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EXPLORANDO LA METODOLOGÍA AICLE DESDE
UNA PERSPECTIVA COGNITIVA: UNA
INVESTIGACIÓN APLICADA AL AULA DE
GEOGRAFÍA E HISTORIA

EXPLORING CLIL METHODOLOGY FROM A
COGNITIVE PERSPECTIVE: AN APPLIED
RESEARCH IN THE GEOGRAPHY AND HISTORY
CLASSROOM

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ABSTRACT

Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) serves as an *avant-garde* fusion of subject didactics that allows the learning of theoretical contents of a non-linguistic subject through a foreign language (L2). This methodology, therefore, enhances the learners' cognitive development in that it fosters natural communication in the classroom and looks for comprehensible and meaningful content-based situations where students focus not on the *way* they are expanding their knowledge but on the *knowledge* itself. Such an enriching situation is what the present project tries to pursue through the design of a didactic unit to be included in the subject of Geography and History that places communication and cognition at its core. It is also intended to deepen the idea that for students to get naturally immersed in their teaching-learning processes, they need to find a purpose for doing tasks. The results obtained at the end of the paper will show how the fourteen students develop a sense of awareness for their own learning processes, thus demonstrating that going some steps beyond the traditional ways of teaching might be a plausible and effective alternative towards 21st century students' success.

Keywords: CLIL, cognition, didactic unit, communication, meaningful learning.

RESUMEN

El Aprendizaje Integrado de Contenidos y Lenguas Extranjeras (AICLE) es una fusión vanguardista de la didáctica que permite el aprendizaje de contenidos teóricos de una materia no lingüística a través de una lengua extranjera (L2). Esta metodología, por lo tanto, potencia el desarrollo cognitivo de los alumnos y alumnas al fomentar la comunicación de forma natural en el aula y generar situaciones comprensibles y significativas basadas en los contenidos, en las que el alumnado no se centra en la *manera* de ampliar sus conocimientos, sino en los propios *conocimientos*. El presente proyecto trata de perseguir esta fructífera realidad en el aula mediante el diseño de una unidad didáctica para la asignatura de Geografía e Historia que sitúa la comunicación y la cognición en su núcleo central. Asimismo, se pretende ahondar en la idea de que para que los discentes se integren de forma natural en sus propios procesos de enseñanza-aprendizaje, necesitan encontrar un propósito para realizar las actividades. Los resultados obtenidos al final del proyecto mostrarán cómo los catorce estudiantes desarrollan un sentido de conciencia para sus propios procesos de aprendizaje, demostrando así que avanzar unos pasos más allá de las tradicionales metodologías de enseñanza puede ser una alternativa plausible y eficaz para alcanzar el éxito del estudiantado del siglo XXI.

Palabras clave: AICLE, cognición, unidad didáctica, comunicación, aprendizaje significativo.

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I. Introduction: Justification and Objectives

“Without dialogue there is no communication and *without communication* there can be *no true education*.” (Freire et al., 2000, p.92-3: emphasis added)

Society is constantly changing and so should be education. Teachers are social agents that need to adapt to the reality that covers the classroom; there is no point in continuing with traditional teaching if our students differ radically from the tradition. This assertion brings a question that would be appropriate to launch at this point: would we want to be operated on by an 18th century doctor using the medical methods of the time? The answer is clear. So, the same happens with teaching: students of the 21st century are used to moving in social networks and channels, to say what they think, what they like and what they do not like. Education, therefore, must meet the needs of the new social context: students have spaces outside the classroom in which to capture information, but teachers sometimes tend to treat them as blank sheets of paper. In the light of this, the teacher's task is not to give students their own knowledge, but to help them advance in the knowledge they already have through methodological strategies focused on social, motivational, and communicative skills (among others). The act of education, in short, consists of dealing with the students' gift.

Not only learners need to be transferred to new forms of learning, but also teachers have to be in a permanent learning process in which their teaching identities are in constant change towards the most proficient outcomes. Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) is born from this perspective, which places the *student* and *communication* at the centre of the educational stage, trying to merge the learning of a foreign language (L2) with the theoretical contents of a non-linguistic subject.

My main motivations for undertaking the present research stem from my degree's final project, which was focused on cognition from a highly theoretical perspective; now, the primary intention is to extrapolate the theory to the reality of the classroom. Therefore, knowing the current situation of teaching through CLIL methodology, as well as finding out to which extent teaching should focus on the cognitive development of the learner are the motives for which I initiated

this applied research.

To this end, the paper is divided into four main sections: to start with, (a) the theoretical framework will serve as a window on CLIL methodology, explaining its origins, relevance from a cognitive perspective, practicality, current situation, and more specifically, how it is extrapolated to the Geography and History classroom, which is the subject that concerns the second part. In much the same vein, and with the intention of not only using a theoretical framework but also a practical procedure, (b) the second part of this work includes an applied research on CLIL through the design and implementation of a didactic unit addressed to a group of students in the third year of ESO. Next, (c) the third major block discusses and analyses the results obtained after the application of the didactic unit. Finally, (d) the fourth section covers the main conclusions of the research and its limitations.

The following are the three chief objectives around which the present project gravitates and that intend to provide more principled, fine-grained conclusions:

1. To design and implement a didactic unit based on CLIL methodology.
2. To provide detailed results after the implementation of a didactic unit in a CLIL context.
3. To enhance the learning experience of students by implementing innovative methodologies based on communication and cognition that may actively contribute to the fostering of an enriching teaching-learning process.

II. Theoretical Framework: A Window on CLIL

2.1 What and Where: A Brief Definition of CLIL and its Origins

‘Content and Language Integrated Learning’ (henceforth CLIL) refers to an educational context with a dual-focused approach where an additional language (L2) different from the students’ mother tongue (L1) is partially used as a means of teaching non-language related content in non-language related subjects. The latter definition encloses in a few lines the main spirit of this methodology; nonetheless, the ‘CLIL’ acronyms encompass a methodological field that still continues to be explored after almost two decades of didactic interventions and from which a number of characteristics could be drawn in relation to its motivating, inclusive, and success-pursuing nature.

‘CLIL’ as a new term was firstly coined in 1994 by the renowned figure on multilingualism and bilingual education David Marsh, “within the European context to describe and further design good practice as achieved in different types of school environment where teaching and learning take place in an additional language” (Coyle et al., 2010, p.3). In much the same vein, many other authors in the field of education have highlighted the motivating aspect of CLIL in problem-solving situations, as learners find alternative ways to build up their critical thinking, thus being able to solve certain problematics with the use of L2 (Muñoz and Naves, 1999).

With regards to the inclusive nature of CLIL, Coyle et al. (2010) argue that it “binds together the essence of good practice found in the different environments where its principles have been adopted, (...) [thus involving] a range of models which can be applied in a variety of ways with diverse types of learner” (p.1). Moreover, CLIL duality is what makes it differ from other methodologies: attention is given to the development of proficiency in both the language and the content taught, and therefore, “achieving this twofold aim calls for the development of a special approach to teaching in that the non-language subject is not taught *in* a foreign language but *with* and *through* a foreign language” (Eurydice, 2006, p. 7).

Although Content and Language Integrated Learning found its heyday in the 1990s, it should be stressed that it is itself a product of the so-called “Content-

Based Instruction” (henceforth CBI) language immersion programmes from the 1960s. North America, and specially Canada, were the pioneer places where the idea of bilingual education began to be forged most vigorously. In both the USA and Canada, a series of historical events and migratory flows encouraged certain linguistic differences, which were dealt more or less correctly, diligently, and hastily when it came to providing a proper solution.

In the case of the United States, during the 19th and 20th centuries, millions of Europeans were prohibited to use their mother tongue due to certain sociocultural and historical reasons. This situation led to an immediate assimilation of English as their L1 for the next generation (second-generation immigrants) and to the creation of a tendency towards monolingualism. Over time, some discomfort began to be generated by non-English-speaking communities as they felt it was important to maintain their own language and cultural identities. Consequently, in states with high percentage of immigrants, pupils began to have access to bilingual schools, where they could continue learning their mother tongue while acquiring the L1 common to the rest of the country.

With respect to the previously mentioned CBI programmes, they took root in Bilingual Education in both Canada and the United States by the 1970s, “and later moved into English as a Second Language (ESL) and various sheltered content programs aimed at preparing limited English proficient children as rapidly as possible for entry into elementary and secondary school mainstream courses in English” (Leaver and Striker, 1989, p. 269). Canadian advocates, and especially English-speaking parents living in the province of Quebec, considered that “proficiency in French was vital in a French-speaking environment. They thus sought to offer their children an education in this language that would lead them to acquire significant language skills” (Eurydice, 2006, p. 7).

According to Leaver and Striker (1989), CBI in its purest form would assemble the following characteristics: (a) the focus on subject matter; (b) the use of authentic texts, (c) the learning of new information, and (d) an appropriate nature for the specific needs of students (p. 270-71).

Some common features could be established between Marsh's definition of CLIL and the content-based instructional approach, which was originally considered as "one in which language proficiency is achieved by shifting the focus of the course *from the learning of language per se to the learning of subject matter*" (Leaver and Striker, 1989, p. 270: emphasis added). Another remarkable characteristic that somehow connects CLIL and CBI is highlighted by Eurydice (2006):

CLIL enables languages to be taught on a relatively intensive basis without claiming an excessive share of the school timetable. It is also inspired by important methodological principles established by research on foreign language teaching, such as the need for learners to be exposed to a situation calling for genuine communication. (p.8)

2.2 Why: Relevance of CLIL from a Cognitive Perspective

"What is at the center for stakeholders is the understanding that CLIL classrooms are an environment for naturalistic language learning, implying that the best kind of language learning proceeds *painlessly*, without formal instruction." (Dalton-Puffer, 2011, p.194: emphasis added)

Although sometimes misconceived as teaching by simply changing the language of instruction, using CLIL in the classroom not only involves a "foreign language enrichment (...) packed into content teaching" (Dalton-Puffer, 2011, p.184), but also an occasionally imperceptible development of students' cognitive processes. Indeed, considering some elements from Stephen Krashen and Tracy Terrell's Natural Approach (1983), would eventually demonstrate that CLIL is not a mere attempt to disguise traditional language learning "by embedding systematic grammatical progression of the target language in a different type of subject such as deforestation, photosynthesis or medieval history" (Coyle et al., 2010, p.27); *de facto*, it has been widely appraised as a conscious endeavour to bring the meaning of the word 'synergy'¹ to its fullest expression.

Krashen's Natural Approach made its emphasis on observation and

¹ The word 'synergy' is, as Coyle et al. (2010) pointed out, a combined success, "which implies working together 'in a dynamic state' where the whole is greater than the sum of the parts" (p.27).

interpretation on how a person *acquires*² his/her first language; nonetheless, research has found that “no fundamental difference is assumed between monolingual first language acquisition in early childhood and plurilingual acquisition later in life” (Dalton-Puffer et al., 2010, p.7). Therefore, the subsequent lines demonstrate that CLIL contains some echoes from this renowned approach, which could be synthesised as follows: Krashen’s approach rejects the formal organization of language, i.e. it is not based on grammar, but on communication. By the same token, it emphasises comprehensible and meaningful practice activities rather than production of grammatically perfect sentences.

In spite of the fact that the Natural Approach is based on the five hypotheses that build up the Second Language Acquisition Theory (SLAT)³, the one that acquires most relevance in relation to CLIL is the Monitor Hypothesis. As is well known, the major idea of this model is that if the learner is exposed to comprehensible and meaningful input, “acquisition will occur, especially if the learning situation is characterized by positive emotions” (Dalton-Puffer, 2011, p.194). Therefore, Krashen’s view of comprehensible input echoes CLIL’s practice of using “a whole range of linked stimuli, while also activating prior knowledge, so as to maximize comprehension of stimulus sources” (Coyle et al., 2010, p.91). The search for authentic messages and the use of realia⁴ is, then, more than met by a CLIL context.

Another cornerstone that somehow becomes an invisible but active participant within CLIL environments is Merrill Swain’s Output Hypothesis (2000) and her focus on the interactional (or social) nature of language. On the one hand, Swain conceives the process of acquiring a language as one in which comprehensible input is not enough; thus, output should be enhanced, “as learners developed their language competence by being required to express their

² A particular stress should be added to this word due to its tremendous relevance within CLIL classrooms. Indeed, a significant distinction between “language acquisition” and “language learning” needs to be made at this stage: the former refers to “developing [an unconscious] ability in a language by using it in natural, communicative situations” (Krashen and Terrell, 1983, p.18); however, the latter is based on “knowing the rules, having a conscious knowledge about grammar”.

³ For a full version of the five hypotheses that shape the Second Language Acquisition Theory, the reader is referred to Krashen, S., and Terrell, T. (1983). *The Natural Approach: Language Acquisition in the Classroom* (1st ed.). Hayward, California: Alemany Press.

⁴ Realia is for current purposes those “objects or activities used to relate classroom teaching to the real life especially of peoples studied” (Merriam-Webster, n.d.).

understanding” (Coyle et al., 2010, p.91). On the other hand, Swain (2000) argues that “language learning occurs in *collaborative dialogue*”, which is defined as “problem-solving and, hence, knowledge-building dialogue” (p.113). Swain outlines that an utterance can be looked as simultaneously “process and product” (p.102), i.e. as “saying” and as “what is said”:

In ‘saying’, the speaker is cognitively engaged in making meaning; a cognitive act is taking place. ‘Saying’, however, produces an utterance that can now be responded to – by others or by the self. (...) Furthermore, ‘what was said’ is now an objective product that can be explored further by the speaker or others [, i.e. it becomes an object for reflection]. (p.102)

Such external speech and interaction, *ergo*, “facilitates the appropriation of both strategic processes and linguistic knowledge. [Consequently,] these are insights that a focus on input or output alone misses” (Swain, 2000, p.113: emphasis added). In much the same vein, authors like Cristina Escobar and Luci Nussbaum (2002) emphasise that “face to face interaction is the privileged medium and place in which the learner *appropriates* the language”⁵ (p.37: emphasis added).

Concerning the importance of language use (rather than usage⁶) in CLIL classrooms, it is of utmost importance to highlight the usage-based thesis (one of the five theses that comprise the cognitive linguistics perspective), included in Evans (2011)⁷:

This [thesis] holds that the mental grammar of the language user is formed by the abstraction of symbolic units from situated instances of language use: *utterances* – specific usage events involving symbolic units for purposes of signaling local and contextually relevant communicative intentions. An important consequence of adopting the usage-based thesis is that there is no principled distinction between knowledge of language, and the use of language (competence and performance, in generative grammar terms), since *knowledge emerges from use*. From this perspective, knowledge of language is knowledge of how language is

⁵ Translated from “la interacción cara a cara es el medio y lugar privilegiado en el que el alumno se apropia de la lengua”.

⁶ ‘Usage’ is here mentioned to emphasise its dichotomous relation with the concept of ‘use’: whereas the latter is concerned with the actual use of language in concrete situations, i.e. how people use language; the former refers to the speaker-hearer’s theoretical knowledge of the actual language.

⁷ For a full version of the five hypotheses that make up the cognitive linguistics perspective, the reader is referred to Evans, V. (2011). *Language and cognition: The view from cognitive linguistics*. In V. Cook and B. Bassetti, *Language and Bilingual Cognition*. 2011. Routledge, Taylor and Francis Group.

used. (p.79: emphasis added)

In accord with the previous premises on second language learning theory, it could be concluded that meaningful and authentic content-based situations where students are focusing not on the way they are expanding their knowledge but on the *knowledge* itself, may disclose where success of CLIL as a prosperous language-learning environment lies.

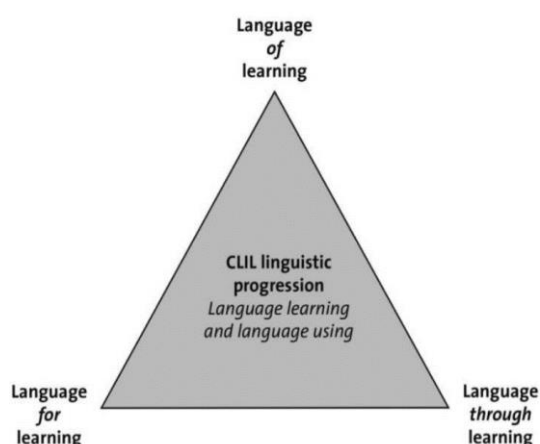
2.3 How: Creating CLIL Contexts

Once the term 'CLIL' has been itemised in a theoretical way, it is worthwhile to delve into its practical outlook since it is through practice that it could be found out whether a given pedagogical procedure has been devised with a real classroom perspective or if, on the contrary, it is relegated to ideality. Still, it should be stressed that CLIL is not a panacea: embracing it does not automatically lead to success in teaching-learning processes. "To truly realize the added value of CLIL, teachers need to embrace a new paradigm of teaching and learning and they need tools and templates that help them plan their lessons and create/adapt their materials" (Meyer, 2010, p.13).

In the light of CLIL's pragmatism, research has found that many CLIL students "have a cognitive level which is likely to be in advance of the linguistic level of the vehicular CLIL language" (Coyle et al., 2010, p.35). It is at this stage that an interrelationship between *content objectives* and *language objectives* should be explicitly made. For that purpose, the so-called 'Language Triptych' was introduced, thus providing a framework for the analysis of the vehicular CLIL language from three interrelated perspectives (see Figure 1): (a) language *of* learning refers to the content-obligatory language needed for students "to access basic concepts and skills relating to the subject theme or topic" (Coyle et al., 2010, p.37); (b) language *for* learning consult the content-compatible language, i.e. "the kind of language needed to operate in a foreign language environment" and required for enabling learning to happen in class (e.g. task-specific language); and (c) language *through* learning, which relies on the content-enriching

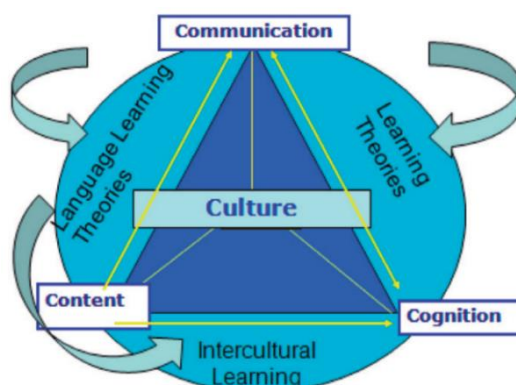
language so as to deepen “conceptual understanding on an individual level” (Coyle, 2015, p.91), based on the principle that “effective learning cannot take place without active involvement of language and thinking” (Coyle et al., 2010, p.37).

Figure 1 *The Language Triptych* (taken from Coyle et al., 2010, p.36)



As shown by the Language Triptych, integrating content and language learning is, then, the major objective of CLIL. The next step is, therefore, framing a pedagogic procedure that serves as a guidance to enable teachers “to plan and teach with a multiple focus that is vital to the successful integration of content and language” (Meyer, 2010, p.12). For that purpose, Coyle et al. (2010) designed in the 1990s the so-called “The 4Cs Framework” (see Figure 2), which “offers a sound theoretical and methodological foundation for planning CLIL lessons and constructing materials because of its *integrative nature*” (emphasis added).

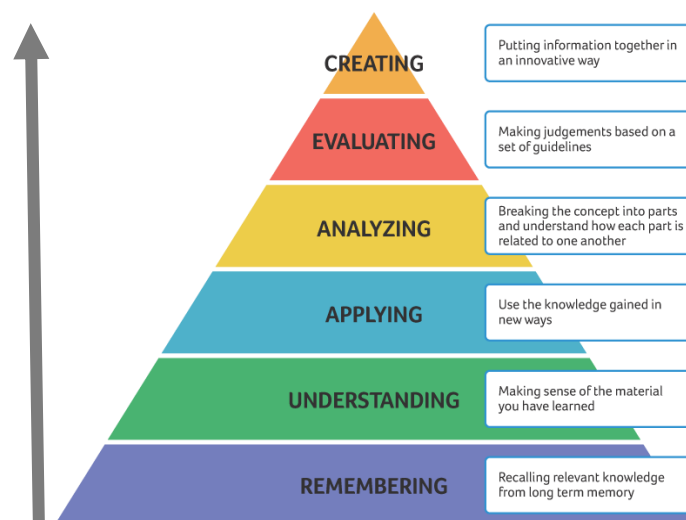
Figure 2 *The 4Cs Conceptual Framework* (taken from Coyle, 2015, p.89)



Content refers not only to the acquisition of knowledge and skills, but also to how learners generate and develop their own critical thinking, i.e. “personalized learning” (Coyle et al., 2010, p.42). However, content cannot be regarded in isolation, but as part of the student’s cognitive and cultural understanding.

Regarding *cognition*, it relates to the “cognitive level of the learning” (Coyle, 2015, p.90), which could be best illustrated by considering Anderson and Krathwohl’s (2001, 2002) revised version of Bloom’s Taxonomy (1956), which arranges in a less rigid hierarchical structure what was firstly proposed in the original Taxonomy. By way of illustration, consider Figure 3, which clearly depicts how the hierarchy of cognitive skills form a spectrum ranging from Lower Order Thinking Skills (LOTs) (remember, understanding, applying) to Higher Order Thinking Skills (HOTs) (analysing, evaluating, creating). Thus, this taxonomy tries to represent the different levels of the learning process, although it does not mean that all students do have to start at the lowest level so as to climb up to others.

Figure 3 Bloom’s revised taxonomy (based on Krathwohl’s “Structure of the Knowledge Dimension of the Revised Taxonomy”, 2002, p.215, taken from www.pngitem.com/middle/ibbwhhw_blooms-taxonomy-hd-png-download/)



Cognition, hence, leads us on to *communication*, since “it is language that cements meaning-making and understanding (cognition) of the subject matter (content knowledge) with the language used to learn, to communicate and to externalise and internalise understanding” (Coyle, 2015, p.90). This element, perhaps the most acclaimed one when referring to CLIL contexts, places

transparent and accessible language as the basis to construct knowledge. Such assumption relates to the fact that language is both the medium and the message, something which is sometimes evaded due to our traditional way of teaching. Coyle (2015) draws attention on this idea:

Grammatical chronology does not provide the wealth of language required for CLIL learners to access the discourse integral to the learning Science or History when it is needed. (...) Teachers, therefore, are faced with the need to reconceptualise practices if CLIL settings language is considered both a learning tool and a communication tool. (p.91)

The fourth and last 'C' is assigned to *culture* and intercultural understanding of learning. Indeed, CLIL serves as an intermediary to promote a closer approach to different cultures, since "developing plurilingual competence in learners will also involve raising pluricultural awareness in order to enable individuals to work, learn, and communicate successfully" (Coyle, 2015, p.92). The main focus is placed, therefore, on the role of culture in learning, for "language is part of an individual's 'linguistic DNA' that is context-related and culturally mediated" (p.93).

Hence, it could be concluded that the educational curriculum derives from a series of sources identified by Coyle as the '4Cs': *culture* establishes a specific socio-educational framework from which a number of filtered contents emerge that need to be transmitted to our learners; these *contents* are linked to each other and must be *communicated* in a certain way so as to promote their *cognitive* acquisition.

2.4 CLIL Now

Since the 1990s, a whole network of educational centres implementing bilingual programmes has been woven throughout Spain; at first, in an isolated and reduced way, but over time and with the educational competencies transferred to the Autonomous Communities, these initiatives have been progressively spread to such an extent that it is hardly possible to locate any area that do not include a "Bilingual School" or a "Bilingual Section". By way of illustration, consider Figure 4, where it is shown that almost 93% of Andalucía's schools ("CEIP") and high

schools (“IES”) are either bilingual or plurilingual.

Figure 4 *Bilingual situation in Andalucía, academic year 2021-22* (taken from <https://www.juntadeandalucia.es/educacion/portals/web/plurilinguismo/centros-bilingues>)

CENTROS BILINGÜES Y PLURILINGÜES CURSO 21/22									
PROVINCIA	TOTAL CENTROS	CEIP	IES	BILINGÜE INGLÉS	BILINGÜE FRANCÉS	BILINGÜE ALEMÁN	PLURI INGLÉS FRANCÉS	PLURI INGLÉS ALEMÁN	PLURI FRANCÉS INGLÉS
ALMERÍA	128	72	56	120	1	1	2	-	4
CÁDIZ	148	83	65	136	3	3	2	-	4
CÓRDOBA	124	70	54	111	5	2	3	-	3
GRANADA	171	101	70	162	1	-	3	1	4
HUELVA	93	55	38	88	2	-	-	-	3
JAÉN	129	75	54	124	1	-	-	-	4
MÁLAGA	182	104	78	166	8	3	2	-	3
SEVILLA	251	135	116	229	5	3	5	-	9
ANDALUCÍA	1226	695	531	1136	26	12	17	1	34

By the same token, it is worth mentioning that teaching-learning processes based on CLIL promote the globalisation of teaching by fostering transversality. In other words, the globalisation of teaching should be understood as the *non-fragmentation of knowledge* (i.e. into isolated subjects). It is at this stage that CLIL plays a pivotal role: with the advent of widespread CLIL implementation, bilingualism and the aspiration to multilingualism in schools are nowadays considered innovative and essential experiences that try to unify the learning and acquisition of different contents so as to create meaningful and enriching learning processes.

In relation to the current situation of CLIL within the Spanish arena, this country has occasionally been referred to as a “language education laboratory” (Madrid Fernández et al., 2019, p. 17) due to “the richness of its cultural and linguistic diversity [that] has led to a wide variety of CLIL policies and practices which can provide us with many examples of CLIL in different stages of development (Coyle, 2010, p. viii)”.

Nonetheless, although CLIL has brought a significant number of changes and innovations into the classroom, it should be pointed out that some limitations

have arose once CLIL has become part of school realities, such as the lack of teaching resources or lower levels of L2 competence among teaching professionals. Therefore, as Madrid Fernández et al. (2019) suggest, “actions are needed to guarantee that high quality CLIL training is in place, not only through the measurement of perceived levels of satisfaction, but (...) through large-scale objective and reliable performance testing” (p.30).

Such problematics have driven CLIL towards certain darkness. Indeed, research has been made on how CLIL should be appraised, whether it is real fact or “an illusion” (Bruton, 2013, p.595). In the light of this, María Luisa Pérez Cañado (2018), based on a longitudinal real-case study, offers a portrait of CLIL in Spain, through which it is demonstrated that this methodology is “currently a reality – and not merely wishful thinking” (p.388). Indeed, it stresses that CLIL’s inclusive nature leads to “more active and participative student roles and enhanced collaboration, transversality, and multidisciplinary among teachers”. However, this study also shows CLIL’s shadows, which are mainly concerned with its characterization, implementation (due to its swift uptake across the continent), and research (Pérez Cañado, 2016, p.11).

The CLIL agenda, therefore, needs to open its arms into the broadening of its very definition, since it should be regarded as a non-exclusive complement from which all methodologies can be nourished, as Pérez Cañado (2016) highlights:

The onus is now on recognizing the diversity of formats which can be subsumed within CLIL and on ensuring that the results and effects of all types of multilingual programs (be they CLIL, CBI, or immersion) are shared so that the pedagogical and research community can benefit from them. (p.14)

Furthermore, CLIL’s current implementation has shown the pivotal need to cater to diversity and to ensure that it enhances everybody, i.e. “over- and under-achievers alike” (Pérez Cañado, 2016, p. 16). It is from this perspective that the frequently mythologised association of CLIL with elitism should be explored.

On the one hand, some scholars like Anthony Bruton argue that CLIL favours elitism in that it “cream[s] off certain students while arguing that the option

is open to all” (2013, p. 595). It is true that socioeconomic status does have a significant impact on students’ English language attainment; nonetheless, research shows that “CLIL can work successfully in a ‘non-elite’ context” (Pérez Cañado, 2020, p.15) and that, therefore, “strong empirical evidence and critical awareness-raising are required in order to ensure a robust and valid base for the appropriate development of bilingual education” (p.16).

On the other hand, advocates compare the flexible and inclusive nature of CLIL to a “blanket on a large bed shared by many children, each pulling in their own direction (...) [, that can be stretched] to meet all needs” (Dickey, 2004, p.13).

Besides, the lack or scarcity of teacher training covers another challenge when dealing with CLIL’s current stains. As Vázquez et al. (2019) argue, “there is often little or no specific training for CLIL provided at university level (i.e. at the initial teacher education stage), which often means that teachers join CLIL programmes without the specific skills required for delivering CLIL” (p. 5). Therefore, research confirms that “content teachers, language assistants and language teachers all tend to feel in greater need of guidance in CLIL teaching” (p.14).

In the light of this, and due to the fact that CLIL implies a change of the *status quo*, Coyle et al. (2010) assigns substantial importance to permanent teacher training:

[T]he key to future capacity building and sustainability is teacher education. Without serious attention being paid to implementing strategies for training the professional workforce, which include long-term plans for skilling multilingual teachers, then quality of CLIL is not sustainable. Indeed, it could be said that poor-quality CLIL could contribute to a *‘lost generation’ of young people’s learning*. Thus, for teacher education in CLIL to be fit for purpose, there must be urgent and significant changes. (p.161: emphasis added)

These urgent changes, nevertheless, entail a transformation of the educators’ identities; such alternation is not easy to follow since it requires teachers to move out of “a traditional ‘comfort zone’ and enter into a more complex and [consequently] less secure space, which has implications for teacher confidence and can lead to teachers feeling anxious in their new role” (Coyle et al., 2010, p.

162).

To shed some light on this, Hargreaves (2003) promotes the concept of 'professional communities' in the process of learning, thus leaving aside the traditionally isolated way of teaching characterised by "separate communities, separate teachers, separate development", which, according to him, is "nothing less than an *apartheid of professional development and school improvement*" (p.10). Therefore, "CLIL teacher-education programmes will have to address these more opaque affective elements of CLIL in order to equip CLIL teachers to work confidently and to encourage innovative practice" (Coyle et al., 2010, p. 162), thus helping them to appreciate the need of an updated teaching identity.

These previous considerations lead us to the importance of delving deeper into *further* research, leaving aside comparisons with other previous studies, since much road is still to be paved in the CLIL enterprise. This requirement is emphasised by María Luisa Pérez Cañado (2016):

Rather than interpret the same (methodologically skewed) studies from opposing perspectives, new ones devoid of research design and statistical problems should be conducted in order to have unbiased, balanced, and methodologically sound research shed light on the *true effects* of CLIL. (p. 18: emphasis added)

Nonetheless, it should be pointed out that CLIL's major aim of providing learners with "high quality, accessible, motivating and challenging plurilingual and pluricultural learning experiences" (Coyle et al., 2010, p. 166) "has infused the field with renewed life and enriched the multiple perspectives from which it can be examined" (Pérez Cañado, 2016, p.22).

2.5 CLIL in the Teaching of History

History is a general course within the block of core subjects taught in all years of Compulsory Secondary Education. According to the official curriculum, the major aim of this subject is to train students in the understanding of the complexity of current societies and in the skills for the analysis and implementation of strategies required to exercise responsible and participatory citizenship and aware of their identity, rights, and obligations in a plural and globalised environment (BOJA,

2021, p.732). Nonetheless, teaching History through CLIL goes a step beyond this goal; indeed, as Pozo (2019) observes, it involves “not only the ability of teaching to enable students to develop subject literacy, but also the capacity to acknowledge, produce and interpret different genres” (p.127). Thus, bilingual students are exposed to a double focus, i.e. content and the target language, that needs to differ from the traditional way of teaching so as to reach proficient results.

The teaching of History *per se* is already conceived as a challenge due to the lack of interest it arouses in most students since they associate it directly with the memorisation of content which, after the exam, they would use no more. As if this were not enough, there is also the added difficulty of teaching non-linguistic content in an L2. Such ‘globalization of knowledge’, therefore, needs new learning environments and methodologies such as Flipped Classroom, Project Based Learning or Role Playing, among others, that would substitute the expository approach of a traditional History class.

CLIL in History lessons also eases the path towards the development of students’ cognitive processes as “school language should be tailored to the cognitive and linguistic abilities of the learners, so that it is engaging and comprehensible” (Pozo, 2019, p.129). In the light of this and as the section *Methodology: An Applied Research on CLIL* would illustrate, the History lesson through CLIL would provide the students with cognitive skills when they try to agree, interrupt, or summarize. Pozo (2019) lists the linguistic and non-linguistic skills that students would develop thanks to CLIL, apart from the theoretical contents studied in class: (a) selecting and putting information together, (b) kinaesthetic and artistic skills, (c) ICT skills, (d) written and oral communication skills, (e) decision-making skills, and (f) evaluation of historical events and consequences (p.131).

III. Methodology: An Applied Research on CLIL

Once Content and Language Integrated Learning has been thoroughly examined from a theoretical perspective, the following sections would approach this methodology on the basis of a real case study. Indeed, several formal aspects have been followed so as to exhaustively adapt to the current Andalusian legislation, i.e. the official curriculum of Secondary Education, in the process of designing proper materials that would contain the curricular contents defined by the Administration and that would properly address the target group, which in this case would be fourteen students of third-year.

As regards with the motivational factors that have given rise to the creation of the present didactic unit, it is worth highlighting the researcher's intention to foster environments where the L2 is not an impediment for the students in the development of their critical thinking and their willingness to take part in the discussion of any topic, thus being communication the cornerstone of the whole project.

Although the lack of resources and time has been an obstacle in some way, once all CLIL's advantages have been described, the aim is to extrapolate them to the reality of the secondary school classroom and to show the results obtained.

3.1 Contextualization of the Didactic Unit: The Students

The present didactic unit has been devised to be implemented in the third-year group of Secondary Education in the Juan Pablo II Mater Asumpta school, located in the city of Almería. The group is composed of fourteen students, aged between 14 and 15 years old.

Although there are three students whose level stands out from the rest, in general terms the whole group has a homogeneous level of English, approximating the preliminary level (PET), commonly known as B1, with regard to Cambridge assessment policy.

In order to contextualise the project, it should be pointed out that the Juan

Pablo II school provides the student with an environment where Catholicism is the basis of education (although all religions are welcome) and that prioritises the development of each learner's intellectual, volitional, and affective abilities. Lessons are carried out through dynamic methodologies where students assume an active role within their own teaching-learning processes.

Despite the fact that this educational institution includes a bilingual programme that aims to ensure learners with the acquisition of the basic communicative skills in the English language within non-language content subjects, the fact is that their contact with English is relegated to the displaying of videos or the reading of texts on a punctual basis. Indeed, it could be argued that students' exposure to English mainly occurs in the English subject.

Nonetheless, students' attitude towards interactive and collaborative activities together with the school's approval and consent have enabled this project to come to fruition.

3.2 Curricular contents

In the course of planning the didactic unit "The Importance of *Δημοκρατία* in the World of Today", the curricular guidelines that include the official curriculum⁸ addressed to students of third year of Secondary Education need to be accurately considered in the choosing of contents.

Due to CLIL's integrative and transdisciplinary nature, contents of both Geography and History and English as a Foreign Language ought to be examined and studied; in the light of this, the present project would result in an amalgamed didactic unit that combines theoretical contents from the former with linguistic purposes from the latter, thus exhaustively tracing the boundaries of CLIL while attending to its main concerns and objectives.

In the case of English as a Foreign Language, the curriculum is divided

⁸ The reader is referred to the *Boletín Oficial de la Junta de Andalucía, Boletín Extraordinario, No.7, pp.740 and 826-832, from January 8th, 2021*, for further details and the original version of the curricular contents for both subjects that concern this project, i.e. Geography and History and English as a first foreign language, respectively.

into four major thematic blocks, which correspond to the language skills promoted by the subject: (a) Comprehension of oral texts; (b) Production of oral texts: expression and interaction; (c) Comprehension of written texts; and (d) Production of written texts: expression and interaction. By way of illustration, consider Figure 5, which clearly depicts the subsections included within the above-mentioned blocks:

Figure 5 *Curricular contents for EFL, Third-year Secondary Education (adapted from Boletín Oficial de la Junta de Andalucía, Boletín Extraordinario, No.7, pp.826-832, from January 8th, 2021)*

<p>Block 1. Comprehension of oral texts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comprehension strategies • Sociocultural and sociolinguistic aspects • Communicative functions • Lexico-discursive structures • Lexicon (reception) • Phonological patterns 	<p>Block 2. Production of oral texts: expression and interaction</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Production (planning and execution) and compensation (linguistic, paralinguistic and paratextual) strategies • Sociocultural and sociolinguistic contents • Communicative functions • Lexico-discursive structures • Lexicon (production) • Phonological patterns
<p>Block 3. Comprehension of oral texts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comprehension strategies • Sociocultural and sociolinguistic contents • Communicative functions • Lexico-discursive structures • Lexicon (reception) • Graphic and orthographic patterns 	<p>Block 4. Production of written texts: expression and interaction</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Production (planning and execution) strategies • Sociocultural and sociolinguistic contents • Communicative functions • Lexico-discursive structures • Lexicon (production) • Graphic and orthographic patterns

Once the subjects' general guidelines have been shown, it should be pointed out that the curriculum addresses each academic year with specific lexical-discursive contents regarding the five main languages that can be taught in Andalucía, i.e. German, French, English, Italian, and Portuguese. The present didactic unit has been consciously built up by following these requirements, although it has focused on the specific ones illustrated by Figure 6 due to the lack of time.

Figure 6 *Lexical-discursive contents for English, third-year Secondary Education* (taken and adapted from *Boletín Oficial de la Junta de Andalucía, Boletín Extraordinario, No.7, pp.831-832, from January 8th, 2021*)

- Expression of affirmative sentences.
- Expressions of logical relationships: conjunction (*and, too, also*), disjunction (*or*), opposition (*but*), cause (*because*), result (*so... that*), explanation (*for example*).
- Expression of temporal relationships (*when, then...*).
- Expression of present, past, and future events (*present simple, present continuous, past simple, be going to, present continuous with future meaning*).
- Expression of modality: factuality (declarative sentences), obligation (*must*), prohibition (*mustn't*).
- Expression of existence: *there is, there are, there was, there were*.
- Expressions of time: divisions (*century*), indications of time (*ago, early, late*), duration (*from...to*), anteriority and posteriority (*before, after*), frequency (*often*), sequence (*first, next, then, finally*).

Geography and History's contents for third-year of Secondary Education are much simpler than the previous subject's. Indeed, at this academic stage, these are more geographically than historically-oriented contents. By way of illustration, consider Figure 7, in which the curricular contents for this subject and the one chosen for the present didactic unit, highlighted in bold, are included:

Figure 7 *Curricular contents for Geography and History, Third-year Secondary Education* (adapted from *Boletín Oficial de la Junta de Andalucía, Boletín Extraordinario, No.7, pp.740, from January 8th, 2021*)

- Human activities: producing areas of the world.
- Andalucía's place in the world production system.
- Economic systems and sectors. Geographical areas according to economic activity. The three economic sectors. Structure and dynamics in Andalucía of the primary, secondary, and tertiary sectors.
- Use and future of natural resources. Sustainable development. Andalucía's commitment to sustainable development: social inclusion, economic development, environmental sustainability, and good governance.
- Geographical areas according to economic activity. Main Andalusian economic areas.
- The three economic sectors. Environmental impact and resource exploitation. Andalucía: main environmental problems and possible solutions.
- **The political organization of societies: types of governments. Characteristics of democratic states and dictatorships: principles and institutions.** Political and administrative organization of Andalucía. Spain and the **European Union. Functioning of its main institutions and the different voting systems.**

3.3 Procedure: The Didactic Unit “The Importance of *Δημοκρατία* in the World of Today”

“The Importance of *Δημοκρατία* in the World of Today” aims not only at making students aware of the cruciality of democratic regimes, but also at fostering, encouraging, and developing spontaneous talk within the classroom through the use of collaborative tasks and innovative methodologies that would be explained in the following sections. By the same token, CLIL’s inclusive and success-pursuing nature would be distinctly reflected in the results of this intervention, thus demonstrating its germinal role in the field of education as a whole.

Linguistic improvement in terms of putting aside fears of speaking in the L2 as well as awakening a natural ability in the development and exposure of critical thinking without the need to (re-)think a certain idea in the L1 are two of the major goals that concern the present project and on which the different tasks have been designed.

3.3.1 Justification

The world of tomorrow depends on our youth; therefore, it behoves teachers to transmit learners the need to know and comprehend the world of today so as to learn from what needs to be repeated in the future, but above all, from what does not. Thus, history was chosen as the main basis of the present project given its cruciality in everything that befalls society.

Today’s students differ from older generations in that they are overexposed to immediate and concise (but not necessarily reliable) information due to social media. However, it is at this stage that a question arises: what is the point of sharing or retweeting a headline about a particular issue if its causes and backgrounds cannot even be identified? Schools, therefore, should provide learners with an accurate and significant explanation of history so as to foster the ability of constructing an opinion based on real facts and sound arguments.

Consequently, and due to the fact that the group has been recently dealing with the political organization of societies, democracy has been selected as the

pivotal theme of the present didactic unit, with the main purpose of making students aware of the importance of increasing and maintaining democratic states, not terminating them. If this is broadly achieved, our future society will tend to avoid eventualities such as the one that is currently shaking our world with the dreadful conflict between Russia and Ukraine.

Another aspect to be justified is the importance of teaching non-linguistic content through a foreign language, in this case, English. CLIL methodology, when properly implemented, awakens in students an involuntary (and, therefore, quasi-natural) or “*incidental*” (Coyle et al., 2010, p. 90) capacity that culminates in communication through a language distinct from their mother tongue (i.e. L2), in an attempt to convey their ideas about a certain issue, such as the value and meaning of democracy in today’s world, as the present didactic unit tries to foster.

With regards to CLIL from the science of cognition, this didactic unit includes activities that pivots on cognitive perspectives. Indeed, following Krashen’s Natural Approach, the second session focuses the learning of content on *communication*, considering the debate a meaningful and comprehensible practice for students through which they are offered the possibility to (re-)activate prior knowledge in order to maximise the understanding of the new one. Thus, drawing on a whole range of linked stimuli through the use of realia would get the students immersed into the mood of the lesson. By the same token, Swain’s output hypothesis was also considered since the debate was designed to mainly focus on the interactive (or social) nature of language through collaborative dialogues. With this task, students are presented with a problematic from which they have to reason out possible solutions, thus enhancing perception, attention, memory, and logical reasoning skills.

3.3.2 Teaching Objectives and Learning Outcomes

The implementation of the present didactic unit would aim to develop the following teaching objectives, i.e., what the teacher plans to teach:

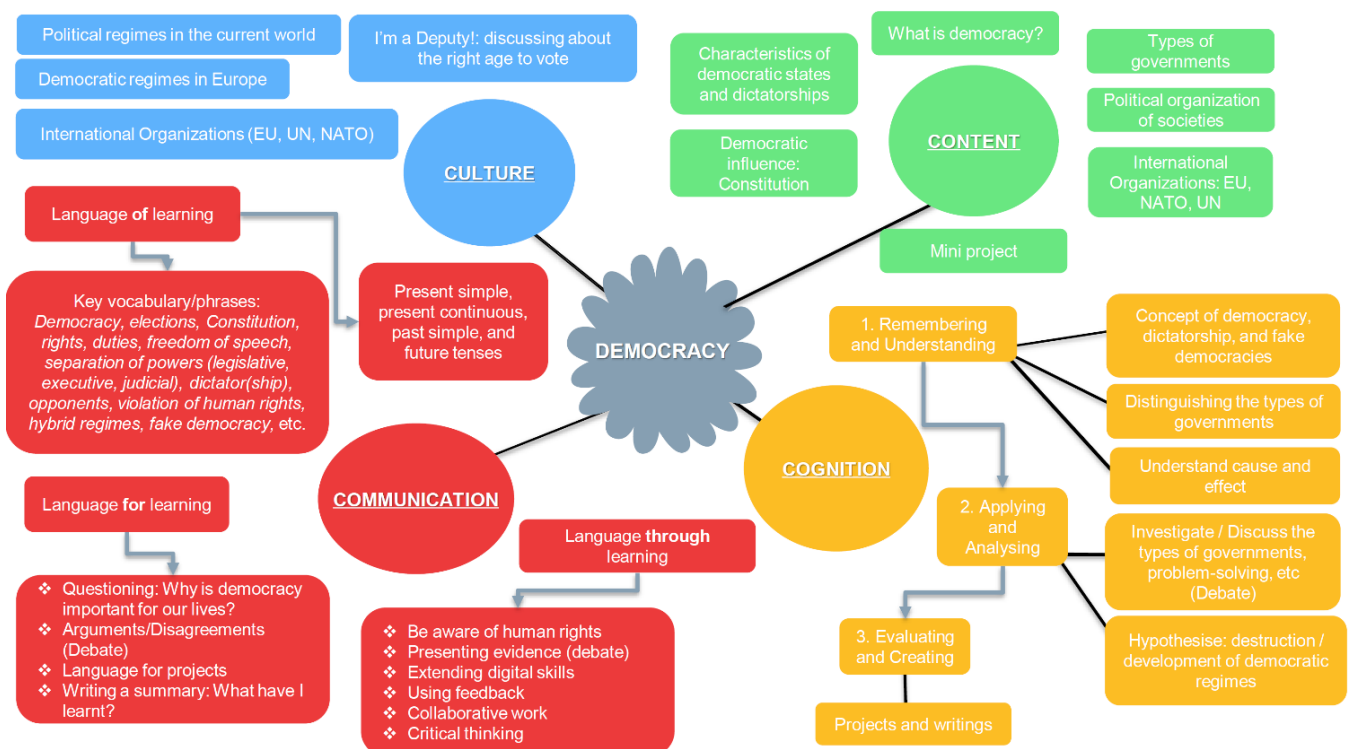
- To state the concept of democracy and its main features.
- To make learners aware of and build on prior knowledge of the types of

governments and their main features.

- To help learners understand that keeping a record of new words is crucial for their learning process (e.g., the diagram of the first session).
- To awaken civic values in the students.
- To make students aware of the importance of fostering democratic principles, thus connecting the unit with the current situation in Ukraine.
- To foster students' critical thinking and public speaking.
- To verify and compare information.
- To summarize and draw conclusions.
- To develop collaborative learning.
- To adapt to different learning styles and rhythms.

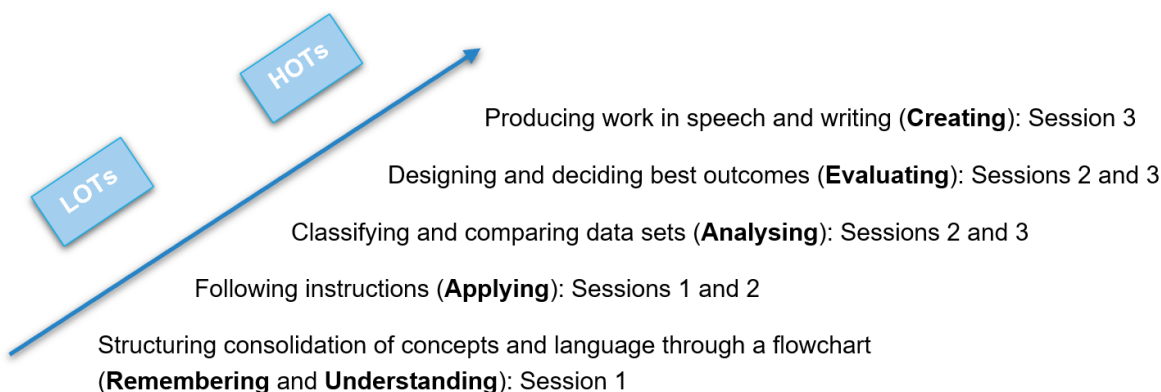
As regards with the specific teaching objectives, attention must be given to CLIL's milestones included in the first pages of this project: The 4Cs Framework (see Figure 2) and The Language Triptych (see Figure 1). In the light of this, the mind map shown in Figure 8 illustrates the learning outcomes that students would be able to do by the end of the unit thanks to the development of the teaching objectives that have been previously mentioned.

Figure 8 Learning outcomes: What learners will be able to do by the end of the sessions



Another core element that is imperative to mention when creating a CLIL unit is Bloom's Taxonomy (see Figure 3). Indeed, the process of tasks design needs to cater for scaffolded activities⁹ that engage and stimulate thinking in the learners, but which also provides them with support materials that would ease their learning process. Following this line and attending to the cognitive perspective that covers the whole project, Bloom's Taxonomy could be easily shown through the planning of this unit, thus capturing how the cognitive demand of tasks might progress from the simpler (LOTs) to the higher levels of processing (HOTs). By the same token, in terms of the perspective from which the teaching objectives are being examined, considering LOTs and HOTs would ease the path from a passive role, based on auditive and visual learning, towards an active one through kinaesthetic learning focused on demonstrating, arguing, doing projects, and teaching others (see Figure 9).

Figure 9 A cognitive hierarchy of task types based on Bloom's Taxonomy



3.3.3 Competences

The Compulsory Secondary Education official curriculum states that 'key competences' are the abilities and skills needed to apply the course contents of each educational stage in an integrated manner. Indeed, the present didactic unit aims to enhance the following key competences¹⁰ in the development of the

⁹ Following Meyer (2010), "to make sure that students successfully deal with authentic materials and that as much *input* as possible can become *intake*, it is essential for students to receive ample support". Therefore, scaffolding helps learners to "cope with language input of all sorts" (p.15).

¹⁰ The reader is referred to the *Boletín Oficial de la Junta de Andalucía, Boletín Extraordinario, No.7, pp.733*

student's academic and personal performance:

- The *Linguistic Competence* (LC) would be developed through the focus on oral and written comprehension and expression by analysing original sources, participating in the debate, and preparing the final project. Linguistic awareness, interaction, and articulation of thoughts and feelings would be also reinforced through the use of English as the L2.
- The use of online resources (e.g. Youtube, WordReference) and platforms (e.g. Edpuzzle, The Guardian, The Times, etc.), digital tools (e.g. Power Point, Prezi), and official websites (e.g. UN, NATO, UE) would strengthen the students' *Digital Competence* (DC), thus enabling the collection, organisation, presentation, and editing of information and conclusions on the contents and projects related to the didactic unit.
- The understanding of a cultural aspect or fact, in this case democracy, its relationship with personal and social identities, its outstanding manifestations and the importance and benefits of its conservation, dissemination, and enhancement, ensure that the *Cultural awareness and Expression Competence* (CEC), together with the LC, is more than fulfilled within this project. Also, the didactic unit contributes to the development of CEC as it implies an open-minded appreciation of today's world and cultural manifestations through the use of the L2.
- The *Learning to Learn Competence* (LLC) is the one that is most connected to cognition. Indeed, it is developed through case studies, research papers and projects, and the use of cognitive skills involving comparison, organization, and analysis (e.g. for the final project). This stimulates the ability to motivate the student to learn and feel that s/he is the protagonist of his/her own teaching-learning process. Additionally, reflection on the learning process and the use of effective strategies for problem-solving (e.g. in the debate) are also part of the LLC.
- The *Socio-Civic Competence* (SCC) enhances the use of the L2 in an

and 812, from January 8th, 2021, for further details and the original version of the key competences for both subjects that concern this project, i.e. Geography and History and English as a first foreign language, respectively.

empathetic and tolerant way, through knowledge of the behavioural patterns and codes that are generally accepted in different sociocultural contexts. Moreover, it assures the development of the skills that would favour personal and collective well-being and, therefore, the rights and duties of citizenship that govern democratic states.

- The *Sense of Initiative and Entrepreneurship Competence* (SIEC) helps the student to start acquiring the abilities to take risks and learning to manage interaction in other languages within complex scenarios. Oral fluency is a direct passport to the labour market. This competence also strengthens personal and social abilities in teamwork tasks.

3.3.4 Contents

“The Importance of *Δημοκρατία* in the World of Today” springs from an attempt to combine the contents of a non-linguistic subject (Geography and History) with the teaching of English as a foreign or second language. Therefore, the contents of this didactic unit revolve not only around learning about the political organization of societies, including the kinds of political regimes, the features of democratic and dictatorial forms of government, their principles, and institutions, but also around communication, which is the main purpose of CLIL environments.

The objective of the present didactic unit has been to bring these theoretically-oriented contents closer to the students through active and collaborative methodologies that approaches these items towards today's society, thus achieving the so-called ‘meaningful learning’ that is so much referred to within the field of education. For that purpose, students would elaborate a project in which they would investigate about different organizations that are crucial for the development and improvement of our present societies (UN, NATO, and UE).

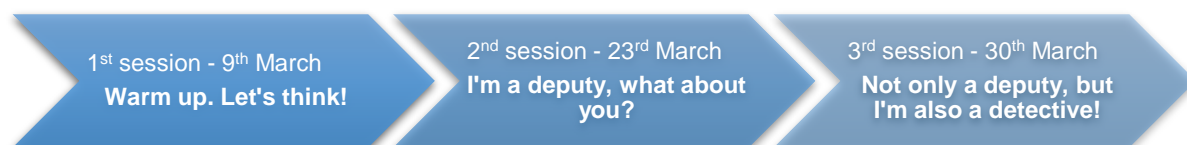
3.3.5 Preparation: Timing and Organization

The didactic unit has been planned to be implemented in three different sessions (9th, 23rd, and 30th March) that would cover three tutorial hours so as to not disrupt

the teacher's programme of the subject. It would consist of collaborative and scaffolded activities where students would acquire an active role within their own teaching-learning processes, thus becoming the main characters of this project.

The specific timing of the whole didactic unit is set up in the *Teaching/Learning Activities* section, where a detailed explanation of the programme and activities will be provided; nonetheless, Figure 10 shows a brief description of the organization of the unit.

Figure 10 Overall planning of the sessions



3.3.6 Teaching/Learning Activities

First Session: Warm Up. Let's Think!

Warm Up. Let's Think! is the name given to the first session of the didactic unit due to its major purpose: to make students reflect on the world of today in terms of socio-political organization. To this end, the session would contain three different activities. Firstly, students would be given a pre-questionnaire called "Testing my knowledge" that includes ten questions about the theoretical contents of the unit. Since they have been formerly dealing with this topic in the History subject, the learners should remember its basic points. Although the questionnaire is not part of the assessment, it would serve as a first contact to find out at which point the students are so as to check how knowledge has been transferred by repeating it in the third and last session.

Secondly, while the teacher is presenting the main contents of the unit through a dynamic and visually attractive Power Point presentation (see Appendix A1), students would be encouraged to follow and complete a diagram (see Appendix A2) that would help them to learn the vocabulary of the unit. Since it is the first time they are dealing with these concepts in the English language, listening to the explanations while following the given diagram would offer them

the correct pronunciation.

Moreover, in terms of cognitive processes, visual perception, focused attention, and deductive reasonings are fostered through the suggested activities. Following this line, students would distinguish among the different political regimes governing the present world by pointing out areas of conflict on the map while relating them to the diverse economic and political factors previously explained. This introductory phase includes infographics that work on routine thinking, allowing students to activate their prior knowledge on the topic.

Also, a continuous collaborative environment between teacher and students would occur, thus leaving aside their fears when speaking in a foreign language, which was one of the main concerns when planning the session. Students would be also explained the Greek origins of the word ‘democracy’ as an introduction to the next activity.

The last part of the first session will be covered by an interactive activity through *Edpuzzle*¹¹ online platform. Once the video *The Origins of Democracy* is displayed, the students would be referred to a QR code through which they could get access to the didactic website using their own mobile phones. Then, they would be asked five multiple-choice and four open-ended questions throughout the video with the purpose of not only checking the understanding of new vocabulary but also to foster comprehension and listening skills, as well as encouraging critical thinking through the open-ended questions.

Figure 11 *First session: an overview*

Activity	Timing
Pre-questionnaire 2: Testing my knowledge	15 minutes
Warming up! Power Point Presentation	20 minutes
<i>Edpuzzle: The Origins of Democracy</i>	25 minutes

¹¹ For a complete overview of the interactive activity, the reader is referred to the following link: <https://edpuzzle.com/assignments/622f78527e77c242b050da08/watch>.

Second Session: I'm a Deputy, What About You?

I'm a Deputy, What About You? has been chosen as the name of the second session since it would be focused on a role-play game. Following the main spirit of the unit, which is the importance of democracy, students would be given the role to become deputies who need to discuss a specific law, in this case, the right age to start voting. For that purpose, the class would be divided into two political parties: group A would defend it should be at the age of 18 while group B would support it should be at the age of 25.

As the first part of the session, students would be explained the mechanics of the debate under the following premise, displayed on the screen:

The right to vote is the basis of democracy. But there is disagreement on what age is the right one to start voting. Imagine you are a member of the parliament and you have to decide about the right age to vote. There are two opinions about it: some people believe it should be at the age of 18, while other people think it should be at the age of 25.

Secondly, each group would be given a sheet of paper (see Appendix A3) on which they would have to write ten arguments in support of their position. For that purpose, they would make use of online dictionaries so as to find the proper terms to establish their arguments. Nonetheless, the teacher would be solving doubts to both groups (see Appendix B1), thus being a facilitator and guide instead of a mere transmitter of knowledge.

After its preparation, the debate would take place. Both groups would debate face-to-face for 25 minutes, respecting each other's turns to speak and defend their arguments (see Appendix B2). This activity would activate students' participation and enrolment within a collaborative climate, where logical reasoning, attention, and perception would reach their highest peak. Indeed, some of them would take it very seriously, putting themselves into their role in a very natural way, which was the main aim when designing the task.

The last five minutes would be devoted to the explanation of the final project, the groups' arrangement, and a general overview of the assessment, which would be further detailed in the following section *Third Session: Not Only*

a Deputy, but I'm Also a Detective!

Figure 12 *Second session: an overview*

Activity	Timing
Explanation of the role-play game	5 minutes
Student's preparation of the debate	20 minutes
Debate: <i>What is the right age to vote?</i>	25 minutes
Explanation of the final project	10 minutes

Third Session: Not Only a Deputy, but I'm Also a Detective!

The last session of the present unit would focus on two innovative methodologies that lead the field of education today: Project Based Learning (PBL) and Flipped Classroom. Both approaches try to expand students' performance and implication within the classroom, thus pursuing the so-called 'active learning'. More details about these avant-garde procedures would be provided in section *Teaching/Learning Tools: Methodologies, Resources, and Materials*.

Not Only a Deputy, but I'm Also a Detective! has been designed to foster students' betterment in their performance in public speech and collaborative tasks. As regards with its organization and timing, the first part of the session would provide the learners with an overall explanation of the assessment items (see section *Assessment* for further details).

Secondly, the five groups would present their projects using the digital screen and would address the rest of the class to explain the contents assigned to each group in the previous session (see Appendix A4), thus learning about different international organizations (UN, EU, NATO) through the use of realia¹² (see Appendix B3).

The last part of the lesson would aim at testing students' improvement

12 The teacher provided the students with original resources from which they had to find the requested information: www.un.org/en (UN), https://european-union.europa.eu/index_en (EU), and www.nato.int/nato-welcome/index.html (NATO).

regarding the contents and topics taught during the three sessions by repeating the questionnaire “Testing My Knowledge”; the results of this post- research would be deeply examined in section *Results, Discussion and Analysis*.

Figure 13 *Third session: an overview*

Activity	Timing
Reminding of the assessment	10 minutes
Student’s presentation of their projects	35 minutes
Post-questionnaire: Testing my knowledge	15 minutes

3.3.7 Teaching/Learning Tools: Methodologies, Resources, and Materials

The following are the main didactic methodologies that have been used for the creation and development of the didactic unit that covers these pages. First and foremost, *CLIL* has been the basis for the whole project by combining the teaching of theoretical contents through a foreign language in a non-linguistic subject, thus demonstrating its excellence as educational practice within the field of education.

Moreover, having emerged as avant-garde methodologies, *Flipped Classroom* and *Project Based Learning* (henceforth PBL) have been taken as reference for the tasks’ design due to their collaborative component, thus placing students’ cognitive development at the forefront of the unit. Both approaches allow curricular contents to be transmitted through the use of technology and encourage the student-teacher interaction.

Flipped Classroom includes as fundamental pillars (a) flexible environments where different learning styles are allowed; (b) a learning culture and the fostering of critical thinking; (c) interactive content; and (d) the teacher’s ability to reinvent themselves.

In the case of PBL, it is built up on the following principles: (a) knowledge is the result of a working process between students and teachers; (b) the role of the student is not limited to active listening but expected to actively participate in

higher level cognitive processes; and (c) the role of the teacher expands beyond the transmission of contents, thus acting as the creator of learning situations that allow students to develop a certain driving question.

Another methodology included within the unit is Role Playing, which allows students to apply contents through decision-making by acting out a particular situation. In the case of this unit, students would take on the role of deputies to discuss the law that establishes the right age to vote.

As regards with the resources and materials used in the creation of the unit, technological devices and platforms have been used. Examples of these are *YouTube*, *EdPuzzle*, *Power Point*, and/or the official websites provided to the students. Additionally, the students' History book was also examined in order to include tasks that approximate the contents they had already dealt with.

3.3.8 Attention to Diversity

Considering attention to diversity and respect for different learning styles and rhythms is essential when planning a didactic unit. In the light of this, the three sessions designed and presented in the previous sections have been created with the aim of sequentially departing from the students' competences so as to meet their special needs through alternative and interactive methodological strategies that differ from traditional teaching. Thus, the role of the teacher would become that of a guide, promoter, and facilitator of knowledge through tasks like the debate, in which a situation-problem was posed to the students and it was them who had to solve it.

Diversity within the classroom was, therefore, rigorously taken into account when creating individual and cooperative work practices using flexible grouping (e.g. the diagram of the first session and the debate and project, respectively); by respecting each other's rhythm and cognitive processes by providing them with the transcript when displaying the video; or/and by arranging the five groups for the projects following a specific criterion with respect to how some learners would complement others.

By the same token, the visual, auditive, and kinaesthetic types of learning were considered when creating the tasks. Such psychological factors would allow the teacher to create an environment where each student found his/her activity: the video would address to the visual and auditive students, whereas the debate and projects would find its major audience on the kinaesthetic ones.

The teacher, therefore, should not only consider his/her academic/theoretical knowledge when planning a lesson; indeed, procedural knowledge must be reviewed, i.e. to adapt not only to the official curriculum but also to the needs and particularities of each learner. The development of critical thinking and the learning-by-doing method were highly appraised when designing the present project.

3.3.9 Assessment

The assessment of the present didactic unit would be mainly (but not only) focused on the productive¹³ skills of the learner, i.e. speaking and writing. The former would be assessed by means of a rubric that would count 60% of the final mark (see Figure 14) and where not only oral skills but also attitudinal, teamwork, and technological competences would be taken into consideration; it contains a detailed description of the features to be assessed. Students would present their projects about the different international organizations (UN, NATO, EU) and the teacher would use the rubric to evaluate them.

The remaining 40% would be devoted to the production of texts, i.e. writing skills: students would hand in an essay explaining what they have done and learned during the elaboration of the aforementioned projects. Originality, accuracy, fluency, spelling, and lexical and grammatical richness considering the theoretical contents of the unit (see section *Contents*) would be appraised as pivotal items of evaluation.

¹³ In this context, the word 'productive' refers to the skills where language is produced by the learner (writing and speaking); on the contrary, 'receptive' skills are those in which language is processed and interpreted (listening and reading).

Figure 14 *Assessment for presentations (60%)*

Assessment for Presentations		
<u>Assessment (6/10)</u>	<u>The student...</u>	<u>Mark</u>
Introducing and finishing the presentation (0'5)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Greets the audience. - Introduces the presentation. - Correctly summarizes the main points at the end. 	
Contents (1,5)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Shows a good understanding of the topic. - The presentation is well structured and visually attractive, includes relevant and interesting details, and meets task demands. 	
Oral fluency and accuracy (1,5)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Speaks clearly, with correct pronunciation and intonation. - Uses appropriate structures, syntax, and vocabulary. 	
Delivery (1)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Establishes eye-contact with the audience. - The speed and volume of delivery is appropriate. 	
Teamwork (1)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Demonstrates clear coordination and implication among members of the group. 	
Technological competence (0,5)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Uses digital tools proficiently for the task. 	

3.3.10 Research Instruments and Procedures

Although the present didactic unit was designed to be implemented in a short period of time, only three sessions, it included different research instruments. On the one hand, evaluation through participant observation played a substantial role in the choice of the target audience and the contents; the third-year group of Secondary Education was chosen among the rest due to its outstanding collaborative and pro-learning attitude. With regards to the contents, thanks to be attentive to students' comments, the researcher could notice their particular interest and concerns about the current situation in Ukraine and, therefore, it was considered essential to deal with the importance of democratic states and the need to avoid and fight against totalitarian regimes. By the same token, the

chosen topic was previously taught in class, so students would not start from scratch.

On the other hand, three questionnaires were given to the students for different purposes. Firstly, Pre-Questionnaire 1 “My view on English” (see Appendix C1) was aimed at evaluating the students’ self-perceptions, concerns, strengths, and weaknesses towards the English language so as to design proper tasks and activities adapted to the results of the survey. Then, Pre-Questionnaire 2 and Post-Questionnaire 3 “Testing my knowledge” (see Appendices C2 and C3) were equal in content but had different objectives; whereas the former served as a first contact with the students’ knowledge on the contents as it was given to them before the intervention phase, the latter showed the students’ improvement towards these contents after implementing them, thus providing the reader with objective and authentic results concerning the efficacy of the didactic unit that covers these pages.

The results and data obtained from these questionnaires would be analysed in detail within the following section *Results, Discussion and Analysis*.

IV. Results, Discussion and Analysis

The present section aims to accurately examine the different research instruments and procedures mentioned in the previous block so as to build sound conclusions about the results obtained. For that purpose, the three questionnaires handed out to the fourteen students during the sessions would be analysed through the use of graphics to better illustrate the data. Once these details are presented, the design of the didactic unit would be better understood since it would decode the motivations for the creation of the different activities and tasks.

4.1 Pre-Questionnaire 1: “My view on English”

The main purpose of the first pre-questionnaire is illustrated by its title: the students’ own view about their position towards English as a foreign language

was the major object of study. Therefore, this form was given prior to the implementation of the didactic unit so as to take a deeper look into the learners' self-perceptions towards the subject, in particular, and the English language as a whole. It consisted of seven questions divided into two main blocks: the first one (first six questions) required students to choose among the five skills (vocabulary, grammar, writing, listening, and speaking) whereas the second (questions 6 and 7) invited them to reason their response and suggest ideas for what they saw as ways to improve the subject.

The results obtained show, on the one hand, that the students' favourite parts of the subject (see Figure 15) naturally correspond to the ones they feel most comfortable with, which are grammar and vocabulary, as shown in Figure 16. Indeed, six students chose vocabulary and five chose grammar as the skills they found most enjoyable. The other side of the coin shows the discomfort generated by productive skills like speaking, where fear of making mistakes takes centre stage.

Figure 15 *My favourite part is...*

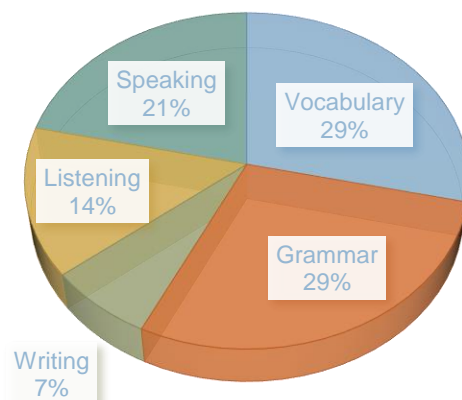
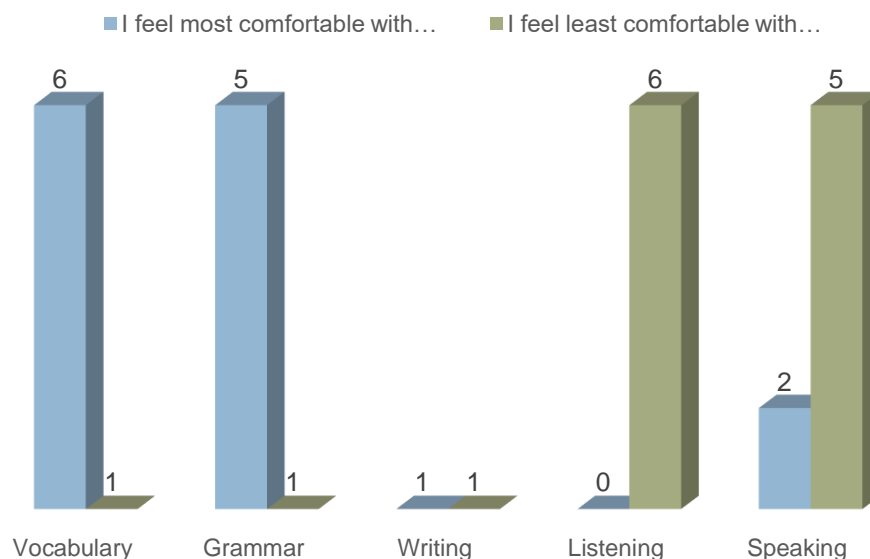


Figure 18 *Strong and weak points from the students' perspectives*



On the other hand, difficulty and importance through the students' eyes were also carefully examined through questions 3 and 6; in the latter, they had to give a reason that would explain their choice, since considering a particular skill difficult does not necessarily mean it is of no importance. Indeed, students opened up and told through the questionnaire that although speaking is the most arduous skill, it is by all means the most relevant one. By way of illustration, consider Figure 17, where the complementary relationship between difficulty and importance can be clearly seen both in grammar and speaking skills, where green and blue colours almost touch each other.

Following the previous idea, it should be pointed out that listening stands as the most difficult skill but at the same time is considered the least important. One reason that could explain this is the fact that students tend to give up on listening exercises from the moment they do not understand a certain aspect. Nonetheless, one of the most repeated suggestions in question 10 is to implement more listening activities using realia and songs, as shown by Figure 18. Watching films and videos and playing games have been the most suggested activities by these fourteen students.

The main purpose of this pre-questionnaire was to establish a first contact with what the learners thought to be their weaknesses and strengths in order to

transform and maintain them, respectively, through the implementation of the didactic unit included in this paper. The activities covered in section *Teaching/Learning Activities* are, therefore, aimed and designed to achieve these points (among others).

Figure 21 *Difficulty vs. Importance*

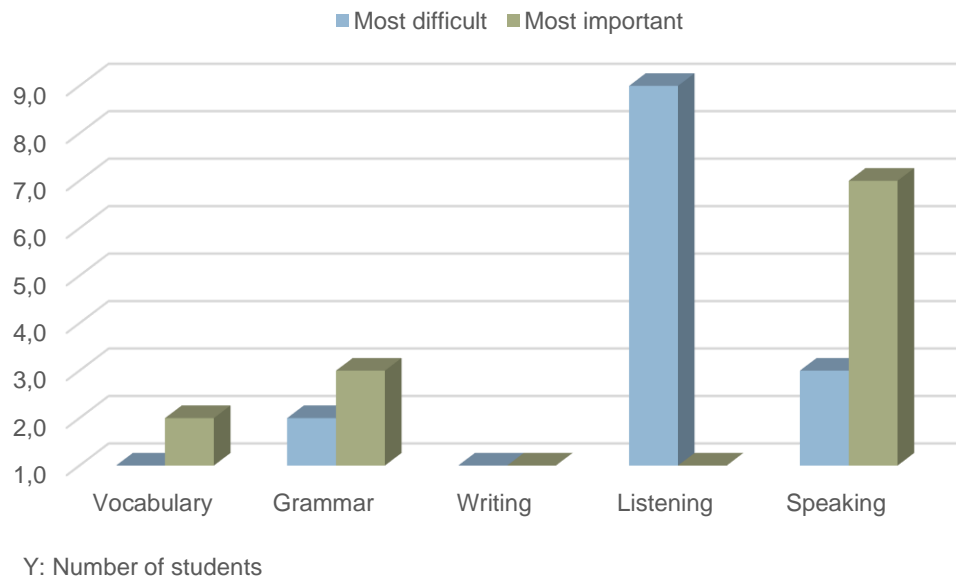
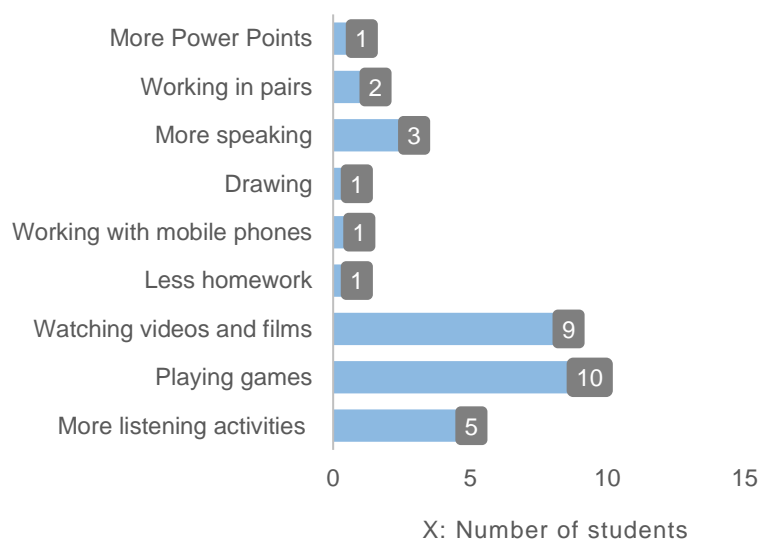


Figure 24 *Students' suggestions*



4.2 Pre-Questionnaire 2 and Post-Questionnaire 3: “Testing my knowledge”

“Testing my knowledge” would serve as both a pre- and post-questionnaire; indeed, it has provided the researcher with reliable information about the learning outcomes after the implementation of the didactic unit. In the light of this, Figure 19 offers a clear depiction of the fourteen learners’ improvement regarding the contents of the unit, thus manifesting its usefulness and validity within the current academic environment.

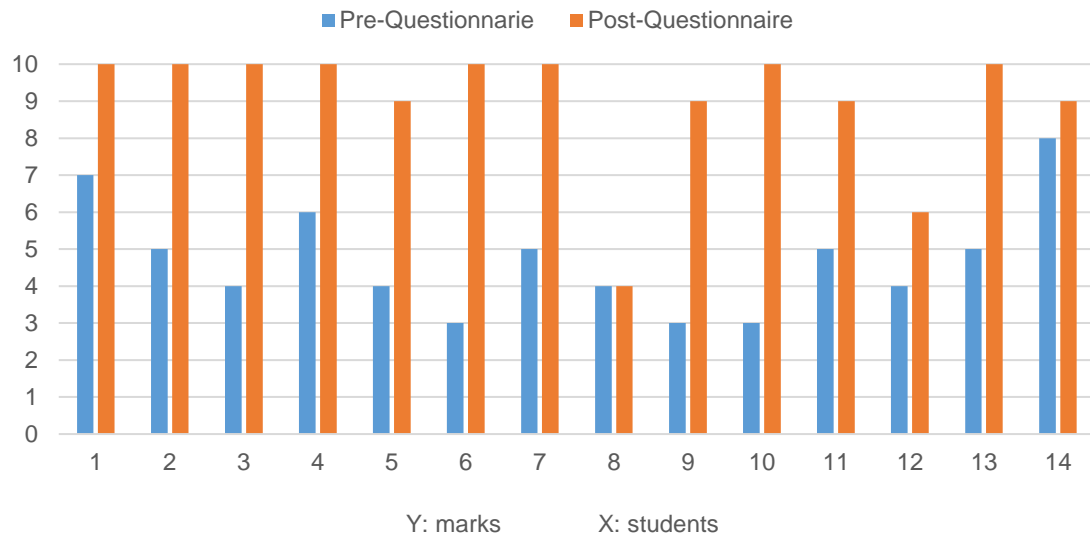
On the one hand, the blue colour shows the results obtained in the pre-questionnaire, which was given to the students the very first session, before the warming-up activity. In this sense, it should be highlighted that students dealt with this topic, i.e. the political organization of societies, some weeks before; nonetheless, the data show that the highest mark obtained in the pre-questionnaire was an 8, with half of the students scoring below 5. As it would be pointed out in the final conclusions of the present project, this information may suggest the need for questioning memorization as the most appraised methodology within the classroom.

On the other hand, the orange colour represents the remarkable evolution that the fourteen students have experienced after the unit, with a 6 being the lowest mark and no failures, thus indicating that the competence level of students is enhanced through collaborative tasks and a permanent focus on cognitive developing.

“Testing my knowledge” is, therefore, a representation of the fourteen students’ development after having put the proposed didactic unit into practice, the validity of which can also be demonstrated by highlighting specific questions that had been answered wrongly before the students had been deeply immersed in their own teaching-learning processes. Consider, for instance, questions number 7 and 9, which are directly connected to the projects they carried out. The former, *7. What is the BREXIT?*, was wrongly answered by 10 students in the pre-questionnaire, i.e. 71% of the class; with respect to the latter, *9. Which organisation is a military alliance?*, 57% of the students did not choose the right answer. However, after the didactic unit’s application, both questions were

answered correctly by all fourteen learners. Both questions analysed relate directly to the projects that the students themselves carried out or that their peers presented to the rest of the class. Hence, these data reflect the benefit of working on academic contents through projects that pursue meaningful learning, teamwork, and the development of students' cognitive skills. If these fourteen students had not been so involved in their own learning processes and, therefore, in the knowledge to be learned, and had limited themselves to memorising content, perhaps the results would have been different.

Figure 27 Students' evolution in the pre- and post- questionnaires "Testing my knowledge"



V. Conclusions

Education is a social process. Education is growth. Education is not a preparation for life; *education is life itself*. (Dewey, 1897, Art. 2: emphasis added)

As previously mentioned in the first part of the present project, society and education goes hand in hand: any influence on one has consequences on the other and vice versa. Ours is the society of communication, and so must be education. Nonetheless, such emphasis on the verbal interaction is not an easy task to be achieved within the 21st century classrooms; students, and particularly those who are in their process towards adulthood, consider speaking (even in their mother tongue) an ongoing challenge. And this is why teachers need to expand their methodologies so as to “invite the student to speak”¹⁴ (Plasencia, 2020, p.20); for that reason, all the activities that have been proposed within these pages have been designed from the awareness that the development of oral discourse “can occur only over time and requires a consistent approach by the teacher to contextualize work in the classroom, provide opportunities for interaction, and offer assessment on the part of both the teacher and the students” (Plo et al., 2014, in Plasencia, 2020, p. 23-24).

CLIL is born from this eagerness to foster a climate of interaction in the classroom, where the student takes the leading role in the educational action while the teacher serves as a guide (not instructor) towards knowledge throughout the learner’s teaching-learning process. The complexity of dealing with this issue does not detract from the teacher’s satisfaction when results are achieved, for as long as we ‘hit the nail on the students’ head’ we will be able to bring out the enhancement of their critical thinking and thus encourage their oral skills. In the light of this, democracy was chosen as the main topic for one minor detail, and that is that the students were quite dismayed by the situation in Ukraine, so I decided to have them delve deeper into the need to pursue democratic states to prevent our future generations from similar atrocities. In other words, *students need to feel a sense of an ending* for lessons, thus providing them with *meaningful learning*.

¹⁴ Translated from “invitar al alumno a hablar”.

The project has also demonstrated that CLIL is away from the connotations of socioeconomic privilege with which it has sometimes been associated. Moreover, it has overcome the challenge of being successful in a societal environment in which there is almost no contact with English outside the classroom.

With reference to the three chief objectives that were established in the first pages as the central axis of the project, a brief analysis of their evolution and scope after the research should be made:

1. To design and implement a didactic unit based on CLIL methodology.

“The Importance of *Δημοκρατία* in the World of Today” was born from the attempt to create a series of activities that bring together the essence of CLIL methodology, where students learn non-linguistic content, in this case related to the subject of Geography and History, through the acquisition of L2, thus being the main vehicle for communication in the classroom. The didactic unit was mainly designed following the fourteen students’ own concerns, strengths, and weaknesses after analysing the two pre- questionnaires given to them. Thankfully, and although time was a first constraint, it could be successfully implemented.

2. To provide detailed results after the implementation of a didactic unit in a CLIL context.

Not only was the didactic unit profitably applied but also the researcher could carry out a comparative study of the students’ situation before and after the three sessions designed so as to establish and provide fine-grained conclusions. The results obtained showed that although students had previously dealt with the contents that form the didactic unit, they barely remembered its main points. This calls into question the validity and effectiveness of the traditional content memorization to address certain didactic aspects. Indeed, the present didactic unit eludes this type of teaching-learning mainly due to its practical nature; this objection is objectively based on the fourteen students’ positive evolution, which is visually depicted through the graphics that cover these pages.

3. To enhance the learning experience of students by implementing innovative methodologies based on communication and cognition that may actively contribute to the fostering of an enriching teaching-learning process.

The present project seeks to adapt to the 21st century classroom and, consequently, to today's students. For that purpose, the activities proposed aimed at fostering communication among students and developing their cognitive processes through an active and dynamic role. Plus, the three sessions were designed with the intention of meeting the different types of learning, thus trying to enable each student to find and even discover the one that best suits him/her.

Although this objective cannot be measured by numbers, the students' attitude during the three sessions was permanent pro- learning, even in those ones who firstly considered speaking a challenging fear. Indeed, Appendix B shows how the fourteen students were actively immersed on the different tasks and showing a willingness to participate and to rise to the considerable cognitive, social, and emotional challenge of being educated.

As a final touch, it should be said that CLIL is not simply another step in language teaching, it is a fusion of subject didactics leading to an innovation which has emerged as *education for modern times*. However, for CLIL to succeed, *a major rethink of how we, teachers, teach what we teach is often needed*.

5.1 Limitations of the study and further research

Developing a didactic unit based on CLIL in a place where this methodology is not practised has undoubtedly been the greatest limitation the researcher has encountered when carrying out the present project. As stated previously, these students were not used to deal with English outside the English subject and, therefore, this proposal would imply a confusing way of learning for them at first.

Plus, due to the school's limited size, the study would have had a wider range of results and, consequently, conclusions, if the target group had been

larger. This would have added a closer look to the reality of Spanish classrooms, mostly made up of thirty students.

Further research on CLIL may include:

- creating comparative studies between CLIL and non-CLIL classrooms to examine communicative and linguistic competence, motivation, grades, and cognitive development.
- investigating learner variables such as socio-economic status, self-confidence, group affiliation, ethnicity and culture, motivation, and/or strategies in respect of their possible association with outcomes such as examination attainments or intercultural and linguistic competence in the CLIL classroom.
- focusing on the development of teaching strategies that contain language-focused strategies, new ways of assessment in support of active learning and the creation of a collaborative classroom climate in the CLIL classroom.

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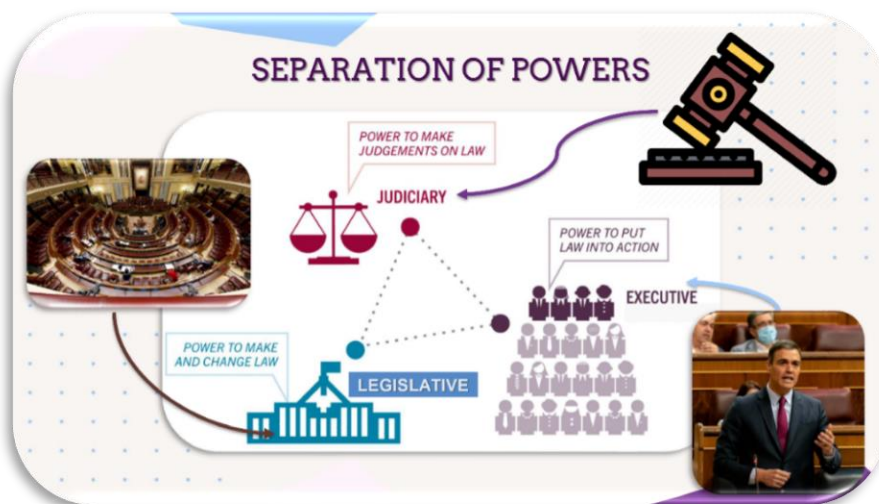
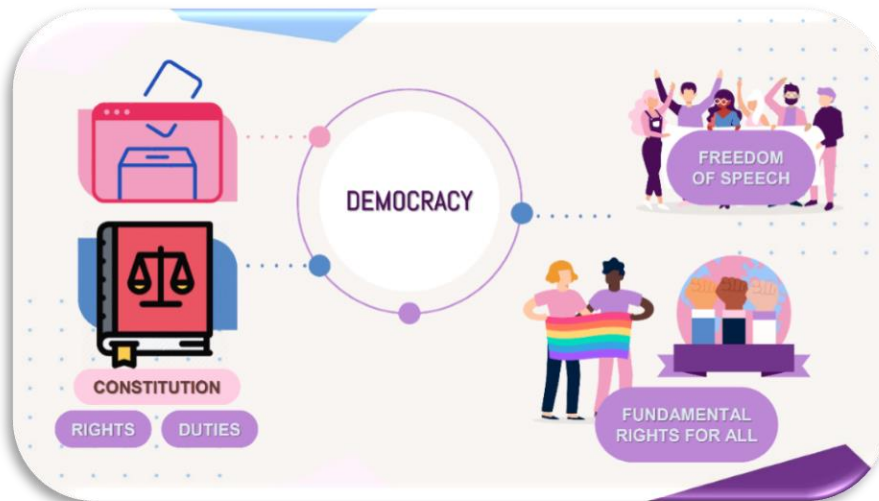
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Appendix A: Materials

A1. Warming Up! Power Point Presentation





THE GREATEST ENEMY OF DEMOCRACY IS...



CONSTITUTION

DICTATORSHIP



FREEDOM OF SPEECH



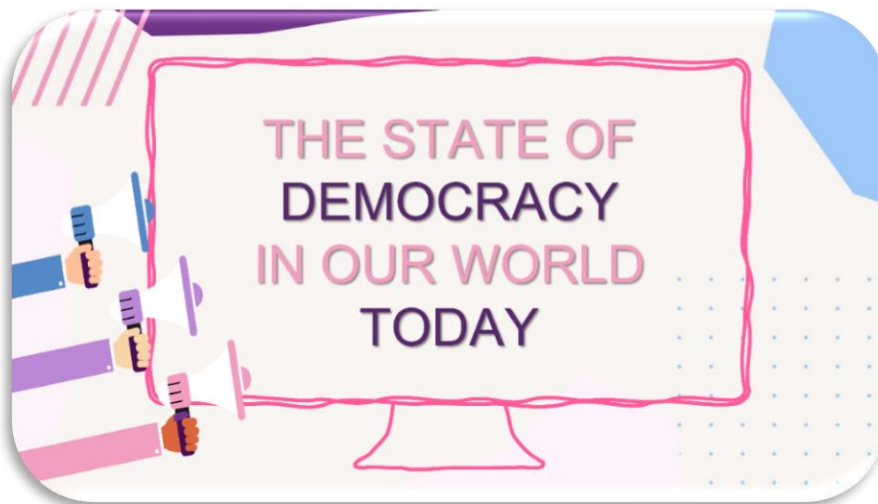
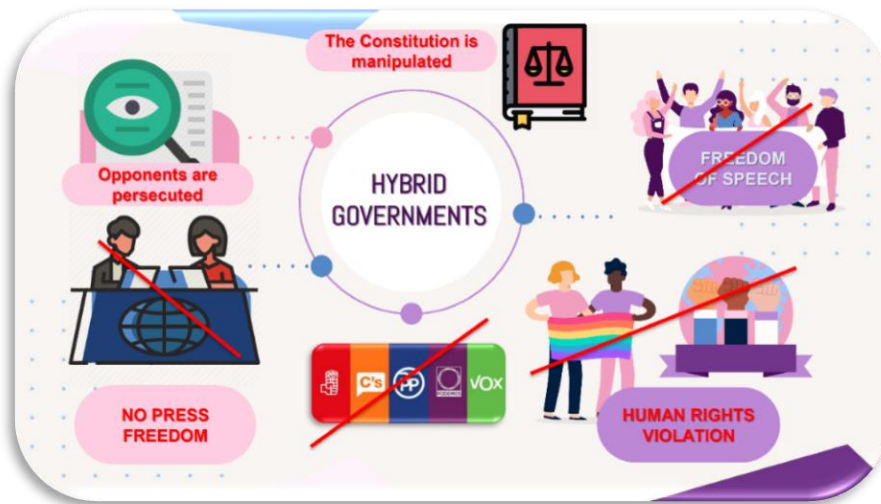
FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS FOR ALL

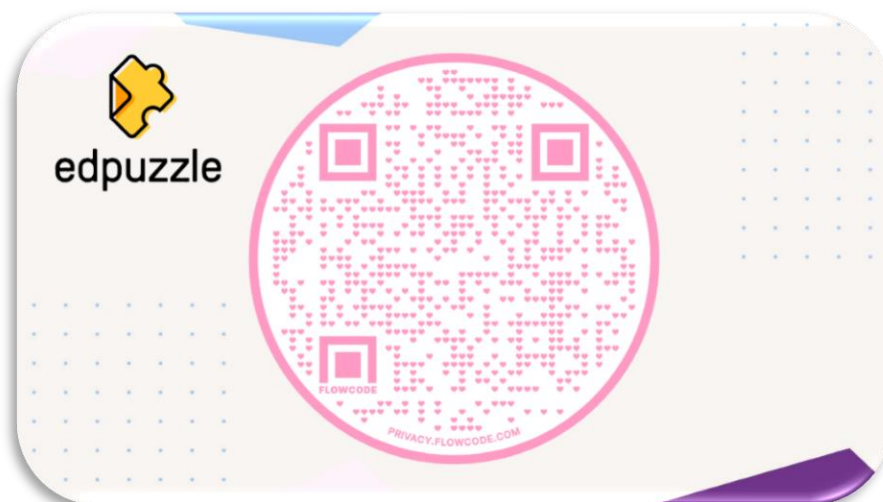
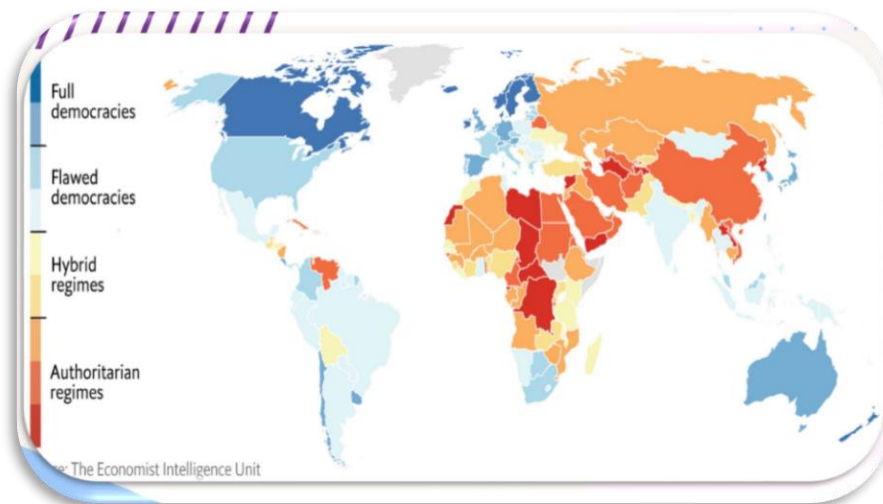
HYBRID GOVERNMENTS

OR

FAKE DEMOCRACIES







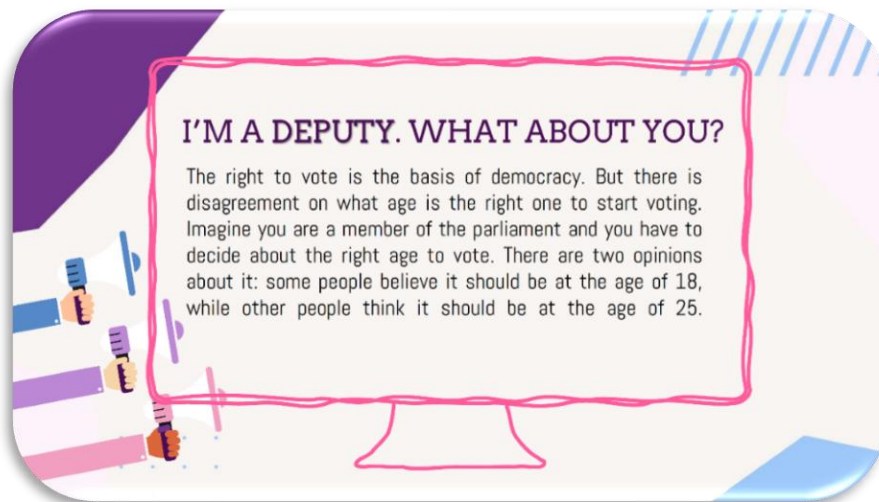
SECOND SESSION

I'm a deputy.
What about you?

A photograph of a large, ornate legislative chamber, likely the US House of Representatives, showing a semi-circular seating arrangement and a central stage.

I'M A DEPUTY. WHAT ABOUT YOU?

The right to vote is the basis of democracy. But there is disagreement on what age is the right one to start voting. Imagine you are a member of the parliament and you have to decide about the right age to vote. There are two opinions about it: some people believe it should be at the age of 18, while other people think it should be at the age of 25.



YOUR TURN!



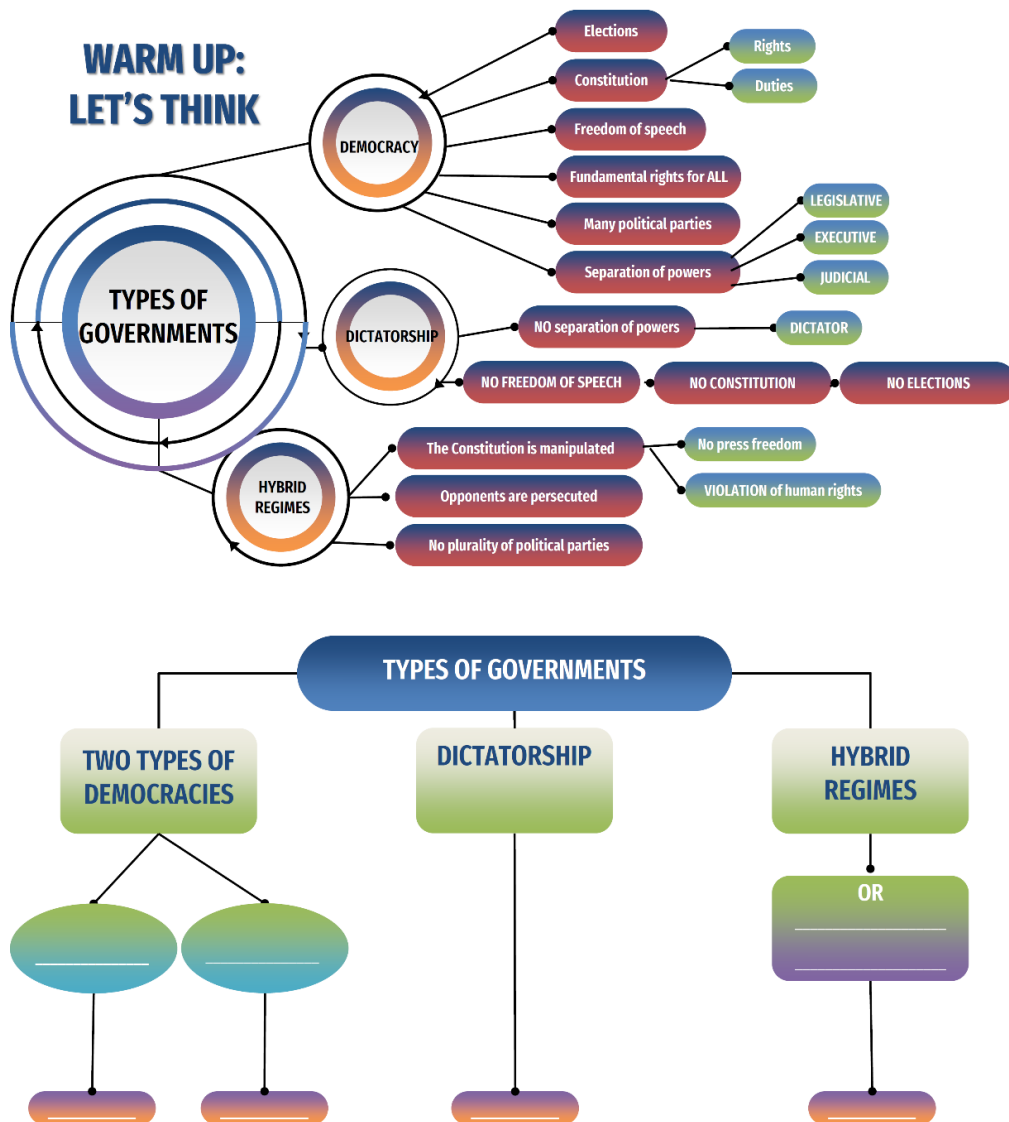
5 GROUPS

INSTRUCTIONS

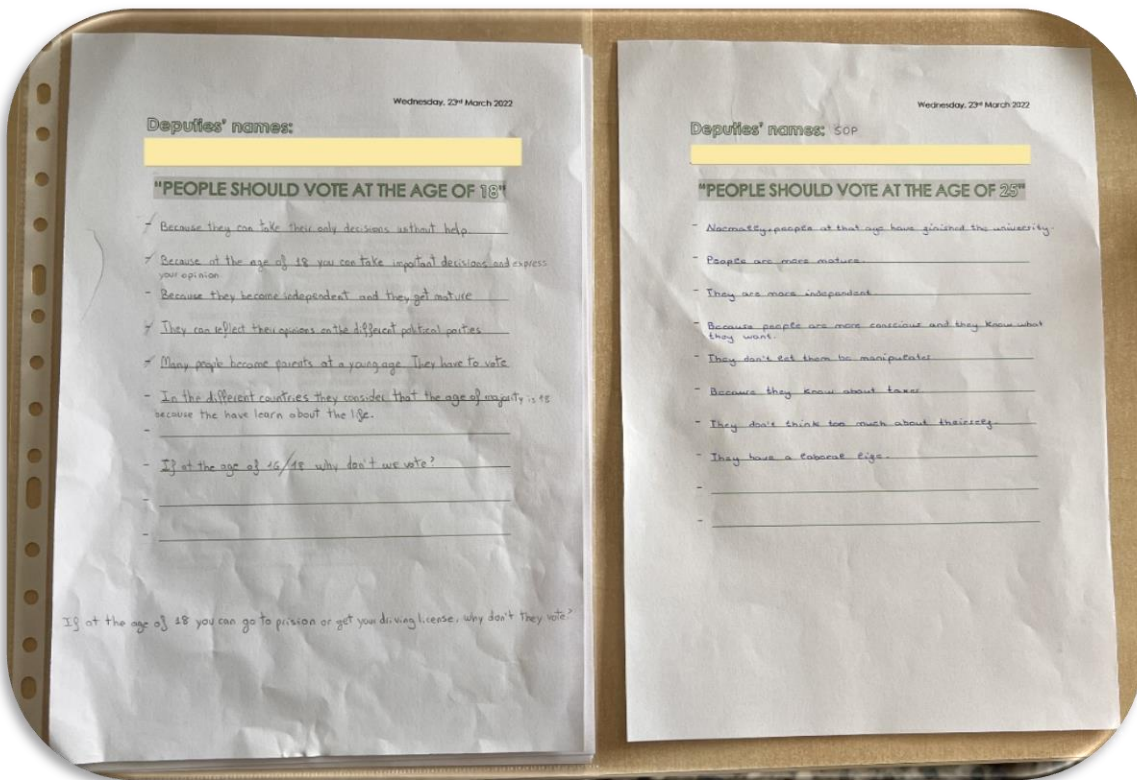
				
Presentation	6 minutes	30 th March	A question for the rest of the class	Summary



A2. Students' diagram

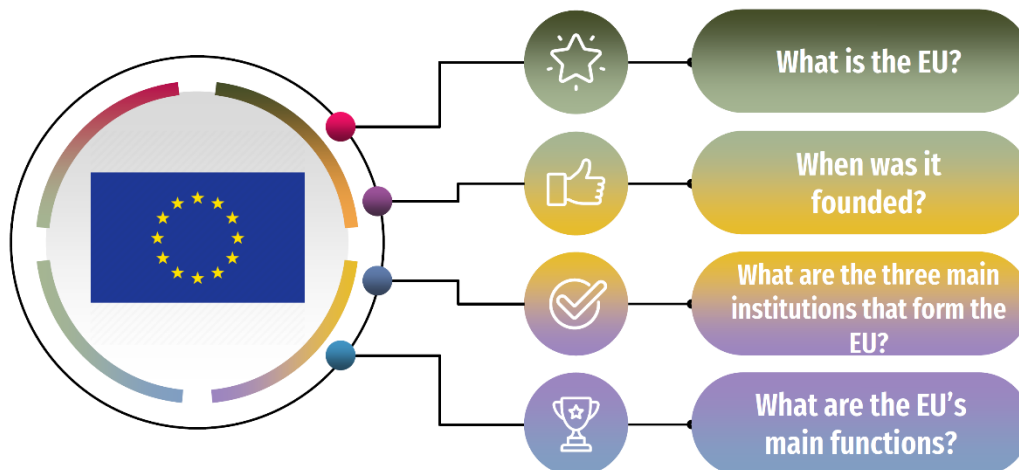


A3. Arguments for the debate

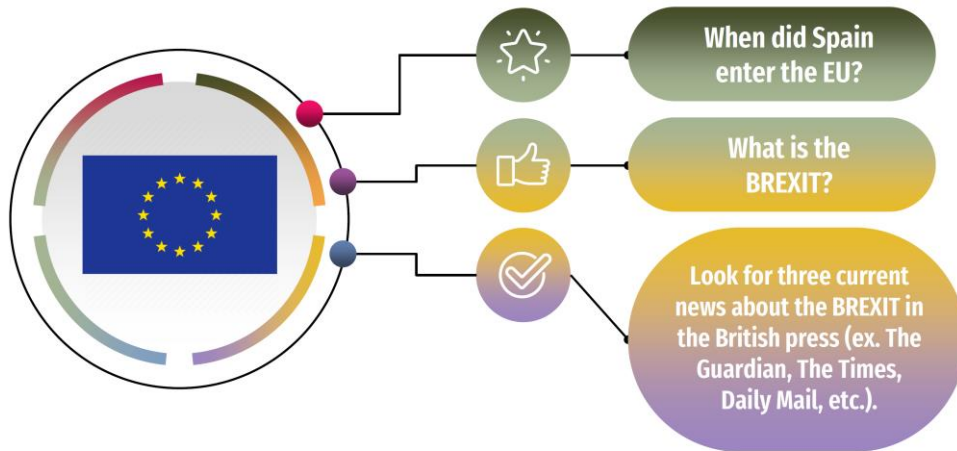


A4. Projects' instructions

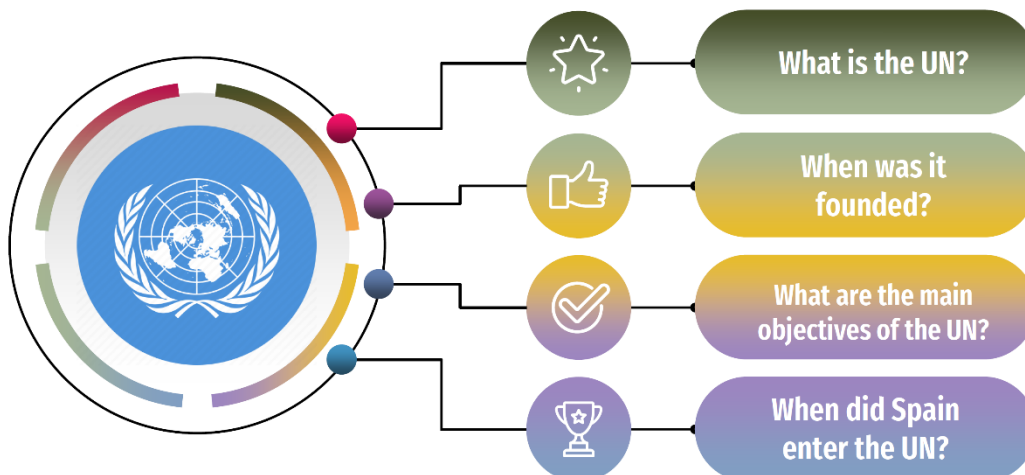
EUROPEAN UNION (EU)



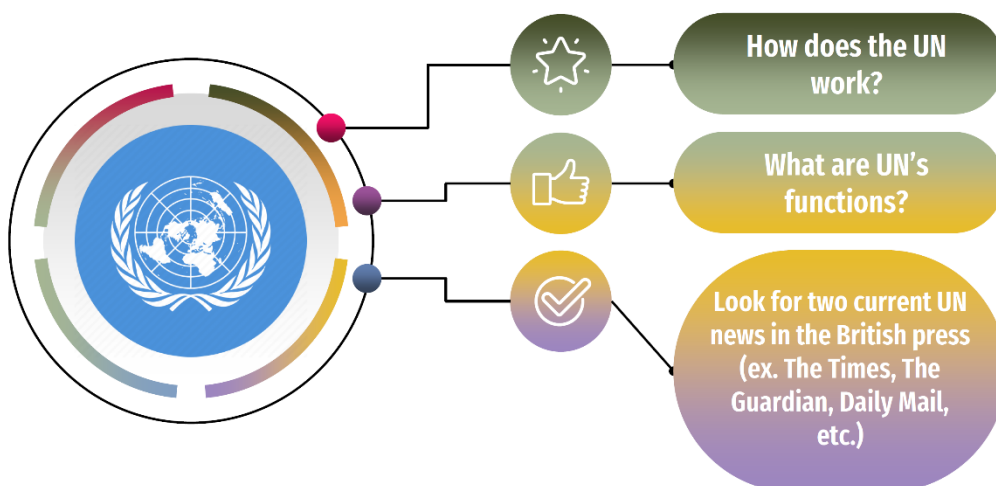
EUROPEAN UNION (EU)



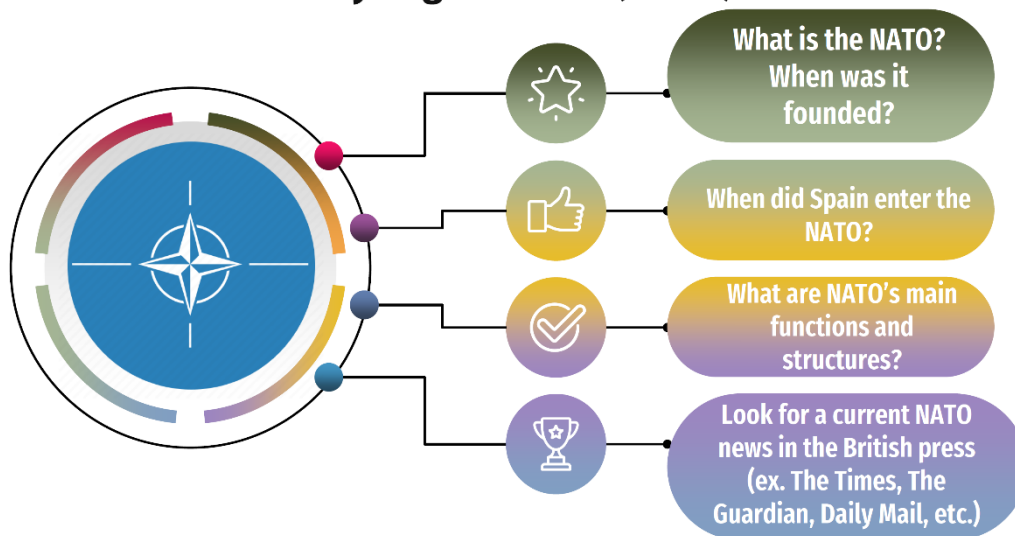
UNITED NATIONS (UN)



UNITED NATIONS (UN)



North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO)



Appendix B: Images

B1. Students' preparation of the debate



B2. Debate

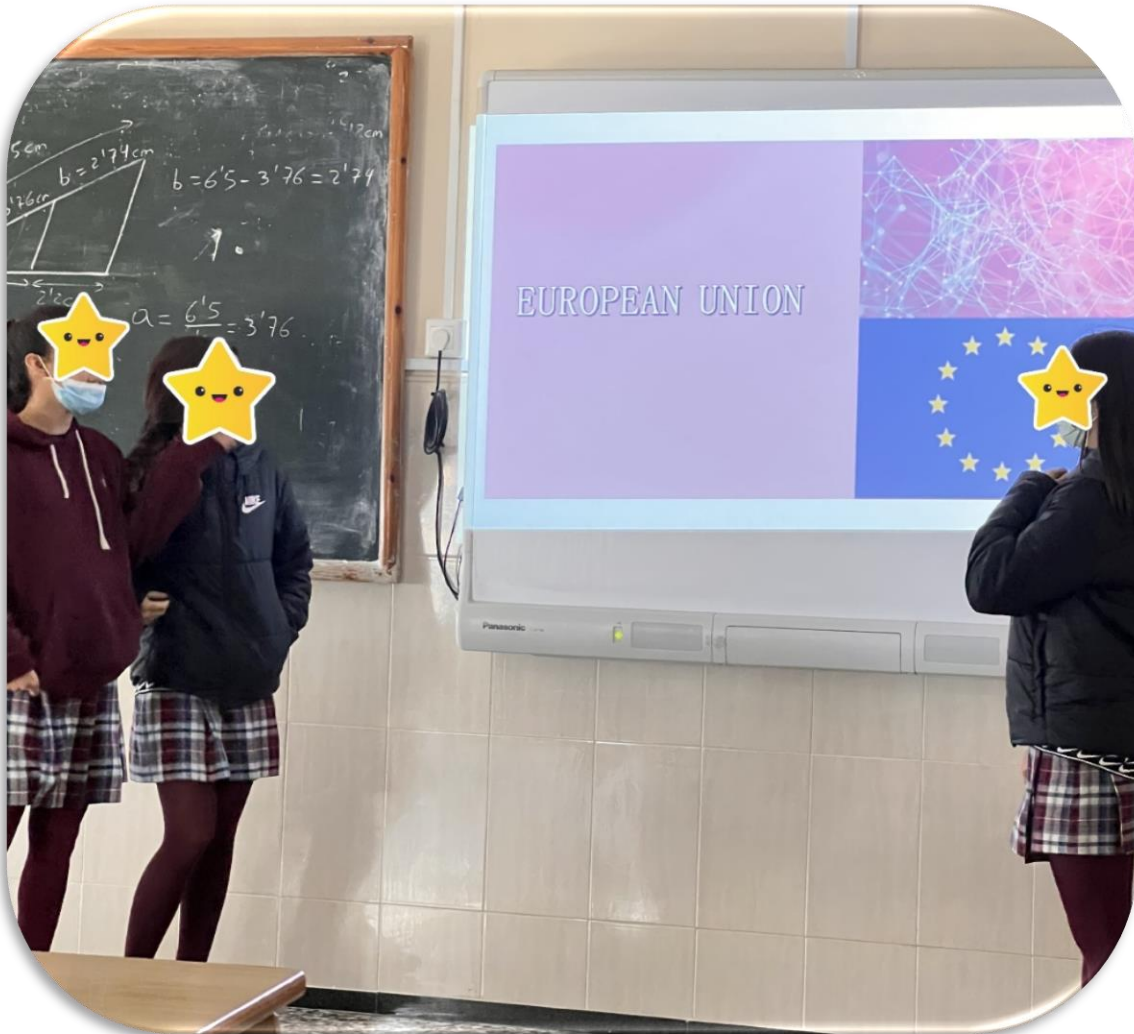


B3. Students' five projects



EXPLORING CLIL METHODOLOGY FROM A COGNITIVE PERSPECTIVE: AN APPLIED RESEARCH IN THE GEOGRAPHY AND HISTORY CLASSROOM





Appendix C: Questionnaires

C1. Pre-questionnaire "My view on English"



COLEGIO
Juan Pablo II
ALMERÍA



QUESTIONNAIRE 1: My view on English

1. What is your **favourite** part of the English subject?

Vocabulary Grammar Writing Listening Speaking

2. Which part of the subject do you consider the most **boring**?

Vocabulary Grammar Writing Listening Speaking

3. Which part of the subject do you consider the most **difficult**?

Vocabulary Grammar Writing Listening Speaking

4. Which part of the subject do you feel **most comfortable** with?

Vocabulary Grammar Writing Listening Speaking

5. Which part of the subject do you feel **least comfortable** with?

Vocabulary Grammar Writing Listening Speaking

6. Which part of the subject do you consider **most important**? Why? (Give **one** reason)

Vocabulary Grammar Writing Listening Speaking

Your reason:

7. And now... you are going to be **my partners in crime**! Give **three suggestions** that you consider interesting to do in an English lesson:

- _____
- _____
- _____

C2. Pre-questionnaire “Testing my knowledge”



COLEGIO
Juan Pablo II
ALMERÍA



NAME AND SURNAME: _____

PRE-QUESTIONNAIRE: Testing my knowledge

1. In a democratic country, what is the **most important law**?

2. There are **two types** of governments: democracies and dictatorships.

True False

3. A characteristic of democracy is that it includes the **separation of powers**.

True False

4. A **republic** is a type of democratic government.

True False

5. The **monarch** of a country is elected by its citizens.

True False

6. In a **dictatorship**, there is no Constitution.

True False

7. What is the **BREXIT**?

8. **France** is a monarchy.

True False

9. Which organization is a **military alliance**?

- a. The United Nations (UN)
- b. The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO)
- c. The European Union (EU)

10. **Where** did democracy **begin**?

- a. In Paris (France)
- b. In Washington (EEUU)
- c. In Athens (Greece)

C3. Post-questionnaire “Testing my knowledge”



COLEGIO
Juan Pablo II
ALMERÍA



NAME AND SURNAME: _____

POST-QUESTIONNAIRE: Testing my knowledge

1. In a democratic country, what is the **most important law**?

2. There are **two types** of governments: democracies and dictatorships.

True False

3. A characteristic of democracy is that it includes the **separation of powers**.

True False

4. A **republic** is a type of democratic government.

True False

5. The **monarch** of a country is elected by its citizens.

True False

6. In a **dictatorship**, there is no Constitution.

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