

APPENDIX 1: LEARNING UNIT OF WORK

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MÁSTER EN
PROFESORADO

LEARNING UNIT OF WORK: TELEVISION AND
ADVERTISEMENT

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INTRODUCTION

JUSTIFICATION

The topic of this learning unit of work is “Television and advertisement”. It has been designed for the second course of the advanced level in the Official Language School number 1 of Zaragoza. “Television and advertisement” are two topics that can be appealing to many people as they can be up-to-date topics and almost everybody normally watches television, so it could be easy for students to find something to talk about. Nowadays, it is very important to communicate effectively in another language, specially English, which is a language that is spoken by so many people. Therefore, this learning unit of work is devoted to these two topics, and it has been designed with the purpose of promoting communication in English. I have designed most of the activities and I have adapted some of them from the book the students of my class use (*Straightforward Advanced*, Macmillan). Moreover, I have taken some activities from the Internet because I found them more suitable and engaging for students than the ones in the book.

This learning unit of work has been designed taking the Organic Law of Education (LOE) 2/2006 as its point of reference. This law regulates the current education system. The Real Decreto 1629/2006 establishes the basic aspects of language teaching and the Orden de 7 de julio de 2008 establishes the curriculum for advanced level courses in language teaching. Therefore, this learning unit of work has been designed taking into account this legal framework.

CONTEXTUALIZATION

This learning unit of work has been designed for a group of students of the second course of the advanced level in the Official Language School number 1 of Zaragoza. In this Official Language School, there are around 6,300 students, and the great majority of them belong to the English Department. The studies that are taught in this centre are divided in 3 levels and 6 years: Basic Level (1º and 2º), Intermediate Level (1º and 2º) and Advanced Level (1º and 2º). When the students finish these six years, they get a B2 official certificate in English. In this kind of centres, lessons are organized in blocks of two hours twice a week. There is also the possibility in this centre to study English as a distance learning course.

The target group of this learning unit of work is made up of 20 students, although the number of students varies, as assistance is not compulsory. Their lessons take place on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 9 o'clock to 11 o'clock.

The group of students is made up of adults (between 20-70 years old). The atmosphere in the class is a good one, since they get on well with each other and they are polite to each other. Almost every student takes part in every activity, so it is not a problem to make students participate in activities. There is a lot of student-to-student interaction, and they often help each other when they have any doubts. Teacher-to-student interaction is also high, although student-to-teacher interaction does not happen so often.

Their level of English is generally high, although some of the students need to make an effort when they speak English. Generally speaking, the teacher does not have to use Spanish to clarify concepts or vocabulary, so the main language used in class is always English.

They enjoy doing speaking activities and they are very talkative. They participate actively in all the activities, so the teacher has to control strictly the timing of the activities, otherwise they would not stop talking.

As any other group, this class is not homogenous and there are some students who may require sometimes special attention: There are two older people who have to make a greater effort to understand instructions sometimes, so it is very important to repeat the instructions again if they need it; there is also one student who almost always wants to answer the teacher's questions, but this is not a problem because this encourages the other students to talk; there are also two shy students, who usually do not feel comfortable when talking in front of the class; and, finally, a woman with a higher level of English, who usually breaks the ice and starts speaking in most of the activities. Therefore, there is no need to adapt any activities.

ORGANIZATION OF LEARNING UNIT OF WORK

Each lesson in this learning unit of work consists of 120 minutes and I have designed 3 lessons, so that I could put them into practice in 3 different days. I have tried to design all the activities following a communicative approach, because

communication is really important when learning a language and it is highly promoted in Official Language Schools.

The topic is “Television and advertisement”, and I have decided to focus on television for the first and the second lesson, and then on advertisement for the third lesson. I have decided to organize my lessons in this way, so that I could work more deeply in each topic and because I do not want to confuse students mixing up the topics. I have decided to talk about television first because there is more vocabulary to work with and the topic is wider.

I have decided to start each lesson with a warm-up, because the lessons take part early in the morning and they are a good way of waking up students. I have also prepared some vocabulary activities, in order to review the vocabulary of the topic. Although they are advanced students, most of the vocabulary of this topic is unknown to them, so they would probably enjoy learning new things instead of reviewing old contents. I have also designed speaking activities with a communicative purpose for every lesson and two listening activities and one writing activity.

LEARNING UNIT OF WORK

OBJECTIVES

- Recognize and use examples of vocabulary about TV & advertisements,
- Comprehend and interpret written texts about TV & advertisements,
- Comprehend and interpret oral texts about TV & advertisements,
- Identify and analyze the main elements of advertisements,
- Comprehend and summarize other people's opinions,
- Assess other people's written tasks,
- Organize ideas about their favourite TV series / programmes and write a composition,
- Notice and check their partners' mistakes,
- Comprehend written / oral texts in "real English" and
- Work / learn cooperatively

CONTENTS

- Speaking:
 - o TV habits
 - o TV series
 - o Advertisement
 - o Agreeing and disagreeing
- Listening:
 - o Interview in "real English"
 - o Different advertisements of British and American television
- Reading:
 - o BBC
 - o TV series
 - o Short reading about the TV show "Lost"
- Writing:
 - o A classmate's favourite TV series
- Vocabulary:
 - o Vocabulary related to television (TV programmes...)
 - o Vocabulary related to advertisement

METHODOLOGY

I have designed my activities using a communicative approach, because communication is the main goal when learning a language and it is highly promoted in Official Language Schools.

I have also promoted cooperative learning in my activities, as well as pair and group work. Students have greater opportunities to learn if they work cooperatively and they are the active, and not the passive, part of the class. Therefore, the teacher is just the guide who conducts the lesson and the classes are learner-centred classes.

I have designed my activities basing them on real-life situations. I consider that activities should reflect whenever possible real-life situations because this can be useful for students in a future, it can help them develop the tasks and it can motivate students as they see that what they are doing can be useful outside the class. Moreover, I have also used authentic materials whenever possible so that students could work with them as much as possible and benefit from the fact that they have not been modified or adapted for students of English as a foreign language.

I have also tried to integrate the five macro-skills (writing, speaking, reading, listening and interaction) whenever possible. In Official Language Schools, students are assessed at the end of the academic year of these five macro-skills, so it is important to work on all of them in class.

I have given feedback to my students constantly and I have written down their mistakes when they were talking, correcting the mistakes at the end of the activity so that their speech was not interrupted.

In most of the activities that I have designed, S-S interaction is promoted. However, there is also T-S interaction, specially when addressing questions directly to students, and also S-T interaction, when they have any doubts or questions to ask.

I have also tried to use ICTs in class whenever possible, for example, I have used the computer to show students some videos. I have decided to use the computer because it is a great tool to learn and because it is a more interactive way of doing listening activities. Students do not only benefit from listening to English but also from watching English programmes and the visual support can help them understand the language better.

EVALUATION CRITERIA

As Official Language Schools have a fixed evaluation system and there is not an evaluation after each lesson, each learning unit of work cannot be assessed. However, I have designed a short test to check if students have learnt or not. This test is included in appendixes.

LESSON PLANS

Lesson 1

Learning objectives:

-
- Recognize and use examples of vocabulary about TV,
 - Comprehend and interpret written texts about TV,
 - Comprehend and interpret oral texts about TV,
 - Comprehend an interview in “real English” which takes place in an authentic American TV programme,
 - Identify and analyze the main elements of advertisements,
 - Comprehend written texts in “real English”,
 - Acquire some knowledge of British and American television and television habits,
 - Assess their partners’ speaking activity and
 - Work / learn cooperatively.

Activities to be carried out:

<i>Time available:</i>	<i>120’</i>
<u>Activities:</u>	<u>Timing:</u>
Activity 1. Warm-up questions: the teacher asks questions about British TV to check their knowledge.	5’
Explanation of exercise 2	2’
Activity 2. BBC Text and discussion. A text about the BBC will be read individually and some questions will be discussed in groups of 3 or 4. (Source: <i>Straightforward Advanced</i> , Macmillan)	15’
Explanation of exercise 3	2’
Activity 3. Word search. Students will look for 14 different types of TV programmes in the word search in pairs. (Source: British Council Webpage:	12’

http://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/language-assistant/essential-uk/tv-cops-docs)	
Brainstorming of more types of TV programmes. The teacher asks the students if they know any more types of TV programmes. If they do not, the teacher gives definitions of the programmes so that they try to guess. This activity will be carried out as a whole group.	5'
Explanation of exercise 4	2'
Activity 4. Vocabulary activity: match part A with part B and answer the questions. Students have to match some cards (As) with other cards (Bs) in pairs, form a question and answer it. (Source: <i>Straightforward Advanced</i> , Macmillan). I modified the activity so that they had to do it with little cards and they did not have to use the activity in the book.	15'
Explanation of exercise 5	2'
Activity 5. Speaking activity: TV habits. Students have to discuss some questions in pairs which have been previously given and then they have to give a short speech about his/her partner's TV habits. (Source: original) A peer assessment will be carried out in this activity.	25'
Explanation of exercise 6	2'
Activity 6: Listening (Source: original)	
Pre-listening activity: Introduction (short reading). A text about the TV show "Lost" will be read in the whole class. (Source: Wikipedia: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lost_(TV_series)) (The text was modified by me)	7'
Interview "Lost: Michael Emerson" (twice played) The actor Michael Emerson talks about his character on Lost. While-listening activity: Students will answer some questions individually. (Source: YouTube: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ec-rfMCZyb8).	13'
Post-listening activity: Questions. Students will finish answering the questions individually, compare them with their partner and then they will be corrected in the whole group. (Source: original)	13'

Teacher actions and classroom management:

The teacher will start the lesson by asking questions about British TV. He /she will keep asking questions or giving examples if students run out of ideas. The teacher will guide the brainstorming activities to make sure everybody takes part in it.

The teacher will arrange the pairs for the vocabulary activity. He / she will make sure that the students working together have more or less the same level of English. He / she will also make sure that the pairs for the speaking activity have more or less the same level.

The teacher will monitor the groups during the lesson. He / she will walk round the class to check if students are working properly or to answer questions if they have any doubts. The teacher will write down the errors or mistakes he / she hears and will give feedback at the end of the activity.

The teacher will play the video for the listening on the computer and will make sure that students are answering the questions correctly by monitoring the pairs. He / she will also guide the whole-class feedback of these questions.

The teacher will tell the students how much time they have available for each activity. The teacher will answer any students' questions. If they have doubts about the vocabulary, the teacher can provide the students with a dictionary if necessary.

Expected learning outcomes:

At the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

- Recognize and use examples of TV programmes,
- Recognize and use examples of vocabulary related to TV,
- Comprehend and interpret a written text about the BBC,
- Speak about their TV habits,
- Assess their peers in a speaking activity,
- Comprehend an interview in “real English” which takes place in an authentic American TV programme and

-Work / learn cooperatively.

Materials and resources used:

All the materials of this learning unit of work are included in appendixes.

Moreover, these are other materials that will be used in class:

-Computer and Internet.

-Blackboard.

-Pens.

Assessment and feedback:

Feedback will be continuously given to students after and during every activity: their pronunciation or grammar mistakes will be corrected on the blackboard when they finish their speech or utterance.

Furthermore, after a speaking activity, a peer-assessment will be carried out. Every student will have to assess a peer by filling in an assessment sheet. The teacher will collect these sheets at the end of the activity, he / she will write a short paragraph about their performance and he / she will give back the students this sheet in the next lesson. This peer assessment will be carried out in the first lesson and the peer assessment sheet is included in appendixes.

Positive reinforcement is a must after each activity or utterance of every student. The teacher will encourage students for their contributions and will celebrate success.

Evaluation of teaching and learning process:

The teaching process will be evaluated in the last lesson with a one-minute paper asking the students to write about what they have liked about the teaching process, what they have not liked, what activities they have liked or enjoyed and which ones they have not.

The learning process will be evaluated at the end of lesson three with a test about the vocabulary seen in this learning unit of work. Moreover, it will be evaluated with the teacher's observation of the different activities the students will do in class.

Lesson 2

Learning objectives or goals:

- Recognize and use examples of vocabulary about TV,
- Comprehend and interpret written texts about TV,
- Notice and check their partners' mistakes,
- Comprehend and summarize other people's opinions,
- Organize ideas about their partners' favourite TV series / programmes and write a composition,
- Comprehend written / oral texts in "real English",
- Agree and disagree on a TV programme they want to watch,
- Reach an agreement in groups and
- Work / learn cooperatively.

Activities to be carried out:

<i>Time available:</i>	<i>120'</i>
<u>Activities:</u>	<u>Timing:</u>
Explanation of activity 1	2'
Activity 1. Warm-up (TV programmes). A volunteer will come to the front of the class and he / she will be given a card with the name of a TV programme seen in the previous lesson. Classmates will ask him / her yes / no questions and try to guess what is written in the card. The person who has the card can give a clue if necessary. (Source: original)	8'
Explanation of activity 2	2'
Activity 2. Role-play. Students will work in groups of 4. Each student will be given a card and a TV schedule. They will have to reach an agreement on which TV programme they are going to watch. However, they all have different tastes so disagreement is expected. (Source: British Council Webpage:	20'

http://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/lesson-plans/young-people-television).	
Explanation of activity 3	2'
<p>Activity 3. Reading activity “Cops and Docs”. Students will work in pairs. Student A will have to read out loud some parts of the text to Student B and Student B will have to copy these parts because they are missing in his / her text. Then, Student B will have to read to Student A the parts missing in Student A’s part. The previous two activities will be useful as pre-reading activities to review TV programmes. As a while-reading activity, students will have to fill in a chart with vocabulary from the text. As a post-reading activity, students will have to answer some questions.</p> <p>(Source: British Council Webpage: http://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/language-assistant/essential-uk/tv-cops-docs) (I modified the activity to create a dictation)</p>	25'
Explanation of activity 4	2'
<p>Activity 4. Speaking activity: favourite TV series. This activity will be done in pairs. Each student will have 4 minutes to prepare a speech answering some guiding questions. After that, they will have to talk for 3 minutes and tell his/her partner about his/her favourite TV series. The other student will have to take notes on what she/he is saying, and then they will have to write a composition about his/her partner’s favourite TV series. After one student has talked, the other one will tell his/her partner about his/her favourite TV series. This activity will be the pre-writing activity for the composition.</p> <p>(Source: original)</p>	15'
Explanation of activity 5	2'
<p>Activity 5. Composition. Students will have to write individually a composition with the information his/her partner has given. The teacher will collect the compositions and will mark the mistakes with a checklist (G [Grammar], V [Vocabulary], N.N.[Non-necessary], etc.)</p>	40'

Teacher actions and classroom management:

The teacher will start the lesson with a warm-up. He / she will choose the people who have to come to the front of the class in case there are no volunteers.

The teacher will arrange the groups for the role-play. He / she will make sure that the students working together have more or less the same level of English. He / she will make sure that the students with the highest level are not working together with the students with the lowest level.

The teacher will arrange the pairs for the reading activity as well. He / she will also try again that a student with a high level does not work with a student with a low level. He / she will also arrange the pairs for the speaking activity about their partners' favourite TV series, taking into account the same criteria.

The teacher will monitor the groups during the whole lesson. He / she will walk round the class to check if students are working properly or to answer questions if they have any doubts. The teacher will write down the errors or mistakes he / she hears and will give feedback at the end of the activity.

The teacher will tell the students how much time they have available for each activity. The teacher will answer any students' questions. If they have doubts about the vocabulary, the teacher can provide the students with a dictionary if necessary.

Expected learning outcomes:

At the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

- Recognize and use examples of TV programmes,
- Comprehend and interpret a written text about TV programmes,
- Notice and check their partners' mistakes when reading,
- Comprehend and summarize other people's opinions,
- Organize ideas about their partners' favourite TV series / programmes and write a composition,
- Agree and disagree on a TV programme they want to watch,

- Reach an agreement in groups and
- Work / learn cooperatively.

Materials and resources used:

All the materials of this learning unit of work are included in appendixes. Moreover, these are other materials that will be used in class:

- Computer and Internet.
- Blackboard.
- Pens.

Assessment and feedback:

Feedback will be continuously given to students after and during every activity: their pronunciation or grammar mistakes will be corrected on the blackboard when they finish their speech or utterance.

Furthermore, after a speaking activity, a peer-assessment will be carried out. Every student will have to assess a peer by filling in an assessment sheet. The teacher will collect these sheets at the end of the activity, he / she will write a short paragraph about their performance and he / she will give the students this sheet in the next lesson. This peer assessment will be carried out in the first lesson and the peer assessment sheet is included in appendixes.

Positive reinforcement is a must after each activity or utterance of every student. The teacher will encourage students for their contributions and will celebrate success.

Evaluation of teaching and learning process:

The teaching process will be evaluated in the last lesson with a one-minute paper asking the students to write about what they have liked about the teaching process, what they have not liked, what activities they have liked or enjoyed and which ones they have not.

The learning process will be evaluated at the end of lesson three with a test about the vocabulary seen in this learning unit of work. Moreover, it will be evaluated with the teacher's observation of the different activities the students will do in class.

Lesson 3

Learning objectives or goals:

- Recognize and use examples of vocabulary about advertisements,
- Comprehend and interpret oral texts about advertisements,
- Identify and analyze the main elements of advertisements,
- Assess other people's written tasks,
- Notice and check their partners' mistakes,
- Comprehend oral texts in "real English",
- Agree and disagree in groups,
- Work / learn cooperatively.

Activities to be carried out:

<i>Time available:</i>	<i>120'</i>
<u>Activities:</u>	<u>Timing:</u>
Activity 1. Warm-up: Brainstorming of "Advertising". The teacher asks students what they know about advertisements (types, where you can find an advertisement...). If students are a bit lost, the teacher will give hints. This activity will be carried out as a whole class.	5'
Explanation of activity 2	2'
Activity 2. Introduction to the advertisements (videos). The teacher explains the videos that the students are about to watch.	2'
Videos (advertisements) (twice played) (Source: YouTube)	8'
Discussion about the videos (I proposed some questions)	15'
Explanation of activity 3	2'
Activity 3. Guess the advert. Students will work in groups of 4. Each group will have 4 minutes to think about an advertisement they know. Then, they will have to describe the advertisement to the rest of the class without saying the name of the product, and the other groups will have to try and guess what the advertisement is about. (Source: original)	15'
Explanation of activity 4	2'
Activity 4. Debate (agree/disagree). Some statements will be projected on the blackboard. Students will discuss in groups of 4 if they agree or	12'

disagree with the statements. (Source: British Council Webpage: http://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/language-assistant/essential-uk/tv-cops-docs)	
Explanation of activity 5	2'
Activity 5. Post-writing activity: Corrections of the compositions in groups. Students will be given back their compositions and they will work in groups of 4. They will have to try to correct the mistakes they have made in the compositions, so they will have to help each other to correct the compositions.	25'
Explanation of the final test	2'
Activity 6. Final test. Students will do a test about the vocabulary seen in the 3 lessons. The teacher will collect the tests and will give each student one test, different from the one they have done. The teacher will ask for the answers and the whole class will say the answers out loud; the teacher will correct them if necessary. Every student will check the test they have and they will mark it. Finally, the teacher will collect the test again and will give them back to their owner. (Source: original)	25'
Explanation of the one-minute paper	2'
One-minute paper: Students will write in one minute what they have liked about the teaching process and about the activities and they will also write something they have not liked.	1'

Teacher actions and classroom management:

The teacher will start the lesson with a warm-up. He / she will ask the students some questions to check their knowledge about advertisements. The teacher will give some clues if the students do not know much vocabulary about advertisements.

The teacher will arrange the groups for the discussion about the advertisements played in class. He / she will make sure that the students with the highest level are not working together with the students with the lowest level.

The teacher will arrange the groups for the activity “Guess the advert”, taking into account again the differences in the students’ level.

The teacher will monitor the debate. He / she will also arrange the groups, taking into account again the same criteria as in the previous activity. The teacher will be the moderator of the debate, making sure all the students take part in it.

The teacher will monitor the groups during the whole lesson. He / she will walk round the class to check if students are working properly or to answer questions if they have any doubts. The teacher will write down the errors or mistakes he / she hears and will give feedback at the end of the activity.

The teacher will tell the students how much time they have available for each activity. The teacher will answer any students’ questions. If they have doubts about the vocabulary, the teacher can provide the students with a dictionary if necessary.

Expected learning outcomes:

At the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

- Recognize and use examples of vocabulary about advertisements,
- Comprehend and interpret oral texts about advertisements,
- Identify and analyze the main elements of advertisements,
- Notice and check their partners’ mistakes in a composition,
- Comprehend oral texts in “real English”,
- Agree and disagree in groups and
- Work / learn cooperatively.

Materials and resources used:

All the materials of this learning unit of work are included in appendixes. Moreover, these are other materials that will be used in class:

- Computer and Internet.
- Blackboard.
- Pens.

Assessment and feedback:

Feedback will be continuously given to students after and during every activity: their pronunciation or grammar mistakes will be corrected on the blackboard when they finish their speech or utterance.

Furthermore, after a speaking activity, a peer-assessment will be carried out. Every student will have to assess a peer by filling in an assessment sheet. The teacher will collect these sheets at the end of the activity, he / she will write a short paragraph about their performance and he / she will give the students this sheet in the next lesson. This peer assessment will be carried out in the first lesson and the peer assessment sheet is included in appendixes.

Positive reinforcement is a must after each activity or utterance of every student. The teacher will encourage students for their contributions and will celebrate success.

Evaluation of teaching and learning process:

The teaching process will be evaluated after this lesson with a one-minute paper asking the students to write about what they have liked about the teaching process, what they have not liked, what activities they have liked or enjoyed and which ones do not.

The learning process will be evaluated at the end of this lesson with a test about the vocabulary seen in this learning unit of work. Moreover, it will be evaluated with the teacher's observation of the different activities the students will do in class.

Conclusions

Generally, I loved teaching this learning unit of work to my students. I had to implement it in two different groups of the same level (2nd year of the advanced level) but the level of the groups was so different (the first one had generally a high level of English and the second one a medium-high level) that I had to adapt the activities to the second group: I usually left them more time to do the activities and I helped them more. I have tried to design the most suitable activities for them, taking into account their needs and interests, their likes and dislikes.

It was really hard for me to control the timing. I prepared too many activities for the first lesson, but I decided not to implement all of them as the lesson progressed and I spent more time in the activities they were enjoying doing. It is not a good idea to hurry students to do the tasks, and that is why I left them work longer in not so many activities. The time these students spend doing the activities is really time on task, because they want to improve their English and they take advantage of every opportunity they have to talk in English. The reason that I prepared too many activities was that I did not know really how long it would take them to do an exercise, but in the following lessons my control of timing was better. It also influences that the students are really talkative, and even if you tell them to stop, they would like to keep talking and talking.

During my school placement, I have also realized that some students are really dependent on dictionaries and it is hard to make them understand that they can rephrase the words they want to say or use other knowledge they have. They really want to know an equivalent word for every single Spanish word, and this is not possible most of the times. Furthermore, teaching adults can sometimes be hard, specially people who are taking this course (advanced level); they sometimes think they already know everything and some of them are not happy when you correct them or suggest they say things in another way. This is not the case with every student, as some of them are really grateful that you correct them or that you try to help them as much as you can. You also have to be patient with older people sometimes, as it is harder for them to understand and to process information.

In conclusion, I have enjoyed designing and implementing activities for both group of students and I would like to keep on teaching in a future. I have tried to apply

all the theories seen in class to make my teaching and my students' learning as effective as possible. I have learnt that it is really important to know your students and to try to design the most suitable activities for them. If there is a good class spirit, it is easier to teach students, so it is important to create and maintain this good class spirit. Generally, I have felt proud of my teaching, although I know I have to improve many aspects. Not only have I taught something to my students, but I have also learnt many things from them, and it is very comforting to notice that your students are learning from you and that you are learning from them.

References

British Council webpage: www.teachinenglish.org.uk.

Straightforward Advanced, Macmillan.

YouTube.

Appendixes

LESSON 1: ACTIVITIES

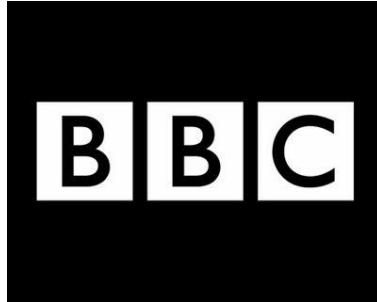
WARM-UP:

- What do you know about British / American TV?
- Do you usually watch TV in English? Which programmes do you watch?
- Do you know how TV is financed in the UK?
- Do you prefer watching TV in English or in Spanish?

ACTIVITY 1: BBC TEXT

1. Work in small groups. Read the information about the BBC and discuss the questions.

Founded in 1922, Corporation radio and the largest the world. As well and radio, the



the British Broadcasting broadcasts on television, internet and is the corporation of its kind in as domestic television BBC broadcasts

worldwide in English and other languages via television stations such as BBC World, BBC Arabic and BBC America, as well as World Service Radio.

The corporation receives most of its funding from the television licence fee, which all television owners in Britain are required to pay. Revenue also comes from its many commercial activities: the subsidiary BBC Worldwide is responsible for a wide range of businesses including magazine and book publishing, education and training videos, English language teaching, interactive telephony, exhibitions and live events.

The BBC is regulated by a Royal Charter which recognizes its editorial independence from the government and sets out its aim to inform, educate and entertain. Some people express concern, however, that it is not always entirely independent and that it often sacrifices quality in its programming for the sake of higher ratings.

Questions:

- Do you ever watch, listen to or log on to the BBC? If so, what is your opinion of the service?
- How are the different TV companies in your country financed?
- How independent of government are they?
- Which TV channels and radio stations do you most often tune in to and why?

ACTIVITY 2: WORD SEARCH

Types of TV programmes

What kind of programmes are there in your country? See if you can find fourteen different types of TV programmes in the word search.

L	S	C	L	F	N	B	A	S	G	Y	Q	C	S	B
N	E	M	H	E	I	C	V	Y	A	Y	E	W	E	M
R	I	N	W	A	Z	L	R	Z	M	O	O	C	Z	U
T	R	S	O	K	T	E	M	A	E	H	V	Z	Z	S
P	A	L	W	S	K	S	Y	S	S	Y	I	D	I	I
M	T	O	O	O	N	K	H	Y	H	Y	B	N	U	C
D	N	Y	O	K	T	O	T	O	O	B	P	O	Q	E
E	E	C	G	S	M	I	O	I	W	D	S	D	T	T
Z	M	U	J	G	L	U	X	T	S	S	V	F	N	I
Z	U	S	O	A	P	O	P	E	R	A	S	I	H	Y
E	C	X	E	R	U	D	R	A	M	A	X	C	G	A
S	O	R	R	Y	Y	C	I	T	N	R	C	N	I	L
E	D	P	U	G	L	D	L	X	C	Q	T	P	D	K
Y	S	X	S	G	A	R	D	E	N	I	N	G	H	E
J	D	C	W	J	F	S	K	O	K	A	F	G	D	T

- CARTOONS
- CHAT SHOWS
- COOKERY
- DIY
- DOCUMENTARIES
- DRAMA

- FILMS
- GAME SHOWS
- GARDENING
- MUSIC
- NEWS
- QUIZZES
- REALITY SHOWS
- SOAP OPERAS

Can you think of any more types of TV programmes?

Now give a definition of each programme and think of one programme on television in your country that fits into each category.

ACTIVITY 3: VOCABULARY ACTIVITY (CARDS)

A. Are you a couch potato , capable	B. than a documentary or a current affairs programme ?
A. Do you often channel-hop , switching	B. between channels with the remote control ?
A. Are you more likely to watch a soap or a sitcom	B. but do you often watch daytime television ?
A. Which programmes are top of the ratings	B. are you happy with just the recorded highlights ?
A. Prime time television is usually mid-evening,	B. of spending hours on the sofa glued to the television ?
A. An anchor is an American term for	B. a newsreader . Who are the most famous newsreaders in your country?
A. Do you watch terrestrial television or	B. cable and satellite ?
A. Do you often watch live sports coverage or	B. in your country, with the highest number of viewers ?

ACTIVITY 4: SPEAKING ACTIVITY: TV HABITS

TV HABITS

Let's talk about your TV habits. Discuss these questions with your partner and be prepared to give a short speech about your partner's TV habits and opinions.

- How many hours a day / a week do you watch TV?
- How many TV and radios do you have at home?
- Which programmes do you like / don't like? (Tip: you can use: I really love, I can't stand, I'm (not) keen on...)
- Which programmes do you usually watch?
- Do you prefer Spanish or foreign programmes? Why?
- Which one is your favourite? Why do you like it?
- Do you listen to the radio? Which dial or programme do you listen to?
- What types of programmes are most popular in your country? Why do you think they are so popular?

PEER ASSESSMENT SHEET FOR THIS ACTIVITY:

	1	2	3	4
Did your partner adjust to the topic?				
How fluent was your partner when speaking?				
How accurate was his / her pronunciation?				
How coherent was his / her speech?				
How well have you generally understood him / her?				
Which is your overall impression of your partner's performance?				

Comments:

ACTIVITY 5: LISTENING: INTERVIEW WITH MICHAEL EMERSON (LOST)
PRE-READING ACTIVITY: SHORT TEXT ABOUT “LOST” AND BEN LINUS



Lost is an American television series consisting of six seasons. It is a drama series that follows the survivors of the crash of a commercial passenger jet flying between Sydney and Los Angeles, on a mysterious tropical island somewhere in the South Pacific Ocean. The story is told in a heavily serialized manner. Episodes typically feature a primary storyline on the island, as well as a secondary storyline from another point in a character's life.



Ben Linus is a fictional character portrayed by Michael Emerson on the ABC television series Lost. Ben was the leader of a group of island natives called the Others and was initially known as Henry Gale to the survivors of Oceanic Flight 815. He began as the antagonist during the second and third seasons, but in subsequent seasons, becomes something of an uneasy ally to the main characters; even so, however, throughout the series, he is persistently characterized by spontaneous coldblooded actions and the shroud of moral ambiguity. Other characters frequently describe him as loyal only to himself, though it is also often hinted that he may be driven by some higher purpose.

As with most characters on Lost, Ben's history is revealed through flashbacks and episodes set in other time periods which are revealed slowly as the series progresses.

Ben, although extremely well-mannered, has an impeccable ability to lie and manipulate the people around him. He can also be petty and vindictive, even to the point of murder, when he does not get what he wants. He unsuccessfully tries to convince the survivors

he is Henry Gale. While he claims he will not sacrifice innocent lives in order to accomplish his goals, he has been shown to do quite the opposite.

Ben's unclear motives have led to speculation about his possible status as a villain. Actor Michael Emerson suspects where Ben's loyalties lie will always be ambiguous, making this a "wonderful role". He is rarely shown losing control of his emotions, but when he does, it is done in a big and childish way. Emerson explains "He's cold because any trace of warmth makes him vulnerable to his enemies". Ben is also known for his commitment to the island and doing whatever is necessary to protect it. He always has a plan and is described as a "know-it-all".

Link to the video: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z8tGMpnTzA0>

WHILE-READING AND POST-READING QUESTIONS

Listening exercise: Michael Emerson (Ben Linus, Lost)

Answer these questions while you watch the interview:

1. Do we see a turning point in Ben Linus character when he goes back to the Island to be judged?
2. Can we clearly see that Ben Linus is a good guy?
3. Has the end of the Smoke Monster already happened?
4. Which is a milestone for any show?
5. When did he arrive to the show?
6. How much fun is for him to be recognised by people?
7. How has his life and career changed?
8. Has the finale already been shot? What does he tell about it?
9. Is he going to make an appearance on the show "True Blood"? Which character would he love to play?
10. What character did his wife play on Lost?

LESSON 2: ACTIVITIES

ACTIVITY 1. WARM-UP: TV PROGRAMMES (CARDS)

Documentary	Chat show
DIY	Quiz show
Reality show	Soap opera
Series	Sitcom
The news	Cartoons
Late night show	Current affairs programme
The weather forecast	Live sports coverage
Recorded highlights	Docudrama

ACTIVITY 2. ROLE-PLAY

Here is your role card. The other students in your group must not see your card. Study the TV programme guide with your group. You are going to discuss the programmes and try to agree on what to watch. Remember you must take on the role on your card and forget about what you'd really like to watch!

Role card 1

You are a fifteen-year-old teenager. You like action films and sport programmes. You don't mind factual programmes like the News or documentaries but you hate soap operas and romantic films. You like films that are violent. You think they are exciting.

Here is your role card. The other students in your group must not see your card. Study the TV programme guide with your group. You are going to discuss the programmes and try to agree on what to watch. Remember you must take on the role on your card and forget about what you'd really like to watch!

Role Card 2

You are a parent. You like anything that is funny. You don't like violence on TV. You like all sport except football. You love music and documentaries. You prefer watching programmes that last less than an hour because you always have a lot of things to do.

Here is your role card. The other students in your group must not see your card. Study the TV programme guide with your group. You are going to discuss the programmes and try to agree on what to watch. Remember you must take on the role on your card and forget about what you'd really like to watch!

Role Card 3

You are a grandparent. You like to watch documentaries and soap operas. You always fall asleep in films. You don't like sport very much but you like football. You like watching television programmes that make you laugh.

Here is your role card. The other students in your group must not see your card. Study the TV programme guide with your group. You are going to discuss the programmes and try to agree on what to watch. Remember you must take on the role on your card and forget about what you'd really like to watch!

Role card 4

You are a fourteen-year-old teenager. You love sport and all films. You hate documentaries and news programmes. You don't mind comedy programmes. You don't like soap operas unless they are about young people.

TV SCHEDULE (Source: www.onthebox.com)

BBC1	BBC2	ITV1	CHANNEL 4	FIVE	E4
09:00 Breakfast (News)	09:00 The Slammer (Children's)	09:00 Fort Boyard: Ultimate Challenge (Game Show)	09:25 The Album Chart Show (Music)	09:40 Mist: Sheepdog Tales (Adventure)	09:30 Supernanny US (Reality)
10:00 Saturday Kitchen (Cookery)	10:30 Splatalot (Game Show)	10:25 The Jeremy Kyle Show (Reality)	10:55 Charlie's Angels (Series)	10:00 Meerkat Manor (Documentary) 10:30 Holiday Heaven on Earth (Travel)	10:25 Gok's Clothes Roadshow (Fashion)
	11:40 MOTD Kickabout (Football)	11:20 The Real Housewives of New York City (Reality)	11:55 The Big Bang Theory (Sitcom)	11:15 Police interceptors (Reality)	
12:00 BBC News 12:10 BBC London News: Weather	12:00 The sky at Night (Science) 12:20 Road to Rio (Film: Comedy)	12:20 Murder, She Wrote (Mystery)	12:20 The Simpsons	12:15 Eddie Stobart: Trucks and Trailers (Documentary)	12:15 Football Focus
13:00 Live: The Boat Race (Rowing)		13:25 The Planet's Funniest Animals (Entertainment)	13:55 Live: Racing (Horses)	13:15 Rory McGrath's Pub Dig (Documentary)	13:20 Hollyoaks Omnibus (Soap opera)
	14:00 Bringing Up Baby (Film: comedy)				14:20 Ambush at Tomahawk Gap (Film: action)
15:05 The Masters 2012 PGA Tour Golf	15:35 Escape to the Country (Documentary)	15:55 Willy Wonka and the Chocolate Factory (Film)		15:45 War Arrow (Film: Western)	
	16:05 Flog it! (Soap opera)		16:05 Come Dine with Me (Cookery)		
	17:05 Dad's Army (Sitcom)	17:00 Live: The Masters PGA Tour Golf	17:00 Doctor Who (Science fiction)	17:05 4thought.tv (Current events)	17:00 My name is Earl (Sitcom)
	18:10 Take Me Out (Romance)	18:00 Big Fat Gypsy Weddings (Documentary)		18:30 The Cleveland Show (Animated)	

ACTIVITY 3. READING “COP AND DOC!”

COP AND DOC!

TEXT A

While you read the text check you understand the following words and phrases.
Use a dictionary or ask your teacher if you need any help.

English	Meaning	English	Meaning
Cop		Thrills	
Doc		Issues	
Tried and tested		At risk	
Rely on		Poke fun at	
Audience		A wide range	
Trend		Crime ridden streets	

Start reading the text aloud allowing time for your partner to write the missing words. Then listen carefully to your partner and write the words that are missing from your text.

Cop and Doc!

Tried and tested

British television has a reputation for the variety and the quality of its programming. However, as the number of television channels increases, and it becomes harder to find an audience for their shows, programme makers are increasingly relying on tried and tested formats.

Thrills and no risk

Shows set in hospitals, police stations and the crime-ridden streets have for many years been popular with viewers. This is not surprising: they deal with issues that are important to us all, such as justice and the meaning of life; they can show us the thrills of a dangerous world without putting us at risk, and they open up the possibility of all sorts of fascinating interpersonal relationships.

Challenging drama

This does not mean, however, that all of these shows are the same. Viewers can watch hourly or half-hourly 'soap operas' set in hospitals and police stations (Doctors, Casualty, The Bill). There is a wide range of challenging drama about all aspects of the medical and justice worlds (recent examples being Spooks and Bodies).

After reading the text, decide with your partner if these statements are true or false. Correct the false statements.

1. The number of TV channels is increasing.
2. There are lots of new and unusual programmes.
3. TV dramas set in hospitals and police stations have been popular for a long time.
4. All the new shows are the same.
5. There are no American TV shows on British television.

Discuss these questions with your partner:

- Are there many programmes about police stations or hospitals in your country? Can you give an example?
- Do you like these series? Why? Why not?

COP AND DOC!

TEXT B

While you read the text check you understand the following words and phrases.

Use a dictionary or ask your teacher if you need any help.

English	Meaning	English	Meaning
Cop		Thrills	
Doc		Issues	
Tried and tested		At risk	
Rely on		Poke fun at	
Audience		A wide range	
Trend		Crime ridden streets	

Start reading the text aloud allowing time for your partner to write the missing words. Then listen carefully to your partner and write the words that are missing from your text.

Cop and Doc!

Tried and tested

By doing this they know that they have more chance of finding an audience than they would through more innovative or unusual television. A good example of

this trend is the focus on television shows about the worlds of medicine and crime prevention.

Thrills and no risk

However, over the last ten years, the number of ‘Cop and Doc’ shows being shown on television has increased dramatically, and now make up a far greater percentage of the total amount of television shown.

Challenging drama

We can even watch comedies which poke fun at the very factors which make these shows so compelling (The Thin Blue Line, The Green Wing)! In addition, the UK along with the rest of the world’s viewing public is lucky enough to be able to watch the very best ‘Cop and Doc’ shows from the United States, giving us another perspective on how drama and comedy can be drawn from these very interesting worlds.

After reading the text, decide with your partner if the statements are true or false. Correct the false statements.

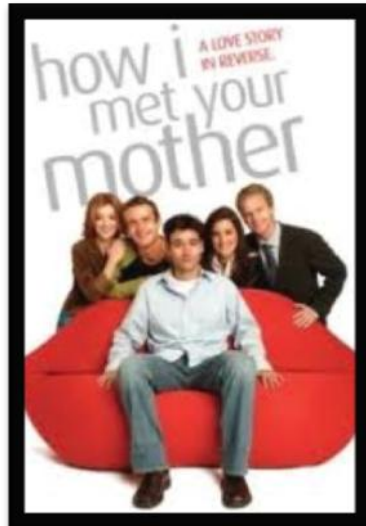
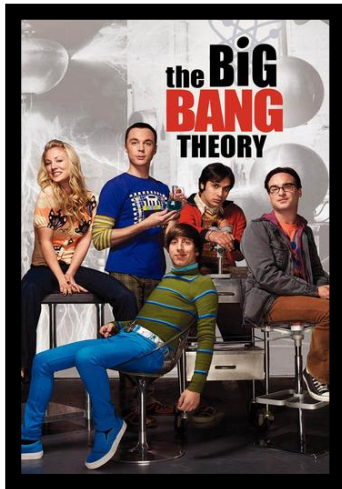
1. The number of TV channels is increasing
2. There are lots of new and unusual programmes
3. TV dramas set in hospitals and police stations have been popular for a long time.
4. All the new shows are the same
5. There are no American TV shows on British television

Discuss these questions with your partner:

- Are there many programmes about police stations or hospitals in your country? Can you give an example?
- Do you like these series? Why? Why not?

ACTIVITY 4. SPEAKING ACTIVITY: FAVOURITE TV SERIES

TV SERIES:



Think of your favourite TV series and tell your partner about:

- The plot
- Main characters
- When and where (on TV, on the Internet...) do you watch it
- How many seasons has it got
- How long has it been on the air or if it is still on the air
- Why do you like it
- What makes it different from other TV series
- Anything you'd like to add

Take notes about what your partner says and write a composition at home about your partner's favourite TV series (150-180). Write as well a personal comment about your partner's favourite TV series (if you like it or not in case you have seen it, or give your opinion taking into account what your partner has told you).

ACTIVITY 5. WRITING: RUBRIC

	1	2	3	4	COMMENTS
The student has adjusted to the requested length					
The student has written an introduction, body and conclusion					
The student has structured the composition correctly					
The student has followed the guiding questions					
The student has written on topic					
The student has made good use of paragraphs, has used punctuation marks, capital letters and connectors correctly					
The student has used a great variety of lexis, including the vocabulary of the learning unit of work					
The student has used grammar correctly					
The register and the style used are correct					
There is a variety in sentence structure					

MARKING CODE FOR THE WRITING:

G – GRAMMAR

V – VOCABULARY

SP – SPELLING

S.M. – SOMETHING IS MISSING

N.N. – NON-NECESSARY

W.O. – WORD ORDER

RW – REWRITE

ST – STYLE

R – REGISTER

P – PUNCTUATION

?? – INCOMPREHENSIBLE

LESSON 3

ACTIVITY 1: WARM-UP: BRAINSTORMING OF ADVERTISING

- What kind of advertisement do you know?
 - o Suggestions: pop-ups, TV/radio commercials, infomercials, fliers, a freesheet, a mailshot, spam, to cold call.
- Do you know the specific name of the music of advertisements? (jingle)
- Are there too many TV commercials in programme breaks?
- What do you think of the brands which try to seek publicity from celebrities?

ACTIVITY 2: ADVERTISEMENTS (VIDEOS)

Links to the videos played in class:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tNxDd3l0lEU>

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ao0x4zsb724>

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S4PpTP2pu8k>

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hmJGKjEvu-U>

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F_-9QFvhQWo

Questions for the discussion about the videos:

- What is your opinion about these advertisements?
- Do you find them appealing? Have you ever bought anything just because the advert was appealing?
- Do you find any of them disrespectful or controversial?
- Would you buy or consume any of these products?
- Would you change anything of these advertisements?

ACTIVITY 4. DEBATE (AGREE / DISAGREE)

1. Television is an excellent way to learn about what's happening in the rest of the world.
2. Watching TV is a waste of time.
3. Television is bad for your health.
4. I could easily live without television.
5. Television is a tool for brainwashing people.
6. Television is a great way to relax.

ACTIVITY 6. FINAL TEST:

Answer the following questions individually:

- 1. The American word for the person who introduces the news is...
- 2. A TV story about many people that usually lasts for years is...
- 3. A lazy person who watches TV for hours every day is...
- 4. When you keep changing TV channels you are...(verb)
- 5. A colloquial way of saying you are clever:
- 6. A short tune used in advertisements which is easy to remember:
- 7. A TV advert that demonstrates how a product works with a number for customers to call is ...
- 8. A funny series, usually involving the same characters and locations is...
- 9. A programme that reports about a sports event, broadcast as it happens is...
- 10. The way that BBC TV is funded in the UK:

ONE-MINUTE PAPER

Give your opinion about:

- what you liked of me as a teacher
- what you didn't like of me as a teacher
- what activities you liked the most
- what activities you didn't like
- any other comments or suggestions you would like to add

APPENDIX 2: RESEARCH PROJECT

UNIVERSIDAD
DE
ZARAGOZA

RESEARCH PROJECT ON THE EFFECTIVENESS OF ROLE-PLAY TO IMPROVE ORAL COMMUNICATION IN ENGLISH AMONG SECONDARY SCHOOL AND OFFICIAL LANGUAGE SCHOOL STUDENTS

Evaluación e Innovación docente e Investigación educativa
en el ámbito de la especialidad de Inglés



| Ana Alloza Clemente, Irene Cortés Acero, Cristina García Vicente &
José Miguel Gaspar Casbas |

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INTRODUCTION

This research attempts to look into the effectiveness of role-plays to improve oral communication in English among secondary school and Official Language school students. It arises from the urgent necessity of Spanish students of developing their oral skills. In general, these students are as characterized by their command of the grammatical rules, as by their lack of oral abilities. As a result, when it comes to speak in English in a different environment of that of the education centre, their competence in the language is deemed extremely poor, if we bear in mind the years of exposure to this same language. Since it is indeed quite difficult for teachers to give students the opportunity of experiencing a different environment in the education centre, they should work to provide their students with real-life situations in the classroom. Not only can teachers achieve this purpose by means of the use of authentic materials, but also with the implementation of a well-known technique: the role- play. There are numerous benefits and surprisingly positive results associated with this technique, which we will try to prove in the following pages.

Background of the research

Owing to our experience as English learners and the little time we have spent on our Practicum observing certain lessons we have reached the conclusion that oral skills are not properly worked nowadays. Although the curriculum states that they are fundamental to fulfil the minimum goals of each stage, the reality is that, from our point of view, oral skills are not given enough importance. The prominent features worked in schools are grammar and vocabulary, with little emphasis on the rest of communicative skills. As a result, the English level of Spanish students is deemed poor worldwide, and our problems are shown when travelling abroad or applying for a job.

The importance of English as a second language cannot be denied. Not only is a medium for negotiation and business, but a medium to obtain information and knowledge in a globalized world. Consequently, our concern for the state of the language in our future students is well founded.

There has been a lot of criticism and comments about the low level of English among Spanish-speaking students and most of them are addressed to the figure of the

teacher. English teachers' reputation is not as positive as in Northern European countries. It is widely considered that teachers in Spain are not motivated or proficient in teaching English. However, with a big class of between 25 to 30 students and several classes to teach, the academic load for teachers is very dense. We, as future teachers, are going to focus on the analysis of the current ways of teaching oral skills and the implementation of role-plays as a tool to develop these communicative (oral) skills and change these facts and popular believes.

Significance of the research

As it has been mentioned before, the problem regarding the lack of oral skills among Spanish learners of English is affecting not only their overall level of English but also the notion other countries have of the Spanish teachers of English. As a consequence, we deemed absolutely necessary to approach this subject and the literature about it in order to understand it and in a near future be able to offer some type of solution to this delicate issue.

Research structure

The project consists of the following points: we are going to analyse first, the current trend in high schools and official language schools regarding the teaching of oral skills. After that, we are going to examine critically our own centres of education by means of a series of surveys that will give us information about how the oral skills are treated, the response of the students to this teaching and so on. Furthermore, we are going to observe different lessons from different levels so as to count with a more objective view of the issue. The next step is going to focus on introducing the topic of drama as an alternative to work the oral skills. We are going to study the literature on the topic and see if there is an actual possibility of carrying out this project. In order to do this, we would interview teachers and students to see their acceptance of the topic.

I. LITERATURE REVIEW

Role-play, as defined by Livingstone (1983), is a classroom activity which gives the students the opportunity to practise the language they may need outside the classroom; that is to say, a speaking activity which improves communicative competence and provides practice in contexts which simulate real-life experience.

The main advantage of this technique, according to Al-Mutawa & Kailani (1989), is that it affords the opportunity to practise a new structure in the context of natural communicative usage. Ments (1999) and Livingstone (1983) add that role-play increases learners' motivation and involvement in the learning process. Role-play also enhances learners' imagination and their communication skills. Therefore, that is why it is an enjoyable and formative activity for learners. Furthermore, it gives the opportunity for learners to identify themselves with different social roles promoting the acquisition and development of social and civic competence.

Not only has it advantages, but also disadvantages as any other activity. Ments points out that discipline may be hard to maintain during role-play and the teacher could lose control of the class. He also notes that it is a time-consuming activity. Moreover, the pacing of the role-play can be altered by the embarrassment of some students, who do not feel comfortable acting out in front of their peers.

In the course of our search for information on the use of role-plays, we have noticed that there are more advantages than disadvantages, when role-plays are used in an appropriate way. We consider that these disadvantages can be solved easily. On the one hand, the loss of control could be avoided by assigning the students, who are not taking part in the role-play, a task such as assessing their partners or a follow-up activity. On the other hand, embarrassment could be solved by giving them advice or support or celebrating success when acting out the role-play in front of the class. With regards to the fact of being a time-consuming activity, we do not agree with Ments' point of view concerning this aspect, since it is not a waste of time and it is absolutely useful for language acquisition, projecting their voices, gaining self-esteem and improving their spontaneity.

Like any learning activity, role-plays require a very detailed organization and according to Cameron (2001:30), they should be “appropriate for the children’s age and social-cultural experience”. When designing the activity, teachers have to choose an interesting and motivating topic related to the lesson he/she is teaching. We need to introduce key vocabulary and expressions the students may use. Additionally, flash cards should be provided to learners to guide the whole process and they should be given enough time to understand the context and develop their own ideas. During the performance, teachers ought to take into account fluency rather than accuracy and reassure their students that they should not be influenced by their possible hesitations or mistakes. Finally, the whole class must have a task at any time and it is also essential to reinforce students’ effort.

In order to succeed with role-plays the following points should be considered (Lazaraton 2001):

- Prepare carefully: Introduce the activity by describing the situation and making sure that all of the students understand it.
- Set a goal or outcome: Be sure the students understand what the product of the role-play should be, whether a plan, a schedule, a group opinion, or some other product.
- Use role cards: Give each student a card that describes the person or role to be played. For lower-level students, the cards can include words or expressions that that person might use.
- Before you start the role-play, have students brainstorm as a class to predict what vocabulary, grammar, and idiomatic expressions they might use (language-oriented input). Some ideas (content-oriented input) may also be necessary before starting the role-play.
- If groups are small, less-confident students will feel more able to participate, as they do not have to compete with many voices.
- Students will work at their own levels: Each student has individual language skills, an individual approach to working in groups, and a specific role to play in the activity. Do not expect all students to contribute equally to the discussion, or to use every grammar point you have taught.
- Do linguistic follow-up: After the role-play is over, feedback can be given on grammar or pronunciation problems you have heard.

II. METHODOLOGY

A school placement is one of the best thinkable ways to put into practice a research project regarding the effectiveness of role-play to improve oral communication. In addition, when a project is carried out by four student teachers visiting different education centres (in various contexts and dealing with a great variety of students), its dimension increases substantially. As a result, we are going to use as many tools as possible in order to gather relevant information that could adjust to the objective of this project.

Participants

The objects of this study were selected because we had implemented our learning unit of work in these classes and they already knew us and the way we worked. The teachers that we selected for our piece of research were our mentors. These are the groups in which we carried out our piece of research:

- Colegio María Auxiliadora:
 - 2 groups of 3rd year ESO; total number of students: 32.
- I.E.S. Ángel Sanz Briz:
 - 1 group of 4th year ESO; 18 students.
- I.E.S. Miguel Catalán:
 - 1 group of 1st Bachillerato; 30 students.
- Official Language School Number 1:
 - 2 groups of Second Advanced Level; 24 students.

Materials

Research Questions

The aim of this study is to investigate the effectiveness of role-play to improve oral communication in English among secondary school and Official Language school

students. Our main purpose is to know students' opinion and personal situation concerning oral communication activities and also teachers' opinion and way of teaching them. Therefore, we have handed two surveys to the students (to complete before and after the implementation of the project) and one to the teachers. (See Appendix I).

Role-plays

We selected different materials according to the topic they were working on at that moment. (See Appendix II).

- Colegio María Auxiliadora: the topic was "Law and Order" and there were two different situations to perform in groups of three or in pairs.
- I.E.S. Ángel Sanz Briz: the topic was "Crime and Punishment" and there were six different situations to perform in groups of three.
- I.E.S. Miguel Catalán: the topic was "Travels and Holidays" and there were five different situations to perform in groups of three.
- E.O.I. Number 1: the topic was "Television and Advertisement" and there was one situation to perform in groups of four.

Procedures

During the first week of the Practicum III, we gave a survey before implementing the role-plays to the abovementioned groups. After acting the role-plays in the second week, we handed out the second survey. While the students were preparing their roles and during their performance, we observed them and took notes about relevant aspects (vocabulary according to the topic, use of English/Spanish, use of notes, asking for help, engagement and enjoyment).

As for teachers' surveys, we gave them to one teacher of the English Department in each centre.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In this section, we will analyse the results obtained in the different surveys carried out during our school placement. First of all, we will examine the teacher's responses regarding their opinion about the education system and its relation to the oral practice. In second place, we will comment on the answers provided by the students prior to the implementation of the role-plays. Thirdly, we will deal with the questionnaires given to the students after they have performed the distinct role-plays they were assigned. And finally, we will give our point of view about the implementation of the role-plays in the different centres.

Teacher's questionnaire

1. Regarding the teachers' opinion about whether the education system facilitates the implementation of speaking activities in class, all teachers except for the one in the Official Language School, share that there are too many students in class, mixed ability groups and they have to cover many curricular contents. The remaining teacher states that the system does not interfere in the practice of the speaking skills, depending only on the teacher's will.
2. The four skills are deemed important for all the teachers. However, they consider that being speaking the students' unfinished business; it should be given more importance than the rest of skills.
3. According to what we observed during our school placement, only two teachers are coherent; one points out that speaking should be worked more, but the rest of skills deserve their importance too, whereas the teacher from the Language School spent quite a lot of time with speaking activities. Two teachers remark that speaking is an essential part of their lessons but we did not see the truth of it.
4. Activities carried out in small groups or pairs are the most effective in the teachers' opinion. Students feel more comfortable when dealing with topics they are interested in.

5. Speaking is worked at least every week in every centre. In addition, there are some circumstances when speaking occurs spontaneously. In the language school, speaking is practiced every lesson due to a big amount of time and the methodology followed in this type of centres.
6. The only circumstance that prevents two of the teachers to work speaking activities is the unwillingness of the students towards these activities. On the other hand, one of these teachers complained of the lack of time and the great quantity of contents to cover.
7. As it can be observed in the previous questions, there are two types of teachers in our centres. Two who give a lot of importance to speaking activities and two who prefer working other skills. As a result, the former use role-plays, debates, games, presentations and interviews in order to practice speaking, while the latter basically resort to questions and answers dynamics.
8. Asked about the participation of the students in the speaking activities, learners in secondary schools are not completely engaged whereas people from the Language School would like to participate even more than they really do.
9. Students in Official Language School feel more or less confident in contrast to students in secondary schools who encounter more problems when speaking in front of an audience because they have barely done in previous stages. Furthermore, their speaking skill in terms of fluency, pronunciation and intonation are rather poor.
10. Teachers suggest that class spirit should be promoted from the very beginning to solve any communicative problems. Moreover, teachers should help students get rid of the sense which makes them feel ridiculous in situations they do not totally control. In addition, learners have to see the necessity of communicating in a foreign language, so that they find tasks are significant.
11. Teachers in secondary schools would need more time and fewer students per class in order to practice more speaking activities. With respect to the teacher in the Official Language School, he considers that his students practice a lot, although he also has to take into account the other skills as students have to sit an exam.

Pre role-play survey

Concerning the results obtained in questions 1 and 2 of this survey, most of the students (101 out of 102) point out that speaking is fundamental when learning a foreign language. As far as question 2 is concerned, students of María Auxiliadora and Ángel Sanz Briz have not understood the questions since their answers do not adjust to what we have been experiencing in these centres, due to, on the first school, the large amount of students and on the other one, the lack of willingness of the teacher. In the Official Language School, (1) students consider that speaking is an important part of the lesson, although it should be practiced more frequently. However, in I.E.S. Miguel Catalán, students agree that this skill is not practiced frequently because of the reasons mentioned above.

Regarding questions 3 and 4, the answers are varied depending on the nature of the education centre. Whereas in the high schools speaking and communication is worked during the teacher-student interaction, students in the Language School declare that they practice speaking not only interacting with the teacher, but also with the students in communicative tasks. They even meet after class to chat for one hour once a week. As a result of the previous statements, the most frequent way of communication is by means of questions and answers. This is the general tendency. However, small talks and role-play are practiced to a lesser extent.

When asked about their feelings and involvement in this type of activities, answers are determined by the students' level of English; Students with a good level of English are usually more self-confident than the students with a lower level. Speaking activities are more interesting, attractive and funnier than the rest of skills, according to the students' opinions. The majority of learners take part in speaking activities as much as they can, even though they get nervous or feel embarrassed.

With regard to the extracurricular activities and exchanges, participation is dependent on the socio economic context of the centres. Most of the students of I.E.S. Miguel Catalán attend private lessons and participate in several exchanges with Germany, Finland and France, while students from Colegio María Auxiliadora and I.E.S. Ángel Sanz Briz hardly take part in this kind of activities. In respect of the Official Language School, it is in itself an extracurricular centre.

In order to improve their oral skill, students suggest the implementation of the following activities: debates about current topics, role-plays, small talks about their personal preferences, contests and games.

Finally, students believe role-play can help them to improve their oral skills because they represent real-life situations and they contribute to make them express what they really know, although the best way to practise them is by improvising.

Taking into account the result of this survey we proceeded to the designing and implementing of the role-plays.

Observation of the role-plays

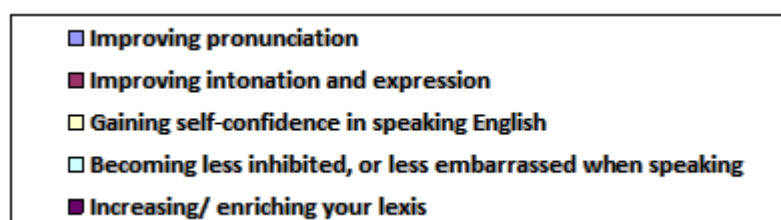
During the preparation of the role-plays, we helped students to create their speech for the performance giving them clues and advising them to use English properly. Furthermore, we also encouraged them to use the vocabulary of the unit and to develop their personal creativity.

All students acted out their situations in their small groups and some of the groups that volunteered represented them in front of the class. While they were performing, we helped them when needed and we took notes of their mistakes to let them talk fluently and correct them after the role-plays.

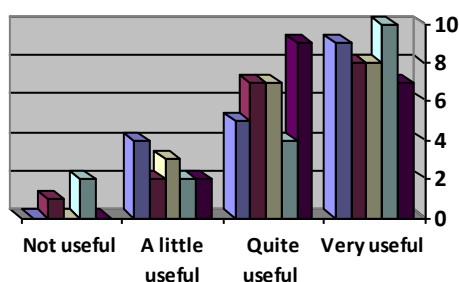
Post role-play survey

- Regarding the usefulness of role-plays to improve pronunciation, intonation and expression, the majority of students from the four centres find this technique useful for this purpose, eight out of one hundred and two consider that role-plays are not useful for improving pronunciation and six students think that they did not improve intonation and expression. With respect to gaining self-confidence and becoming less inhibited or embarrassed, results are balanced according to the students' opinions and only an average of 3 students per centre considers it to be not useful. Finally, most of the students' responses determine that role-plays are quite useful when enriching their lexis.

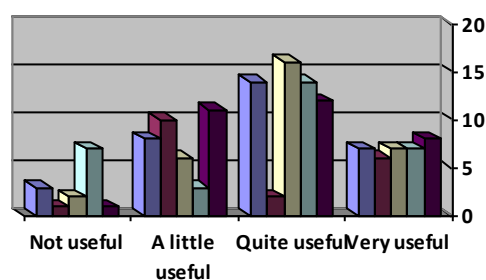
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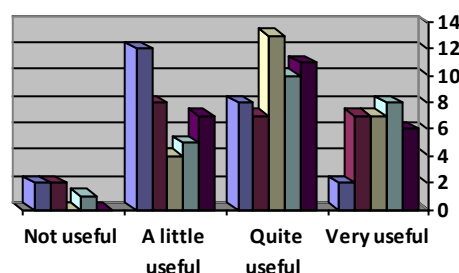
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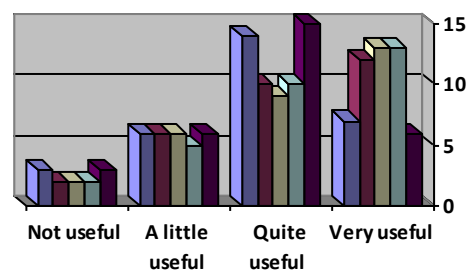
Colegio María Auxiliadora



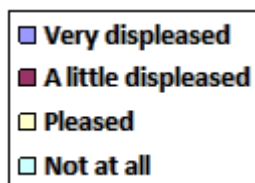
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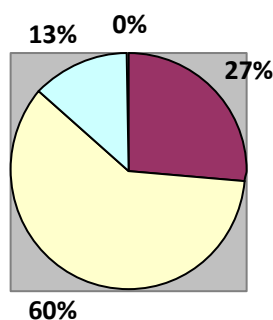


2. Considering the level of satisfaction of the students while expressing themselves in English, results reflect that the students felt pleased with their performance, since sixty-two out of one hundred and two stated so.

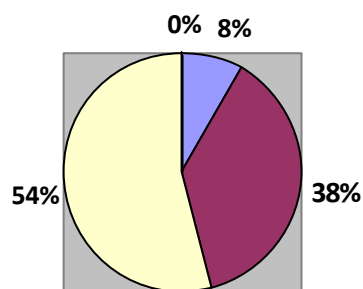


How did you feel about your ability to express yourself in English?

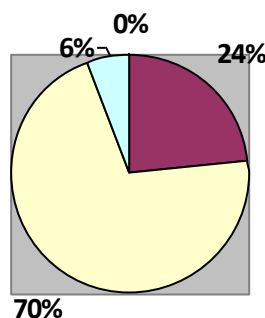
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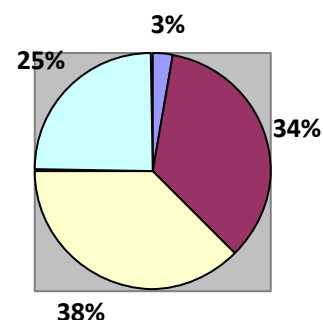
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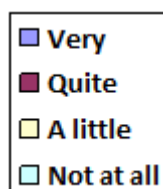
I.E.S. Ángel Sanz Briz



C. María Auxiliadora

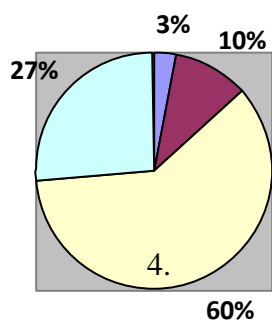


3. Regarding the design of the character, between 50% and 60% of the students found a little difficulty in this matter. Furthermore, results establish that around 45 % of the students had little problems identifying with their role.

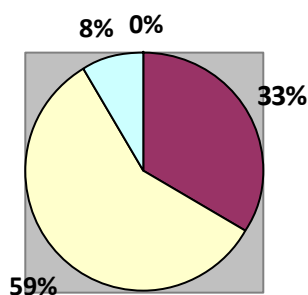


How difficult did you find to design and identify with your character?

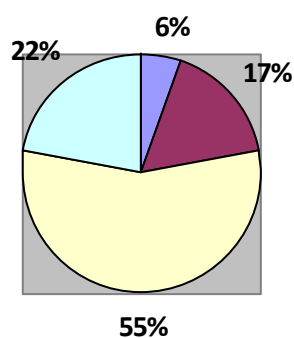
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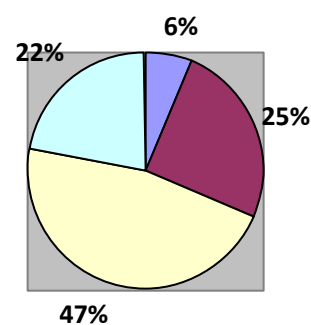
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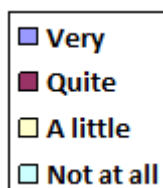
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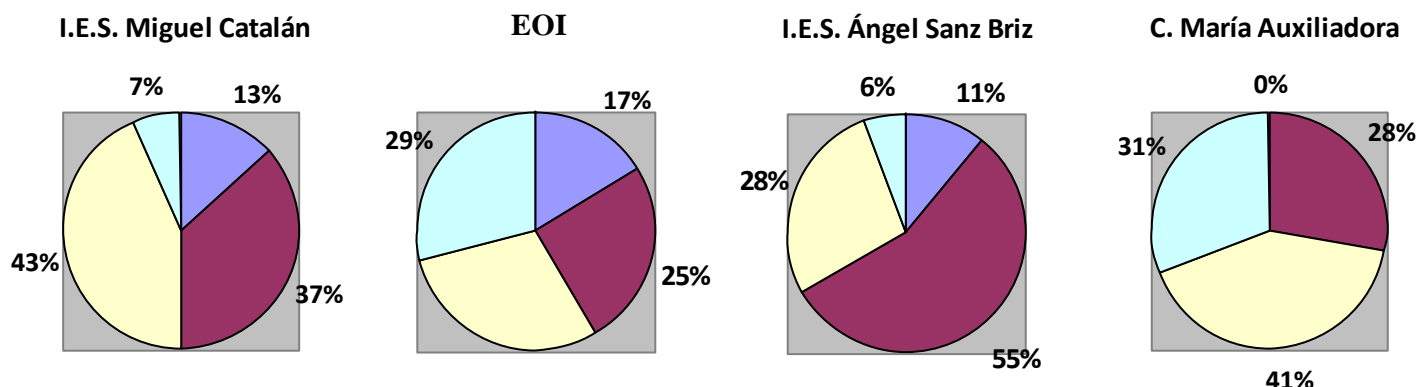
C. María Auxiliadora



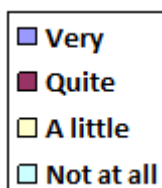
4. Analysing their feelings of nervousness, almost all the students felt somehow nervous, although it depends on the centres, the age and the lack of practice.



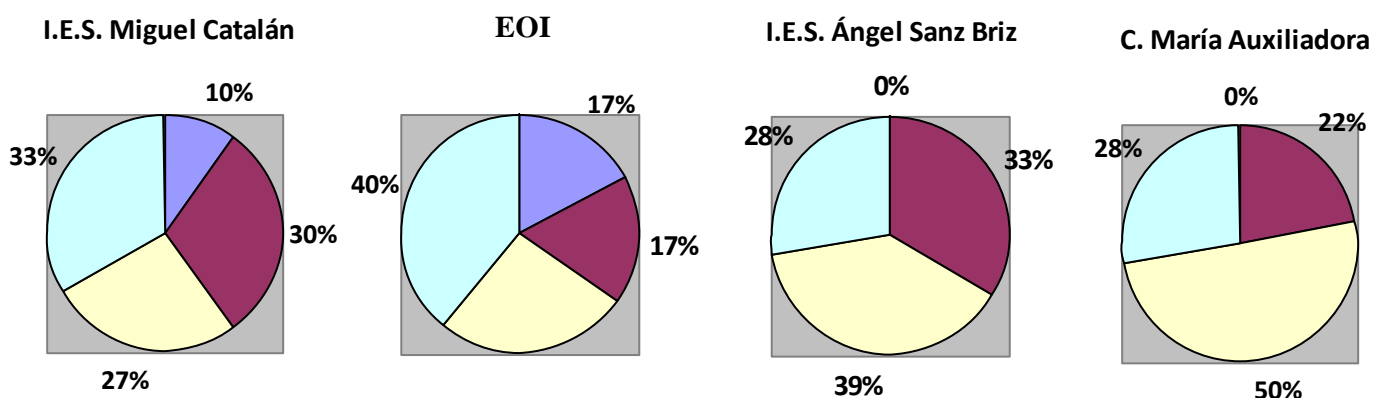
How nervous did you feel when representing your role?



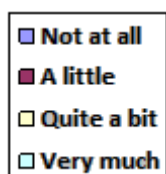
5. Concerning embarrassment, the results depend on the centres: the older the students, the less embarrassed they felt. Therefore, the students of ESO felt less comfortable probably owing to the pressure their partners can put on them.



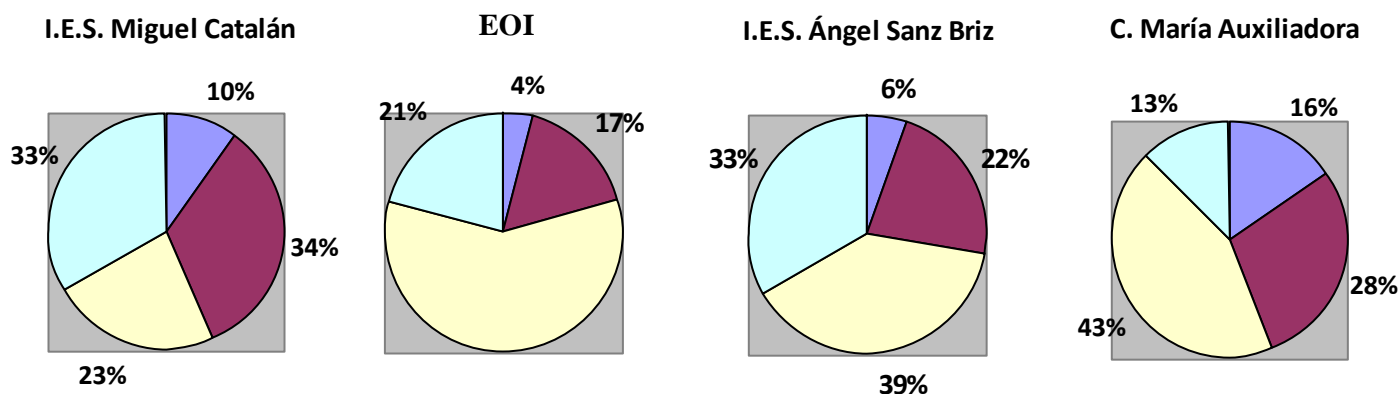
How embarrassed did you feel when acting in front of your partners?



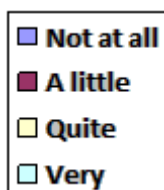
6. In spite of the difficulties and challenges, students enjoyed participating in the role-plays quite a bit.



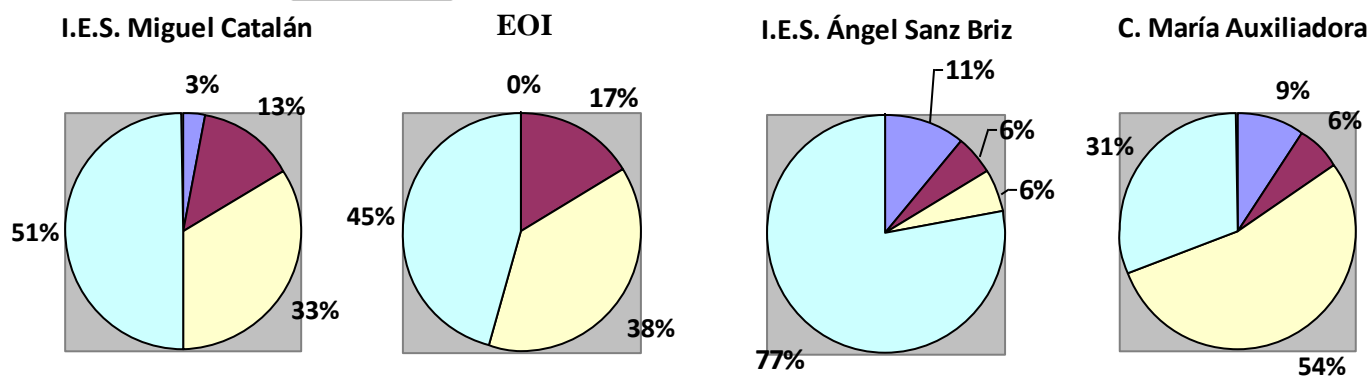
How much did you enjoy participating in the role-play?



7. With regard to the usefulness of role-plays, the results fluctuate between quite and very useful. Consequently, role-plays are deemed to be extremely helpful for students in order to improve their oral abilities. Furthermore, they highlight the benefits of this technique for gaining self-confidence and thinking in the target language. It is also a good tool to work the pragmatic competence, since students have to change their register and use gestures and body language. Besides, we consider that it could be a good method to put into practice the previous knowledge.



Do you consider that these activities are useful to improve your oral skills?



8. Asked about the possibility of participating in more role-plays, most of the students from secondary schools answered they would like to take part in this kind of activities, since they consider them useful (although they sometimes do not feel at ease when implementing role-plays) and entertaining and break the daily routine. Students who did not enjoy role-play were shy and they felt they lacked confidence and knowledge of English. Regarding students from the Official Language School, all except three are eager to continue performing role-plays, considering that role-plays are one of their only chances to practice the language.

CONCLUSIONS

Thanks to role-plays students have the opportunity to use their knowledge of vocabulary and suprasegmental features (speech acts, discourse fillers, turn taking, pauses, etc.) As it can be a very difficult or unnatural task if the students do not have sufficient language or information about the participant or the situation, we decided to carry out the role-play at the end of the unit.

As we have observed, the major obstacle we can encounter in a research project like this is related to the short period of time for its implementation. Two weeks are not enough to implement a variety of activities and role-plays that allow us to assemble some reliable evidence. As a result, the data collected during this period, although from different contexts and levels, would not suffice to demonstrate the feasibility of such a research. Furthermore, not all the components of the research might be able to develop the tasks required for each step of the research owing to their mentors' restrictions.

Given the nature of this study there are some differences between the Official Language School and Secondary Schools. Official Language Schools are based on the principles of communicative approach; therefore, speaking activities are a fundamental issue there. In secondary schools, although the curriculum fosters the implementation of this type of activities, factors such as the high ratio of students, the little amount of time or the difference between levels condition teachers when developing these activities. However, as the teachers establish in their surveys, their willingness to work speaking is crucial. As a consequence, teachers who want their students talking would not make excuses and provide the learners with the necessary resources in order to work communication.

To conclude, the results obtained throughout the surveys indicate that role-plays are a useful tool to improve communication since both the students and the teachers coincide with their advantages even though secondary school teachers should implement them more often. Moreover, learners have found that role-plays are motivating and help them to improve their speaking in a different and less conscious manner. Finally, the most powerful argument for us is that almost every student highlights his or her readiness to participate in future role-plays.

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APPENDIXES

Appendix I – Surveys

Role-play Survey

1. Do you think the current education system facilitates the implementation of speaking activities in class?
2. Which skill do you consider the most important? Which skill do your students need to improve?
3. Is speaking an important part in your lessons? Why?
4. Which sort of activities work better with your students? Why?
5. How often do you work speaking?
6. Are there any circumstances that prevent you from working speaking?
7. How do you work speaking? (sort of activities)
8. Do your students actively participate in these activities?
9. Do your students feel comfortable when doing speaking activities? If not, what are their main difficulties?
10. What could be done to solve this problem?
11. Would you like to practise more speaking in class? If so, what would you need to do it?

Pre-survey (Role-play)

1. Is speaking important when learning a language?
2. Is speaking an important part of your lessons? Why?
3. How often do you work speaking/communication?
4. How do you work communication? Role-play// Small talk// Question and answer//
Acting out a play (theatre) // Games
5. Do you feel comfortable when doing speaking activities?
6. When there is a speaking activity, do you take a part in it? If not, why?
 - I don't like English
 - I get nervous when I speak in English
 - I feel embarrassed in front of my partners
 - I don't have enough confidence when speaking in English
7. Do you do any extracurricular activities related to improve your oral skills? Which ones? (Private lessons, language schools, communication workshops)
8. Have you ever done a tandem/exchange?
9. Which activities would you like to do to improve your speaking?
10. Do you think that role-plays can help you to improve your oral skills?

Survey after the Role-play

❖ How useful was acting out a role-play for you in each of the following areas?

	Not useful	A little useful	Quite useful	Very useful
Improving pronunciation				
Improving intonation and expression				
Gaining self-confidence in speaking English				
Becoming less inhibited, or less embarrassed when speaking				
Increasing/ enriching your lexis				

❖ Think back to when you were acting out the role-play and try to remember how you felt about your ability to express yourself in English.

Very displeased	A little displeased	Pleased	Very pleased

❖ How difficult did you find to design your character?

Very	Quite	A little	Not at all

❖ How difficult did you find it to identify with the role you were playing?

Very	Quite	A little	Not at all

❖ How nervous did you feel when representing your role?

Very	Quite	A little	Not at all

❖ How embarrassed did you feel when acting in front of your partner?

Very	Quite	A little	Not at all

❖ How much did you enjoy participating in the role-play?

Not at all	A little	Quite a bit	Very much

❖ Do you consider that these activities are useful to improve your oral skills?

Not at all	A little	Quite	Very

Why/ Why not?

❖ Would you like to participate in more role-plays? YES/ NO

Why/ Why not?

Appendix II- Role-plays

Role-plays María Auxiliadora

Situation I:

Student A

You are the lead detective for the Las Vegas Police Department. You need to interrogate a suspect that has vandalized a store with graffiti. You believe that he was helped by another teenager but the security cameras were out of order Find out how!

Be sure to ask him/her questions about the **timeline of his/her day**, starting from the moment he/she got up, until you arrested him/her.

For example: What were you doing at 7:30 am yesterday morning? What were your friends doing at that time?

Remember to use the interrogatives **who, what, where, when, and why?**

Student B

You have just been arrested in Las Vegas. You are accused of vandalizing a store with graffiti. The detective on the case does not believe that you have not painted that graffiti and that you were alone but you do incriminate your best friend.

You need to convince him that you did not paint that graffiti that you were alone at the wrong place at the wrong time.

Be sure to use a lot of detail, you don't want to go to prison!

Situation II

Student A

You're now in your second country but unfortunately you've just been mugged and have lost your bag with your passport, air tickets and money in it. You're at the police station to report the theft. Be sure to use a lot of detail, you want to go to find your bag you have to come back to Spain!

Student B

You're now in your second country but unfortunately your friend's bag's been stolen. You're at the police station to help your friend.

Student C

You're a police officer. Two westerners are in your police station to report a theft. You don't believe their story. Ask them a lot of questions to find out if they are telling the truth.

Be sure to ask him/her questions about the **timeline of his/her day**, starting from the moment he/she was mugged, until he came to the police.

For example: What were you doing when you were mugged? What was your friend doing while you were attacked?

Remember to use the interrogatives **who, what, where, when, and why?**

Role-play Official Language School N°1

Here is your role card. The other students in your group must not see your card. Study the TV programme guide with your group. You are going to discuss the programmes and try to agree on what to watch. Remember you must take on the role on your card and forget about what you'd really like to watch!

Role card 1

You are a fifteen-year-old teenager. You like action films and sport programmes. You don't mind factual programmes like the News or documentaries but you hate soap operas and romantic films. You like films that are violent. You think they are exciting.

Here is your role card. The other students in your group must not see your card. Study the TV programme guide with your group. You are going to discuss the programmes and try to agree on what to watch. Remember you must take on the role on your card and forget about what you'd really like to watch!

Role card 2

You are a parent. You like anything that is funny. You don't like violence on TV. You like all sport except football. You love music and documentaries. You prefer watching programmes that last less than an hour because you always have a lot of things to do.

Here is your role card. The other students in your group must not see your card. Study the TV programme guide with your group. You are going to discuss the programmes and try to agree on what to watch. Remember you must take on the role on your card and forget about what you'd really like to watch!

Role card 3

You are a grandparent. You like to watch documentaries and soap operas. You always fall asleep in films. You don't like sport very much but you like football. You like watching television programmes that make you laugh.

Here is your role card. The other students in your group must not see your card. Study the TV programme guide with your group. You are going to discuss the programmes and try to agree on what to watch. Remember you must take on the role on your card and forget about what you'd really like to watch!

Role card 4

You are a fourteen-year-old teenager. You love sport and all films. You hate documentaries and news programmes. You don't mind comedy programmes. You don't like soap operas unless they are about young people.

TV SCHEDULE (Source: www.onthebox.com)

BBC1	BBC2	ITV1	CHANNEL 4	FIVE	E4
09:00 Breakfast (News)	09:00 The Slammer (Children's)	09:00 Fort Boyard: Ultimate Challenge (Game Show)	09:25 The Album Chart Show (Music)	09:40 Mist: Sheepdog Tales (Adventure)	09:30 Supernanny US (Reality)
10:00 Saturday Kitchen (Cookery)	10:30 Splatalot (Game Show)	10:25 The Jeremy Kyle Show (Reality)	10:55 Charlie's Angels (Series)	10:00 Meerkat Manor (Documentary) 10:30 Holiday Heaven on Earth (Travel)	10:25 Gok's Clothes Roadshow (Fashion)
	11:40 MOTD Kickabout (Football)	11:20 The Real Housewives of New York City (Reality)	11:55 The Big Bang Theory (Sitcom)	11:15 Police interceptors (Reality)	
12:00 BBC News 12:10 BBC London News: Weather	12:00 The sky at Night (Science) 12:20 Road to Rio (Film: Comedy)	12:20 Murder, She Wrote (Mystery)	12:20 The Simpsons	12:15 Eddie Stobart: Trucks and Trailers (Documentary)	12:15 Football Focus
13:00 Live: The Boat Race (Rowing)		13:25 The Planet's Funniest Animals (Entertainment)	13:55 Live: Racing (Horses)	13:15 Rory McGrath's Pub Dig (Documentary)	13:20 Hollyoaks Omnibus (Soap opera)
	14:00 Bringing Up Baby (Film: comedy)				14:20 Ambush at Tomahawk Gap (Film: action)
15:05 The Masters 2012 PGA Tour Golf	15:35 Escape to the Country (Documentary)	15:55 Willy Wonka and the Chocolate Factory (Film)		15:45 War Arrow (Film: Western)	
	16:05 Flog it! (Soap opera)		16:05 Come Dine with Me (Cookery)		
	17:05 Dad's Army (Sitcom)	17:00 Live: The Masters PGA Tour Golf	17:00 Doctor Who (Science fiction)	17:05 4thought.tv (Current events)	17:00 My name is Earl (Sitcom)
	18:10 Take Me Out (Romance)	18:00 Big Fat Gypsy Weddings (Documentary)		18:30 The Cleveland Show (Animated)	

Role-plays I.E.S. Miguel Catalán

You are a travel agent. You have a special offer on trips to Ireland, and you have one more holiday to sell to make some extra commission.	You are in the travel agent's with your partner. You would like to book a short holiday together. You like good scenery and interesting culture.	You are in the travel agent's with your partner. You would like to book a short holiday together. You enjoy going to tropical islands and relaxing in the sun.
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You've just arrived in your first country at the beginning of your world tour. You're worried about money and so you'd like to find a cheap hotel to stay in. Try and convince your friends that this is the best option.	You've just arrived in your first country at the beginning of your world tour. You want to start your holiday in style and stay in a nice hotel. Try and convince your friends that this is the best idea.	You've just arrived in your first country at the beginning of your world tour. Your friends have got different ideas about where they would like to stay. Listen to them and decide who you agree with trying to be balanced.
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You're now in your second country but unfortunately you've just been mugged and have lost your bag with your passport, air tickets and money in it. You're at the police station to report the theft. Although you and your friend aren't sure about the description of the thief, be accurate in the other facts.	You're now in your second country but unfortunately your friend's bag's been stolen. You're at the police station to help your friend. Although you and your friend aren't sure about the description of the thief, be accurate in the other facts.	You're a police officer. Two westerners are in your police station to report a theft. You don't believe their story. Ask them a lot of questions (nationality, reason of the trip, next destination, personal belongings, appearance of the thief; when, how, where the theft happened) to find out if they are telling the truth.
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Because of the mugging you phone home to talk to your parents. You want your parents to send you some money urgently because you have no money left. Reassure your parents that everything is OK and get as much money as possible.	You are Mum. You are upset about what has happened to your child. You don't want to send him/her any money because you want him/her to come back home immediately and you are worried about his/ her safety.	You are Dad. You are upset about what has happened to your child. You don't want to send him/her any money because you want him/her to come back home immediately and you are worried about the money he/ she is wasting.
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You're in Malaysia and you've fallen in love with Asia. Now you really want to go to Thailand because you've heard they've got the best beaches in the world. Try and convince your friends to come with you.	You're in Malaysia and feel quite happy. Your two friends have got very different ideas about where to go next. Listen to your friends and then tell them what you would like to do.	You're in Malaysia but you want to leave. You are tired of travelling and you miss your home and your home cooking. Try and convince your friends to come home with you.
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You're ecstatically happy. You've fallen in love with a boy/girl from the country you are visiting and you've decided you want to buy a house on the beach and live there forever. Tell your friends about your big decision.	Your friend has something important to tell you. Listen carefully and then respond: You think their relationship could work, but your friend should convince the boy/ girl to move to Spain.	Your friend has something important to tell you. Listen carefully and then respond: You think your friend's gone mad (crazy) and he/she is going to make a terrible decision. Think of all the reasons why his/her plan is crazy and convince him/her to come back home with you.
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Role-play I.E.S. Ángel Sanz Briz

You were standing next to the bank at 4pm yesterday. You saw one person standing outside the bank.
You were in the bank changing money, you heard someone shout "Get on the floor" and so you lay down.
You saw three people dressed in black. They ran to the counter and demanded money.
You saw one person in black with a gun. He/She was pointing it at the bank teller. She was putting money into a bag.
You were standing outside the bank. You saw a blue car stop in front of the bank and three people got into it.
You were standing next to the bank manager in the bank. You were asking about the bank. Suddenly, he ran passed you and left the bank.
You were waiting on line when you heard a gunshot, you screamed and fell to the floor.
You were waiting buy the bank and you saw one person shoot a gun into the sky. He was shouting to three other people.
You saw three people take a bag of money out of the bank. They were wearing black masks.
You were standing by the telephone outside the bank. You heard one person shout come on _____!
You were waiting for a telephone. You saw three people in black run to a blue car. They had a big black bag. One said his name- _____!
You were trying to use the cash machine outside the bank when you heard a gunshot and three people. They were running to a blue car. There was a fourth man in the car.
You were standing next to a blue car outside the bank. You saw three people run out of the bank. They jumped into the car and it drove off. You then saw the police came.
You were walking to the bank when you saw a police car speed towards the bank.
You were waiting at the airport. You saw a blue car arrive; four women got out. You heard two names _____ and _____! They tried to get to a plane but the police caught them!