention, so the teacher, in the first one made use of her voice modulation and the bear, saying softly that the bear had to go to sleep, and in the second one, she put some soft music and also told them that the bear had to go to sleep, and children responded positively.

## 5. Discussion

To start with, the outcome of this research has found that to develop the communication skills in the foreign language, not only verbal and non-verbal languages are important, but also other factors like the interest and participation of the children, the role of the teacher and the game conditions. Talking about drama techniques, the three interviewed teachers, who all use drama techniques such as storytelling, story dramatization, and symbolic play, agree with Tomback (2014) that using drama techniques in preschool allows children to use the foreign language and develop their communication skills.

It was found that while using drama techniques children felt involved in the process, they were interested in what they were doing and were able to express freely (Hazar, 2019). Additionally, children could try without giving importance to error, since there was no judgement, and they could express their emotions and feelings. This could be seen specially when they could play freely in the third sessions, where they used their experiences and imaginations. In that way, as Tejerina (1994) states, they had suitable conditions for language acquisition. Furthermore, using a story that the children already knew favoured communication and expression, since, as Ellis and Brewster (2014) say, when retelling a story that the children enjoy, teachers offer comprehensible input, motivation, and participation. Additionally, according to Kang (2006), the story and the materials also fostered communication between the children, because the familiar context and language allowed them to actively participate in it and use their communication skills. Talking about conditions, the relaxation activity before the session also promoted a comfortable and calmed atmosphere which allowed the realization of the activities (Maley & Duff, 2005).

Concerning children's use of verbal and non-verbal skills, this research shows that they were using their bodies to communicate and to express themselves, since they had very limited language. Nonetheless, according to Cameron (2001), children retained and applied in other contexts the repetitive structures and some vocabulary of the story, because they enjoyed the rhythms and onomatopoeic structures. They already knew some structures of the story, so this was helpful, because children were familiarized with it and could feel more involved in the activities. As some authors like Cameron (2001) and Kang (2006) state, offering familiar contexts enhance language acquisition, since children can understand the foreign language and conceive it as a communication

tool. In that way, following Maley and Duff's (2005) idea, it was a good chance for children to use the words they already knew in a communicative and more natural situation.

On the same lines, offering a context where body language was promoted was really engaging for children, and they used it not only for performing the actions in the first and second sessions, but also to express some feelings such as cold when they were going through the spaces in the third sessions, using gestures, facial expressions and voice modulation. This could be related to the idea that using non-verbal communication promotes participation, and with so, language learning (Phillips, 2003). In the third sessions, communicative situations between the children were established, since they could play freely and the group was smaller, so conditions were better, and they could use their verbal and non-verbal communication skills. As Locke (1993), as seen in Cameron (2001), states, when children interact with each other they develop their communication skills.

The comprehension of the story vocabulary and structures, and the instructions and input offered by the teacher were also stimulated by her body language and voice modulation. Moreover, the big and clear images of the story also promoted the story comprehension. (Cameron, 2001; Ellis and Brewster, 2014; Piquer, 2006). In that sense, drama was a useful tool not only for the children to express themselves, but also for the teacher to offer meaningful language. The teacher had an important role in the sessions, since she was leading most of them, but as a facilitator. What is more, the teacher served as a model, since, as Tejerina (1994) says, children imitated her speech and expressions, both repeating after her or while she was using body language, and also when they were playing freely. Thus, children were able to practice their communication skills in the foreign language. Moreover, following Ellis' (n.d) idea, the teacher could offer comprehensible input while adding a dramatic effect to the story and activities, eye-contacting children, and involving them in the learning process. Besides, in agreement with Cameron (2001) and Ellis and Brewster (2014), in some occasions, the teacher used children's L1 to promote comprehension and more natural communication, for example, when giving instructions in the third sessions, to check understanding and when giving feedback.



It was observed that the sessions with worse conditions (S1-G1 and S3-G2), and consequently, in which the teacher did a worse classroom management, children were less focused on their communication skills and on the activities, displaying less participation and motivation.

Nevertheless, even though the sessions were carried out successfully, preschool children were in a preliminary stage, as it could be seen in the research, so, according to Dolci (2010), during the sessions, children played pretending to be games where they selected some elements of the story to play with a communicative purpose, while exaggerating their non-verbal skills. In that sense, some theatre scrawls, for example, of role-play, could be seen, according to Dolci's (2010) and Eines and Mantovani's (2007) idea.

## 6. Conclusions

The current study investigated the development of communication skills in English as a foreign language through drama techniques in preschool. To start with, it is important to consider that the practical implementation of this research was carried out in a concrete school with two concrete groups of children and during a short period of time. In that way, the conclusions cannot be extrapolated to other situations.

Concerning the research question, first of all, it is important to say that it was a very wide question and after the study, it can be said that this type of question had many variables and limitations. Nonetheless, it was found that drama provided children with opportunities to develop their communication skills in the foreign language, as they were involved in the activities and had an active participation, so they could use the different communication skills, both verbal and non-verbal, to experiment and play with the language and try without judgement. However, some factors need to be considered.

It seems that in order to achieve the development of communication skills in the foreign language, the game and class conditions need to be suitable to promote children's interest and participation. The study shows that some conditions that benefit drama activities are letting children participate and try without judgement, enabling free expression. The space also needs to be suitable and a well organization of the children is necessary so that they can all participate. Moreover, the teacher has an essential function, since she also needs to use drama techniques to promote the interest and participation of the children and to offer comprehensible input. Furthermore, she needs to have a positive attitude towards the activities and manage them properly. These conditions may enable the development of children's communication skills in the foreign language, since they can participate in drama activities expressing themselves, using both verbal and non-verbal skills.

The first objective of the research was entirely achieved, since the programming guideline was implemented correctly, apart from some limitations that will be mentioned afterwards. Furthermore, the sessions could be observed and analysed properly, thanks to the video recordings and observation grids. Talking about the last objective, so, to use the teachers' experiences and opinions to support the research, it

was not completely achieved, since only 3 teachers could be interviewed because of the difficulty to find teachers with the profile sought.

The study presents several limitations that should be considered. To start with, it was difficult to find theoretical support about using drama techniques in preschool, since it is said that children start doing drama activities when they are in primary school. Nevertheless, as drama is a process, in preschool we can find the basis for future stages. Moreover, the two groups of children that took part on the study were not used to doing drama activities where they could express freely, but to very directed activities, and in some occasions, they did not know if they could intervene and play or not. Talking about the conditions, the space where the sessions were carried out, which was the motor skills room, was not multifunctional, so when they could play freely, they linked this to the motor skills sessions. Furthermore, the activities were not carried out by their habitual teacher and this caused a little bit of confusion among the students. Because of these various elements, during the practical implementation some doubts and limitations were found, but these could be solved efficiently.

This project made me realize that research needs time, care and a lot of organization. During the process I have learnt to find information and conduct the literature related to the focus of the research. Moreover, it was a great opportunity to complement the subject Drama Classes and to put in practise some theoretical considerations learned in the subjects Teaching English and Resources and Strategies for Teaching English.

To finish with, this study could be an interesting first step for further research about how the process of drama continues in primary education and its implications on the communication skills in the foreign language. Furthermore, some other questions have emerged after analysing the results of the study, as the importance of the teacher's knowledge of the dramatic language and his or her influence among the children. On the other hand, many doubts and questions about the usefulness of teaching English as a foreign language in preschool and how to do introduce it have come up, and it is an area which could be enriching to discover as a future teacher.

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## 8. Appendices

### 8.1. Appendix 1: Programming guideline

#### *Pre-activity: Relaxation activity*

In order to achieve a relaxed atmosphere, coordination and concentration in the classroom, we will start by doing the activity of the *Lazy Eight*. When children arrive at the motor skills room, they will sit down making a circle and the teacher will guide the relaxation activity. She will start presenting number eight, using a piece of the number that they had in the school (See Figure 1) in order to show it to the children if they do not understand the word. To start the activity, they will be invited to draw lazy eights in the air with different parts of their bodies, three times with each body part. First of all, they will do it with their left hand, then with their right hand, then with their left leg, after that with their right hand and the last movement is drawing a lazy eight with their head. The activity can also be done with the eyes closed.



**Figure 1.** Number eight piece.



**Table 1.** First session of the practical implementation.

**1<sup>st</sup> session:** Mime the actions

Year: Grade 5

Space: Motor skills room.



**Figure 2.** Motor skills room.

Materials: a CD player, a pen drive with the song recorded and a camera.

Aim: To have a first contact with actions' vocabulary miming the teacher, using non-verbal

Procedure of the activity:

- Children will be stood up in the space, where they can be able to move easily.
- I will represent some actions related to the story three times. The first time the teacher will do it alone and the second time will invite them to do with her, action by action. The third time, the teacher will mix the expressions, and will say which action they have to execute, letting them some seconds to think which action is, and offering help if need it. The teacher will clap to mark the action rhythm and they will go from one side to the other of the room.
- When the teacher says stop, they have to be like a statue, and when she say the action, they can keep moving, doing the new action.

*Expressions:*

- Walk to the wall bars / Walk to the other side
- Swim to the wall bars / Swim to the other side
- Stumble to the wall bars / Stumble to the other side
- Run to the wall bars/ Run to the other side
- Tiptoe to the wall bars / Tiptoe to the other side

*Modifications improvised at the middle of Session 1 Group 1 and applied in Session 1 Group 2*

We will stand in a circle in the middle of the class, and I will ask children if they know the actions, using the question “Can you show me how to...?”. If some of them know it, we will follow him or her doing the action, if not, the teacher will do it and they will imitate her. When we represent the actions, we will say: “... around the circle” using the same rhythm, various times, more and more fast, until the teacher says STOP.

Then, they will have to stand like statues. The teacher will not clap to mark the rhythm.

Can you show me how to walk? “Walk around the circle, walk around the circle...”

Can you show me how to swim? “Swim around the circle, swim around the circle...”

Can you show me how to stumble? “Stumble, around the circle, stumble around the circle...”

Can you show me how to run? “Run around the circle, run around the circle...”

Can you show me how to tiptoe? “Tiptoe around the circle, tiptoe around the circle...”

The first time, they will have the first model of the teacher (or of some classmate, if they know it), and the second time the teacher will let them some seconds to do the actions.

For the second part of the activity, we will use the song: “In the Hall of the Mountain King” from Peer Gynt<sup>7</sup>. The teacher will direct the activity saying the movements we should do, and we will represent it around a circle following the music path. During the activity, the teacher will be explaining a story in order to contextualize the activity and the actions and to let them understand the exercise better.

*Story: An excursion to the mountains*

One winter day, a group of children from a little school took an excursion to the mountains. But they did not know that during their way, they

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<sup>7</sup> Berliner Philharmoniker. (2010, June 14). *Grieg: Peer Gynt / Järvi · Berliner Philharmoniker* [Video]. Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pPLXNmKvLBQ>

would have many adventures.

- Let's go, come with me to the excursion! Let's start walking

The children arrived at the forest, there was a lot of grass, trees and little animals, who were happy because of the children's visit. They were walking and walking because they wanted to arrive at the top of the mountain.

- Let's walk together, how do we walk? Walk, walk, walk!

They were walking and they saw something at the other side of the river

- Look, look, what is that? Let's go, let's follow it. We will have to swim now! Come on, swim, swim! Splash, splosh, splash, splosh!

When the children arrived at the other side of the river, there was no one, but they did not want to make noise

- Sht!

The children went on their tiptoe, they did not want to scare all the animals and that strange character they were following.

- Let's go to find that character on tiptoe! Tip, toe, tip, toe!

But suddenly....

- Look! What is that? Let's go, it's him! We want to catch it! We have to run! Run, run!

Look, he went into the cave! Can you see him?

Oh no, I am scared, the cave is so dark! Let's go back to school, this is scary!

Be careful, there are many branches, do not stumble!

- Stumble, trip, stumble, trip

And all the children were so scared, that they all stumbled and fell on the floor!

- Stumble!

(We all lay down on the floor)

Role of the teacher: explain the instructions and the story, do the actions, invite children to participate and observe the children.

*Note. This table shows the year in which the activity is carried out, the space, the materials used, the aim of the activity, its procedure, the changes done during the session and the role of the teacher. In this first session, children had to mime the actions of the teacher, and then try to do them by their own.*

**Table 2.** Second session of the practical implementation.

**2<sup>nd</sup> session: Storytelling**

Year: Grade 5.

Space: Motor skills room.



**Figure 3.** Motor skills room.



**Figure 4.** The book *We're going on a bear hunt* in the tripod.

Materials: The book *We're going on a bear hunt* of Michael Rosen, a tripod, a teddy bear and a camera.

Aim: To let children listen to the story *We're going on a bear hunt*, offering them contextualized English, supported with body language and intonation.

Procedure of the activity:

- The children will be sitting in a circle and the teacher will be stood up telling the story.
- At the beginning of the session the teacher will tell the story<sup>8</sup> using a big book, which will be exposed on a tripod, and representing the actions and expressions of the story, so that children can relate the story to the images.
- Then, the teacher will go to take a teddy bear (which will be hidden in the room), and she will modulate her voice as she was the bear in order to present it to the children in English and will ask them if they enjoyed the story and if they want to be his friends. “The bear” will also explain that the following day they are going to go on a bear hunt.

Role of the teacher: storyteller, do the actions, represent the bear’s voice, invite the children to participate and observe them.

*Note. This table shows the year in which the activity is carried out, the space, the materials used, the aim of the activity, its procedure and the role of the teacher. In this second session, had to listed to the storytelling, and they could participate in the storytelling while doing some gestures, actions or repeating some word and expressions.*

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<sup>8</sup> Inspiration by Walker Books. (2014, February 14). *Michael Rosen performs we're going on a bear hunt* [Video]. Retrieved from [https://www.youtube.com/watch?time\\_continue=228&v=0gyI6ykDwds&feature=emb\\_title](https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=228&v=0gyI6ykDwds&feature=emb_title)

**Table 3.** Third session of the practical implementation.

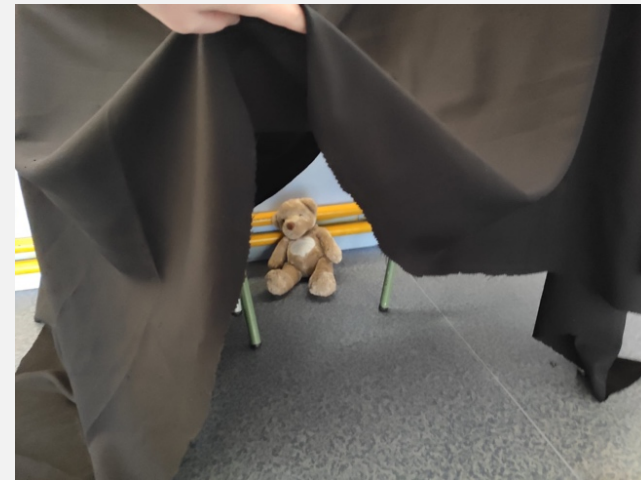
**3<sup>rd</sup> session: Recreation of the story**

Year: Grade 5

Space: Motor skills room.



**Figure 5.** Motor skills room with all spaces of the story.



**Figure 6.** The bear inside the cave

Materials: a bench and a green fabric to symbolize the grass, circles to symbolize the river, a brown fabric to symbolize the mud, wall bars and a green fabric to symbolize the forest, white fabric to symbolize the snowstorm, a black fabric to symbolize the cave, a brown teddy bear and a camera.



Aim: To recreate the story all together while telling and story and let children play in a communicative situation using their language and bodies.

Procedure of the activity:

- The room will be organized in different spaces related with the story. There will be some spaces that symbolize the different journey that the family in the book *We're going on a bear hunt* – Michael Rosen follow in order to arrive to the cave, where there will be our friend the teddy bear.
- The session will start recreating the story all together going through the different spaces, so that children can remember the story and make connections with the material in the classroom. During this part of the activity, the teacher will ask question to the children related to the story, so that they can remember where the family were going through.
- Then, the teacher will explain to the children that they can play freely under the topic of the story through the spaces. Some guidance of the teacher will be possible if need it.
- After the session, the children will sit down in a circle with the teacher. The teacher will ask questions to the children in English or Catalan if needed, related to their experience in the scene, so that they can explain their experience and their feelings.

Role of the teacher: prepare the spaces, recreate the story with the children, accompany them during the dramatic play if need it, making questions at the end, and observe the children.

*Note. This table shows the year in which the activity is carried out, the space, the materials used, the aim of the activity, its procedure and the role of the teacher. In this third session, the teacher and the teacher reproduced the story through the spaces and after that, children could play freely through these.*

## 8.2. Appendix 2: children's observation grids

**Table 4.** Estimated scale

EVALUATION	NOT AT ALL	A LITTLE BIT	A LOT
Comments	Children do not do it or use it at all. They do not seem enthusiastic about it at all	Children do it or use it in some occasions, or they try to do it. They seem quite enthusiastic about it.	Children do it or use it all the time. They seem very enthusiastic about it.

*Note. Estimated scale created to identify the children's behaviour and capacities.*

**Table 5.** Children’s observation grid: Session 1 - Group 1

SESSION: 1	GROUP: 1			DATE: 11 <sup>th</sup> February 2020
23 children	Not at all	A little Bit	A lot	Observations
Usefulness of the relaxation activity	X			Children were not really focused on the relaxation activity and after it the atmosphere was not really calmed. The climate of the classroom was not suitable, because of lack of time we had to prepare it the materials really fast when children were already there. Furthermore, it was very difficult to maintain a calmed atmosphere.
Active participation in the activity		X		When the teacher changed the group organization and created the circle, children were more focused and participative, as they all were into the activity. During the story activity, children followed all the instructions and seemed interested.
Do they understand the instructions?		X		During the first part of the session children did not follow the teacher’s instructions, neither in English nor in Catalan. The group organization was not appropriate, so it had to be changed, for that reason, for the second activity the teacher changed their

				distribution and created a circle. This distribution was much better, since they seemed more focused and they could follow the instructions and participate more actively.
Do children understand the vocabulary without gestures?		X		Some of the children knew some of the actions vocabulary and when the teacher asked for example “Do you know how to swim?” one child said, “Yes, like this” and started swimming. Then, all the children imitated her.
Do children understand the vocabulary with gestures?			X	During the relaxation activity children imitated the actions the teacher did, so actions helped to understand the instructions. During the activity, they imitated the teacher’s gestures and seemed to understand the actions. During the story activity, they followed all the gestures the teacher did, and when asking questions about the activity at the end of the session, when the teacher did gestures of the cave, they could say a cave.
Use of the action’s vocabulary or spoken English		X		During the activity, when the teacher was saying the actions, some of them repeated the words. They also answered simple questions. For example, when the teacher asked, “Do you want to go and see it?”, they all said “Yes”
Body expression			X	When doing the actions, all of them used body expression and gestures to reproduce them.

*Note. This table shows the 1<sup>st</sup> group observations of session 1, focused on the interest, participation, communication skills and comprehension of the children.*

**Table 6.** Children’s observation grid: Session 1 - Group 2

SESSION: 1	GROUP: 2			DATE: 12 <sup>th</sup> February 2020
23 children	Not at all	A littl e Bit	A lot	Observations
Usefulness of the relaxation activity			X	Children were very participative during the relaxation activity. The atmosphere became more calmed and suitable to do the activity
Active participation in the activity			X	A lot of participation during the core activity, since they were doing the actions and some of them answering the questions. During the story activity, children followed all the instructions and seemed interested. They were also attentive because of the surprise factor of the story and the music.
Do they understand the instructions?			X	They followed instructions that the teacher was giving to them during all the activities.
Do children understand the vocabulary without gestures?		X		“Can you show me how to walk?” “No, no sabem que dius” When the teacher asked how they go on their tiptoe, one child did the action, since she knew it from the story “We are going on a bear hunt”.

				The same happened with the expression “Stumble, trip”, since all the children started doing the action, but they did as if they were looking at something, because is how the teacher showed to them. But then, the teacher showed them another action closer to the meaning of the expression.
Do children understand the vocabulary with gestures?			X	When doing the gestures, they imitated the teacher instantly. Words were much clearer when the teacher did the actions or gestures. When all the actions had been done once, the next times, some of them remembered the actions and reproduced them.
Use of the action’s vocabulary or spoken English.		X		They repeated the repetitive structures after the teacher, such as, “Swim around the circle” or “Tiptoe around the circle”- After doing the actions, some of them said the word in Catalan. At the end of the session, they also answered simple questions of “Yes” or “No”.
Body expression			X	Children used their bodies to reproduce the actions. One child, at the end, when the teacher asked “What did we see” regarding the story activity, she was doing actions referring to the river.

*Note. This table shows the 2<sup>nd</sup> group observations of session 1, focused on the interest, participation, communication skills and comprehension of the children.*

**Table 7.** Children’s observation grid: Session 2 - Group 1

SESSION: 2	GROUP: 1			DATE: 18 <sup>th</sup> February 2020
23	Not at all	A littl e Bit	A lot	Observations
Usefulness of the relaxation activity			X	Children were really focused on the activity, and this helped to create a calmed and adequate atmosphere to do the storytelling.
Show interest in the story			X	Children already knew the story in English, but they seemed really interested.
Want to participate in the story		X		Some of them repeat some expressions or words after the teacher, and in some cases, they predict the words and said them when they see the pictures.
Do they understand instructions or questions?		X		There were not many instructions nor questions. At the end of the session they seemed to understand the questions from the bear, since they answered them.
Do they repeat some words or parts of the story?		X		Yes, some of them repeated some of the action’s vocabulary or some expressions such as “Big one” “Beautiful day”.

Do they understand the story?			X	They seem to understand the story. It was helpful that they knew it before, so that some of them could predict what was happening.
Do they associate the teddy character with the story?			X	When the teacher took the bear some of them instantly said “The bear” with enthusiasm, in the same way that when they tell the story.
Do they answer teddy bear’s questions?		X		Some of them answer “Yes” or “No” questions, such as “Did you listen to my story” and “Do you want to be my friend” and also the question “How are you today”, since they are used to answer them in every English lesson.
Body expression (representing the actions of the story)		X		Some of them represent the actions and some expressions after the teacher from where they are sitting.

*Note. This table shows the 1<sup>st</sup> group observations of session 2, focused on the interest, participation, communication skills and comprehension of the children.*



**Table 8.** Children’s observation grid: Session 2 - Group 2

SESSION: 2	GROUP: 2			DATE: 19 <sup>th</sup> February 2020
23 children	Not at all	A little Bit	A lot	Observations
Usefulness of the relaxation activity			X	we had little time to do the activities, since we already arrived from an excursion and they were really excited. The relaxation activity helped a lot to keep them calmed and to promote a more peaceful atmosphere. In general, all children participated.
Show interest in the story			X	They seem interested to listen to the story and to enjoy it.
Want to participate in the story			X	Yes, a lot. They want to be part of the story, while reproducing some parts, predicting what is going to happen and doing some actions.
Do they understand instructions or questions?		X		Some of them answer “Yes” or “No” questions, such as “Do you want to listen to the story of the bear hunt?” while answering “Yes” or “Sí” or when asking “Who is calling” when the teacher was knocking at the door as if she was the bear, they some answered “Tu”

Do they repeat some words or parts of the story?			X	A lot of them said some parts of the story together with the teacher, such as “We are going on a bear hunt”. Since they already knew the story, some of them predicted the words when they saw the pictures, mostly words like “Grass” and “River”. They repeated some words they after the teacher, such as “Mud”.
Do they understand the story?			X	Yes, they seem to understand the story, since they already knew it, and they could understand it, also with the help of the book pictures and of the teacher’s gestures.
Do they associate the teddy character with the story?			X	Yes, they knew the bear, relating it with the story. “The bear!”
Do they answer teddy bear’s questions?			X	“Did you like my story” and they answered “Yes”. “Do you want to be my friends?” and some of them answered “Yes”
Body expression (representing the actions of the story)		X		Not a lot of them were doing the actions, they were more focused on looking at the teacher or at the story and repeating some words or saying what was happening. At the final part of the story, they were more participative regarding actions.

*Note. This table shows the 2<sup>nd</sup> group observations of session 2, focused on the interest, participation, communication skills and comprehension of the children.*

**Table 9.** Children’s observation grid: Session 3 - Group 1

SESSION: 3		GROUP: 1			DATE: 3 <sup>rd</sup> March 2020
9 children		Not at all	A little bit	A lot	Observations
Usefulness of the relaxation activity				X	With the relaxation activity children were focused on the movements and their bodies. This helped to create a positive, comfortable and peaceful atmosphere.
During the first part of the activity	Participate actively in the activity			X	They remembered the story a lot. They participated both orally and using gestures. They remember some parts of the story, so some of them were telling the story with the at some points such as “We are going to catch a big one” (where we did a gesture). They also remember the expressions of the actions “Swishy, swashi/ splash, splosh” and the other ones.  In some occasions, after passing through 3 different spaces, the teacher said, “We are going on a bear hunt, we are going to catch ...” and did the gesture but not the word and they said it themselves “A big one” exaggerating their voce.
	Follow the instructions			X	They all went through the spaces that the teacher indicated and seemed to understand her instructions when changing the activities. The small group enabled

					them to follow the instructions and being attended in a more personalized way.
	Make questions or intervene orally			X	<p>A lot of them answered the question “Are we scared”, saying “No!” and when the teacher was asking “Can we go over it?” and “Can we go under it?” while doing the gestures, they were answering the questions orally.</p> <p>Some of them were also answering the questions of the places, when the teacher asked them “What is this?” and pointed to some space, they said the name of the space, for example “Mud” modulating their voice according to the story.</p> <p>One girl remembered very good the story, and, in some occasions, she continued the story before the teacher, for example saying, “We are going on a bear hunt” or saying the expressions of the actions such as “Tip, toe”.</p> <p>When going back “Home”, they were going before the teacher, and when she was saying “Back to...” some of the spaces, they did the actions without the teacher doing an example.</p> <p>They asked questions about how to play after the first part of the story, for example “Podem voltar per la neu, mud...?” “Podem anar tots al mateix lloc alhora?”, since they are used to play very guided games.</p>

During the second part of the activity	Recreate the whole story			X	Most of them, at the beginning of this part of the activity recreated the whole story going through the different spaces quite fast and in some of them, saying some expressions, such as “Stumble, trip”.
	Recreate parts of the story			X	A: “Back to the river” she goes to the cave → “Back to the bear” M took the bear and started running after his and her classmates, going through the path back to the house. From time to time during the activity, some of them were going through some of the spaces doing the movements or saying the expressions.
	Use of spoken English			X	Some expressions (swishy, swashy / splash, splosh / stumble, trip / tip, toe), sentences (it is a bear → many times, back to the ...), some words related to the spaces (cave, river, mud). - A: “Back to the bear!” with intonation. / “Som bears” / “Mira, es el baby bear, la mummy bear, la sister i la otra sister”
	Communication with peers			X	At the beginning all of them started doing the circuit and playing through the spaces on their own, but in some occasions running into the same spaces, so creating the situation together. Nevertheless, at the beginning the game was quite individual. As the activity was going on, they started to look for their classmates and created

				<p>some little groups, with which they started new communicative situations.</p> <p>In one occasion they were all playing to be a bear, and all went inside the cave.</p> <p>The four monsters (grass, mud, cave and snow) started to play together.</p>
	Body expression		X	<p>They were free to move, and they were doing the actions, some of them started being shy but then they saw they could express freely, so that they started using their body and doing more movements, for example, to reproduce the actions.</p>
	Use of the voice when playing		X	<p>They were reproducing some expressions imitating the storytelling, emphasizing and modulating their voices “It is a bear”, and also in their discourse they were using intonation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- P: “Qui gosa molestar el meu grass”</li> </ul>
	Improvise new situations		X	<p>At the end of the activity, some new situations appeared:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- S and AR were doing role play, since they were playing as bears inside the cave, they created a discourse, in a natural communicative situation. Then, D and M joined them, and played to be a bear family. They received many visits in the cave.</li> <li>- More than one couple was playing tag (one was the bear and the other one the family)</li> <li>- P took the green fabric (grass) and put it on. The teacher asked him “Are</li> </ul>

					<p>you in the grass?” and he said “Sí, soc el monstre de l’herba”.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- A took the brown fabric (mud) and put it on saying “Jo soc el monstre del mud”</li> <li>- M went behind the white fabric (snowstorm) and said “Sóc el monstre snow”. O joined her and said “Jo també snow”, but he left.</li> <li>- O took the black fabric (cave) and put it on, becoming the cave. Then, S joined him inside the fabric.</li> </ul>
	Can identify the different spaces and materials			X	<p>Before the activity, the teacher asked them if they recognized the spaces, and they knew all of them.</p> <p>P: “M’estic enfilant a un arbre”</p> <p>Many children liked the forest space, since there were the wall bars. The teacher asked, “Are you climbing a tree” pointing at the wall bars and doing a gesture and some of them said “Yes”.</p>
	Create different meaning to the spaces or materials			X	<p>Some of them saw the space as a motor skills circuit, but some references to the story can be seen, as while they were going through the circuit, they were doing some of the gestures we did in the previous activity or saying some expressions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- P used the green fabric (grass) to become the grass monster.</li> <li>- A took the brown fabric (mud) to become the mud monster.</li> </ul>

During the third part of the activity	Explain something about their experience			X	<p>Most of them explained what they liked the most. The teacher tried to help the ones who were more shy, for example, when they pointing at what they liked the most or what they did, (for example at the cave), she said the part of the story or what they were doing or with a question, such as “Yes, you were playing to be a bear in the cave?” and they answer “Yes”.</p> <p>Some of them explained their experience of recreating the story, but what they explained the most were the new situations they created.</p> <p>One of them did not want to explain his experience.</p>
	Enjoyed the activity			X	<p>When asking “Did you like it?” they said “Yes” with emotion.</p> <p>They seemed to have fun during the second part of the activity. When the teacher asked them after playing if they liked it, they said “Si” with a lot of emotion.</p> <p>They liked a lot the materials, especially the teddy bear.</p>

*Note. This table is divided into the three parts of the activity and shows the 1<sup>st</sup> group observations of session 3, focused on the interest, participation, communication skills and comprehension of the children.*



**Table 10.** Children’s observation grid: Session 3 - Group 2

SESSION: 3		GROUP: 2		DATE: 4 <sup>th</sup> March 2020	
10 children		Not at all	A little bit	A lot	Observations
Usefulness of the relaxation activity					Because of the lack of time, the relaxation activity could not be carried out. They were coming from the playground and were really excited and impatient; maybe because of this, the atmosphere was not very calmed and relaxed.
During the first part of the activity	Participate actively in the activity			X	They seem enthusiastic about the activity and all of them participate in the story. They follow the teacher and pass through all the spaces doing the actions. Moreover, they also intervene during the explanation of the story, since they know it a lot, and they can say some of the words before the teacher say them, such as we have to go “Through it”, before crossing the spaces. They participate both orally and using gestures when saying expressions such as “A big one”, “A beautiful day” or when doing the actions “Swishy, swashi / splash, splosh” and so on.
	Follow the instructions			X	They all went through the spaces that the teacher indicated and seemed to understand my instructions when changing the activities. The small group enabled

				them to follow the instructions and being attended in a more personalized way.
	Make questions or intervenes orally		X	<p>A lot of them answered simple questions related to the story, for example “Are we scared”, saying “No!” and when the teacher was asking “Can we go over it?” and “Can we go under it?” while doing the gestures, they were answering the questions orally.</p> <p>Some of them were also answering the questions of the places, when the teacher asked them “What is this?” and pointed to some space, they said the name of the space, for example “Grass” or “Mud” putting some effort to their voice, according to the story.</p>
During the second part of the activity	Recreate the whole story	X		None of them recreated the whole story.
	Recreate parts of the story		X	<p>At the beginning of the activity one child recreated the first part of the story, until arriving at the cave, where she wanted to play with the bear.</p> <p>Some of them recreated the scene where the bear is running after them and they go inside the bed to sleep, where the bear could not catch them.</p>
	Use of spoken English		X	<p>They used some of the words of the story, such as “The bear” many times.</p> <p>They also answered simple questions in English “A are you a bear?” and said “Yes”.</p>

	Communication with peers			X	<p>Most of them created groups in the spaces and were playing together, but in some occasions, they were playing freely through the different spaces.</p> <p>They were playing together most of the times, they were using verbal and nonverbal skills to communicate, since in some occasions, only with the gestures, children knew which were their purposes (for example, playing tag, when they did the gestures of being a bear)</p>
	Body expression			X	<p>They used their body a lot to express freely. Some of them were doing the movements of the story when they were going through the different spaces, expressing cold in the snowstorm, disgust in the mud and a little bit of fear in the cave, for example. When they were representing bear, they adopted the role of being scary and big, expressing it with their bodies. The ones who were followed by the bear, were expressing fear and nervous with their bodies (accompanied with their voices).</p> <p>Nevertheless, in some cases, they were using their bodies to move, but not to communicate.</p>
	Use of the voice when playing			X	<p>When they were representing the bear, they were modulating their voices, making them stronger, as when we were telling the story.</p>

	Improvise new situations			<p>X One group improvised a new situation in the “Bedroom” space, they were playing to be a family. This did not last a lot of time.</p> <p>They used a lot the teddy bear to play:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- To play tag, while one was holding the bear and running after other children, while they were escaping.</li> <li>- Another girl took it to play with her in the wall bars.</li> <li>- Some of them created a situation inside the cave with it.</li> </ul> <p>A couple of girls were playing in the grass space, playing to hide under the green fabric and establishing a conversation under it.</p> <p>One girl played to be the bear inside the cave. Then, more children joined her, and they created a situation inside the cave.</p> <p>A lot of them were playing tag: one of them took the role of the bear and the other ones were running to escape. They were changing roles, so most of them represented the bear.</p>
	Can identify the different spaces and materials			<p>X Before the activity, the teacher asked them if they recognized the spaces, and they knew all of them.</p> <p>When they were going through the spaces, they were doing the correspondent movements, so that they could identify them.</p> <p>They were climbing the wall bars as if those were trees to hide from the bear in</p>

				<p>some of the occasions. The teacher asked them “Where are you climbing? On esteu pujant?” and a girl said “Pugem als arbres”</p> <p>One child gave the brown fabric (mud) to the teacher taking it as if it was real, mud, while putting a face of disgust.</p>
	Create different meaning to the spaces or materials		X	Children acted as if they were in their psychomotricity class, since the space where we were is where they do them, and the materials invited them to run and move.
During the third part of the activity	Explain something about their experience.		X	<p>C: una era el bear i si ens to cava nosaltres erem el bear, i si ens estiravem ja no ens podia tocar i si anavem a les espatlles tampoc. Com quan a l’atrapada</p> <p>E: jo, la C, l’A, en M i l’AM estavem jugant a que eren 3 ossos i hi havia una nena que era sola i l’haviem de tocar.</p> <p>Q: jugava a la cova de l’ós</p> <p>V: jo i l’A haviem jugat a la cova que erem ossos i sortiem a passejar.</p> <p>Some of them did not want to explain their experience.</p>
	Enjoyed the activity		X	They were all happy about the activity and did not want to stop playing.

*Note. This table is divided into the three parts of the activity and shows the 2<sup>nd</sup> group observations of session 3, focused on the interest, participation, communication skills and comprehension of the children.*

### 8.3. Appendix 3: Teacher’s practice observation grids

**Table 11.** Teacher’s practice observation grid: Session 1 - Group 1

SESSION: 1						GROUP: 1					DATE: 11 <sup>th</sup> February 2020									
TEACHER'S PRACTICE OBSERVATION																				
Are the explanations and instructions clear?			Is she speaking in English all the time?		Is the language suitable for the children? (adequate vocabulary and comprehensible output)			Is she using body expression? (showing by doing, use of actions to support the language)			Does she have a positive attitude towards the activity? (dynamic, inviting, retaining attention)			Is she conducting the activity properly? (showing confidence, leading the activity)			Is she giving positive feedback to the children?			
Not at all	A little bit	A lot	Yes	No	Not at all	A little bit	A lot	Not at all	A little bit	A lot	Not at all	A little bit	A lot	Not at all	A little bit	A lot	Not at all	A little bit	A lot	
	X			X		X				X		X			X			X		
OBSERVATIONS																				
- In some occasions, when children did not understand some questions, for example “Where did we go?”, the teacher asked another time the																				

question in Catalan “On hem anat?”, so they answered. At the end of the session, when asking “Did you like the trip?”, with the help of gestures, they understood the question and could answer yes or no.

- It was very difficult to keep the attention of the children and to manage the group.

*Note. This table shows the teacher’s practice observations of session 1, group 1. It is focused on the comprehensible input given, the suitability of her language and the feedback given, her use of non-verbal skills, her attitude and her classroom management.*

**Table 12.** Teacher’s practice observation grid: Session 1 - Group 2

SESSION: 1			GROUP: 2						DATE: 12 <sup>th</sup> February 2020											
TEACHER'S PRACTICE OBSERVATION																				
Are the explanations and instructions clear?			Is she speaking in English all the time?		Is the language suitable for the children? (adequate vocabulary and comprehensible output)			Is she using body expression? (showing by doing, use of actions to support the language)			Does she have a positive attitude towards the activity? (dynamic, inviting, retaining attention)			Is she conducting the activity properly? (showing confidence, leading the activity)			Is she giving positive feedback to the children?			
Not at all	A little bit	A lot	Yes	No	Not at all	A little bit	A lot	Not at all	A little bit	A lot	Not at all	A little bit	A lot	Not at all	A little bit	A lot	Not at all	A little bit	A lot	
		X	X				X			X			X			X			X	
OBSERVATIONS																				
<p>- Without using their first language, it was difficult for them to understand some difficult questions, such as “What did we do? where did we go?” To solve that, the teacher said some examples, for example in this case, “We went to the mountain” emphasizing the word “Mountain” and they could say some vocabulary, such as “A river”. In addition, the teacher asked the concrete actions: “Did we walk?”</p>																				



and they answered “Yes”, “Did we go on our tiptoe?” and they answered “Yes”

- A conflict between to children happened, and in order to solve it, the teacher asked to one of them to help her asking questions to the group.

*Note. This table shows the teacher’s practice observations of session 1, group 2. It is focused on the comprehensible input given, the suitability of her language and the feedback given, her use of non-verbal skills, her attitude and her classroom management.*

**Table 13.** Teacher’s practice observation grid: Session 2 - Group 1

SESSION: 2			GROUP: 1						DATE: 18 <sup>th</sup> February 2020											
TEACHER'S PRACTICE OBSERVATION																				
Are the explanations and instructions clear?			Is she speaking in English all the time?		Is the language suitable for the children? (adequate vocabulary and comprehensible output)			Is she using body expression? (showing by doing, use of actions to support the language)			Does she have a positive attitude towards the activity? (dynamic, inviting, retaining attention)			Is she conducting the activity properly? (showing confidence, leading the activity)			Is she giving positive feedback to the children?			
Not at all	A little bit	A lot	Yes	No	Not at all	A little bit	A lot	Not at all	A little bit	A lot	Not at all	A little bit	A lot	Not at all	A little bit	A lot	Not at all	A little bit	A lot	
		X	X				X			X			X			X			X	
OBSERVATIONS																				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- During the story she does not ask questions nor giving feedback to the children when they predict situations. Poor feedback giving in general.</li> <li>- Children seem to understand all instructions and story with the help of the actions. When one child does not understand something he</li> </ul>																				

asks it, and the teacher repeats it in English (the tutor from the school does not want to use Catalan in their classes).

- When using the bear with voice modulation children were really interested.
- At the end of the session, she had more complications to manage the situation.

*Note. This table shows the teacher's practice observations of session 2, group 1. It is focused on the comprehensible input given, the suitability of her language and the feedback given, her use of non-verbal skills, her attitude and her classroom management.*

**Table 14.** Teacher’s practice observation grid: Session 2 - Group 2

SESSION: 2			GROUP: 2						DATE: 19 <sup>th</sup> February 2020											
TEACHER'S PRACTICE OBSERVATION																				
Are the explanations and instructions clear?			Is she speaking in English all the time?		Is the language suitable for the children? (adequate vocabulary and comprehensible output)			Is she using body expression? (showing by doing, use of actions to support the language)			Does she have a positive attitude towards the activity? (dynamic, inviting, retaining attention)			Is she conducting the activity properly? (showing confidence, leading the activity)			Is she giving positive feedback to the children?			
Not at all	A little bit	A lot	Yes	No	Not at all	A little bit	A lot	Not at all	A little bit	A lot	Not at all	A little bit	A lot	Not at all	A little bit	A lot	Not at all	A little bit	A lot	
		X	X				X			X			X			X			X	
OBSERVATIONS																				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Better management of the situation than the last session, but difficult to catch their attention at the end of the session.</li> <li>- A lot of body language and voice modulation to support the storytelling.</li> <li>- She waits until children say some of the expressions, since they remembered and wanted to say it.</li> </ul>																				

- When using the bear with voice modulation children were really interested.
- She gives more feedback to the children during all the parts of the session, both during the story and during the questions after it.

*Note. This table shows the teacher's practice observations of session 2, group 2. It is focused on the comprehensible input given, the suitability of her language and the feedback given, her use of non-verbal skills, her attitude and her classroom management.*

**Table 15.** Teacher’s practice observation grid: Session 3 - Group 1

SESSION: 3					GROUP: 1					DATE: 3 <sup>rd</sup> March 2020									
TEACHER'S PRACTICE OBSERVATION																			
Are the explanations and instructions clear?			Is she speaking in English all the time?		Is the language suitable for the children? (adequate vocabulary and comprehensible output)			Is she using body expression? (showing by doing, use of actions to support the language)			Does she have a positive attitude towards the activity? (dynamic, inviting, retaining attention)			Is she conducting the activity properly? (showing confidence, leading the activity)			Is she giving positive feedback to the children?		
Not at all	A little bit	A lot	Yes	No	Not at all	A little bit	A lot	Not at all	A little bit	A lot	Not at all	A little bit	A lot	Not at all	A little bit	A lot	Not at all	A little bit	A lot
		X		X			X			X			X			X			X
OBSERVATIONS																			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Instructions and explanation of the activity in Catalan.</li> <li>- When recreating the story all together, giving positive feedback to some of their interventions.</li> <li>- The vocabulary and language are suitable for the children since the most of it is about the story and they already know it.</li> <li>- When they did not understand some questions, the teacher translated them, for example she asked AR “Are you a bear?” and she</li> </ul>																			

answered “Què?” and the teacher asked “Ets un ós?” and said “Yes”

- Teacher intervention in some occasions to promote communicative situations. “AR is a bear”.
- To finish the second part of the activity, it was difficult to catch their attention since they were playing. The teacher took the bear and said “One, two, three, listen to me” twice, and said that the bear had to go to sleep with intonation, so they could become aware of the modulation of her voice.
- Asking to each of them what did they like the most and what did they do, so that they could communicate and verbalize their experiences.
- Managing the word turn during the last part of the activity in Catalan, and also some of the feedback.
- Some of the comments they did in Catalan during the last part of the session were repeated in English by the teacher in a question form or literally with intonation.

*Note. This table shows the teacher’s practice observations of session 3, group 1. It is focused on the comprehensible input given, the suitability of her language and the feedback given, her use of non-verbal skills, her attitude and her classroom management.*

**Table 16.** Teacher’s practice observation grid: Session 3 - Group 2

SESSION: 3					GROUP: 2					DATE: 4 <sup>th</sup> March 2020									
TEACHER'S PRACTICE OBSERVATION																			
Are the explanations and instructions clear?			Is she speaking in English all the time?		Is the language suitable for the children? (adequate vocabulary and comprehensible input)			Is she using body expression? (showing by doing, use of actions to support the language)			Does she have a positive attitude towards the activity? (dynamic, inviting, retaining attention)			Is she conducting the activity properly? (showing confidence, leading the activity)			Is she giving positive feedback to the children?		
Not at all	A little bit	A lot	Yes	No	Not at all	A little bit	A lot	Not at all	A little bit	A lot	Not at all	A little bit	A lot	Not at all	A little bit	A lot	Not at all	A little bit	A lot
	X			X			X			X			X		X				X
OBSERVATIONS																			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The teacher is a little bit nervous because of the lack of time and does not attend the children as with the other group.</li> <li>- More difficulty to manage the group and maintain a calmed atmosphere. Modulating a lot her voice during the first part of the activity and trying to be calmed, in order to catch their attention</li> </ul>																			



- When they were not following her during the first part of the activity, retaining attention inviting them to go and help her crossing the different spaces.
- During the first part of the activity, lack of feedback to the children.
- At the beginning of the session instructions are clear, but not a lot when moving from activity to activity, since she says that they can go to play but without any instruction, example or reminding of the story or spaces.
- Intervening more during the second part of the activity, since the children were more excited and playing as if they were in the motor skills session, so trying to invite them to do something related to the story, or dramatic situations. Moreover, asking questions to them about what they were doing, to promote communication about their experiences.
- The lack of time during the third part of the activity caused that the teacher could not attend a lot children's experiences.

*Note. This table shows the teacher's practice observations of session 3, group 2. It is focused on the comprehensible input given, the suitability of her language and the feedback given, her use of non-verbal skills, her attitude and her classroom management.*

## 8.4. Appendix 4: Interviews

My name is Aina Farrés and I am currently studying a Bachelor's Degree in Pre-School and Primary School Teaching, majoring in English at the University of Vic (UVic-UCC). This interview is part of the data collection instruments for my final dissertation project about the use of drama as a communication tool to learn English as a foreign language.

### **Final dissertation project: Interview**

Interviewer: Aina Farrés

Interviewee:

Relationship with education:

School:

1. Do you usually or have you ever used some drama technique to teach English as a foreign language (such as storytelling, story dramatization, pantomime, role play, symbolic play, etc.)? Could you describe them?
2. What do you think about using stories to support drama activities to teach English as a foreign language? Do you use them? Why?
3. If you have answered "yes" in the previous question, what type of stories do you use and how do you use them?
4. Do you agree with the fact that drama techniques as storytelling and story dramatization (where not only verbal language is important, but there is a lot of body expression and other types of contextualized language, such as non-verbal language) provide children with communication tools in the foreign language? In what sense?

The data collected will only be used for academic purposes.

Thank you for your participation.

### Interview Teacher 1

Interviewer: Aina Farrés

Interviewee: Raquel Cano

Relationship with education: English teacher

School: FEDAC

1. Do you usually or have you ever used some drama technique to teach English as a foreign language (such as storytelling, story dramatization, pantomime, role play, symbolic play, etc.)? Could you describe them?

Yes, we tell stories to the students from EI3 to EI5 every week as a method for learning English. We usually use big story books with engaging images to make us understood. We also use symbolic play to teach vocabulary and grammatical structures. For instance, we pretend a monkey eats different fruits to teach the words: yummy, yucky, I like... , I don't like... plus the vocabulary.

2. What do you think about using stories to support drama activities to teach English as a foreign language? Do you use them? Why?

I am a big fan of telling stories in all sessions. I think it is a complete and less artificial way to teach and learn English as the vocabulary is presented in context.

3. If you have answered “yes” in the previous question, what type of stories do you use and how do you use them?

I like to tell stories that are related to the children's reality in every moment. For example, I will not tell a story about horror and mystery to a 3 year-old student but I would tell something related to a lovely family or a cute teddy bear. It depends of the age of the student and interests of every class group. I usually choose books with simple and clear vocabulary and big images. I tell the stories making different voices, making the students repeat what I say and using gestures. I also make questions during the story, before or after reading it.

4. Do you agree with the fact that drama techniques as storytelling and story dramatization (where not only verbal language is important, but there is a lot of body expression and other types of contextualized language, such as non-verbal language) provide children with communication tools in the foreign language?  
In what sense?

Yes. The words are in context and we do not use isolated words with nonsense. They can also learn idioms and the intention in each sentence.

## Interview Teacher 2

Interviewer: Aina Farrés

Interviewee: Elisabeth Gómez

Relationship with education: Preschool teacher

School: IE Marta Mata, Torelló.

1. Do you usually or have you ever used some drama technique to teach English as a foreign language (such as storytelling, story dramatization, pantomime, role play, symbolic play, etc.)? Could you describe them?

Yes, I usually teach English in P3 and I use Artigal methodology. I teach through short stories: “Fish and Octopus”, “Smiley and Grumpy” and “Peggy and Granny”. These stories are dialogues between two characters and in the beginning, is the teacher, the one that represents all of them without any visual support. What is important is the tone that is given and the accompanying gestures, which always must be equal for each oral expression. The child memorizes everything, and before the teacher says anything, he knows what he has to say in English. Once children know the story, they start working it with story dramatization, games, songs, flashcards and some material to draw or cut and glue to support the learning process.

2. What do you think about using stories to support drama activities to teach English as a foreign language? Do you use them? Why?

I always use stories in my lessons. From my point of view, children are really motivated, stories promote an active listening and allow them to become the main character. Through the stories, children learn the phonetics, vocabulary, linguistic expressions... all in a fun way and in a real context.

3. If you have answered “yes” in the previous question, what type of stories do you use and how do you use them?

As I said in question 1, I mostly use the Artigal stories. Each story is used during 4 or 5 sessions. Firstly, I tell the story through the voice and gestures, usually children

spontaneously accompany me. Then children dramatize the story for their partners. When they know the story well, I do it again with a visual support (like puppets). Then they create a visual support too (for example painting the puppets) and finally they tell the story with it. As a final activity for each story, we go to some of the preschool classrooms to dramatize the story in front of an audience.

4. Do you agree with the fact that drama techniques as storytelling and story dramatization (where not only verbal language is important, but there is a lot of body expression and other types of contextualized language, such as non-verbal language) provide children with communication tools in the foreign language?  
In what sense?

Yes, I totally agree. Through the storytelling and story dramatization, children are learning not only the verbal language, but also the non-verbal one. The gestures, intonation, etc. are tools that allow children to understand the story. As they imitate them from the teacher, they are also learning how to use them in order to communicate and also to learn their own too.

### Interview Teacher 3

Interviewer: Aina Farrés

Interviewee: Carme Oller

Relationship with education:

School:

1. have you ever used some drama technique to teach English as a foreign language (such as storytelling, story dramatization, pantomime, role play, symbolic play, etc.)? Could you describe them?

Yes, we teach English using Dialogued stories, they are part of a pack of material created by Josep Maria Artigal. We use everyday stories based on dialogues: children use gestures and rhythm and they produce from the first moment.

2. What do you think about using stories to support drama activities to teach English as a foreign language? Do you use them? Why?

Children need to feel involved, to be protagonists, to feel emotions ...if they have these ingredients, they feel eager to talk, eager to participate and eager to talk. .

3. If you have answered “yes” in the previous question, what type of stories do you use and how do you use them?

I use both real and fantasy stories. The stories that help them to talk are based on everyday situations (Artigal’s stories) or fictional stories that can be applied to reality.

But, I sometimes use real English speaking literature to enjoy the music, the rhythm and the illustrations.

4. Do you agree with the fact that drama techniques as storytelling and story dramatization (where not only verbal language is important, but there is a lot of

body expression and other types of contextualized language, such as non-verbal language) provide children with communication tools in the foreign language? In what sense?



## 8.5. Appendix 5: Codes for observation grids and interviewed teachers

**Table 17.** Code for children’s observations

Children’s observation grids	
Session 1 Group 1	S1-G1
Session 1 Group 2	S1-G2
Session 2 Group 1	S2-G1
Session 2 Group 2	S2-G2
Session 3 Group 1	S3-G1
Session 3 Group 2	S3-G2

*Note.* This table shows the code created to refer to the children’s observations of the different sessions. The first column shows the full name session and the group and the second column shows the code.

**Table 18.** Code for teacher’s practice observations

Teacher’s practice observation grids	
Teacher’s observation Session 1 Group 1	TO-S1-G1
Teacher’s observation Session 1 Group 2	TO-S1-G2
Teacher’s observation Session 2 Group 1	TO-S2-G1
Teacher’s observation Session 2 Group 2	TO-S2-G2
Teacher’s observation Session 3 Group 1	TO-S3-G1
Teacher’s observation Session 3 Group 2	TO-S3-G2

*Note.* This table shows the code created to refer to the teacher’s observations of the different sessions. The first column shows the full name session and the group and the second column shows the code.

**Table 19.** Code for interviewed teachers

Interviews	
Teacher 1	T1
Teacher 2	T2
Teacher 2	T3

*Note.* This table shows the code created to refer to the interviewed teachers. For confidentiality reasons, the teachers' names do not appear in the report, so one number has been given to each of them. The first column shows the teacher and the second column shows the code.

## 8.6. Appendix 6: Permission document for the families



### AUTORITZACIÓ

En/ Na ..... com a pare/ mare/ tutor/a de .....autoritza que es pugui realitzar la següent activitat:

Enregistrar en vídeo una seqüència didàctica

amb la finalitat exclusiva de realitzar el Treball de Final de Grau de l'estudiant Aina Farrés Cabanas de la Facultat d'Educació, Traducció i Ciències Humanes de la Universitat de Vic.

Per la seva part, l'estudiant s'ha compromès a: “respectar els drets fonamentals de les persones, siguin infants o persones adultes; demanar el consentiment de les persones que col·laborin o participin en el treball; respectar l'esfera privada de totes les persones, grups o institucions que participin o estiguin relacionades amb el treball; utilitzar la informació obtinguda només amb finalitats científiques i donar compte dels resultats del treball a les persones, grups o institucions col·laboradores”.

.....

Signatura

....., ..... de ..... de 201

## 8.7. Appendix 7: Permission document for the centre



### AUTORITZACIÓ

En/ Na ..... com director/a o responsable del centre/ entitat .....  
.....autoritza que es pugui realitzar la següent activitat:

Enregistrar en vídeo una seqüència didàctica

amb la finalitat exclusiva de recollir dades per a la realització d'un Treball de Final de Grau de l'estudiant Aina Farrés Cabanas de la Facultat d'Educació, Traducció i Ciències Humanes de la Universitat de Vic.

Per la seva part, l'estudiant s'ha compromès a: "respectar els drets fonamentals de les persones, siguin infants o persones adultes; demanar el consentiment de les persones que col·laborin o participin en el treball; respectar l'esfera privada de totes les persones, grups o institucions que participin o estiguin relacionades amb el treball; utilitzar la informació obtinguda només amb finalitats científiques i donar compte dels resultats del treball a les persones, grups o institucions col·laboradores".

.....

Signatura

....., ..... de ..... de 201

