

CREATIVE WRITING: A TOOL TO ENHANCE THE LEARNING OF PRESENT SIMPLE USES

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Abstract: Traditionally, English as a foreign language grammar has been taught in primary school in a systematic and de-contextualized way, giving more importance to the form of the verbs than in the uses. Consequently, there has been a debate discussing if grammar sessions were helpful to improve children's English proficiency and production skills (writing and speaking). This study aims at emphasizing the benefits of grammar learning in primary stages while using creative writing to practise it. Its objective is to examine if creative writing is a useful way to learn grammar with contextualized and meaningful practices. The current research carries out three grammar sessions working with poems in a 5th grade Catalan primary school to see previous and post evidence about their *present simple* usage. The qualitative data collected helps to examine if creative writing can help students to improve their present simple knowledge in a contextualized task. The results have showed that focus on form sessions are necessary but writing is a good way to see children's improvement in language because they link the uses with the forms in order to write correctly.

Key words: creative writing, EFL, grammar teaching, poetry, verbs, present simple tense.

Resum: Tradicionalment, l'ensenyament de gramàtica a l'escola primària es feia i es fa de manera sistemàtica i descontextualitzada en les sessions d'anglès com a llengua estrangera. A més, es dona més importància a la forma dels verbs que als seus usos. Com a conseqüència, hi ha un debat que discuteix si la gramàtica ajuda a millorar el nivell d'anglès dels infants i de les seves habilitats lingüístiques (escriptura i parla). Aquesta recerca té l'objectiu de ressaltar els beneficis de l'aprenentatge de gramàtica anglesa durant l'educació primària, fent servir l'escriptura creativa. L'objectiu és examinar si l'escriptura creativa és una eina útil per aprendre gramàtica amb pràctiques contextualitzades i significatives. L'estudi duu a terme tres sessions de gramàtica, treballant amb poemes, amb els estudiants de 5è d'una escola primària catalana per tal d'observar evidències prèvies i posteriors sobre l'ús del present simple. Les dades qualitatives que es recullen ajuden a examinar si l'escriptura creativa ajuda els infants a millorar el seu coneixement sobre *present simple* en una tasca contextualitzada. Els resultats mostren que les sessions focalitzades en la forma del verb són necessàries però l'escriptura és una bona manera de veure les millores del llenguatge perquè vinculen els usos amb les formes verbals per escriure de manera correcta.

Paraules clau: escriptura creativa, EAL, ensenyament de la gramàtica, poesia, verbs, present d'indicatiu.

Resumen: Tradicionalmente, la enseñanza de gramática en la escuela primària se hacía y se hace de manera sistemática y descontextualitzada en las sesiones de inglés como lengua extranjera. Además, se da más importancia a la forma de los verbos que a sus usos. Como consecuencia, hay un debate que discute si la gramática ayuda a mejorar el nivel de inglés de los niños y de sus habilidades lingüísticas (escritura y habla). Esta investigación tiene el objetivo de resaltar los beneficios del aprendizaje de gramática inglesa durante la educación primaria, usando la escritura creativa para practicarlo. El objetivo es examinar si la escritura creativa es una herramienta útil para aprender gramática con practicas contextualizadas y significativas. El estudio lleva a cabo tres sesiones de gramática, trabajando con poemas, con los estudiantes de 5o de una escuela primaria catalana para observar evidencias previas y posteriores sobre el uso del *present simple*. Los datos cualitativos que se recogen ayudan a examinar si la escritura creativa ayuda a los niños a mejorar su conocimiento sobre presente simple en una tarea contextualizada. Los resultados muestran que las sesiones focalizadas en la forma del verbo son necesarias pero la escritura es una buena manera de ver las mejoras del lenguaje porque vinculan los usos con las formas verbales para escribir de manera correcto.

Palabras clave: escritura creativa, EAL, ensenyanza de la gramatica, poesia, verbos, presente indicativo.

1. INTRODUCTION

This article presents an investigation about how creative writing can be a useful tool to learn English grammar in EFL sessions in Primary School. The study consists on asking fifth graders to write a poem in English in pairs using present simple and, after a session focused on analysing present simple uses in different poems, ask them to revise their poem in order to improve it. The research questions are the following: 1) How can teachers use creative writing when the aim is to teach grammar as EFL? 2) What does it change after the ‘focus of form’ session with poems in present simple? 3) How does the work in pairs influence? 4) Are children more conscious about present simple form in the last session? To contextualize the analysis and be able to answer all this questions the article have different parts, which are: theoretical framework, methodology, data collection and conclusions.

2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1. GRAMMAR LEARNING IN PRIMARY SCHOOL

Throughout the XIX and XX centuries, there has been a debate about grammar in both first language and second language learning classes in many countries. Much research was done in order to prove if explicit grammar classes were helpful to improve children’s writing. However, most of these studies took into account explicit grammar classes which were not contextualized nor focused in a specific aspect of the writing. This is why Myhill (2010) states that we need to inquire about what to teach in grammar classes and carry out it due to enhance writing, this is, contextualizing the explicit grammar classes with meaningful examples and meaningful writing exercises. Nassaji (2017) refers to contextualized grammar as *focus on form* grammar. He describes it by saying that children focus mainly on the form, but they have a real context and situation, so their need is to use the form correctly in order to communicate. Penny Ur says that “focus on form may involve ‘time out’ to talk about a particular grammatical form in the course of an otherwise communicative procedure, or involve paying attention, while focusing on the meaning of a text [...]” (2011, p. 87).

Scrivener (2011) describes grammar as a complicated progress where learning the rules does not necessarily mean that students are able to use them or even understand them. This is why he points out, as well as Myhill (2010), that grammar have to be included inside a living ability to use the language, which are writing and speaking skills. As it was mentioned before, Myhill states that it is not about teaching or not teaching grammar at school; the important issue is how and what contents de we teach. This opinion is shared by other authors, such as Gurrey, who argues that: one cause of

skepticism about grammar teaching was in ‘the divorce of grammar and meaning’ (Guerry, 1962, p. 8), this is why he defends the need to introduce contextualized grammar in the primary classes, such as UK Literacy Association (UKLA) statement says: grammatical knowledge should be taught and tested in a context of purposeful writing together with a rich and diet of reading and classroom interaction (2013).

In the Catalan context there has also been debate and research about teaching grammar in Primary Schools in order to improve the proficiency of the language. Moreover, the debate in this region there has been extended not only in the first language classes, but also in the second and foreign language classes. And the conclusion of the research agrees with Myhill; grammar knowledge enhances a better use of language (Casas, 2017).

Regarding the system of verb tenses, Casas (2014) states that “schools have primarily focused on morphological contents and on basic time distinction (past-present-future) and have barely examined the relationship between verb forms and their usages (p. 203)”. Which is what this study wants to achieve; putting together present simple form and its uses in the creative writing. Casas (2014) calls to this inclusion of both linguistic knowledge and usage as reflective teaching and learning.

The way that verb tenses are taught in school is also a topic of interest for many educators, which are rethinking how to deal with it. Together with these educators, authors such as Taylor (1993) and Zayas (2004) try to develop a specific pedagogical grammar tips to focus on this kind of verb tense teaching.

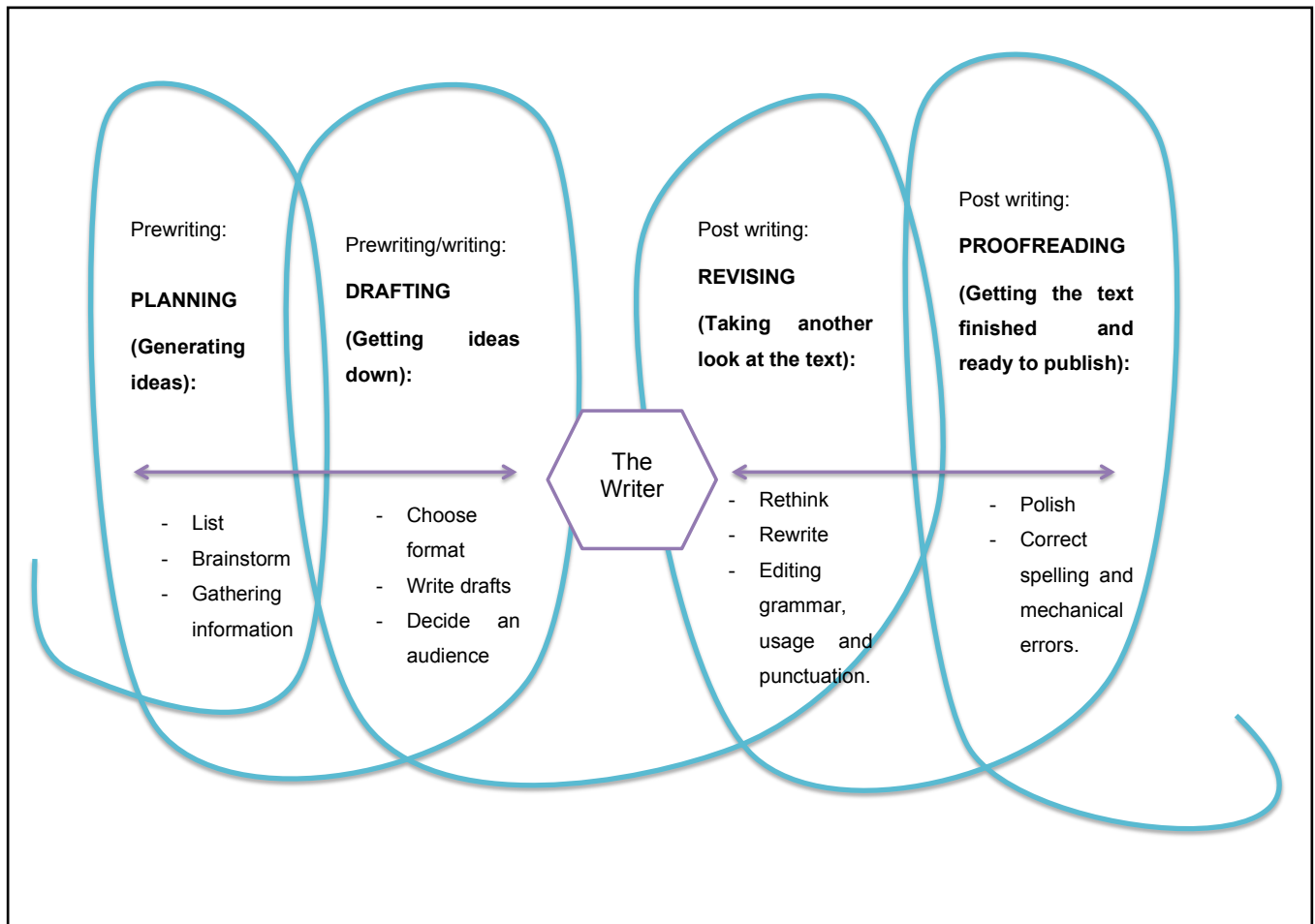
2.2.CREATIVE WRITING

Czereniewska says that “when children are learning to write, ‘they learn more than the *system* of writing. They learn about the *social practices* of language’ (1992, p.2). Myhill agrees with this and states that writing is not a set of de-contextualized skills to be mastered and expanded, instead, it is a meaningful activity, implanted in social contexts, and which reflects power relations between different groups (2005, p. 84).”

In the following image based on Weaver (2010, p.191) we can divide the writing process into four parts: prewriting, which consists on planning and thinking what do we want to write about; drafting,

revising and proofreading. The loops from the picture simulate the process, which is not lineal, but it can go forward and onwards at anytime.

Figure 1. Writing process (based on Weaver, 2010, p. 191)



Creative writing is typically thought as the writing of novels, short stories, poems and playwriting, but Hyland (2002) defends the idea of creative writing as any writing, fiction or non-fiction, that happens outside of everyday professional or academic forms of writing. So we need to think of creative writing as self-expression, where children can talk about the topic they want, and they just have some guidance, or they are completely free to choose.

Various professionals have supported creative writing because it is beneficial for everyone; students and adults. It fosters people's artistic expression, stimulates imagination and it allows working on writing functions. Also, it enables children work on their reading learning while they are writing. Using creative writing can also be beneficial for students with low self-esteem, as it provides them

the time to discover their abilities and qualities and their self-expression, and so, normally they realize their abilities and hopefully it raises their motivation (Maley, 2009).

2.3. GRAMMAR LEARNING THROUGH WRITING

As Myhill states, learning to write is one new area of empirical enquiry, so there are few professional studies about this topic and much research is still going on (2005). The connection between grammar learning and learning how to write is even more recent. Most of the articles talk about how grammatical knowledge supports writing, but not the other way, which is the aim of this research.

Schiach (1995) in his study declares that grammar helps us to understand our mistakes and correct them. However, the Bullock Report (DES 1975) criticizes the pedagogy of establishing the relation between writing and grammar upon error. Two years later, Blackman (1997) defends that without a good understanding of grammar our writing will be with difficulty understood and read, and here is where authors such as Myhill see the worthy connection between both grammar knowledge and writing skill, which can be worked in a contextualized and meaningful way for learners.

2.4. EFL IN PRIMARY STAGES

In the Catalan context, the majority of schools have English as a Foreign Language. EFL is obligatory in primary school, as it is decreed by LEC; Catalan educational law from 2009. There it is said that all the school curriculums must have a minimum of one foreign language, however, each school can choose the language. Some years ago in most of the Catalan primary schools EFL started in first grade but, nowadays there are some schools which start teaching English in Infant stages or even in Kindergarten. This is increasingly popular and the schools who start EFL in Infant education are more and more frequent.

The main aim of teaching languages is the progressive learning and proficiency of the language in order to communicate with others, but not only establishing a basic written or oral conversation, also, being able to read and get information from elementary English texts, videos and audio. Also, languages are an important cultural element that broaden the perspective of the world. The objectives from the national curriculum are general and there is no specific part in grammar, apart from distinguishing present, past and future. This is why in this research we want to introduce the

different uses of the 'present simple' tense and work them in the classroom in a contextualized way; using creative writing for it.

3. METHODOLOGY

This research has been carried out with a total amount of 48 children from two different classes of 5th grade in a primary school of Vic, Osona. It is a public school with children from many backgrounds and it is located in the outskirts of the city and in that area of the city the majority of citizens are immigrants, that is the reason why children live together with different cultures and languages. So, even if the communicative language from the school is Catalan, this can be the second or even the third language from the students. There are three learning languages: Catalan, Spanish and English; communicative language, second language and third language respectively. In fifth grade, none of the students have English as a first language, contrarily, for them English is the third or fourth language to learn; taught in the school as a foreign language. Fifth graders were chosen because they had already studied 'present simple' tense and so, it was possible to ask them to use this verb tense for the creative writing task. Due to the creative writing, poetry was chosen because children can use simple and short sentences, it doesn't need to be long, and they need to think properly the information they want to tell, because each sentence should have a short clear idea.

The study consisted on three different sessions that took place in January 2018. The sessions were carried out by the researcher, who had the English teacher support. The first session (29/01/18 and 01/02/18) pretended to refresh the knowledge about 'present simple' that children had, asking them what did they remember about the uses of this specific tense. Afterwards, in pairs they started working on a poem. During the explanation where they were told to write a poem, in the first session, they were given different ideas: they could choose if they wanted their poem to rhyme or not, they could do different verses related for the topic or even they could write an acronym poem. Acronym poem was introduced as an example because is a format that helps fighting against being lost for a long time in front of a blank paper. They only had to choose a word and they had the first letter to start working on the sentences.

The only given instruction was that they had to use present simple to write the poem. The pairs were chosen by the researcher together with the English teacher and they tried to pair a child who was good at English and another one that was not that good but was creative instead.

The second session (2/02/18) was focused on the uses of present simple, so it was an explicit grammar class throughout poems¹. Firstly, the information that children gave at the first session was completed, introducing the three main uses that present simple have in both Catalan and English: atemporal, states and habits and general truths. After introducing them, comparing how we use them in both languages and giving some examples, children were given a total of 8 poems, and they had to read and then, classify them deciding which of the use of present simple were they exemplifying. It was a deduction activity in small groups, where they could discuss, help each other and talk about their suppositions.

In the third and final session (5/02/18 and 6/02/18), children were given back their poem and they had to recognize and revise the present simple forms, as well as finishing the poem. The children who considered that their poem was finished and correct had the opportunity to write another one about a different topic.

During the first and the third session, two different pairs were selected in order to be recorded while they were working on the poem, so in total we had four pairs recorded, two of each class. The aim of recording is to analyse the topics of speech and comments they shared and knowing which was the relationship between the pairs regarding their writing. The recordings would help to analyse the written poems as it would be easier to interpret children's words and errors, as well as to know how they manage the knowledge they are developing.

¹ A summary of the session and the poems used will be found in the Annex (7.1).

Table 1: Data collection

<p>Study intervention dates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- 1st session: 29/01/18 (5th A class) and 01/02/2018 (5th B class)- 2nd session: 02/02/18 (5th A class and 5th B class)- 3rd session: 05/02/18 (5th A class) and 06/02/18 (5th B class) <p>Number of pairs analysed: 4</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- M. and P. : transcription A and A2.- G. and N: transcription B- J. and S: transcription C and C2.- M. and I. : transcription D. <p>Number of recordings/transcriptions: 6 (4 from the 1st session and 2 of the second session), all of them can be found in the Annex (7.2).</p> <p>Analysed poems: 6</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- <i>Spring</i> and <i>Smile</i> (by M. and P.)- <i>I like travel</i> (by G and N.)- <i>Present simple</i> and <i>The class</i> (by J. and S)- <i>Rain</i> (by M. and I.)

In order to answer the research questions the analysis of the results will be divided into different categories in order to answer the research questions:

- a) Topic decision: which will deal with the types of topic decision that groups used.
- b) Help from the teacher: where will be analysed the ways in which the teacher help students.
- c) Linguistic aspects: where it is explained how children solved their linguistic problems without teacher's help and the knowledge they had about present simple.
- d) Interaction: this part regards to the roles and discussion among children from the same group and finally.
- e) Motivation: as an important issue that appeared during the creative writing sessions.

4. DATA COLLECTION

From the different categories that have been presented in the previous part, here there will be different examples of the obtained results; each category includes one or two examples to show the results in a visual way.

a) Topic decision

Choosing a topic was not a problem for any of the groups which were recorded, some of them had a clear idea and others used the acrostic poem as a help to start with a word, which is easier than with a sentence. However, there were some children from the class who spent much time discussing and thinking about a possible topic to start with the poem.

One thing that most of the groups had in common was that they used the previous knowledge to decide the topic and even the first sentence; here there's an example².

Extract 1: topic decision example (transcription A)

P4: Però vols ficar algo de les flors?

M5: Sí, per exemple '*flowers are beautiful*' que vol dir: les flors són molt boniques.

P5: Doncs ja està, tampoc ho has de buscar, ja ho apuntem!

[...]

P9: Què has posat, les flors són molt boniques, no?

M9: Sí. Pot ser algo de la primavera, de les flors. Algo de la herba...

We can see that M proposes a topic to talk about and, through this topic, they decide a wider subject: spring, in order to include information related to flowers. In this case, one of the members has an idea using the previous knowledge and they keep in mind the topic and continue working on it.

In other groups, the decision of topic is not reached as an agreement, but only one of the group, normally the one with the highest level of English, decides the topic depending on his or her knowledge. Here's a brief example of how another group starts working.

Extract 2: topic decision example (transcription B)

G1: Podem ficar... Ja hem posat el títol: poem.

'*I like travel*'. Saps què vol dir '*travel*'?

N1: No.

G2: Aquí he ficat, m'agrada viatjar.

N2: Ahhh! Ahora...

G3: '*I like travel*'.

² You can see that children interventions are in Catalan, as we said they do not have enough English level to talk and interact in English.

In both groups the topic decision is done depending on children's previous knowledge, even if they start working with an acronym (transcription A) poem form or a *regular* poem (transcription B), without visual characteristics. We can also see that in both groups the one who decides the topic and the sentence to start working is the child with the highest English level.

b) Help from the researcher

Teachers have a key role in the class during the creative writing sentences, even if children work mostly autonomously. Children ask every single doubt and lack of knowledge to the teacher and, it is this one, who needs to know which questions can be answered and which not. During the research, children asked about word and sentences translations. Most of them were autonomous and used the dictionary, but when their doubts were about sentence structure, they asked for teacher's help. During the study, teacher helped them with everything, unless it was a structure which included a verb. If a verb was included, the teacher asked them questions until they discovered how to say it (this can be observed in the next fragment).

Extract 3: Teacher's help, example (transcription A)

((Children do not know the correct form of *verb to be* in 3rd person singular and they ask the translation of a whole sentence to the teacher)).

T1: Com diem és? La Paula és intel·ligent, com ho diem això?

M27: *Is, Paula is intelligent.*

T2: So, *the grass...*

M28: *Is*

Extract 3 is a clear example that shows that teachers are also important to guide the peer work towards the specific aim. We can see that throughout the teacher's questions, children arrive to the answer by their own (if they have worked on it before). For instance, if the aim is working on vocabulary or grammar tenses, teacher will ask questions about this and will make children discuss that specific content. In Extract 4, we can observe that the intervention of the teacher makes children focus in the verb tense, which they normally do not talk about. We can observe that only two pairs talk about present simple, but only this one, which had the intervention from the teacher, talks about the form of this tense.

Extract 4: Teacher's guidance, example (transcription A)

((Children are told to revise the poem because it is not written in present simple, but in imperative)).

I1: Ha dit lo mateix però amb *present simple*.

M1: Ahh, lo mateix, ha dit? ((There is a silence, they are thinking)).

Lo mateix.... què podria fer ara? Ai... costa molt pensar! ((with a complaining tone of voice)).

XXX (I comes to me to ask something about present simple)).

[...]

M4: '*Rain, rain comes to Spain.... Rain rain come to Spain*' ((almost singing)).

Com ho podriem fer en *present simple*? '*Rain, rain...*'

I5: *Rain... comes, crec. Amb present simple és comes, crec.*

c) Linguistic aspects

This part will focus in the linguistic aspects that children faced during the creative writing sessions, to do so, it will be divided into two different parts: the problem solving without teacher's help, about language and *present simple* knowledge, which is related with the previous example; extract 4.

a. Problem solving related to language

While children were writing it could be observed that many of them do not have enough English level or knowledge of English vocabulary to create complete sentence structure in English. So, there were pairs which decided to use all the knowledge they had, even if in some occasions they asked the teacher the translation of a word or they had to use the dictionary. There was a couple who spend a lot of time looking for words in the dictionary, but they were really autonomous working and they hardly needed help from the teacher, they were even checking the spelling of the words they were not sure. This two children had the opportunity not only to learn English, but also practice the usage of the dictionary. Extract 5 shows only one example of the many times that these girls were using the dictionary. In this case, they could not find the word 'que' as in English is not used. They were doing a literal translation of the sentence because they are not able to think in English yet, and they do not control the sentences' structures in English neither. However, while they look through the dictionary, they were refreshing the alphabet order, the spelling of the words and in some occasion, they were reading random words in order to get inspired to continue the poem.

Extract 5: Language problem solving, example (transcription A)

((Children are with the dictionary looking for the translation of 'que')).

M43: Ahhh podem ficar: melodies que et fan estar bé. 'Melodies'... Però no sé com. 'Melodies...' però tinc d'anar a buscar perquè no sé com. La Q?

P38: Aquí no hi és.

M44: La P on està. Tens que buscar la P perquè després de la P va la Q.

((They go through the dictionary pages saying the letters that they see till they find letter P)).

Other pairs asked the teacher the translation of the words. Even if few of them did so, it has to be considered as another strategy of problem solving related to language. Few of them were asking the teacher because they had the dictionaries from the first moment on their tables and they tried to use them or use their English knowledge and furthermore, because many times when they asked the teacher she told them to use the dictionary; they had to try solving language problems alone.

b. Present simple knowledge

During the two creative writing sessions, the only guidance that children had was writing in present simple, however only two partners out of four talked about it. One of the pairs is the one I guided with questions of the teacher in order to make them think and talk about present simple form. The other partner talks about the uses of present simple and they even write the poem about them. We will see fragments of both partners as examples.

Extract 6: Present simple, example (transcription D)

((Their poem was not written into present simple, so the researcher told them to revise it and turn the verbs into the correct form and they were discussing about it)).

M4: 'Rain, rain comes to Spain...' 'Rain rain come to Spain' ((almost singing)).

Com hi podríem fer en present simple? 'Rain, rain...'

I5: Rain... comes, crec. Amb present simple és comes, crec ((he pronounces it with all the letters as it was in Spanish)).

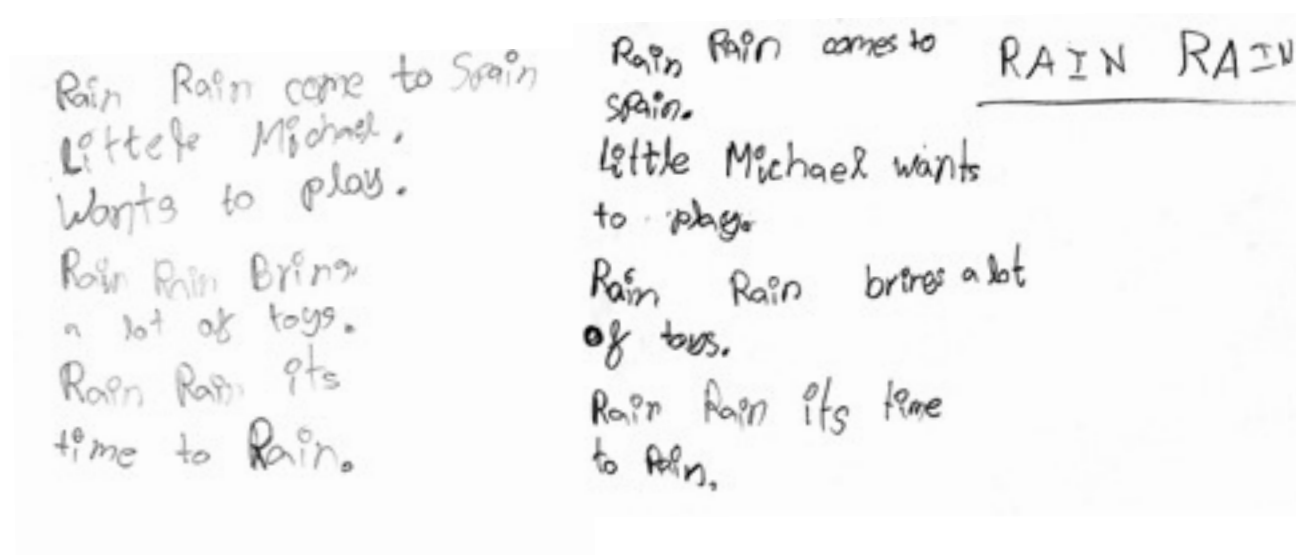
M5: No, coming no. Coming és amb present continuous. Però allò no ho hem estudiat. Perquè -ing va amb present continuous. 'Rain, rain, come to Spain'.

M6: Now podríem fer... ah, no. 'Rain, rain comes to Spain'. Perquè és it, no?

No, it no... Ai! Com ho podríem explicar? Perquè té un nom, 'comes to Spain'.

The interventions of extract 6 were from the pair which had teacher intervention in order to provoke the discussion about present simple form and how to transform their written poem into present simple tense. Teacher had a very important role to guide students into that direction and make them think about it. We can see that I5 says ‘comes’ but he cannot explain the reason why and then M5 do not understand it, but afterwards, he realizes that is ‘comes’ because the rain is 3rd persons singular, so it can be changed with ‘it’. After this discovery, they revise all their poem and change all the verbs they had without the ‘-s’ into the correct present simple form. Here below there will be showed the first poem done in the 1st session and the poem with the corrections done in the 3rd one.

Figure 2. ‘Rain’ poem from M and I.



Surprisingly, in the first poem they had two correct present simple forms and two other verbs in imperative. But, after telling them to write it in present simple, they changed the two of the verbs into present simple form. At the end, they realize that all three forms have to go in 3rd person and so, they have to add an ‘-s’. So, the intervention from the teacher encouraging them to revise the poem and reminding them to use present simple helped them to go on with the corrections correctly.

Extract 7 is taken from the interventions another group of two children who wrote the first poem about the uses of the present simple. They introduce the use with one or two words and then they explain why we use them.

Extract 7: Present simple, example (transcription C)

((They started working in class and I asked them if they could go to the corridor because I wanted to record their voices and that way there was less noise)).

S1: Sense rima no hem dit?

J1: Sí.

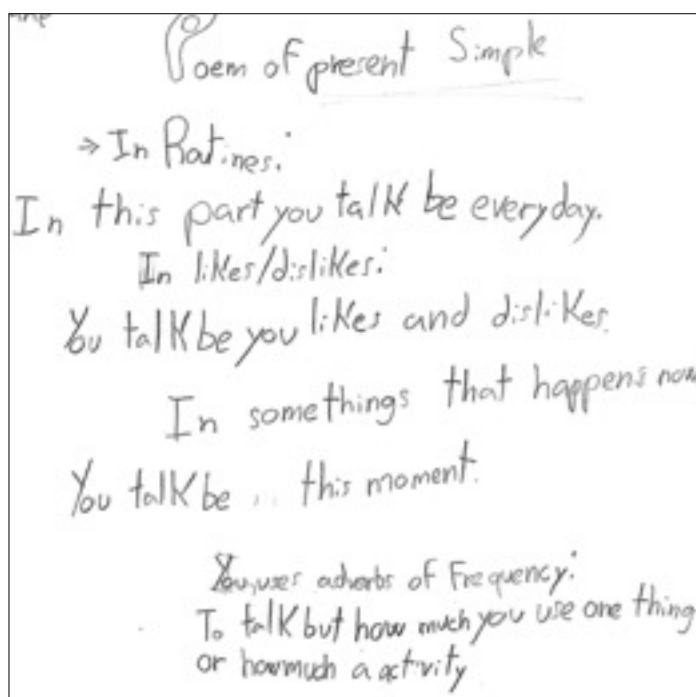
S2: Què tenim: 'routines'... Què més tenim?

J2: 'Routines, likes and dislikes and somethings we...'

S3: 'In this part, in this part...' o sigui en aquest part, podem parlar del que fem cada dia.

In the J2's intervention reads the different uses and topics that they talk about in the poem: routines, likes and dislikes and some things that happen now. Afterwards S3 goes deep into what routines are. In the poem they explain it with the following words:

Figure 3. 'Poem of Present Simple' from J. and S.



When then use 'be' they should have written 'about', but I suppose they did not know how to say it and they wrote how they thought it was.

These two examples or fragments prove that creative writing is an effective tool to work on language, grammar and metalinguistic. Without knowing about it, these children are talking and

reflecting on language (metalinguistic), which is a really important part to understand grammar and make sure to know how to use it.

d) Interaction

The interaction among three out of the four pairs focus on two main topics: to decide how to write down the ideas that children have and to understand the meaning of some vocabulary. In transcriptions A, A2 and B most of the moments with more interaction happen when they need to decide how to write down some word that they do not know, so they consider the dictionary as a tool.

In Extract 8 it can be seen that both children accept using dictionary as a tool and, furthermore, M explains to P how a bilingual dictionary works. In the intervention M56 she explains why they need to look for the word in the Catalan part in order to obtain the English translation.

Extract 8: Interaction, example (transcription A2)

((They have an idea of how to continue the poem, but they do not know how to say it in English))

M54: Espera perquè no sé com es diu en anglès.

P47: També ho he de buscar?

M55: Sí.

P48: Ho he de buscar a la part de català o a la d'anglès?

M56: No, en el lloc de català. Perquè si ho busques amb català t'ho tradueix en anglès i si ho busques en anglès t'ho tradueix en català.

P49: Vale, per tant, diga'm com es diu? EL que he de buscar.

M57: et... et. Una E i una T i ja està.

Other moments of interaction which are shorter but as usual as the one explained previously is the search of comprehension; this is, when one child asks the other one what is the meaning of the word that the other one has written down. Extract 9 is a clear example about it. Nevertheless, there are many interactions similar to this one in the other transcriptions too.

Extract 9: Interaction, example (transcription C)

((They think for a while without talking but S has been writing)).

J11: Què vol dir *spend*?

S21: Passaràs.

Apart from these two frequent topics of interaction, there is a group of partners from which the only part that was recorded was short (pair of transcription C) and they were talking about how to write the poem in present simple. So the interaction between both children was to discover this.

e) Motivation

Motivation is a key element to achieve learning and enhance children to work in a more deliberate way. During the session I could observe almost all children's motivated with the task, there were children who asked me to continue with the sessions in order to write another poem or another child who was working for many hours at home. Moreover, working in pairs gave the chance of having fun while writing. There are many comments from the transcriptions that show motivation or pride of the writing that students had done. Here below there is an example:

M2 intervention from extract 10 shows that he is really proud of his piece of writing. Furthermore, he explains that he got inspired with some information which he heard somewhere and he mixed these chunk with new ideas. It is a clear example of creativity and also, from having fun while learning and using a language for a specific aim.

Extract 10: Motivation, example (transcription D)

((A child which is from another group approaches the two students who are writing)).

M2: Val.

Saps aquest poema? Enns l'hem inentat nosaltes! Bueno 'rain, rain' no és inventat, ho vaig sentir a algun lloc, però tot el poema menys 'rain, rain' ho he inventat jo.

I3: Doncs va, fem l'altre.

M3: Ammm... 'rain... rain... '.

However, as in any cooperative work position or creative project there are less positive moments. In one classroom there was one pair who had many problems to start working because they did not get on well and their styles of work were completely different, so they were discussing for long time and one of them even asked to do the creative writing on her own.

M. and P., children from transcription A and A2 had a frustration moment. Even if they were working really well together, they had a downfall during the second session.

Extract 11: Motivation, example (transcription A2)

((A girl from the class comes from the other class where she went to ask for help to Marina, their English teacher)).

M79: Ja, per això tindrem que ficar una altra cosa perquè si no està en el diccionari i no com és i la Marina no ens pot ajudar...

P70: No ens vol ajudar.

M80: No no pot perquè la T. no li deixa. Almenys é el que m'ha dit.

P71: Però per què?

M81: No ho sé, ralla molt. Això si que ho sé.

In extract 11, M expresses her feelings related to not knowing how to solve the problem they have. Both do not know how to say a word and the teacher would not help them, so they got stuck for some minutes and they lost their motivation; they frustrate. However, this frustration lasts few minutes because then they realize a way to solve the problem and they keep working.

It must be taken into account that this happened at the end of the second session, they had been working for about an hour and they were tired already. This context do not help to work when something wrong happens and there is the need to make an effort to solve it.

5. CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION

The results of the research show how have creative writing worked in a specific school context and they can give information in order for teachers to prepare and guide children in these sessions, with the aim of learning grammar; specifically, the present simple tense. In order to draw conclusions the research questions will be answered, taking into account all the examples and information explained before in the data collection and discussion and in the theoretical framework.

Recalling the first question: 'How can teachers use creative writing when the aim is to teach grammar in English?', it can be observed that the obtained results are in line with Myhill (2010) statement of including grammar inside a living ability to use the language. This is, creative writing can be a good tool to work on grammar in a contextualized way, because when children write they need to think about the usage of the verb tenses in order to use them properly in each context. But, as Ur (2011) states, 'focus on form' grammar, which is what it has been done with creative writing in this research, involves paying attention at the same time to the meaning of the text, so children have a double task: being aware of the form and the meaning.

Regarding the second question which was ‘What does it change after the ‘focus on form’ session with poems in present simple?’, it can be seen that children have a clearer idea of the different uses of *present simple tense*. Moreover, there is a slight improvement related to the present simple forms used in their poems. However, the changes are few in the research because three sessions are not enough to evidence a big change and work deeply in the aimed aspect. With more sessions there would have been some more focus on form grammar sessions with poem examples and children would have been more conscious about present simple forms and uses. Furthermore, as Casas (2014) explains, schools are not used to work on the inclusion of both linguistic knowledge and usage and that makes the progress slower. Once children and teachers are used to that methodology and they work with it, progress would be seen swiftly.

The third question was: ‘How does the work in pairs influence?’, and looking back to the transcriptions from children interaction, it could be seen that in all the pairs there is one child, normally the one with a higher English knowledge, leading the process of writing and the other helping, giving ideas, looking for words in the dictionary or with some suggestions; a clear example of this is ‘Extract 1’, where P gives ideas in English already and then explains to M what these meant. Furthermore, during the sessions it could be seen that working in pairs increased the motivation on the task because it was more pleasant and less complicated for all children.

Another important issue to take into account is that working in pairs makes it easier to be reflexive about grammar, this is, it is easier that metalinguistic appears. Children interact and talk about how to continue writing and, when one of them doubts about something, he discusses it with the peer. Moreover, as it could be seen in ‘Extract 4’ where the teacher guided children interaction to talk about ‘present simple’ their discussion about that topic went deeply and they had the opportunity to solve their problems and revise present simple forms, acquiring knowledge and clearing their ideas while talking about it.

The last research question recalled the consciousness of present simple form that children had at the last session; it was: ‘Are children more conscious about present simple form in the last session?’. In this research children showed that they were able to carry out the task that they were asked, but that does not ensure that if they had to do a similar task in the future they turn on the knowledge worked

during the sessions of this study. It has to take into account that for children, creative writing is a difficult task and in English as a foreign language it has an increased difficulty.

During the research there have been some limitations that should be knowledge. Firstly, a case study with few students and the specific context, like this one, reduce the possibility of drawing general conclusions and extrapolating the results in another school or area. Secondly, results would have been clearer if the study had taken longer and more constant sessions. Without time limits it would be interesting to conduct sessions as the ones in this research with children from many schools and contrast the results. Also, it would have been interesting implementing the sessions not only with 5th graders but also with 3rd or 4th graders in order to widen the context.

In sum, this study is an example of how creative writing can be used in schools to work on verb tenses. So, for further didactic implications can give ideas of session planning in order to work on grammar in a contextualized way; using this type of activity may contribute to make visible the implications and benefits of learning grammar. As future teacher is a notable resource to introduce in EFL sessions to turn grammar learning meaningful.

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7. ANNEX

7.1. Summary of the second session program

Children were divided into small groups and they had eight sample poems (added below) and three titles: *atemporal poems*, *habits and routines* and *general truths/ general states*. They had to read the different poems and match each of them with a title. Groups that had more problems, the researcher underlined the present simple verb forms with a marker in order to help them distinguish them and their use.

The session was developed on 1/02/18 with the 5th A classrom and on 2/02/18 with 5th B group. Both sessions last for 1 hour with each group. Children were working autonomously with some punctual supervision or help from the researcher.

7.1.1. Sample poems

Here below there are the poems that were used during the focus on form session with children, between both sessions where they were writing their own poems. Most of them are written by the same researcher, except '*The pocket watch*', '*Together*' and '*He lives in a house in the suburbs*'; those are from Maley and Moulding (1992).

Atemporal poems:

The pocket watch

Although I am a pocket watch
My hands are now too weak
To tell the time.
For I am old
And cannot speak.
I am not worth a dime.
You keep me now
For old time's sake
But every time I hear the hours ring
My heart would break.

Carry one
Hold him
I am happy.
Look at you
Daddy.

Habits and routines:

He lives in a house in the suburbs
He rises each morning at six
He runs for the bus to the station
Buys his paper and looks at the pics.

He always gets in the same carriage/ *coach*.
Puts his briefcase up on the rack
Thinks *sadly* of his office,
And knows he can never turn back.

Together they get up
Often he makes her tea, then
Goes down to light the fire /*prepare breakfast*
Even on the cold days
They *take the risk*,
He goes to the pub, she *goes* to the shops
Each of them *impatient /anxious* to
Return together home.

Prepare my bag
Take my snack
Say good by to Janine
That's my morning routine!

General truths or general states:

Autumn

Leaves fall in the streets
And they cover the roads.
Is time to stay under the sheets.
As cold and wind comes back.

Spring

Sun shines all day long
People walk and hear birdsongs.
Rain often shows up, so
In grey days the umbrella is a must

Night is to sleep
But
Some animals eat
And
Some people work.

7.2. Transcriptions

[Transcription A] Poem: 'Spring'

Date of recording: 29/01/18 (1st session with 5th A class)

Participants: M. and P. are the initials of the two 5th graders that I recorded. They are both between 11 and 12 years old. The T. is the initial of me as a Teacher.

Participants were informed that they would be recorded but that they could do as normal; that the recording was only for the research and would only be listened to by me.

((They are alone in a classroom and they have the white paper in front)).

M1: Què posem?

P1: Mira, a veure, he trobat.. no ho sé. Veus?

M2: Podem fer una paraula i després XXX.

P2: De què ho vols fer?

M3: Les flors com es diu en angles? *Flowers*, sí em sembla que és.

P3: *Flowers*. Aviam, aquí ((They are looking for something in the dictionary)).

M4: La 'g'... la 'f'!

((They look for the word in English to the dictionary instead of looking the Catalan word and look the translation. Then another student comes into the class and they comment that they are being recorded)).

P4: Però vols ficar algo de les flors?

M5: Sí, per exemple '*flowers are beautiful*' que vol dir: les flors són molt boniques.

P5: Doncs ja està, tampoc ho has de buscar, ja ho apuntem!

M6: Ja però... *flower* mira.

P6: Ho apunto?

M7: Espera, espera.

P7: Que jo estic apuntant una cosa molt important. Va, comença a escriure.

M8: No te'n vagis! Espera, espera que encara ho farem al revés!

P8: *flowers.... are beautiful*.

P9: Què has posat, les flors són molt boniques, no?

M9: Sí. Pot ser algo de la primavera, de les flors. Algo de la herba...

P10: Les flors... estan plantades a l'herba. Les flors fan olor.

((They have a doubt, they do not know how to say 'herba' in English and so, they come and ask me for it, when they go back to the class, they double check it looking for it in the dictionary)).

M10: Busca la 'g' després la 'r' i després tot el rollo. Mira aquí la 'g'. Mira, I la 'r'! *Grass*. No..., ha de ser més cap aquí.

P11: Sóc una crack eeh, a la primera pàgina. '*grass*', molt bé. *Grass*.

M11: Vale, ara aquí tenim que dir.

P12: Què?

M12: Res res. Podem posar: 'les flors són boniques'. L'herba està mullada.

((They laugh]).

M13: *Les flors són molt boniques, l'herba està mullada*. Vale, a veure.. '*The flowers are beautiful...*'.

P13: Espera, com es deia..?

M14: L'herba.

P14: Doncs ja l'he trobat.

M15: Vale què més, '*the flowers are beautiful...*'

P15: Per què no... ai no sé.

M16: Podem posar: les flors són molt boniques, el sol brilla. *The sun*.. Com es diu brilla? Li anem...

P16: No, no, no! Hi vaig jo! ((Talking about how is going to ask me how is it called)).

((There is a gap where they call me and then I go there and I tell them that is *shine* and then they ask me why I am recording them. Afterwards, we talk a little bit about the topic they are writing about and I tell them that the dictionary that they have is bilingual so they can look for their doubts)).

P17: Prima... aquí! No.

M17: Prima... prima, no. Ha d'estar per aquí. '*Spring*', has de posar '*spring*'.

Per què no ho apuntes aquí? Serà com el títol.

P18: Ahh!

M18: Ho podem ficar al revés no?

P19: Què vols dir al revés?

M19: Bueno, les frases. Perquè primer seria...

P20: La 's' la última?

M20: No, primer fica el títol i després t'ho explico.

P21: Spring, com era?

M21: S-P-R-I-N-G ((She spells it to the other student)).

Saps què pensava? Jo crec que podem començar amb això primer; primer el sol brilla i després les flors són boniques, saps? Perquè primer... les flors són boniques, el sol brilla...

P22: Doncs mira, jo...

((They change the order of the sentences and so we can hear them how do they pronounce the different words as the way they are written)).

M22: Diga'm una cosa que sigui verda.

P23: L'herba.

M23: A part d'això! Perquè volia ficar: l'herba és verda com... Com què?

P24: Jo què sé, estic pensant! L'herba és verda com la cadira.

M24: Ja, però aquesta just és verda, però...

P25: Ja, la meua es blanca.

M25: No sé, algo que sigui de tota la vida verd.

((They think about it and have different ideas, until they decide to compare it with the pepper)).

P26: L'herba és tant verda com el pebrot verd.

M26: Ves li a dir a la Marina ((their English teacher)) com es diu 'és tant....' en anglès.

((There are some minutes of silence and then I go there and I let them know that is a comparison and I tell them the structure: transcript under the comment. However, I make them think and how do we say 'és' in English, I do not tell them the correct form of the verb to be, they tell me that is 'is' with an example that I make. Then, I tell them the comparison structure)).

T1: Com diem és? La Paula és intel·ligent, com ho diem això?

M27: *Is, Paula is intelligent.*

T2: So, *the grass...*

M28: *Is*

T3: as green as; tant verda com. *As green as.* ((Here is where I let them know the structure they wanted to know, I tell them because they haven't studied comparisons yet)).

M29: Com s'escrui 'pebrot'?

T4: *Pepper.* If you don't know, you can use the dictionary.

P27: Saps com és pebrot?

M30: No, bueno com es digui en castellà. Pebrote? ((They laugh)) No.

P28: Ho puc anar buscant?

M31: Sí.

P29: Però va amb 'b alta' o 'v baixa'?

((M. Goes to the other class to ask how is 'pebrot' in Spanish)).

M32: Paula, és 'pimiento'!

P29: El què?

M33: Doncs pebrot, perquè després busquis com es diu en anglès. Pimiento.

((P. Has some trouble to look for the word into the dictionary and then M. helps her and finds it. During the search M. reads out loud some of the words she finds attractive and they comment and ask each other the meaning of them)).

M34: *Pepper.*

P30: Es diu '*pepper*'? ((laughing)).

((They find it really funny and they are making comments about this for some minutes. They decided that they have finished and then they get distracted. Afterwards, they announce to the phone that they are starting a second poem and they wonder what can they do it about)).

M35: Va continuem, ens falta una frase!

P31: Una frase no! Un altre tema.

M36: Ja, ja ho sé, però tindrà que ser una frase, no sé, dic jo.

P32: D'unn altre tema.

M37: Ja ho sé. Vale quina frase pot ser?

P33: Emoji!

M38: Una frase sobre un emoji?

P34: Sii!

M39: No, a veure... *The emojis are.. smile. Smile* què vol dir?

Sí, 'smile' crec que vol dir content o no sé què! Però ho vaig a buscar perquè després no sigui.

((M. is looking for the word 'smile' and P. talks about other topics not related to the task that they are doing)).

M40: 'Smile, sonrisa'. Val. *Smile* és sonrisa? No ho sabia! A veure... 'The emojis are smile'.

P35: I un emoji és 'con sonrisas'. ((They laugh))

M41: Això està clar.

((There is a child distracting them and going around, while they try to write the last sentence)).

M42: A veure... *The smile*, que vol dir tu sonrisa.

P36: Tu sonrisa es tant bonica tomo el...

M43: Sí, és veritat. Ara això però amb anglès. ((They laugh))

Ho fico aquí vale? *Beautiful...*

Ja està! Va, li anem a ensenyar.

P37: Una cosa, una cosa. Què té a veure emoji amb la primavera?

M44: Res, però ha dit que fiqui una frase i és aquesta.

P38: No, no, no. Ha dit que fèssim una cosa diferent!

((But M. is gone and came to show me what they did)).

[Transcription A2] Poem: 'Spring'

Date of recording: 01/02/18 (2nd session with 5th A class)

Participants: M. and P. are the initials of the two 5th graders that I recorded. They are both between 11 and 12 years old. The T. is the initial of me as a Teacher.

((They were alone in the same classroom they worked during the 1st session. They have their finished poem in front and they have been told to modify it and look for present simple mistakes and afterwards, they can write another poem)).

M1: Què fem continuem aquest o corregim aquest? Jo crec que XXX.

P1: Que aquí no podem escriure-hi!

M2: Vale, escrivim aquí.

P2: Què volia dir això?

M3: 'Spring', primavera.

P3: Ah, vale.

M4: Però continuem aquest, no?

P4: Sí.

XXX

M5: No, no Paula. Tenim que treballar.

P5: Sí, sí. Per això! Vale, puc posar el títol?

M6: No, no, però a veure... podem fer algo que no sigui la primavera?

P6: L'emoji?

M7: És que els emojis no hi ha gaire per parlar, són emojis i ja està.

P7: Ja... Són cares grogues normalment...

M8: Bueno, i la caca què? ((they laugh and they say some silly things about shit)).

M9: Vale a veure, quin és el títol?

P8: Aviam, si no el vols fer de primavera!

M10: Podem fer frases...

P9: De què el vols fer?

M11: Podem fer allò que agafes una paraula, describeixes una paraula i aquí vas fent frases, vale? ((referring to the acronym poems)). O quina frase...

P10: Quina paraula vols fer?

M12: Ja, no ho sé. Quina paraula? XXX

Ah, ja sé quina podem fer! *Smile*, vol dir... no ho sé, però

P11: Però que vol dir?

M13: *Smile* crec que vol dir content o una cosa així.

P12: Ah, no ho vam posar per aquí?

M14: Mm... no. A veure faré aquí... ah clar, aquí ens ha dit que no podem escriure res. Vale, pues ho ficaré aquí.

P13: Té, fes-ho aquí.

M15: No.

P14: Que sí!

M16: No.

P15: Si t'equivoques què?

M17: I a mi què?

P16: Jo, ja s'ha equivocat...

M18: Que no m'he equivocat! És que les faig així perquè es puguin pintar. Després te les deixaré pintar.

P17: És el que deia jo, abans!

M19: El què?

P18: De pintar-les per dintre. I resseguir-ho.

M20: Bueno.

P19: Va amb dos eles (L)?

M21: No.

((There is a silence while M. is writing the word)).

P20: 'Smile' ((She reads it pronouncing the sound of all the letters as it was a word in Catalan /smile/)).

M22: 'Smile' ((repeating P's pronunciation)), sí s'escriu així, però... vale ara què podem ficar? 'Smile' ((with the correct pronunciation in English))

P21: *Spring*

M23: Com vols! Com vols fer *smile* i *spring*. XXX

Vale, a veure... Mmm...

P22: XXX. Aquí podem fer *I like* no sé què. ((Referring to the letter I of the word smile)).

M24: Amb la I de '*smile*'. Amb la essa ((S))...

P23: Què volia dir que no me'n recordo?

M25: Amb la essa ((S))....

((P is looking at the poem they wrote in the last session)).

P24: Veus com aquí ja ho vam escriure! ((Regarding to the word *smile* that she commented before)).

M26: I què, però això és un altre. Ara hem... XXX

((They comment that they want a dictionary and they need to go to the other classroom to take one but afterwards they find one there and they look for the word smile)).

M27: Tens que buscar '*smile*', vale?

P25: Però t'aviso, només t'aviso que eh, que anglès no sé gaire.

M28: Val, si.... ((She is working on something else and do not finish the sentence)).

P26: Aquí? Aquí.

M29: 'Sm'... smi... *Smile*' ((She reads it as it is written not as it is pronounced)). Somriure, veus? Mira, podem fer, ficar, '*spring*' has *beautiful* que vol dir la primavera és molt bonica. Vale?

((P agreed with a sound)).

M30: Aii, he ficat '*smile*' i tenia que ficar primavera. Vaig a buscar tippex, tens tippex?

P27: Però líquid i tarda molt a assecar-se.

M31: Vale vaig a buscar-ne.

((M goes to the other class to find a tippex to use but then she realizes that Marina, the teacher from their class don't let them use it so they decide to write it in the other side of the paper)).

M32: Vale a veure, ho fico a darrere.

P28: Ara t'ha sortit una essa millor, crec. L'emma fatal.

M34: És igual, és perquè m'ocupi tot el paper.

((They discuss what is the letter they like the most)).

P29: 'Spring has beautiful'? ((Reading at the same time that M is writing the verse)).

M35: 'Spring has beautiful' ((Repeats with the correct pronunciation)).

P30: Amb la emma ((M letter))

M36: Busca paraules amb la emma que puguin ser interessants.

((P exhales to show boredom. She grabs the dictionary and opens it to look for letter m)).

P31: Ja està, ja he trobat la emma.

M37: Emma. Malament, clar; tens que fer una cosa. Tens que anar... aquí, perquè al final et surt això, saps? ((She explains P that English words at the second half of the dictionary)).

P32: Que mala que eres! Que lo habia encontrado la emme. ((She says it in Spanish and imitating as if she was crying)).

M38: Mayonnaise.

P33: Maionesa.

((They read different words and their translation)).

M39: Podem ficar 'melodies' que són les melodies. Perquè una paraula que sigui bonica amb la emma, tampoc és que n'hi hagi tantes. Bueno sí, hi ha el meu nom ((she laughs)), és broma.

P34: Posa-ho! Mireia, ai, posa a la Mireia... li encanta la primavera.

M40: Te que ser tot sobre la primavera?

P35: No. Per algo t'estic dient..

M41: ((She interrupts her)) 'Mind' vol dir cervell.

P36: Posa: la Mireia té cervell. O pots posar, la Mireia li agrada tot el que veu.

M42: Melody... melodies ((she says while writing)). Què podem dir amb melodies?

P37: No ho sé...

M43: Ahh podem ficar: melodies que et fan estar bé. 'Melodies' Però no sé com. 'Melodies...' però tinc d'anar a buscar perquè no sé com. La Q?

Espera, R, S.... A, B, C, D, E, F, G, H, I, J, K, L, M, N, O, P, Q. Vale, doncs després de la pe ((P)).

P38: Aquí no hi és.

M44: La P on està. Tens que buscar la P perquè després de la P va la Q.

((They go through the dictionary pages saying the letters that they see till they find letter P)).

M45: Vale, ara després va la Q.

P39: Aii, que me dejes!

M46: La Q?

P40: Aquí no hi ha la Q crec...

M47: Potser hi ha poques paraules. *Quarter*... Ah clar!

P41: Sí mira, la Q només és això. La Q és això i prou, ehh!

M48: Sí, a vale doncs ho podem buscar aquí al principi que seria, al principi en català. Veus? Al principi en català i després en anglès. ((Regarding to the organization of the bilingual dictionary where you have the first half where it is Catalan-English and the other half English-Catalan))

((They are trying to find the Q in the Catalan part of the dictionary and they discuss because they take the dictionary from the other to do it themselves)).

M49: Quan... quan, aquí! 'Melodies...' A no clar, tinc que buscar què. 'Què'; 'What', no seria? ... 'That'.

Vale. ((She comments and doubts about which option is the good one and then she writes something down)).

P42: Has de posar 'that'.

M50: Vale ja està, ara tens que buscar amb la E...

P43: No, amb la I.

M51: No, amb la E. Perquè *melodies que et i* després amb la E, que *et fan estar bé*.

P44: Ah! Jo pensava que te n'anaves directament a baix.

M52: No. Què prefereixes *melodies que et fan estar bé o melodies que et fan feliç*?

P45: No sé.

M53: Jo prefereixo *melodies que et fan feliç*, perquè és més curt i perquè és més maco.

P46: Pues va, posa-ho!

M54: Espera perquè no sé com es diu en anglès.

P47: També ho he de buscar?

M55: Sí...

P48: Ho he de buscar a la part de català o a la d'anglès?

M56: No, en el lloc de català. Perquè si ho busques amb català t'ho tradueix en anglès i si ho busques en anglès t'ho tradueix en català.

P49: Vale, per tant, diga'm com es diu? El que he de buscar.

M57: et.. et. Una E i una T i ja està.

P50: Estic anant al revés, no?

M58: No, estàs bé. Aquí!

P51: E –S. ((They are spelling the words they can see in the dictionary)).

M59: E – T. Vale, espera; A, B, C, D, E, F, G, H, I, J, K...

P52: No hi ha E-T. E-T de la pel·lícula. ((She continues turning pages)).

M60: Està pel final de la E. Ves més endarrere.

((There is silence and they turn pages and look together to find the word, but they do not find it)).

M61: Ja està, ja va a la F. Ves-li a dir a la Marina ((their English teacher)).

P53: El què?

M62: Com es diu *et*. Et; et, en anglès.

((P stands up and goes to the other class to ask the teacher, meanwhile M is looking for another word in the dictionary)).

P54: Quina paraula? Perquè ja li he dit *et*.

M63: *Et*.

P55: *Et*? Perquè en català no n'hi ha. Aviam, què li he de demanar que... XXX.

M64: *Melodies que et*, saps?

P56: Ves-hi tu.

((Spends to seconds thinking before taking a decision))

M65: Espera, busca *personalitat*. ((Then, she stands up and goes to the classroom)). Al diccionari que t'ho he deixat.

P57: ((She talks alone)) He trobat '*personal*'... ja. Ja he trobat '*personalitat*'. Ara he d'esperar que vingui... Aviam...

M66: Jope... La T li ha dit a la Marina que no ens pot ajudar.

P58: Per?

M67: No ho sé.

P59: Ja ho he trobat.

M68: *Personalitat?* '*Personalitat, personality*'. *I like your personality*; vol dir: m'agrada la teva personalitat. Pot ser a la 'I' no?

P60: Però... I perquè no ho mirem en un ordinador? ((At that moment they are talking at the same time and some of their sentences are said at the same moment)). Posem traductor...

M69: Ah noo! Saps que podem ficar? Però no sé si ens deixen... Ves-li a preguntar si podem anar a un ordinador i mirar-ho per el traductor.

P61: Vale!

((She goes out from the class to ask so. M stays and writes something down and thinks out loud)).

M70: M'agrada com ets... *I like*... ((She says while she is alone)).

P62: Diu que no.

M71: Mira, aquí a la I ((letter i)) he pensat que podíem ficar '*I like*...'. M'agrada com ets.

P63: Què?

M72: M'agrada com ets. Per això, '*I like*...' vol dir m'agrada i clar, *com ets* no ho sé. Ho podem buscar, perquè *com* jo crec que ho trobaràs.

P64: És la Q, no? ((Taking the dictionary back to look for the word)).

M73: Després de la B va la C. Busca la O que està pel final de la C suposo.

P67: No, és la L.

M74: Vale. *Com: C-O-M* ((spelling it)).

((They keep looking for the word together till they find it)).

M75: Mmm... Com!

P68: I si mirem *com* però traiem *i*?

M76: Espera... no es pot fer, no es pot fer. Es que clar les paraules tant petites no crec que surtin al diccionari. I perquè no li vas a dir a la Marina si sap com es diu *com ets*.

((A girl from the class comes in and explains them what they are doing in the science class, but after two seconds M goes to ask Marina their doubt)).

M78: No li podem anar a demanar res, no ens ho diu, no ens deixa ((says with a complaining tone of voice)). La T no li deixa. Ens tenim que espavilar de la vida.

P69: No hi és.

M79: Ja, per això tindrem que ficar una altra cosa perquè si no està en el diccionari i no com és i la Marina no ens pot ajudar...

P70: No ens vol ajudar.

M80: No, no pot perquè la T. no li deixa. Almenys és el que m'ha dit.

P71: Però per què?

M81: No ho sé, ralla molt. Això si que ho sé.

((They discuss the why of T not letting Marina helping them and then they got distracted and P. starts painting the letters of the acronym and they do not work on the poem, they talk about other topics)).

P72: Podem posar, '*I like you... personality*. Si?

M82: Sí.

No! És una I grega ((Y letter)).

P73: Ja, mira no s'ha notat. Mira, no s'ha notat ho has vist? Espera, espera, per enrecorda'ns-en.

M83: Fiquem els noms aquí. Va córrer que vindran els de grup.

((The music sounds, they collect their things and they go to the other class)).

[Transcription B]: "Poem G I N"

Date of recording: 01/02/18 (1st session with 5th B class)

Participants: N. and G. are the initials of the two 5th graders that I recorded. They are both between 11 and 12 years old. The T. is the initial of me as a Teacher and the B is a boy; a student from the class.

((They were alone in the same classroom they worked during the 1st session. They have their finished poem in front and they have been told to modify it and look for present simple mistakes and afterwards, they can write another poem)).

G1: Podem ficar... Ja hem posat el títol: poem.

'*I like travel*'. Saps què vol dir *travel*?

N1: No.

G2: Aquí he ficat, m'agrada viatjar.

N2: Ahh! Ahora...

G3: '*I like travel*'.

((They do not talk for a while because one of them came to ask me for help. They wanted to know how to say 'aniré per tot el món', but I told them that I could not help them with a whole sentence; that I only wanted a word)).

T1: '*I like travel all over the world or around the world. Like this* ((and I write it down for them)).

G4: Aviam?

T2: Is this two sentences or one here? Think about the structure. Són dos versos o un? Com vulgueu eh, sou vosaltres els autors.

G5: No, no. Això és una estrofa.

T3: Talk with him.

((And I go and leave them alone, working)).

G5: '*I like travel around the world*'.

N3: I ara, això què és?

G6: No això no ho hem acabat.

N4: Ah, vale.

G7: I ara què?

((They do not talk for a while. Then, I live them a dictionary and N. reads the cover and says, you know that we have a dictionary? During this time G. is writing)).

G8: Mira, '*I like travel around the world, Brazil, Bolivia, Paraguay and Uruguay*'. És molt guai ((as the idea to write the next sentence)). Jo què sé.

N5: Sí, però aquí tenim...

G9: Espera. ((And he reads out loud the poem for the recording)). És que de què serveix... per què volem un diccionari?

N6: No, però es que després, si fica català una mica sí.

((I go there and they tell me that they haven't finished. Then G. Asks me how to say a sentence in future and I tell her that that is future and she needs present simple. And then she asks me some translation in

present continuous, so I tell them not to ask me the translation of a whole sentence, I tell them to write things that they know and they do not need my help.))

((G starts writing the same structure again))

N7: I què fiques el mateix aquí?

G10: Sí.

((Then they do not talk and there is a lot of chaos around, maybe because children from other classes come back to their class because they have finished a subject and they start another one.

Suddenly, we hear that they work together to write different countries and it is possible that some of the countries that they use for the poem, they have looked the way of writing them in the dictionary because both N and G read them as they are written)).

G11: *'I like travel*

Around the world

Brazil, Bolivia

Paraguay and Uruguay.

I like travel

Around the world

Africa, America,

Asia, Europe

And Oceania.'

((They finish reading the poem together))

T4: Now, try to change it a little bit, not to repeat *'I like travel, I like travel.'* Write your names.

G12: Aviam, ficarem *she*.

((Nando is reading the poem quietly))

G13: Ara fem el mateix però amb *she likes travel around the world*.

((There is no talk during a while and you can hear children around. N. has gone somewhere to ask something and comes back)).

N8: Havia un que es deia Paraguai.

G14: Pregunta-li que com es diu 'perquè'.

N9: 'Perquè?'

G15: Sí

N10: Com es diu 'perquè'?

G16: Sí.

((N goes and comes back with the answer)).

N11: Ha dit *'because'*.

G17: *Because it's beautiful...*

Tio, quines paraules em sé jo...

((They do not talk, they look for something in the dictionary as we can hear pages of a book turning))

G18: És que amb el diccionari, què vols buscar al diccionari?

N12: Sí, però què buscaràs si no sabem com es...

G19: Busquem en català però després potser en anglès no ho diu...

Heu acabat? Aviam... ((they ask to another group to let them see their poem)). Només això?

B: Ha dit que no cal ser llargues.

((They both read the other's poem. Some time of silence and then we can hear that someone is writing but without conversation)).

G20: És que ens falta molt... i hem d'acabar ja..!

((I ask them if they talk among themselves and they both agree that they talk. Then G. says that they have to finish but then they tell me that is finished)).

G21: Bueno li demano a la Marina ((their English teacher)) a veure si li agrada i llavors...

T5: No, has de ser tu que t'agradi i que diguis que està acabat. És el vostre poema, t'ha d'agradar a tu, no al mestre.

G22: Bueno però si a ella no li agrada?

T6: Què?
G23: Que llavors no tenim bona nota!
T7: No, perquè no compta pas nota això!

((They discuss a little bit and then they decided that they have finished and they leave it like this. And they say that it took a lot of effort and they measure the effort with the time that they have spent writing it: 24min)).

[Transcription C]: ‘Poem of present simple’

Date of recording: 29/01/18 (1st session with 5th A class)

Participants: J. and S. are the initials of the two 5th graders that I recorded. They are both between 11 and 12 years old. The T. is the initial of me as a Teacher and there is an intervention from G, who is another student from the same class.

Participants were informed that they would be recorded but that they could do as normal; that the recording was only for the research and would only be listened to by me.

((They started working in class and I asked them if they could go to the corridor because I wanted to record their voices and that way there was less noise)).

S1: Sense rima no hem dit?

J1: Sí

S2: Què tenim: ‘*routines*’... Què més tenim?

J2: ‘*Routines, likes and dislikes and somethings we...*’

S3: ‘*In this part, in this part...*’ o sigui en aquesta part, en aquesta part podem parlar del que fem cada dia.

((There is a silence in the audio, none of them are talking and then there are some sentences that because of the noise cannot be understood)).

S4: A veure... fiquem-ho tot. Aaah... fiquem-li tot. Es que tinc: ‘*routines; in this part we can talk be everyday*’. I després fiquem: *In likes and dislikes...*

J3: Vale

((They reread the sentences that they have written about routines and think what to write for *likes and dislikes*)).

S5: ‘*In likes and dislikes...*’ you talk in...

((A classmate goes there and they comment that they are being recorded)).

S6: Ja està no?

J4: Sí, bé.

((They call me to go with them, but at that moment I am solving problems with other children and so, S. goes back to the place they were writing)).

S7: Sinó continuem.

((They are working but not commenting anything out loud, maybe reading or thinking)).

J5: Jo em pensava que deia que m’he llevat o algo i després...

S8: Espera eh!

((In the audio we can hear another girl from the class asking the other children: com es diu brilla)).

S9: Deu estar a la “b” (referring to the dictionary).

G: No sale!

S10: Sí que sale. Aquí!

((The girl leaves and they continue with their work. I go with them and check the text because they had told me that it was finished, but then they say it was not)).

T1: ‘*Routines*’, ok. But which routines are you talking about?

S11: O sigui és... 'in routines, in likes and dislikes...'

T2: Ah, but you can choose. It needs to be a poem so... ha de tenir una continuació. When you read a poem it talks about a specific topic, right?

S13: Sí

((I comment them if they have ever read a poem in Catalan and I make them think how are the ones they have read. Then I remember them that they need to use present simple, but that they do not need to talk about all the uses of the present simple)).

S14: Ahh...!

T3: És a dir, podeu fer servir les rutines com a tema, però llavors podeu parlar de les rutines de l'estiu o les rutines que jo tinc quan vaig a cole. O likes and dislikes and talk about the likes and dislikes from Ahmed; Ahmed likes and dislikes, ok? Do you understand?

No és una activitat que m'hagueu de mostrar tots els usos del present simple, heu d'escriure un poema com si el publicéssim. Podeu començar aquí, revisar aquest... perquè pot ser que sigui un poema del present simple i que parli del present simple, també està bé.

S15: Ja ho hem fet! Aquí tenim cada part I llavors per què l'utilitzes.

T4: Ok, then keep going!

((Then I leave and I let them work alone again. They are in silence and S comments that he is not feeling well and that something hurts and asks to stop working for some minutes.

After some minutes they come and tell me that they are finished, and they have to wait a little bit till I go with them)).

T5: Have you read it again? Us sona tot bé?

S16: Yes.

T6: Ok, can you try to do another one about another topic? It can be shorter. No ha de ser tant llarg si no voleu, ok? No cal que sigui del present simple, és a dir, el fas servir però no cal que sigui sobre el present simple. Pots parlar de la lluna, o d'en Sebastian...

S16: Podem parlar d'algo però amb present simple, no?

T7: Exacte, potser sera més divertit no si no parlem del present simple?

J6: Hablemos de Bob Esponja!

((Some laughs. They discuss laughing what they can talk about and I cannot understand them. They talk about some drawings that they did in class and they show each other which one is theirs)).

J7: La tieta... la classe.

S17: La classe. A veure que podem dir?

J8: De la classe.

S18: *In this class...*

J9: *The class habla mucho* [some laughs].

S19: *In this class...*

J10: Tenemos que hacer de valor?

S20: *In this class you...*

((They think for a while without talking, then a boy from the class goes there and they get distracted. But during that time S. has been writing and they are looking for words into the dictionary, as we can hear someone turning the pages of a book)).

J11: Què vol dir *spend*?

S21: Passaràs.

((We can hear the turning of some book pages. Then, they call me to go, but it is time, so I tell them to write their names and give the papers to me)).

T8: What were you asking me?

S22: Com es diu: parlen molt?

T9: *talk a lot.*

S23: '*In this class they talk a lot.*'

[Transcription C2]: Poem ‘The class’

Date of recording: 01/02/18 (3rd session with 5th A class)

Participants: J. and S. are the initials of the two 5th graders that I recorded. They are both between 11 and 12 years old.

T1: Read again the poem and try to finish it, to write the last version.

((They are talking and saying silly things laughing, then, they read again the poem ‘The class’ that they started the last day)).

S1: ‘*In this class you spend... s... pend... a funny, a funny time.*’

((Other children go with them and they compare their poem with the one that they have done it, they comment that they have been recorded. They talk about other things and check if they are being recorded by making sounds in front of the phone)).

S2: T we finished, T we finished!

((In this audio recording they do not really talk about the poem... we cannot not know how is the process because the audio stops all of a sudden)).

[Transcription D] Poem: ‘Spring’

Date of recording: 01/02/18 (1st session with 5th B class)

Participants: M. and I. are the initials of the names of two 5th graders that I recorded. They are both between 11 and 12 years old. The T. is the initial of me as a Teacher.

Participants were informed that they would be recorded but that they could do as normal; that the recording was only for the research and would only be listened to by me.

((We had some problems and the recording is only from the last 10min of the session. It is when they have finished and they need to review it. They are told that their poem is really good but it is not written in present simple, but in imperative, so the transcription starts at the point they need to start changing it)).

I1: Ha dit, lo mateix però amb *present simple*.

M1: Ahh, lo mateix, ha dit? ((There is a silence, they are thinking))

Lo mateix.... què podria fer ara? Ai... costa molt pensar! ((With a complaining tone of voice)).

XXX ((I comes to me to ask me something about present simple)).

I2: El del *present simple* aquí. ((Pointing at the other half part of the paper, where they had a white space where they could write the new version)).

M2: Val.

Saps aquest poema? Ens l’hem inventat nosaltres! Bueno ‘*rain, rain*’ no és inventat, ho vaig sentir a algun lloc, però tot el poema menys ‘*rain rain*’ ho he inventat jo. ((He explains to someone who has approach)).

I3: Doncs va, fem l’altre.

M3: Amm.... ‘*rain... rain...*’

I4: ‘*Rain...*’

M4: ‘*Rain rain comes to Spain... ‘Rain rain come to Spain’ ((almost singing))*’.

Com ho podríem fer en *present simple*? ‘*Rain, rain...*’

I5: *Rain.. comes, crec. Amb present simple és comes, crec* ((he pronounces it with all the letters with their Spanish /comes/)).

M5: No, *coming* no. *Coming* és amb *present continuous*. Però allò no ho hem estudiant. Perquè *-ing* va amb *present continuous*. ‘*Rain, rain, come to Spain*’.

M6: Now podríem fer... ah, no. ‘*Rain rain comes to Spain*’. Perquè és *it*, no? No, ‘*it*’ no... Ai! Com ho podríem explicar? Perquè té un nom, ‘*comes to Spain*’.

I6: Sí, per això. ‘*Rain, rain comes to Spain*’.

((M takes some minutes to write it down)).

M7: ‘*Rain rain comes to Spain, little Michael want to play*’.

I7: ‘*Little Michaels*’ ((joking with the word)).

M8: *Little Michael wants to play.* (While writing it downs)).

'Rain rain brings a lot of... rain rain brings a lot...' Brings! He brings.

I8: Va que ens queda poc!

M9: *'Rain rain brings a lot of toys'.*

'Rain rain, brings... brings...

I9: Després què ens toca ara?

M10: Ara ens tocarà naturals.

'a lot of... toys' ((while writing it. Then he rereads the poem again)).

M11: Ja està, perquè ens faltava la S!

((M grabs the paper sheet and both stand up and come to give the paper to me)).