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The coordination between English and Spanish literacy teaching methods in Aragonese Infant Education Schools: Work in Progress

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Abstract:

The use of English as a lingua franca has enormously increased its importance in recent decades. It teachings has advanced with such a force to the Early Childhood educational Stage that it has become necessary to coordinate the mother tongue (Spanish) and foreign language (English) teaching to avoid further learning problems. Many schools have developed bilingual teaching models that require complex organizational systems and a higher degree of coordination among the teaching teams. However, teachers continue detecting gaps and contradictions in this coordination. The hypothesis this TFG wants to demonstrate is that there is a lack of effective coordination between the teaching of English and the teaching of Spanish literacy. To demonstrate this lack of coordination, a survey has been developed for teachers practicing in state, semi-private and private schools in Aragon, with questions about the teaching of key-skills (speaking, reading, listening, and writing) and the current coordination carried out in these schools. A methodical exploitation of the survey data has also been carried out through a descriptive interpretation, taking in to account different biases to draw relevant conclusions. To finish the project, a series of basic guidelines to start coordinating language learning, with a focus on literacy, has been proposed.

Key Words:

Use of English, Mother tongue, foreign language, Coordination, Synthetic methods, Analytical methods, Questionnaire, Early childhood education…

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1. INTRODUCTION

Learning English today has a great relevance in education, as it is the language we use to communicate all over the world. That is why, nowadays, teachers need to train their students properly so that they would perform fluently in the future.

The position that foreign languages have acquired over the years is evident in the increase of teaching load and number of courses in which this subject has been introduced, since its inclusion in compulsory education in 1970. This change involved the testing of new methodological directions and approaches so that the foreign language ceased to be taught using the same methodology as for the classical languages, which focused almost exclusively on written skills.

This is how the new methods of teaching foreign language appeared. Throughout the history of the Spanish Education system the effectiveness and implementation of different foreign languages teaching methods has been observed. From the grammar-translation method, through the communicative approach to the model of project work of Kilpatrick (1992). They all had something in common; they were not used for teaching Spanish. As different pedagogues and teachers have been mentioning in the last few years (Muñoz Redondo, 2002; López Bautista 2003), this separation between Spanish and English teaching methods is what, over the years, has led to the degree of lack of coordination that exists at the moment between the teaching of the mother tongue (Spanish) and the teaching of the foreign language (English). As will be explained later on, the lack of coordination between language teaching methods can add another difficulty to the already complicated task for children under 7 years old to learn to read and write in both the L1 and the L2.

Not having enough information about this coordination, this dissertation has focused on the creation of a questionnaire that can give us some clues about the teachers' needs regarding the need to coordinate the teaching of literacy in the L1 and the L2, English in this case. Then, relevant information has been collected such as the methodology and materials used, and the coordination that exists.

Moreover, I should add that, prior to my study; I did a teaching placement in a Bilingual State School for three months. I taught English to four-year-old students using Jolly Phonics as the main teaching method. During that time I noticed that my tutor was

using synthetic (Phonics) methods to teach both English and Spanish. At this school students' reading and writing learning process was slower than what I had seen in my first placement at another school. Most of the students were not able to read or write, except for their own name. But the children that were already able to could read or write any word they were asked to. This aspect made me realize about the importance of coordinating the methods with which we teach both the mother tongue and a foreign language, because English and Spanish have different codes.

Therefore, the hypothesis that wants to be demonstrated through this dissertation is that a proper coordination between Spanish and English teaching methods would improve learning outcomes, from the finding that such coordination does not exist, as the survey supports. Reviewing scientific literature regarding different ways of teaching both English and Spanish made me analyse this particular issue for children under the age of 6, who are at the same time learning their mother tongue and a foreign language. What it was noticed is that Spanish is usually taught using analytic methods, which are opposite to the ones commonly used for English (Synthetic methods).

Together with the hypothesis, the main aims of this dissertation are, to describe and analyse the methodological coordination between English and Spanish teaching methods and teachers in Aragon's early childhood education stage, specifically literacy methods and to suggest some recommendations and guidelines to follow to improve this coordination in the early childhood stage.

The proposal presented will begin with a brief theoretical framework, necessary to understand the acquisition of the mother tongue and the foreign language, the stages of literacy in Early Childhood Education, to then expose the Child Education curriculum in Spain. To finish the theoretical framework I will expose the different teaching-learning methods of literacy. The next point, which is the basis of this dissertation, is the explanation of the questionnaire that collects the answers from Early Childhood English teachers in Aragon, in reference to the coordination between the teaching of Spanish and English. And, to finalize the project, a series of basic guidelines to ensure coordination plans are included.

During the completion of this work some limitations have been found. For example, the coordination between language teachings in Spain, specifically between English and Spanish, is a rare topic in the field of educational research. Therefore I had to create a

questionnaire to collect some of this information. The coordination of interdisciplinary teams is a pending issue in teacher training, especially in the infant stage where the differentiation between the teacher-tutor and the specialist still prevails. It is a task that is not taught during teacher training or an aspect that, during the exercise of the profession is usually relegated due to lack of time. Therefore, I hope to demonstrate that this must be a priority to improve the coordination of teaching and learning languages. In spite of these limitations, it is expected to answer the initial questions and provide further reflections on the necessary coordination of teaching methodologies, mainly when it comes to the development of literacy skills, in our infant education classrooms.

2. THEORETICALAND FRAMEWORK

2.1 Characteristics of the Spanish Early Childhood educational Stage.

Infant education is understood as the educational stage that attends girls and boys from birth till six years old with the aim of contributing to their physical, emotional, social and intellectual development.

In Spain according to the "Ley orgánica 2/2006 del 3 Mayo", this stage is divided into two parts: the first one which goes from 0 to 3 years old that can only be found in private schools. And the second one from 3 to 6 years old that can be found either in public, private or semi-private schools. In spite of not being compulsory, according to information from the Spanish Ministry of Education, culture and sport, almost 100% of children between 3 and 6 years old are enrolled in the second stage of infant education. In this stage of education children will develop a positive image of them, will acquire autonomy, will develop a good control of their movements, will be able to start communicating in different languages, will develop a healthy affectivity, will stablish good social relationships, etc.

In order to accomplish the main objectives set for this educational stage, the contents are divided into three areas: Self-knowledge and personal autonomy, second, Knowledge of the environment and third, Languages: communication and representation. In this last area we can find the contents related to learning a foreign language, which usually is English. In 1996, the Ministry of Education and the British Council signed an agreement with the purpose of designing a bilingual program (Curriculum Integrado Hispano-Británico). They gave a special importance to synthetic phonetics since the acquisition and recognition of sounds in these stages encourages the further development of reading and writing, as well as good a pronunciation. This was agreement revised in 2013.

2.2 Stages of the Linguistic and Literacy Development

2.2.1 Mother tongue language acquisition

Language development is a process acquired naturally by the child, due to their communication needs. This process has been studied by many authors and therefore there are different points of view.

Many authors (Navarro Pablo, 2003; Pérez, 2015; Lizana, 2008) differentiate two evolutionary stages: the pre-linguistic stage and linguistic stage.

- Pre-linguistic stage:

This stage begins when the baby is born. During the first month, the baby tries to get attention by crying. Depending on its tonality it can because of hunger, pain or discomfort. By the second month, the baby performs spontaneous joints and is able to recognize familiar voices, responding with smiles or imitating sounds. Little by little the baby realizes that the manifestations of crying have repercussions in the environment that surrounds the baby, so that it becomes a communicative element for him.

From the third month, a clear babbling begins, creating its own sounds, and with the characteristic of the scream. Later this will become a call of joy or protest. Between the third and the sixth month the baby develops a very wide vocal game, mainly vocalic. In this period the baby becomes aware of the phonation, gurgles and guttural noises that produce. It establishes relations between what it emits and the effect it produces, thus learning to communicate.

At around eight months the child recognizes many signifiers. With different images or questions the child is able to point clearly. Therefore we know that it understands the signifiers (words) and identifies them with the correct image (objects). During this period, echolalia or imitation of speech appears. At the end of nine months the baby imitates sounds of nature and animals. This created significant relationships between emissions and perceptions.

- Linguistic stage:

There is no clear age for the beginning of this stage, according to Castañeda (1975); it is situated at the moment when the child says his/her first word, usually around twelve months old.

We can differentiate two phases in this stage: the constructions of the sign with oral character (between ten and twelve months) and the evolution of the sign towards the word (between thirteen months). In the first phase, the appearance of the signifier changes the type of emissions that the baby produces. The baby focuses on recognizing the distinctive features of sounds. The meaning and function of the signifier are

determined by the tone the baby uses and the gestures that accompany it, usually points to the object to which it refers. At the beginning of the second phase, starting from the first year, the number of syllables, as well as their combinations increases, progressively approaching the lexical elements of the adult system. The functions do not change designation or demand of objects or people.

At eighteen months, there is already a great repertoire of words, but there is still a lot of babbling. It recognizes the parts of its body and it can keep its attention on something for two minutes. At twenty-four months he begins to join words to form sentences. Recognize verbs like "come" or "take" and even obeys two or three consecutive orders. At thirty months its vocabulary increases rapidly and it feels the need to communicate. If it is not understood, it shows signs of frustration. At the age of five years the baby has a complete command of the phonological system and gradually acquires the rules of language. Language development will continue until the child is ten or twelve years old. (Galician, 2011)

2.2.2 Foreign language acquisition, with a focus on the English language

During the first five years of life, children acquire the mother tongue without grammatical instructions. However, the second language is subsequently learned consciously.

Some authors (Del Río and Sánchez, 1996) have studied the appropriate age for learning a second language; Lenneberg in the *Critical Period Hypothesis* (1967) suggests that the ability to learn a second language decreases while reaching puberty. On the other hand Omaya (1979) raises the existence of an "advantageous period", after which learning becomes more difficult but not impossible. Moreover, Moreu and Richelle (1981) believe in a privileged period that extends up to ten years, at the most.

Regarding the morphological acquisition, by the time children are three-year-old, they start incorporating some morphological inflections, which will end up dominating between five and seven years. In the case of English one of the first inflections to appear is the continuous form (-ing), the plurals marker (-s), some irregular plurals (fish/fish), the third singular person (He/She/It) in the present (-s) and the forms of regular verbs and some irregular ones (Yule, 1996, Radford et al, 1999). Also, by this time, the lexical category that predominates in its vocabulary is the names,

especially those of its context, for example "mummy", "daddy". Later they will acquire verbs that express purpose.

2.2.3 Stages in the learning of reading

Before going deeper into the reading methods, it is important to know the stages in the learning of reading. According to González (1991), there may be two stages or types of reading: the “decoder reading” and the comprehensive reading.

The “decoder reading” takes place when children learn to recognise words. This happens during the Foundation Stage, the Year one of Primary Education and sometimes in Infant School. Within this phase in which children decipher by searching for the relationship between phonemes and graphemes, two types of reading can be differed:

- Syllabic reading: this is when children read all the syllables separately and very slow. It is very important to make sure that children make progress and advance to the next stages.
- Mechanic reading: takes place when children learn to read the words and sentences fluently but they do not pay attention to what they read.

Moreover, the comprehensive reading is studied from Year Two of Primary School onwards. This has a vital importance since as Mendoza (1996) states: the reading of a text is not completed until the reader interprets it, thus; reading will be interpreted according to the reader’s prior knowledge. Therefore, it is necessary to stimulate children to see reading as an instrument to interpret their world and enrich their lives.

2.3 Literacy Methodologies

The methods that are more significant in the Spanish schools are: the Synthetic methods (bottom up), Analytic methods and Mixed methods. The criteria to classify these techniques are linked to the mental processes that children have to carry out to read and write (Guzmán Rosquete, 1997; Wyse and Goswami, 2008)

- <u>Synthetic methodology:</u>

Also known as bottom-up, it is the oldest, since it was already used in ancient Greece and Rome. It consists of starting from simple elements such as phonemes, letters or

syllables to get to more complex structures such as words, phrases or texts. One of the main advantages of this method is the speed of learning, as it is based on memorization. Also, it gives the student great autonomy during the process and, knowing the constituents of the words it allows them to recognize them. For this reason, reading is done with better precision and agility.

This method also has some drawbacks. One of them is that, as it does not take into account the interests of the student, the lack of motivation can generate aversion to reading. In addition, the discovery of meaning and understanding is not encouraged, since it focuses on decoding. Finally, this reading method cannot be considered as a discovery or an exploration method in which children build their learning. The rules of reading are already very marked and this prevents the development of creativity or discovery by students.

- Analytical methodology:

Also known as top-down, it appears as an alternative to synthetic methodology. This method starts from the most complex structures such as words, phrases, texts, to arrive by decoding, to more simple structures such as words and phrases. One of the main advantages of this method is that it can be carried out taking into account the students learning process. In addition, teachers can focus on the interests of children, encouraging motivation, enjoyment and creativity. Therefore, it encourages learning by discovery and research.

Some of the disadvantages are that children are not able to recognize new words, because they do not know how to identify its constituents. It slows down the learning process of literacy. In addition, this method requires highly trained teachers and involves greater effort, since it requires more elaborate activities. Finally, it should be noted that visual perception predominates in this method, over and above the auditory one. This can be a handicap for children with visual difficulties.

- Mixed methodology:

Nowadays it is difficult to find purely synthetic or analytical methods. Most teachers combine both methods to exploit its advantages and avoid disadvantages. The main advantage of this approach is that it gives the teachers the option to adapt to the children's needs and allows them to strength those processes in which they have more

difficulties. In addition, this kind of methods develops different abilities such us comprehension, reading performance and writing quality.

Within this methodology we find two trends:

- The synthetic trend:

The methods that can be found in this trend are the ones that, although they unify both approaches, have a more synthetic basis. The process starts from the units without meaning (phoneme, letter or syllable), but at the same time words and phrases with showing the meaning to the children. The best known method of this trend is Jolly Phonics.

- The analytical trend:

The methods that we can find in this trend, unlike the previous ones, have a more analytical basis. The process starts from units with meaning (words, phrases or texts), but at the same time the children are taught the letters, and the syllables are analysed. (Guzmán Rosquete, 1997)

2.4 Language Codes

The English language has a more complex code than the Spanish one, where the grapheme-phoneme relationship is much simpler. In Spanish orthography, lexical access by the phonological route is very simple since the grapheme-phoneme relationship is simple and regular (transparent code), with consistent rules of letter-sound conversion (Seidenberg, 1992) However, in a system like English, where this relationship is irregular (opaque code), hinders the process of literacy. Thus, encoding and decoding, or what is the same, learn to read and write is easier when there is an opaque one that transparent code. Since English has a complicated code it is even more important to know the code thoroughly since it is not easy to deduce. In fact, English onsets and rimes do not usually correspond to alphabetic letters. For many European languages however (e.g., Finnish, Spanish, Italian, Greek), the onset-rime division of the syllable results in a single-phoneme onset, and a single-phoneme rime.

For the majority of the world's languages, syllable structure is simple (CV/consonant-vowel). Syllables in languages like Spanish and Italian are like the English words "see" or "go", two phonemes making up the syllable. Therefore, onset-

rime segmentation also corresponds to the phonemes made by the letters used to write the syllable down.

However, the English language has primarily complex syllables. The dominant syllable structure in English is CVC and also there is CCVC syllables, CVCC syllables and CCVCC syllables. Only 5per cent of monosyllabic words follow the CV pattern ("sea", go", "do"…) that is dominant in so many other languages.

Both the phonological complexity of English syllables and the inconsistency of English spelling patterns make it difficult to become aware of phonemes in English. Prior to learning to read, phonological awareness should depend on spoken language factors only. The children who will struggle with learning to read are those children who come to the task of reading with less well-developed phonological representations. As Jim Cummins stated, "because writing systems are systems for representing the spoken language, it is reasonable to suggest that an understanding of the psychological processing involved in using a writing system must include an understanding of the processing of the spoken language" (1992, p.67).

This complexity in the English language code translates into the majority use by English schools of synthetic methodologies, the most famous of them, Jolly Phonics created by Sue Lloyd. Until 1960 the majority of English-speaking countries used analytical literacy methods called "look and say". However, in 1995 Flesch showed that these methods had increase reading problems in the US. That is why Spailding developed in 1957 a phoneme-based method called "The Writing Road to Reading", the persecutor of the famous Jolly Phonics method**.**

3. CURRICULAR FRAMEWORK

3.1 State curriculum

The document known as "Real Decreto 1630/2006 de 29 de Diciembre, BOE" establishes the minimum teaching requirements for the second part of the Early Childhood Education stage. It advises teachers, within the curriculum of the stage, to encourage a first positive approach to learn a foreign language and start the process of teaching reading and writing.

Specifically, in terms of teaching reading and writing, the "ORDEN ECI/3960/2007, de 19 de Diciembre" establishes the curriculum and the regulation of early childhood education (ORDEN ECI/3960/2007). In the "Languages: Communication and Representation" developmental area we can find the contents related. Some of these contents are:

- Approach to the written language as a means of communication, information and enjoyment.
- Identification of words and phrases written very significant and usual.
- Initiation to the knowledge of the written code through those words and phrases.
- Use, gradually autonomous, of different supports of the written language such as books, magazines, newspapers, computers, posters or labels.

As can be seen in this document, "ORDEN ECI/3960/2007, de 19 de Diciembre", a teaching methodology for specific literacy is not named. But through the proposed contents we can deduce that the methodology which should guide the teaching of literacy in early childhood is analytic (Top-Down).). Moreover, no specific comments on the coordination between the Spanish and English teachers when developing the students' literacy are named or promoted.

3.2 Aragonese Curriculum

According to "ORDEN de 10 de Marzo de 2008, del Departamento de Educación, Cultura y Deporte, BOA/2008", which extends the "Orden of Noviembre 15 de 2007", the coordination between language teachings methodologies is regulated in Article 21. It focuses on recommending a close coordination between the Primary and the Early Childhood cycle to facilitate the student's transit across these stages. As can be seen below in the results obtained from the survey, although this coordination is regulated, it

is not always fulfilled. Perhaps this may be due to the lack of training given to the teachers on teamwork and interdisciplinary work.

3.3 Integrated H-B Curriculum

In 1996 the Spanish Ministry of Education and the British Council, initiated a unique experiment within the Spanish state education system. They created a document called "Currículo Integrado hispano-británico para educación infantil y orientaciones para su desarrollo".

This agreement was revised in 2013. It integrates a curricular program from the second stage of infant education up to the last year of secondary school. Some characteristics of this program are:

- To give special importance to synthetic phonetics since the acquisition and recognition of sounds in these stages encourages the further development of reading and writing, as well as good a pronunciation.
- As it is a school-wide project, it will stimulate the development of the School's Educational Plan. The main objective is to offer children of all socioeconomic and academic levels the opportunity to receive a bilingual education.

In this document, unlike the state curriculum, the need for coordination between the teaching of English and Spanish is reflected. As can be seen among the characteristics of the program, it is defined as a School-wide project. Also, as cited in the document: "clearly, the Spanish class teacher and project teacher should plan closely together to ensure that the concepts are covered and understood in both languages"(Curriculum Integrado Hipáno-Británico para Ed. Infantil y Orientaciones para su desarrollo, 2013)

4. METHODOLOGY

After having analysed the information cited above, considering not having obtained enough data to corroborate the hypothesis has been decided to develop “ad hoc” a questionnaire to collect the rest of the necessary information. This questionnaire consists of twenty-one questions about which methods are used in Aragonese schools in the Early Childhood stage to teach either Spanish or English, and how infant teachers coordinates theirs teaching processes in both languages.

4.1 Population

This questionnaire was first addressed to infant English teachers of all state schools in Aragon. Since it is not possible to access the emails of all the teachers in the region, and knowing in advance that the response rate to educational research questionnaires is usually low, I decided to request the emails from all Aragonese schools secretaries so that they could provide the questionnaire to their English infant teachers. In this way, not only were mails obtained from state schools in the region, but they were also obtained from private and semi-private schools, thus expanding the responses to be obtained. The Department of Education provided the list from its website for parent information. Moreover, as email questionnaire studies have a very low response rate, I did not consider to select a sample but to send the questionnaire to all the emails available.

4.2 The questionnaire

The number of the questions was designed so that it would be enough to compile the data needed, but would not be too long so as not to require too much work from the teachers.

Thirteen of those twenty-one questions were closed questions with options to choose from or to rank in order of importance. These closed questions were used in order to simplify the task of filling out the questionnaire and compiling the answers. Nevertheless, the main disadvantage of closed questions is that the range of answers is limited, so when possible the option “others” was included to write any other thoughts or suggestions that the respondents might have. One complete open question was also included to allow the respondents to comment on anything they thought might be important for the research.

The questionnaire was created in a Google Form Support Service and it was anonymous and submitted by email. Google Forms is a tool which collects the data entry from the user and offers the possibility to analyse them by the app.

https://drive.google.com/open?id=1mL_kHtHa5V85tuDc3sQpQmsf7Cvq0973Vev4lJSKo30 (see Annex I.)

Before sending the questionnaire to the chosen population, I asked for feedback to three experts: one Senior English teacher working in a state primary school with a long-term experience in bilingual English education; a University Lecturer at the Faculty of Education specialised in the teaching of English to young children, and one English teacher, expert in teachers' continuous education. (Olga Mur, Silvia Pellicer and Pedro Carenas respectively) These experts sent some comments about the questionnaire and I could add their comments and I could add their comments and suggestions to the final version in June 2019.

The questionnaire was sent for the first time on 11 June. A total of 583 e-mails were sent with a short message to motivate the answers. (The message can be found in Annex I) A second survey was sent on the 1st September in order to get more answers. The questionnaire was closed on 6th September with a total of twenty-eight questionnaires. The 583 E-mails were obtained from the webpage of the Department of Education, Aragon Government a total of 318 belonged to Zaragoza province, 177 to Huesca and 88 to Teruel. As mentioned above, the number of responses obtained was twenty-eight. A priori this number of replies compared to the number of emails sent may seem low, but considering that it is an educational research questionnaire sent in June and intended for practicing teachers, the number of responses was as expected.

4.3 Post-questionnaire stage

Once all the results were compiled and analysed, they have been critically analysed so as to offer measures of improvement for the coordination of teachers and open the path to further research on this topic.

5. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

5.1 Questionnaire Analysis

A total of twenty-eight teachers answered the questionnaire. Thus, the response rate was 0,048. As has been mentioned before, the response rate to educational research questionnaires is usually low. The minimum number of responses that were proposed in order to begin to produce results with criteria was twenty-five, therefore it can be said that the number of responses meets the proposed objective.

In this survey it was decided not to include questions regarding the sex or the age of the respondent since these biases are not relevant for the investigation. But, a question has been included regarding the number of years the respondent has been practicing as a teacher, since the experience is a great bias in the education field. The average number of years working as teachers is 10.5 years with a range from 1 to 32 years. Also, a question regarding the number of students has been included as it is an important bias too. The average number of students is 23 students with a range from 6 to 120 students per classroom.

From the first seven questions more specific data from the population that has answered the survey are obtained. As can be seen in the diagrams, the majority ,70.4% (See image 1) of the answers come from respondents practising in state schools, but a significant number of responses are also obtained from respondents teach in private or semi-private ones(29.6%). Also, it can be observed that 63% of the schools surveyed are bilingual (See image 2), of which 52.4% are state ones. Therefore, the heterogeneity and diversity of the study's population is highlighted.

Image 1. School Type

Image 2. Bilingual schools

Regarding the methodologies used in these Aragonese schools to teach Spanish and English, it can be observed that there is a tendency towards Synthetic / Syllabic methodologies (62.5%) in the ones used to teach Spanish in the private and the semi-private schools. Otherwise, at the state schools there is not such a big difference since a 42% of the teachers (see images 3 and 4) use analytical methodologies and 37% use synthetic ones. Regarding those used to teach English it can be observed a tendency towards synthetic methodologies such as Jolly Phonics in both, at the state (47%) and the private and the semi-private schools (75%). Although at the state schools there also are a significant number of them that use analytical methodologies such as Whole Brain Teaching (31.5%). Knowing this information, it can be deduced that this synthetic tendency for teaching English and Spanish, may be causes by the recommendations cited above, made by some authors that highlight the special nature of the English linguistic code. Also, according to the information cited in the previous paragraph, a major use of this methodology in private and semi-private schools is observed, may be due to its greater capacity of resources or teacher training.

Image 3. Methodologies to teach Spanish

Image 4. Methodologies to teach English

Regarding the skills acquisition, in question fifteen it can be observed that 64% of the surveyed teachers value that there may be an improvement in the coordination of skill acquisition in both languages. It can be deduced from this that teachers ask for improvements but perhaps do not know how to carry it out which would support my initial research hypothesis.

Image 5.Skills Learning Acquisition

Another interesting fact observed in the survey is that 57% of the respondents chose to coordinate speaking and listening skills. And 53% of the teachers practising in state schools choose speaking skills, while in the ones practising in private or the semi-private schools opted for listening skills. But there is not a clear decant for one of them in the second group (37% Listening, 25% Reading, 13% Writing. 0% Talking). If we analyse these data taking into account the age bias, we observe that the teachers that have been practising for more than 15 years opt for speaking skills (28%) or reading skills (29%), and that the teachers that have been practicing for less than 15 years opt for speaking (40%) and listening (30%) skills. Therefore it can be deduce that the new teacher's generations are more focused on oral communication skills. Maybe that can be due to the approach given in university studies to English as a lingua franca, understanding English as a worldwide communication channel not as an individualised language.

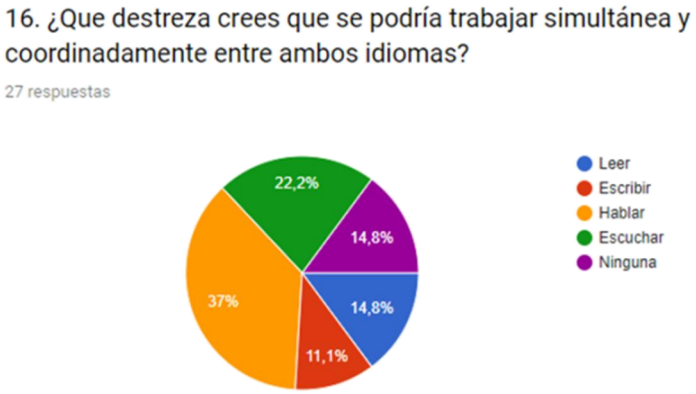

Image 6. Learning Skills Coordination (LSC)

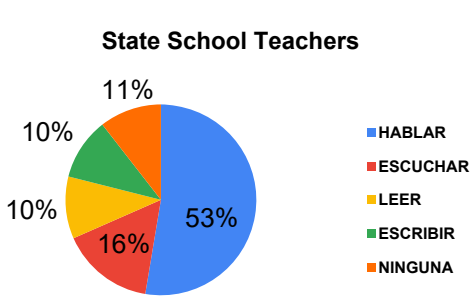

Image 7. LSC in State Schools

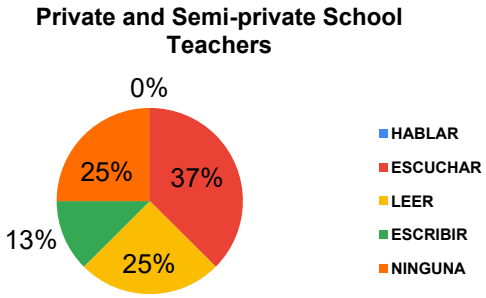

Image 8. LSC in Private and Semi-private Schools

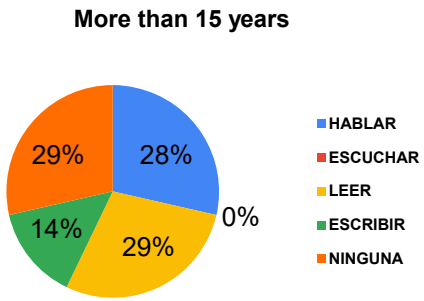

Image 9. LSC TE more than 15 years

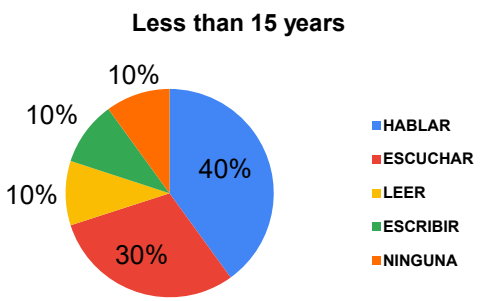

Image 10. LSC TE less than 15 years

It can be observed that the most common type of coordination between these Aragonese schools is between the stages (36%) or between the English and the Spanish teacher (25%). Nevertheless there is a high percentage of teachers that say they have no coordination between English and Spanish, 18%. If we analyse these data taking into account the age bias we observe that a 43% of these teachers that are over 15 years practicing opt for cycle coordination and the ones that are under 15 years practicing opt either for Cycle coordination (35%) or just between the English and the Spanish teacher (30%). It can be deduced that the ones that have been practising for more than 15 years are more used to this coordination than the ones that have not been practising for so long. As has been said before, this lack of knowledge and experience about coordination skills is what may be causing this decrease in percentages among the less experienced teachers. This may be due to the lack of training on coordination among the youngest teachers, since it is not directly provided by the educational institutions. They have to be the ones that should search for it on their own. This means that the number of teachers trained in this area has been decreasing over the years and it is an area of improvement since higher education programmes.

It can also be observed that 39% of these schools use the same type of methodologies to teach Spanish and English. These are usually synthetic ones (73%). It can also be observed that this methodological coordination occurs more in the private and the semi-private schools with a percentage of 62.5%, compared to a percentage of 31.5% in the state schools. This may be due to the lack of resources or experience among the teachers practising in state school, since it can be observed that among the state schools the percentage of respondents (74%) who have been practising less than 15 years is much higher than in the private and the semi-private schools (26%). Therefore,

as has been said before, there is a need for training in coordination among the youngest teachers in the state schools.

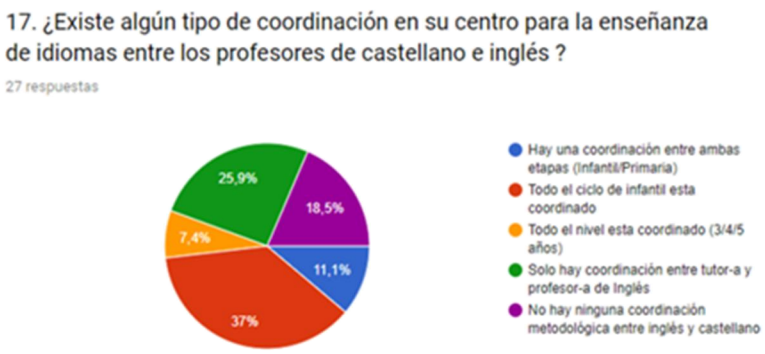

Image 11. Coordination

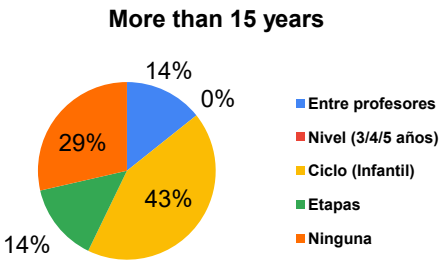

Image 12.C between TE more than 15 years

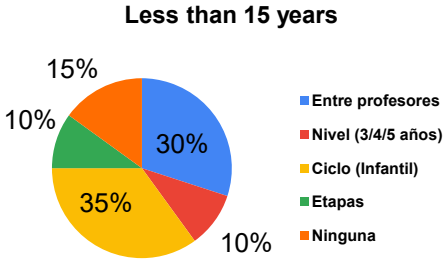

Image 13. C between TE more than 15 years

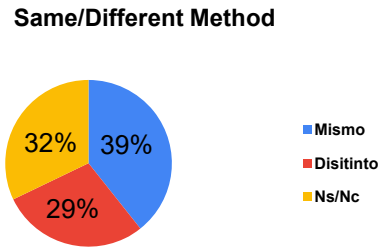

Image 14. Methodologies used

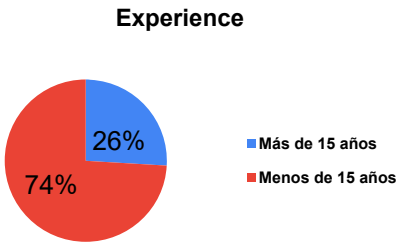

Image 15. Teachers Experience (TE)

Regarding the skills acquisition assessment, it can be observed that the best valued skill by the respondents is the Spanish speaking skill (75% of the respondents has valued it as really or very good) and the worst valued is the English reading (Only a 28.55% of the respondents has valued it as really or very good).

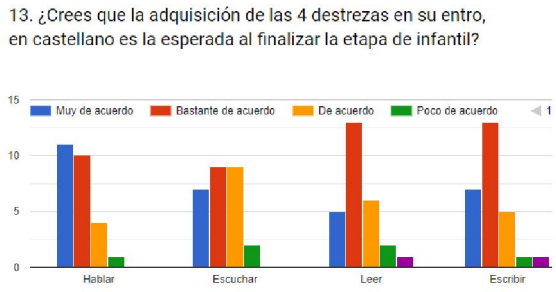

Image 16. Spanish Skills Acquisition

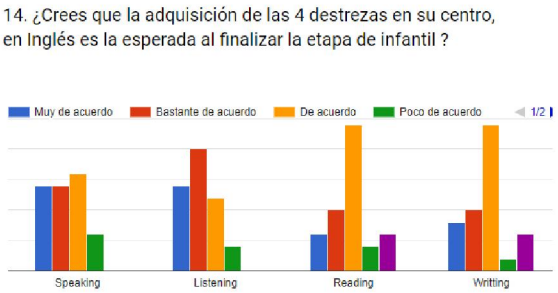

Image 17. English Skills Acquisition

One of the most relevant questions in this questionnaire is the number twenty. After the surveyed teachers have described the reality of their state, private and semi-private schools, through this question they inform us about their opinion of the coordination in a methodological level.

As expected, 71% said that the coordination at methodological level would be necessary. Of this, 39% already use the same type of methodology for teaching both languages. It should also be noted that, as the majority of respondents practicing at state schools are in favour of this coordination (84%) otherwise, in the private and the semi-private schools, this response is polarized. A 50% are in favour and the other 50% are against it.

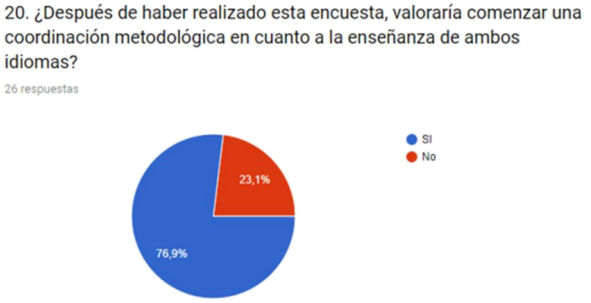

Image 18. Develop a methodological coordination

According to the answers obtained from this question, it can be clearly deduced that educators are in favour of this coordination, mostly teachers of state schools. As have been observed, among the teachers of private and semi-private schools, some kind of coordination is already taking place, either between teachers or methodologies to teach English or Spanish. Therefore, it can be said that most of the state school teachers that have been surveyed want to start some kind of methodological coordination.

As has been observed throughout the analysis of the results obtained from this questionnaire, the hypothesis raised in this dissertation has been corroborated: there is a lack of coordination when it comes to literacy teaching methods. However, this lack of coordination is not only at a methodological level but also it has been observed that in some cases there is no coordination between the teaching of English and Spanish at all. So, as has been said before, most of the teachers want to start a methodological coordination, but to achieve that type of coordination, they must start from the bases.

5.2 Coordination Proposals

As has been explained before, the results of this questionnaire have shown that, there is coordination between teachers of both languages, but not always or not of the necessary quality. In view of the results obtained, it has been decided to create a guide to promote cycle level coordination, since without a prior general coordination it would be unfeasible to begin coordination at a methodological level. In order to develop these guidelines with a more complete vision of the reality of bilingual schools in Aragon, it was decided to contact the coordination chief of the Pre-school stage of one of the schools surveyed.

GUIDELINES TO FOLLOW FOR AN EFFECTIVE COORDINATION BETWEEN ENGLISH AND SPANISH TEACHERS IN INFANT EDUCATION:

- **Preparation of the initial evaluation of each level:** During the preparation of the initial assessment, the English and the Spanish teachers should coordinate the methodologies as much as possible, since it is worrying that only 39% of the teachers surveyed use the same methodology for both languages. The survey reveals that 71% of teachers request a better coordination, and this percentage is notably higher in state schools than in private or semi-private ones, where the teams are more stable. The preparation of the initial assessment, which is usually carried out at quieter times, is a good time to start this coordination. The documents of the initial evaluation must be prepared with the tutors at the end of each academic year, and during the first weeks of September the initial evaluation must be carried out in each of the classrooms. This preparation and evaluation must be carried out jointly to ensure that the content to be taught is carried out jointly. In this way, children can relate and adjust content more easily. During this evaluation period it is important to collect qualitative data through statistics, checklists, etc., but also qualitative data through classroom records and

journals. It is useful to have information provided by the Guidance Department to anticipate any difficulties that may arise.

- **English teachers must work with the tutors during the adaptation period:** Firstly, if the children meet both teachers at the same time, they will be able to create a partnership between the two teachers that facilitates a better adaptation to changes during school hours. In addition, during the adaptation period, tutors meet with families in a more informal setting than at parent meetings. This informal form can lead to the development of a relationship with a higher degree of trust. It should also be borne in mind that although they are specialised teachers who teach their subject in several classrooms, they must share at least a few hours of this adaptation period. It is worrying that 18% of those surveyed acknowledge that there is no coordination between the English and Spanish teachers. This adaptation period, carried out jointly, is a good opportunity to begin methodological coordination between both teachers. From this study, it can be deduced that team coordination skills are a pending task in teacher training.

- Coordination among all cycle teachers to establish all contents, methodologies and evaluation criteria sequenced for each of the cycle levels: It is convenient to agree on the methodologies in the programming to avoid discrepancies: the survey reveals that 64% of those surveyed call for better coordination in the teaching of the mother tongue and the foreign language and that they are not aware of the tools to achieve it. As the survey observes, the concern for coordination is greater in state schools, where teaching teams vary constantly and it seems necessary to install this coordination in internal regulations and programming. On the other hand, if 31% of those surveyed are inclined towards methodologies such as Whole Brain Teaching, where multiple intelligences are involved, this endorses the need for coordination in areas such as English, psychomotor skills, music, environmental education... In this way, it is possible to create a joint progression in terms of the contents that the children are going to learn, so that the teacher is going to offer a greater quality of bilingual education. The sequencing of the contents in the teaching team makes it possible to group them and coordinate the most significant methodologies.

- **Create a "Bilingual Commission":** All the English teachers in the school must meet and prepare proposals to work within or between the cycles (Primary and Preschool). This "Bilingual Commission" could orient its work according to a communicative approach, since 57% of the respondents and inclined to coordinate the strategies of speaking and listening in both languages. The age bias in this regard reveals that its importance will increase even more in the future.. In this way we can create good coordination between cycles without having to meet too many people to discuss something simple.

- **Fortnightly coordination meetings with all cycle teachers and weekly coordination meetings with teachers at each level.** There is a deep concern among teachers about comprehension and reading mechanics skills that not only refer to Spanish but also to English, since only 28% express their satisfaction on this point. The Reading Plan is the responsibility of the entire cycle and frequent periodic coordination is a good opportunity to improve these skills. It is important to organize the meetings in the most practical way possible, so that the teachers can carry out the coordination in the simplest and most productive way possible.

- **Participation in quarterly general meetings with families.** As mentioned above, it is important that both teachers know the parents. A good relationship with parents can improve the quality of children's education. These quarterly meetings can coincide with relevant moments of mother tongue and foreign language teaching in which the teachers shows what is being done in the classroom. This obliges teaching teams to coordinate their educational action in order to show the best version of the work in the classroom.

- **Carry out at least once a quarter a bilingual history agreed in the cycle for each of the levels, so that it is not repeated.** In this project teachers can unfold the work of speaking and listening skills on a motivating task. They work together with the tutors, the story must be told in English and Spanish. The teacher will agree on a day and tell the story at two different times, one language at a time. It would be useful to have artistic, musical and psychomotor skill goals to reinforce learning through multiple intelligences. Teachers should prepare a dossier or handicrafts and children should take them home at the end of the term so that they can work on it at home if they wish.

- **Carry out a "bilingual week" to celebrate the whole school together**, for example Halloween, Christmas or Saint Patrick, or even a specific theme proposed by the

Bilingual Commission such as "Canada Week". These moments serve to link different methodologies and find links between them. On the other hand, tasks such as writing or reading, which may seem secondary in a communicative approach, take on special relevance in these interdisciplinary projects and facilitate the coordination of teachers around a common task. They are an excellent time for that gap between the younger and older faculty approaches to be aligned in the work of all skills. This is a type of activity that is really appealing to all children. Families should also be included in this task as much as possible, with the organization of typical food workshops, dances, songs, costumes, etc. Even visits in the environment as associations or musical groups that carry out activities of this type could be taken into account.

6. CONCLUSION

In relation to the main objective of this work, to analyse the methodological coordination between English and Spanish teaching methods in Aragón's early childhood education stage, specifically the literacy methods; it is considered that it has been satisfactorily fulfilled through the curricular and theoretical framework and the information obtained from the questionnaire.

Regarding the second main objective of this work, to suggest some recommendations on coordination, it has also been satisfactorily fulfilled, some guidelines have been offered to improve the coordination between language teachings.

Thus, during the accomplishment of this work it has been possible to arrive at different conclusions.

The first conclusion is obtained from the analysis of the official documents where the Spanish government regulate teachings, since although it is not quoted verbatim it can be deduced from its objectives that the methodology by which it teachers should be guided to teach Spanish is an analytical one.

The second conclusion is obtained from the theories of Katz and Frost cited in the theoretical framework, where they expose that the most appropriate methodology for teaching English is a synthetic one. If, as previously mentioned, the Spanish curriculum followed an analytical methodology for teaching Spanish and theorists recommend the use of synthetic methodologies for teaching English, there is a discoordination between language teachings that can add difficulties to what already involves learning a new language.

The third and last conclusion is based on the answer obtained from question number 20 *"After having carried out this survey, would you value starting a methodological coordination regarding the teaching of both languages?"* in which 76.9% of respondents valued beginning a methodological coordination in terms of teaching English and Spanish. Therefore it is important to regulate the methodological coordination between both languages since the use of contrary methods (Bottom-up and Top-down) can add another difficulty to the already complicated process of of teaching and children to read in both the L1 and the L2. But as has been shown in the detailed

analysis of the survey, it is observed that it would be necessary to regulate first a general coordination at least between the Early Education stages.

This study about the coordination of teaching languages in Aragonese schools has been limited to its description since, as mentioned above; there was not enough information about it to begin a deeper analysis. But, after the completion of this study, the possibility of exploring more on this subject opens up. During the analysis of data several questions are unlocked, whose answers can be deepened much more. For example: Why is there a greater coordination in private and semi-private schools? Why do teachers tend to coordinate using synthetic methods and not analytical ones? Why is there less coordination among teachers who have been practicing for less than 15 years?

This dissertation has been created with the purpose of being able to be used as inspiration for later works on a subject as little studied in the field of education as is the coordination of Spanish and English literacy teaching in the Early Childhood Stage.

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8. ANNEX II

8.1 Questionnaire example

APRENDER A LEER EN INGLÉS Y CASTELLANO EN ED. INFANTIL EN ARAGÓN.

En primer lugar agradecerte que hayas abierto este cuestionario. Tus aportaciones van a formar parte de los resultados de mi Trabajo Fin de Grado del Grado de Educación Infantil de la Universidad de Zaragoza. Este trabajo quiere describir la coordinación metodológica entre la enseñanza del inglés y del castellano en la etapa de educación infantil en Aragón, concretamente los métodos de lectoescritura. Muchas gracias por tu tiempo, no te llevará más de 10 minutos, y por tus valiosas opiniones. Cualquier sugerencia o comentario será muy bienvenido. Podéis enviármelo a: luci.astier97@gmail.com

Dirección de correo electrónico: …….

Datos

1. Fecha en la que se realiza la encuesta: ……

2. Tipo de escuela en la que el encuestado/a ejerce

   - Privada

   - Publica

   - Concertada

3. ¿Es el centro en el que ejerce bilingüe en inglés?

   - Sí

   - No

4. Número de años que el encuestado/a ha ejercido como docente

5. Cargo del encuestado/a en el centro

   - Profesor-a

   - Tutor-a

   - Secretario-a

   - Jefe-a de estudios

   - Director-a

6. Enseña inglés o castellano

7. Número de estudiantes en el aula en el que se ejerce

METODOLOGÍAS PARA EL APRENDIZAJE DE LA LECTO-ESCRITURA

Existen dos tipos de metodologías en lo referente a la enseñanza de la lectoescritura: el método sintético y el analítico. La metodología sintética, también conocida como bottom-up es la más antigua. Consiste en partir de los elementos simples (fonema, letra o sílaba) hasta llegar a estructuras más complejas (palabra, frase o texto) La metodología analítica, también conocida como top-down, aparece como alternativa a la metodología sintética. Este método parte de las estructuras más complejas (palabras, frases, textos) para llegar a la de-codificación viendo las palabras y las frases como unidades lingüísticas generales. Hoy en día es difícil encontrar métodos puramente sintéticos o analíticos. La mayoría combinan ambos métodos para aprovechar sus ventajas y evitar sus inconvenientes.

8. ¿Qué tipo de metodología se utiliza en su centro para la enseñanza del castellano?

- Método Global (Analítico)
- Método Silábico (Sintético)
- Otro:

9. ¿Qué tipo de metodología se utiliza en el centro para la enseñanza del inglés?

- Whole Brain Teaching (Analítico)
- Jolly Phonics (Sintético)
- Otro:

10. ¿Qué materiales se utilizan en su centro para la enseñanza del inglés?

- Materiales de creación propia
- Materiales de libre acceso en la red
- Materiales de editoriales (Si es el caso indica cual en el apartado "otra")
- Otro:

11. ¿Qué materiales se utilizan en su centro para la enseñanza del castellano?

- Materiales de creación propia
- Materiales de libre acceso en la red
- Materiales de editoriales (Si es el caso indica cual en el apartado "otra")
- Otro:

12. En España, en cuanto a la enseñanza del inglés, los colegios pueden guiarse en base a dos currículos: El currículo Español (REAL DECRETO 1630/2006, de 29 de diciembre, por el que se establecen las enseñanzas mínimas del segundo ciclo de

Educación infantil) y el Currículo Integrado Hispano-Británico para educación Infantil y orientaciones para su desarrollo (Firmado en colaboración con el Britsh Council 1996 y revisado en 2013. Guía las enseñanzas para programas bilingües) ¿Con cuál de ellos se guía el centro en el que ejerce?

- Currículo integrado hispano-británico (2013)

- Currículo Español (R.D. 1630/2006)

EL CÓDIGO CASTELLANO Y EL CÓDIGO INGLÉS

La lengua inglesa tiene un código más complejo que el español, donde la relación grafema-fonema es mucho más sencilla. En el sistema ortográfico español, acceder al léxico por la ruta fonológica es mucho más sencillo puesto que esa relación (grafema-fonema) es simple y regular. En cambio, en un sistema como el inglés donde esa relación es irregular, se dificulta el proceso de aprendizaje de la lectoescritura. En el español, cada uno de los 44 fonemas se corresponde con un grafema, en cambio se utilizan más de 150 grafemas para representar los 42/44 fonemas que existen en la lengua inglesa.

13. ¿Crees que la adquisición de las 4 destrezas en su entro, en castellano es la esperada al finalizar la etapa de infantil?

Muy de acuerdo/Bastante de acuerdo/De acuerdo/Poco de acuerdo/En desacuerdo

Hablar
Escuchar
Leer
Escribir

14. ¿Crees que la adquisición de las 4 destrezas en su centro, en inglés es la esperada al finalizar la etapa de infantil?

Muy de acuerdo/Bastante de acuerdo/De acuerdo/Poco de acuerdo/En desacuerdo

Speaking
Listening
Reading
Writing

15. ¿Crees que el aprendizaje de las 4 destrezas se podría coordinar mejor entre los dos idiomas?

Muy de acuerdo/Bastante de acuerdo/De acuerdo/Poco de acuerdo/En desacuerdo

16. ¿Qué destreza crees que se podría trabajar simultánea y coordinadamente entre ambos idiomas?

- Leer

- Escribir

- Hablar

- Escuchar

- Ninguna

17. ¿Existe algún tipo de coordinación en su centro para la enseñanza de idiomas entre los profesores de castellano e inglés?

- Hay una coordinación entre ambas etapas (Infantil/Primaria)

- Todo el ciclo de infantil está coordinado

- Todo el nivel está coordinado (3/4/5 años)

- Solo hay coordinación entre tutor-a y profesor-a de inglés

- No hay ninguna coordinación metodológica entre inglés y castellano

18. ¿Cómo valoras las dificultades asociadas con los métodos de enseñanza de la lectoescritura por métodos analíticos (Ej.: Método Global/WBT)?

Muy de acuerdo/Bastante de acuerdo/De acuerdo/Poco de acuerdo/En desacuerdo

Los niños no son capaces de reconocer nuevas palabras
Requiere profesores muy preparados
Implica mucho esfuerzo ya que necesita más elaboración
Requiere que los alumnos presten mucha atención en el reconocimiento de palabras
Al aumentar el diccionario visual por encima de la percepción auditiva los niños tienen a inventarse palabras
Los niños no son capaces de reconocer nuevas palabras

19. ¿Cómo valoras las dificultades asociadas con los métodos de enseñanza de la lectoescritura por métodos sintéticos (Ej.: Método Silábico/Jolly Phonics)?

Muy de acuerdo/Bastante de acuerdo/De acuerdo/Poco de acuerdo/En desacuerdo

Existe una falta de motivación por parte de los alumnos que puede generar aversión a la lectura (No se tienen en cuenta sus intereses)
No se favorece el descubrimiento del significado y la comprensión (Se favorece la decodificación)
Reglas de la lectura muy marcadas, impide el desarrollo de la creatividad o descubrimiento.

20. ¿Después de haber realizado esta encuesta, valoraría comenzar una coordinación metodológica en cuanto a la enseñanza de ambos idiomas?

- Si

- No

21. ¿Hay alguna cuestión que no aparezca reflejada en las preguntas anteriores que consideres relevante a tener en cuenta en cuanto a los métodos de aprendizaje del castellano y del inglés? Escriba cualquier idea que se quiera transmitir en cuanto a la realización de la encuesta.

8.2 Motivating message

8.2.1 First message, 11 June 2019

Buenos días a la secretaria del centro,

Soy Lucía Sanz Astier alumna de la Mención Bilingüe del Grado de Magisterio Infantil de la Universidad de Zaragoza.

Contacto con usted para solicitar su participación en una encuesta.

Estoy realizando el Trabajo de Fin de Grado, cuyo objetivo es describir la coordinación entre los métodos de enseñanza del castellano, como lengua madre, y del inglés, como lengua extranjera.

Por ello estoy remitiendo esta encuesta a los docentes de inglés de la etapa de educación infantil en Aragón.

Muchas gracias de antemano por su colaboración. Un saludo,

Lucía Sanz.

P.D.: Adjunto el enlace de la encuesta a rellenar.

https://drive.google.com/open?id=1mL_kHtHa5V85tuDc3sQpQmsf7Cvq0973Vev4lJSKo30

8.2.2 Second message, 1 September 2019

Buenos días a la secretaría del centro,

Soy Lucía Sanz Astier, alumna de la Mención Bilingüe del Grado de Magisterio Infantil de la Universidad de Zaragoza.

Me vuelvo a poner en contacto con usted para solicitar la participación en una encuesta dirigida a los docentes de inglés de la etapa de Infantil de su centro. En caso de haber realizado ya la encuesta, ruego disculpen este recordatorio. En caso de no haberla realizado les solicitaría su colaboración ya que sus respuestas son fundamentales para continuar con mi trabajo de investigación.

Estoy realizando el Trabajo de Fin de Grado, cuyo objetivo es describir la coordinación entre los métodos de enseñanza del castellano, como lengua madre, y del inglés, como lengua extranjera.

Debido a que no existe una fuente donde obtener los correos electrónicos de los docentes, me remito al centro para que puedan ustedes reenviar la encuesta a sus docentes de Inglés en la etapa de educación Infantil.

Quedo a la espera de su respuesta. Muchas gracias de antemano por su tiempo y su colaboración.

Un saludo,

Lucía Sanz.

P.D.: Adjunto el enlace de la encuesta a rellenar.

https://drive.google.com/open?id=1mL_kHtHa5V85tuDc3sQpQmsf7Cvq0973Vev4lJSKo30