Learning English through games. Design of a game-based didactic proposal for learning to communicate in English at Agora Sant Cugat International School.

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ABSTRACT

Playing is a fundamental right of children, and something that everyone enjoys, in one way or another. At school, games are often conceived as insufficient resources for the learner to acquire knowledge. Also, there is a lack of guidance for teachers to design pedagogical games, that is why their main role in school has often been transformed into mere entertainment. This dissertation is focused on framing games as an effective, meaningful and pedagogical resource to use in the classroom to learn how to communicate in English. Hence, a game-based didactic proposal addressed to fourth-graders of Agora Sant Cugat International School has been designed and applied. To create this action plan, a study was conducted through interviews with different experts in the field to identify the benefits and resources related to these pedagogical approaches. In addition, a group of students and teachers of the school's fourth-graders were interviewed to gain a closer perspective of the students' needs as well as the role of games in the school. The data collected show that games bring different benefits in the learning of an additional language. Among these benefits, the students' engagement to learn and to develop positive behaviour, as well the creation of meaningful contexts for using the language to communicate, stand out. When children are playing, they forget they are learning English, however, they are acquiring the language since they need it for communicating.

Keywords: English didactics, additional language, games, game-based learning, gamification, student engagement, communication

RESUM

Jugar és un dret fonamental dels infants, i quelcom que tothom gaudeix, d'una manera o d'una altra. A l'escola, els jocs sovint es conceben com a recursos insuficients amb els quals l'estudiant pugui adquirir coneixements. Així mateix, hi ha una manca d'orientació al professorat per dissenyar jocs pedagògics, per això sovint el seu paper principal a l'escola s'ha transformat en simple entreteniment. Aquesta tesi està enfocada a enmarcar el joc com a recurs eficaç, significatiu i pedagògic per utilitzar a l'aula per aprendre a comunicar-se en anglès. Així doncs, s'ha dissenyat i aplicat una proposta didàctica basada en el joc adreçada als alumnes de quart de primària de l'escola Àgora Sant Cugat International School. Per a la creació d'aquest pla d'acció es va realitzar un estudi a través d'entrevistes a diferents experts en la matèria per identificar-ne els beneficis i recursos relacionats amb aquests plantejaments pedagògics. A més, s'ha entrevistat un grup d'alumnes de quart de primària de l'escola i les professores per tal d'obtenir una perspectiva més propera a les necessitats de l'alumnat així com al paper dels jocs a l'escola. Les dades recollides mostren que els jocs aporten diferents beneficis en l'aprenentatge d'una llengua addicional. Entre aquests beneficis es destaca el compromís de l'alumnat per aprendre i desenvolupar una conducta positiva, així com la creació de contextos significatius per utilitzar la llengua per comunicar-se. Quan els infants juguen, obliden que estan aprenent anglès, tot i així, estan adquirint la llengua perquè la necessiten per comunicar-se.

Paraules clau: Didàctica de la llengua anglesa, llengua adicional, joc, aprenentatge basat en el joc, gamificació, implicació de l'estudiant, comunicació

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INTRODUCTION

Learning a new language can often be difficult and sometimes even frustrating since it requires a lot of practice, effort and time to attain significant results. In school, for example, students may get stuck several times when learning a new language. Indeed, these difficulties often leave learners feeling unmotivated about their learning process. That is why student engagement in learning an additional language should be one of the most important aspects to bear in mind when planning a lesson. However, how can students get actively engaged in class? Stirling (2014), associate researcher of the Learning Development Institute, claims that motivation is a key point for the active participation of children. Following the *Self-Determination Theory*, as human beings, we have an intrinsic desire to learn, which is stimulated by the basic psychological needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness (Ryan & Deci, 2000). Therefore, students' involvement and active engagement in learning are influenced by the way teachers design environments and systems that support these needs.

In the words of Paras and Bizzocchi (2005) "to motivate someone to learn is to provide them with an incentive to engage in the act of gaining knowledge". If we focus on teaching English as an additional language, the use of games in the classroom can play an important role in student engagement, as well as serve as an incentive for effective student participation.

Nowadays, among the innovative methodologies appearing in the educational field, games are known to be good resources for teaching English since they provide a context where multiple skills can be practised simultaneously. Also, while playing games, students are developing not only cognitive but also social and emotional competencies since they are part of a team and have a set of rules to respect and follow. Beyond all this, one of the most important reasons why the use of games in the classroom is effective is due to the fun element they possess. It is a well-known fact that children tend to acquire language best through play and other activities which they find motivating and interesting.

However, the pedagogical value of play in the classroom has sometimes been confused, and its main function has been transformed into mere entertainment. There is a lack of guidance on how to teach teachers to design pedagogical games with clear learning goals. Therefore, this dissertation attempts to provide a framework where games are understood to be an effective, meaningful and pedagogical resource to use in the classroom to learn how to communicate in English, as long as they have clear learning objectives. For this purpose, a list of aspects to be taken into account when creating a learning game has been elaborated based on different authors' points of view. In addition to that, an action plan consisting of a didactic proposal that provides a game-based approach to work on simple past and stories

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in the Area of English has been designed and carried out. This proposal is addressed to fourth-year students at Agora Sant Cugat International School (hereinafter, "AIS"). In addition, this article offers definitions of *play, game, gamification* and *game-based learning* to situate how these concepts are understood throughout the article.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

1. The current framework for English didactics as an additional language at school

When referring to language didactics, we must consider the standards, principles and policy instruments that regulate it. The *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, teaching, assessment* (CEFR) was first designed and published in 2001 by the Council of Europe to contribute a "transparent, coherent and comprehensive basis for the elaboration of language syllabuses and curriculum guidelines, the design of teaching and learning materials, and the assessment of foreign language proficiency". Moreover, to encourage the use of teaching and learning of languages as a way to communicate from an empowered conception of the learner, the Council of Europe (2020) published a *companion volume* which updated the CEFR of 2001. This document conceives the language student as a "social agent, acting in the social world and exerting agency in the learning process" (pp.28). This means a change of the model followed in the course planning and teaching so as to foster the learner's autonomy and engagement.

In light of the CEFR's conception of the language learner as a user who interacts with the world and therefore needs to communicate, it is crucial to take into account the *Communicative Approach to Language Teaching* (CLT). Richards and Rodgers (2014), in their book *Approaches and methods in language teaching*, state that the CLT was developed because of the need for alternative methods of language teaching that focused on "the communicative potential of the language rather than on mere mastery of structures" (pp. 84).

According to Richards and Rodgers (2014), the CLT refers to a collection of bases that represent a communicative perspective on language and language learning. Among these principles, it is important to highlight the conception of the learner as an individual who learns language through the need to use it to communicate. At the same time, this approach proposes the creation of contexts that provide authentic and meaningful communication as an objective for classroom activities and lets the students find out the grammar rules by themselves. Also, it considers fluency as an important dimension of communication and takes into consideration that communication implies the integration of several language skills. On the whole, the CLT views learning as a "creative construction process that incorporates trial and error" and thus, offers room for diversity and tolerance towards the different rhythms of work (Richards & Rodgers, 2014, p.105 - p.107).

On the other hand, focusing on the current language model of the Catalan education system (2018), there is a new conception of language teaching. This vision aims to move towards a multilingual and multicultural educational environment. Specifically, this new approach conceives plurilingual education as "something more than the teaching and learning of different languages". Moreover, this new perspective is based on the belief that all languages contribute to the communicative competence of each learner valuing their use to acquire knowledge and achieve effective communication in several languages and contexts, which should be integrated to raise awareness towards the learning of all languages (Departament d'Educació, 2018, p.6 - p.14). According to the Council of Europe,

> The concept of plurilingualism can be understood from a threefold perspective: as a capacity, that all speakers have from using and learning – independently or through instruction – more than one language; as a skill, which any person has from using their partial knowledge of various languages and their experience of different cultures, for communicating and participating in intercultural activities; and as an attitude of tolerance towards diversity. (Departament d'Educació, 2018, p.12)

As noted in the language model of the Catalan education system (2018), the *Guide for the Development of Educational Language Policies in Europe* made by the Council of Europe (2007) stated plurilingualism "as a skill that can be acquired". This means that all language learners can be plurilingual due to their innate abilities to learn different languages at different levels of expertise, thus creating a heterogeneous linguistic framework (Departament d'Educació, 2018, p.12).

The fact of being plurilingual and its threefold conception leads us to the consideration of the *Intercultural Communicative Competence* (ICC). This ability consists of the effective interaction between people from different countries "using linguistic and non-verbal resources in a foreign language to relate appropriately in a variety of cultural contexts" (Byram, 1997). Language teachers must search for opportunities to teach learners other languages and cultures, creating an atmosphere of respect. Integrating this competence into language didactics creates a bridge between people who are living in different contexts and use different languages to communicate. Thus, students are better prepared for their critical participation in the changing society when language abilities and ICC are connected in a language classroom (Moeller & Nugent, 2014).

2. English didactics through a game-based learning perspective

Language teaching is sometimes handled as a subject independent of other disciplines. Nevertheless, like other educators from different subjects, language teachers are also responsible for creating a positive atmosphere for learning in the classroom. That is the

reason why they must plan their lessons with learning arrangements that stimulate active student engagement in the classroom. Moreover, they also have to look for teaching strategies that recognise the different motivations and interests learners bring to class, and that promote collaborative working and help make the class a favourable learning experience for all (Richards & Rodgers, 2014, p. 244).

Zosch et al (2018) suggest that "children learn best when the learning is active (minds-on) and engaged (not distracting), meaningful (applied to prior knowledge and transferred to the outside world), and occurring in a socially interactive environment" (pp.3). Hence, game-based learning can be considered as one possible teaching strategy that responds to the need Richards and Rodgers (2014) present. It is also "minds-on" and keeps students engaged in a meaningful and interactive way, as Zosch et al (2018) project. Moreover, it also stimulates language development (Levy, 1984), creates real contexts for communicating and thus, takes into account the CLT mentioned in the previous pages.

According to a study conducted by Butler, Someya and Fukuhara (2014) related to the use of online games in the EFL (English as a Foreign Language) classroom, using game-based learning fits in the current educational philosophy, which is based on a model where learners are considered active participants in their learning process.

On the other hand, as presented by Figueroa (2015), gamification allows students to improve their language learning experience while solving a challenge settled. Since gamification offers the learners a chance to interact with each other, there is a need to communicate and thus, use the language. In addition, Fogg (2002) highlights that "when people perceive social presence, they naturally respond in social ways feeling empathy or anger, or following social rules such as taking turns" (pp.89).

According to the ELI (2021) magazine of games to use in the EFL classroom, the linguist Stephen Krashen referred to the *Rule of Forgetting* (1983) which states that when students focus all their attention on playing, they become distracted from the content of the language and forget that the main reason for playing is related to a learning objective, in this case, the acquisition of the language. In addition to that, the American linguist in his Theory of Second Language Acquisition (1982) makes a distinction between the acquisition of language and learning. While the former (acquiring language) needs significant interaction in the target language in which speakers are fully involved in the communicative act; the latter (learning) refers to the outcome of formal instruction consisting of a conscious process that leads to conscious knowledge 'about' the language (Krashen, 1982).

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3. Definition of the concepts

The following section aims to situate the understanding of the different concepts involved in the topic addressed. That is why, a definition of each concept has been made by the author, in addition to a previous contextualisation based on the bibliography read about the concept.

Play: It has been stated that the concept of *play* is a broad notion that continues to be a matter of debate (Danniels & Pyle, 2018). Zosch et al. (2018) describe the term as "an inaccessible concept due to its complexity" and draw a frame considering *play* as "a spectrum" that goes from a concept of no-guided *play* (also known as *free play*) to a perception of *play* as a guided and meaningful activity which contains fun features with adult purpose and support. Also, according to Smith and Pellegrini (2013), *play* is "characterised by means rather than ends", thus it is more focused on the process than on the final goal to achieve. In addition, *play* is distinguished by its flexible capacity as "objects are put in new combinations or roles are acted out in new ways". And finally, it is considered to have an element of fun since it implies positive and engaging reactions in the human being (p.1)

Taking into consideration what has been stated and the authors' points of view presented, in this research, *play* is understood as the "experiential aspect of a game" Specifically, *play* is contemplated as the "formalised interaction that occurs when players follow the rules of a game and experience its system through play" (Salen & Zimmerman, 2004, p.303 - p.311).

Game: According to Salen and Zimmerman (2004), "the words *play* and *games* have a unique relationship in the English language" since there exist two ways of stating their relationship. The first one refers to "games as a subset of play", thus, conceiving *play* as a broad term that encompasses a wide range of enjoyable activities, some of them including games. Whereas the second one understands "play as a component of games", here, games are interpreted as a complex experience that involves rules, play and culture. That is the reason why, in this conception, *play* represents a subset of *games.* (p.72 - p.73).

Kapp (2012) adjusts the definition of *game* that Salen and Zimmerman (2004) proposed by including the concept of "emotional reaction" considering the idea of fun presented by Koster (2005), thus specifying it into a learning setting: "A game is a system in which players engage in an abstract challenge, defined by rules, interactivity, and feedback, that results in a quantifiable outcome often eliciting an emotional reaction".

In this way, this research conceives *games* as a resource with a context settled and its participants, in this case, the students/players must follow and respect a set of rules that regulate it in order to obtain a final result or achieve a specific goal. This activity implies the

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participants' engagement which can be developed individually or cooperatively and, consequently, implies an emotional reaction by the subjects involved.[1]

Gamification: According to the Dictionary of Cambridge, *gamification* is defined as "the practice of making activities more like games in order to make them more interesting or enjoyable" (Cambridge University Press, n.d). This definition can be complemented with Zichermann and Linder's (2010) conception of *gamification*. They emphasised the use of these fun elements to engage audiences and solve problems. Both highlighted the social aspect of gamification as a way to contribute to the participant's engagement and motivation towards a specific domain, which can be educational or not. Furthermore, Bradbury (2017) lists different components which are often used to gamify content: conflict, collaboration, competition, strategy, chance, aesthetics, theme, story, resources, time, rewards/scoring and levels. These components are adapted according to the aims of the gamified activity.

Likewise, conceptualising the term in a learning situation or educational context and taking into account the literature read about it, this dissertation understands *gamification* as the application of game structures and elements to a specific learning context in order to contribute to the participants' involvement and motivation.[2]

Game-based learning: This term has often been confused with *gamification*, but it is slightly different. This concept has its origins in the 70s and since then, *game-based learning* (also known as *learning games* and *serious games*) has been used by teachers due to the intention this approach has to educate (Isaacs, 2015). Qian and Clark (2016) refer to *game-based learning* as "an environment where game content and game play enhance knowledge and skills acquisition, and where game activities involve problem-solving spaces and challenges that provide players/learners with a sense of achievement" (pp.51). Additionally, Bradbury (2017) emphasises that once this methodology is applied, "players will either know something or be able to do something as a result of playing the game".

According to what has been stated, in this research, *game-based learning* is defined as a strategy that uses already existing games or adapted games in an educational setting or learning context to achieve a learning goal and therefore to promote students' engagement.[3]

4. Characteristics for an effective, meaningful and pedagogical learning game

Throughout the thesis, *games* are presented as a powerful resource to implement in the language classroom due to the communicative and meaningful context they set to use language. However, it is important to keep in mind that games, to be an effective, meaningful

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[1] Author's definition of the concept of *game* based on the literature read.
[2] Author's definition of the concept of *gamification* based on the literature read.
[3] Author's definition of the concept of *game-based learning* based on the literature read.

and pedagogical tool for language learning, must have clear instructional aims. Bradbury (2017) emphasises the distinction between *learning games* and the concept of *games* in general. She stresses that *game-based learning*, unlike a basketball game, as she exemplifies, possesses a pedagogical objective to be reached through play.

Apart from that, according to an article published by Kozlova (2021) in Cambridge Assessment English about the importance of games in the classroom, it is relevant to refer to the concept of "chocolate-covered broccoli". In gamification, this term is used when the gamified content turns out to be unsuccessful due to the fact of not integrating all the game and learning elements into the experience adequately. Thus, losing one of the most important aspects that involve gamification which is students' engagement.

Therefore, to avoid ineffective learning caused by a poorly designed gamified system, it is necessary to take into account the characteristics a learning game must have to be effective for the learning process of children, meaningful for the students and pedagogical for its learning objectives. Based on all of the above, the following is a list of aspects to bear in mind when creating a learning game (see Appendix 2 for an infographic summarising these characteristics):

- It should have **rules** and an established **learning goal** that has to be met through a challenge or a task to be completed and adapted to the needs of the group to whom it will be applied. The rules have to limit the behaviour and define the development of the game. (Salen & Zimmerman, 2004, p.80). The final achievement of the goal can be rewarded with a symbolic or specific prize.

- It should have an element of **fun** that implies students' motivation towards it by creating a positive environment for learning. The component of joy has to lead to the **effort** and **interest** of the player as a subject who is emotionally attracted to the result of the game. (Aranda et al, 2015)

- It should create a **meaningful context** to **communicate** using the language by considering the CLT approach (Richards & Rodgers, 2014). Moreover, this context has to lead players to **make choices**, **take action** and thus, challenge the learner. It should involve **interactions and cooperation** with the other players and the game, as well as with the content introduced during its development (Kapp, 2012).

- It should be based on the player's experimentation. It has to imply a process of **trial and error** and **track progress** where precise **feedback** is given about their performance. It can offer multiple chances for success and failure. (Dickey, 2005).

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- It should be **iterative**, keep the player focused and active and let the player **connect** with different contents of the setting. Furthermore, it can involve either **physical, mental or verbal action**, or all at the same time (The LEGO Foundation, 2018).

- It has to promote **imagination**, **curiosity** and **creativity**. It has to let the students work with different materials to favour their capacity of inquiry and problem-solving (The LEGO Foundation, 2018).

Leaman (2016) stated that "the process of learning is irrelevant if no real knowledge is acquired". That is why, when language games are used in the class in order to achieve the learning goals, a reflection after having played is needed to be aware of the language that has been acquired. In other words, the acquisition of deep learning requires awareness. Thus, learners must become aware of the language that has helped them to communicate to complete the main aim of the language learning game, that is, to acquire language.

5. The *Catalan Educational Curriculum's* vision of the use of games at school

Considering the *Catalan Educational Curriculum* elaborated by the *Departament d'Educació de la Generalitat de Catalunya*, their vision of including games at school is as follows:

> "El joc acompanya l'infant al llarg dels anys, desenvolupa la seva imaginació i creativitat i permet explorar, conèixer i entendre el seu entorn i relacionar-se amb els altres. També és un instrument per donar a conèixer i fer respectar les diverses cultures i tradicions. Facilita l'expressió de diferents sentiments i la gestió i l'autocontrol de les emocions que se'n generen. El joc, a la vegada, facilita el desenvolupament de certes habilitats socials com la negociació i el pacte, l'autogestió de les normes, la comunicació i l'expressió assertiva, la presa de decisions, l'agraïment i la disculpa." (Departament d'Educació, 2017, p.144)

Referring to the perspective of the *Catalan Educational Curriculum* towards play*,* it is noted that games are mentioned as an effective instrument that can be applied in the different areas of the *Curriculum*. First of all, regarding the Linguistic area, when referring to the literary dimension, linguistic games are proposed as a methodology that involves children's enjoyment and at the same time allows them to think, create and write tongue twisters, calligrams and rhyming couplets, among others (Departament d'Educació, 2017, p.37). On the other hand, regarding the Area of Mathematics, the mentioned *curriculum* presents some orientations for methodology and evaluation where games are proposed as "a source that provides more relevant contexts to learn Mathematics". Moreover, games can be useful to work on estimation, probability and chance based on the outcomes the children produce. (Departament d'Educació, 2017, p.103)

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According to the Area of Physical Education, *play* is considered to be essential. Through active play, children develop physical activity and work on their motricity. As games are valued as a means to interact with the rest of the students, they are also conceived as a common activity to work on tolerance towards the different cultures. Furthermore, play encourages knowledge and respect for a set of rules as well as favouring the student's ability to modify them and create new ones (Departament d'Educació, 2017, p.147-151).

Hence, as stated in this document, games themselves play an important role as an educational source that caters to many different contexts and experiences. Besides, this resource makes it easier for teachers to observe specific interactions between the students as well as the roles each of them has in the group by offering the educator a scheme of the relationships that are established between the children (Departament d'Educació, 2017, p.152).

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

Based on the topic stated and the overarching question of the research "How to teach teachers to design pedagogical games", the following aims are presented:

1. To situate the didactics of English as an additional language at school nowadays.
2. To identify the benefits and resources related to game-based learning and gamification in English class.
3. To detect the main needs of the fourth-grade students of AIS.
4. To design a game-based didactic proposal to apply with fourth graders of AIS.

DESIGN

Contextualization: The didactic proposal and the needs analysis have been carried out at Agora Sant Cugat International School (AIS). This international private school serves children from different nationalities from a high socioeconomic background and is linked to the International Baccalaureate Organisation (IB). The program for children between 3 and 12 years old is called Primary Years Programme (PYP) and it allows students to use their initiative to take responsibility for their own learning. They work on inquiry and reflection from different perspectives. The school's language project incorporates the same number of sessions in Catalan, Spanish and English. They begin with the English Immersion Linguistic Project during the first level of Early Childhood Education (0-2 years). The reason for choosing this school was that it hosted my curricular internship and offered me the opportunity to incorporate a game-based didactic proposal, since the school was not particularly familiar with it.

Recipients: The action plan was designed for the students from 4th grade D (second key stage) of Primary Education of AIS. There are 24 students in the class, 15 girls and 9 boys between the ages of 9 and 10 years old.

- **Needs detection**

Method: This research follows an interpretative paradigm based on analysing qualitative data through an exploratory perspective. It is a cross-sectional project based on a field study.

Participants and instruments: First, in order to collect the data necessary to achieve Aim 2 *(To identify the benefits and resources related to game-based learning and gamification in English class)*, four semi-structured interviews have been conducted with 4 teachers who are experts in the field of gamification and game-based learning: Isabel (I), Sara (S), Bea (B) and Adrián (A). They have been chosen for their expertise in classroom teaching through gamification and game-based learning and for the successful projects in which they have been involved. All the interviews consist of a set of questions about their understanding of the concepts involved and the benefits of using games and gamification in class. In addition, they were asked about the use of gamification-related resources and recommendations.

On the other hand, regarding the data collection to attain Aim 3 (*To detect the main needs of the fourth-grade students of AIS*), the participants are 8 students of 4th year D of Primary Education in AIS and their tutor and cotutor. First, the 8 students have participated in a focus group where they were asked questions related to their views and experiences towards games to identify their needs in relation to the topic. They have been chosen randomly to avoid potential bias. Secondly, both the tutor Gemma (G) and cotutor Susana (S) of the students have participated in two semi-structured interviews with questions concerning the school's methodology and the characteristics of the group as well as the relationship among the students and engagement in classroom activities. They have been chosen because they know the children and the school, and the information given has been complemented with the author's analysis and observations made during the internship.

Procedure: First, theoretical research on the field has been done by reading literature in the educational area, laws and policy instruments to have a first background of what has been studied. Afterwards, in order to collect the data for Aim 2, first, it has been necessary to contact the experts in the field of gamification through social networks and inform them about the thesis and its aims as well as the activities in which they were asked to participate. Once they agreed, the days to carry out the interviews were settled. When the interviews have been conducted, the data collected has been precisely codified and analysed to write the outcomes obtained and take them into account to design the didactic proposal.

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On the other hand, regarding the collection of data for Aim 3, first, an informed consent has been given to the coordination of AIS. Once they agreed to participate, the focus group with the students of the class randomly selected has been made. Also, the interviews have been held with the tutor and cotutor of the group to have a closer perspective on students' general and individual characteristics and the school's methodology. Once both of them have been carried out, the data has been precisely codified and analysed to write the outcomes obtained and to take into account when carrying out the didactic proposal at the school.

Ethical conditions: The research meets the established ethical standards. All participants (experts, AIS, teachers and students) were informed about the research and its aims. Before participating in the focus group and interviews, the school, teachers and experts have consciously signed an informed consent allowing me to use the information obtained for my research and their conditions have been respected. The students are guaranteed confidentiality, while teachers and experts are referred to by their name as they requested.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Regarding the **first aim** (*To situate the didactics of English as an additional language at school nowadays*), it has been fully developed in the theoretical framework.

As for the **second aim** (*To identify the benefits and resources related to game-based learning and gamification in English class),* the results show that all four experts refer to the benefits of gamification and game-based learning from both academic and socioemotional perspectives. (S) also adds that gamification can serve as a tool to work on student behaviour, as well as a classroom management strategy due to its engagement component.

To start with, considering the experts' views regarding the concepts involved (*game, game-based learning and gamification*), a perspective is drawn in which *game* is related to the words "implicación" (I), "diversión" (S), "aprendizaje" (B) and "libertad" (A). At the same time, the four experts concur that gamification is not playing, but using the game strategies to follow a particular narrative. (I) and (A) agree that gamification and game-based learning can be applied simultaneously, since some challenges can take the form of adapted games addressing specific curricular content. In addition to that, (B) and (S) add that gamification can be an interdisciplinary resource with different objectives that can go from learning or practising specific curricular content to work on positive behaviour development. All of them claim that the students' feedback and experiences confirm the several benefits that contribute to the acquisition of language, and therefore, to the child's development.

The most frequently cited academic benefit was that contents are contextualised, and thus the language used has a clear aim related to communication. (A) justifies this by saying: "Le

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damos un significado a toda esa teoría que estamos intentando que aprendan, ¿no? (...) con el juego creamos una circunstancia, un momento en el que ellos necesitan utilizarla, (...) le damos contexto a ese vocabulario o gramática." This result seems to corroborate the *Communicative Approach to Language Teaching* (Richards & Rodgers, 2014) which highlights the need to create situations where learners use the language to communicate. Also, (I) and (S) confirm that not only do games provide a context to work on specific vocabulary or grammar but, depending on the game, they also offer room for spontaneous outputs (*"roll the dice", "it's my turn", "you're wrong…"*) and interactions from the students that lead to the acquisition of the language. This goes closely related to the expansion of the classroom language as well as to the improvement of the students' level of comprehension.

In addition, the experts also refer to students' engagement in learning specific content since active learning is promoted; (I) adds "Están completamente inmersos". This result matches the theory stated in the theoretical framework that "children learn best when the learning is active (minds-on) and engaged (not distracting)" (Zosch et al., 2018, p.3). Furthermore, (B) and (S) specify that the students become involved in an educational activity without realising that they are acquiring language with it. This finding can be related to the *Rule of Forgetting* developed by Krashen (1983), which states that while children play, they focus all their attention on the development of the game, thus making use of language as a need to complete the established goal (Krashen, 1983, cited in ELI, 2021).

On the other hand, the experts also emphasize the socioemotional benefits of these approaches. In the first place, (I) highlights the socializing effect on students because of the interaction required to complete the challenge. This is connected to the perspective the *Catalan Educational Curriculum* has on "play" which states that through play children develop social skills such as negotiation, assertive expression and decision-making, among others. This statement has been corroborated by the experts interviewed as all of them agreed that games lead to work on abilities they will need in their future life such as responsibility, decision making, organisation, problem-solving, teamwork and team building. For instance, when students have to decide whether to choose one action or another in a specific game or challenge, as (S) refers to, "(...) lo que les estamos enseñando al final es iniciativa, toma de decisiones, que ante varias opciones tengan que elegir cuál es la que más les interesa y de qué depende." Also, regarding this, games help to work on emotions and give strategies to manage loss and frustration. (A) adds that games provide a context where strategies to mediate problems are put into practice. Besides, games are a resource where cooperation can be introduced, so multiple strategies can be implemented to work on cohesion and self-confidence to lower the affective filter between the students and teachers.

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Finally, (S) explains that another important benefit to add, is related to the growth of positive behaviour. She views gamification as a tool for classroom management. In fact, at the school where she works, while game-based learning has a specific learning goal, gamification has a behavioural aim. That means that for each positive behaviour, students receive coins to "buy" privileges, for instance "(...) cinco minutos más de patio o ayuda en un examen, claro, esa va a valer mucho dinero… van a tener que hacer muchas cosas buenas para poder comprar esa acción. (...) Al final se trata de recoger y usar estrategias que se utilizan en juegos y aplicarlas en el aula para poder gestionarla y crear buenos ciudadanos."

On the other hand, regarding the resources that have been identified thanks to the experts' suggestions based on the students' feedback, a table has been made to classify some tools and games/activities connected to gamification and game-based learning. (See Appendix 3 for a table summarising the recommendations given by the experts in the field.)

Regarding the **third aim**, *(To detect the main needs of the fourth-grade students of AIS)*, both teachers define the fourth-graders as a participative group, who are engaged, easy-going and hard-working but talkative and often unfocused. Regarding the special needs, there are three kids with individualised plans: two who have dyslexia and another one with autism. In terms of the relationship among students, the teachers' opinions differ: (S) refers to a good relationship in general, but (G) says that her view has changed due to several arguments among the students and the fact that there are lots of small groups of friends within the group. Moreover, the students in the focus group add that some of the arguments emerged while they were working in groups or playing competitively.

Regarding the academic level of the students, (G) considers it adequate for their age and observes that games are engaging for them. According to (S), the general English level of the class is around A2, but there are four students with a higher level (one of them being native) and three with a lower level. The students make a constant effort to use English in the classroom but often, when working in groups, they tend to switch to Spanish or Catalan.

On the other hand, it is worth mentioning that the school's methodology, has recently changed and that teachers are still in a process of adaptation. As mentioned previously in this thesis, the school follows the basis of the PYP. Regarding the English subject, (S) confirms that in fourth grade there is a deep work on Simple Past, but that in general terms, the students of the school work more on conversation than grammar. Also, both teachers interviewed affirm the important commitment required by the PYP as well as the large amount of time invested in preparing the project. It is for this reason that other methodologies or resources aren't used with frequency. Concerning the role of games in this school, (S) explains: "Yo diría que no tienen ningún papel los juegos en esta escuela,

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simplemente porque, bueno… con el PYP tenemos mucho que abarcar y la verdad es que se nos va el tiempo en eso." However, (G) mentions that she often uses games in Maths, specifically Kahoots from other users in the platform. She adds "Però és això, que com no tenim temps potser, per planificar jocs doncs no fas el joc amb un objectiu perquè aprenguin, sinó… més aviat perquè allò que tu has treballat doncs hi juguin i s'ho passin bé a partir d'aquell concepte." This could be related to the central issue addressed by this thesis, which is that games are often conceived as insufficient resources for the learner to acquire knowledge, meaning that students cannot learn from games alone. The words of (G) refer to the lack of time to design pedagogical games, limiting their use to mere entertainment. Their use, as she explains, is focused on engaging students by playing with concepts they have already studied but without any specific emphasis on the learning objective of the game itself.

Although the use of effective learning games is rare in this school, the research done and the data analysed show that students have a positive view of the use of games in the class. Throughout the focus group, the children listed several experiences they enjoyed with games used in the classroom. The results show that the subjects where students played these games were Computer Science (Block Craft, Scratch) English (Word games) and Maths (Kahoot). Moreover, concerning the games the students like the most, the data analysed show that video games and interactive games are the most popular. In other words, they prefer games that involve missions and rewards. Moreover, they enjoy interactive quizzes such as Kahoot the most as well as games where several letters are given and have specific time to create words.

Finally, it is worth mentioning the perspectives and awareness the students in the focus group showed when they were asked about learning through games: "**E:** Creéis que cuando jugáis también aprendéis cosas? (…) **Various students:** Sí. (…) **I5:** Aprendemos a jugar en equipo (...) **I3:** Y a no enfadarte si pierdes. **E:** ¿Creéis que aprendéis mejor si estáis jugando? **I6:** Sí (...) **I5:** Claro, es más divertido (...) **I6:** Sí, porque como es más divertido pues quieres aprenderlo." Here students refer to concepts that have been addressed throughout the thesis such as games as a resource to engage students in their learning process as well as other benefits explained above. Moreover, the kids showed awareness of games as a resource to work on specific content while putting emphasis on the fun element they offer.

Regarding the **fourth aim**, *(To design a game-based didactic proposal to apply with fourth graders of AIS),* the data collected from the interviews and focus group has been used to design the action plan. The plan has taken into account some of the resources recommended, as well as the criteria to follow when choosing or designing a game

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suggested by the experts and gathered in the theoretical framework. And most importantly, it considers the students' needs and experiences identified both through the research tools and the school placement.

The proposal is entitled *Let the adventure begin, welcome to Alaska!* It follows a game-based learning approach but incorporates some elements from gamification as well. It takes into account the socio constructivist pedagogy and bears in mind the *Communicative Approach to Language Teaching* (Richards & Rodgers, 2014) since games create real contexts for children to communicate in English, and thus allow learners to practice the language they are learning (see Appendix 5 for the planning of the didactic proposal).

The action plan is aimed at the Area of English and focuses on the grammatical content of the simple past tense and storytelling, as requested by the school. Additionally, the unit of inquiry (PYP) related is *How do we express ourselves?* This unit is related to stories, its main elements, traditions and ways in which stories can be told. That is why, the main guiding thread (gamification) of the action plan is a story about Hiti, a girl from Alaska who goes to visit her grandparents in the north of the state and magically travels to the past. However, the students are not told the whole story in the beginning, but every time a mission is completed, a part of the story is unlocked, until they complete the final challenge to discover the ending. At the same time, during the adventure which the students are immersed in, they get to know the way of life of the ancient Inuits from the north of the state, Hiti's ancestors. With this guiding thread, the proposal also works on Intercultural Communicative Competence, since while the students work on English content, they also learn about a different culture from theirs.

The teaching plan is designed using game strategies such as missions, system messages and rewards (which are the parts of the story that get unlocked) as if it was a video game which relates to the concept of gamification developed throughout the article. On the other hand, each mission is an adapted game with a clear language goal. These games have been created using *Genial.ly* and *Canva*, as the experts suggested. In most of the cases, the games provide a context where students can use simple past to communicate in English, and in others, they serve as a practice with irregular verbs' past forms as well as the interrogative forms of simple past tense. In addition, the proposal aims to work especially on oral and written expression through the creation of cooperative stories. Also, game quizzes and board games are introduced to work on specific content, as students suggested and the experts recommended.

In addition, it is important to note that in order to ensure efficient learning, and thus to raise awareness of the language that is being acquired, after each mission, students have to

complete a passport tracking in which they reflect on their participation in the mission as well as the vocabulary used to communicate. At the same time, they also have a space to write down any predictions they have about what will happen next in the narrative.

In other words, from a cognitive perspective, the teaching plan created tries to review and practice the knowledge the students have in relation to the Simple Past through game-based learning, gamification and storytelling as well as expand it following the comprehensible input hypothesis (meeting students' current level and implementing one more level of difficulty). Additionally, from a metacognitive perspective, it seeks to give students the opportunity to interact with their classmates using English as the vehicular language and practising the structures they have learnt. Although most of the language is very guided, for example, when working on interrogative forms, there is also room for spontaneous outputs when communicating to play a game or doing a cooperative activity, also related to classroom language. And from a socio-affective perspective, it is relevant to add that the action plan seeks to cater to all students' needs by giving each student the tools they need to succeed in their learning experiences. For instance, tips and hints to communicate in English during the games are given to all the students, not only those with a lower level of English, thus by letting them be at the same level and have the same learning opportunities. Moreover, the plan has taken into account students' interests, motivations and needs thanks to the data gathered with the focus group and the interviews.

Finally, it is worth saying that this proposal has been implemented as a pre-service teacher at AIS. The observations made and the students' participation in the different missions have shown that the use of both gamification and game-based learning, promotes students' engagement and implication in their learning process. The outcomes obtained from the children show that their engagement contributed positively to their language acquisition. Even so, it is important to highlight that in games where language was more spontaneous, students tended to switch to Catalan or Spanish. That is why the teacher had to be in constant contact with the children, encouraging them to use English to communicate. However, students have shown awareness about the language used throughout the missions with their writings on the *passport tracking*. Most of them provided answers emphasizing the vocabulary or sentences used while carrying out the games, some of them even referring to simple past tense directly. At the same time, all the children wrote new words that they learnt thanks to the games and the story. These new words were understood, either because of the context in which they were introduced and the visual support given, or thanks to the teachers' help. The fact that the students became aware that they had learnt new words or expressions without noticing it was a clear example of the effective acquisition of language provided by the games.

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CONCLUSIONS

This thesis arose from the need to offer teachers a convincing vision about the use of games. Specifically, this study sought to show that if a game is designed taking into account the characteristics mentioned during the dissertation (it has rules, clear learning goals and elements of fun, among others), it can be an effective resource that works meaningfully in the classroom and can contribute successfully to the students' learning process.

Returning to the main question and the objectives of this dissertation, it is worth saying that all of them have been completed. Among the findings, it is important to highlight that English didactics as an additional language is nowadays situated within a framework in which language is understood to be learnt in a context with the aim of communicating with others through the interaction that takes place. In relation to this, it is stated that it is necessary to look for teaching approaches that stimulate students' engagement in the classroom. On the other hand, the data collected through the interviews with the experts showed that games can be an engaging resource for students to work, not only on curricular content but also on their social skills and that have multiple benefits such as the contextualisation of learning and of language and the possibility to work on team building, among others.

Besides, the needs detected from the students and the school where the action plan was carried out made it clear that the school was not entirely committed to the idea that games can work as resources through which meaningful learning can be acquired. However, the fact of being able to carry out the action plan proved that student engagement increased and that games provided the students with the opportunity to express themselves in a different language without making them feel insecure. Also, gamification played an important role, since the students wanted to complete the missions to know how the story continued. A real purpose was given to carry out and participate in the different activities.

To conclude, it is necessary to highlight the importance of children's commitment, or their engagement in their learning process. It is important to emphasize that not all learning needs to have an element of fun to be significant, but it is relevant to reflect on how this fun influences students' commitment to continue wanting to learn.

Limitations and further research: Considering the limitations of this study, it is important to bear in mind that all the data analysed through the six interviews and the focus group could not be fully represented in this dissertation due to space limitations. Therefore, the results and conclusions mentioned in the article are the most relevant according to the author. On the other hand, another limitation of this study is that, from the beginning, the action plan was supposed to combine both approaches (gamification and game-based learning). However, when planning the proposal, it was not possible to add so many strategies from

gamification such as tracking points or individual rewards as their application in the classroom required too much time for the students to understand the mechanics as they had never worked with this system before. As the action plan was the same unit presented in the practicum subject, the hours for the sessions and the syllabus were very limited, so it was finally decided to focus more on game-based learning to work on the content and gamification as an incentive to motivate the different challenges. That is why one possible future line of research could be to design some guidelines for kids to show them how this system works, since the research found gives more emphasis on teachers' formation but less for students who have never worked with it before. Also, in order to prove the benefits and effectiveness of games, a comparison between different methods of teaching (one more transmissionist and the other one following a game-based learning approach) could be done.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Relation of the TFG with the SDG of Agenda 2030

The current world that society is facing is characterized by multiple situations and challenges that require people to be flexible and adapt quickly to the changing context in which they live. The Sustainable Development Goals serve as a guide to contribute to change from different perspectives in order to help, in a sustainable way, to take care of the world and the society that inhabits it. As Baden Powel once said "Try to leave the world a little better than you found it", this dissertation seeks to contribute to the global change the Sustainable Development Goals tries to achieve, specifically with the SDG 4: Quality Education, by giving guidance and proof of effectiveness in one specific teaching resource.
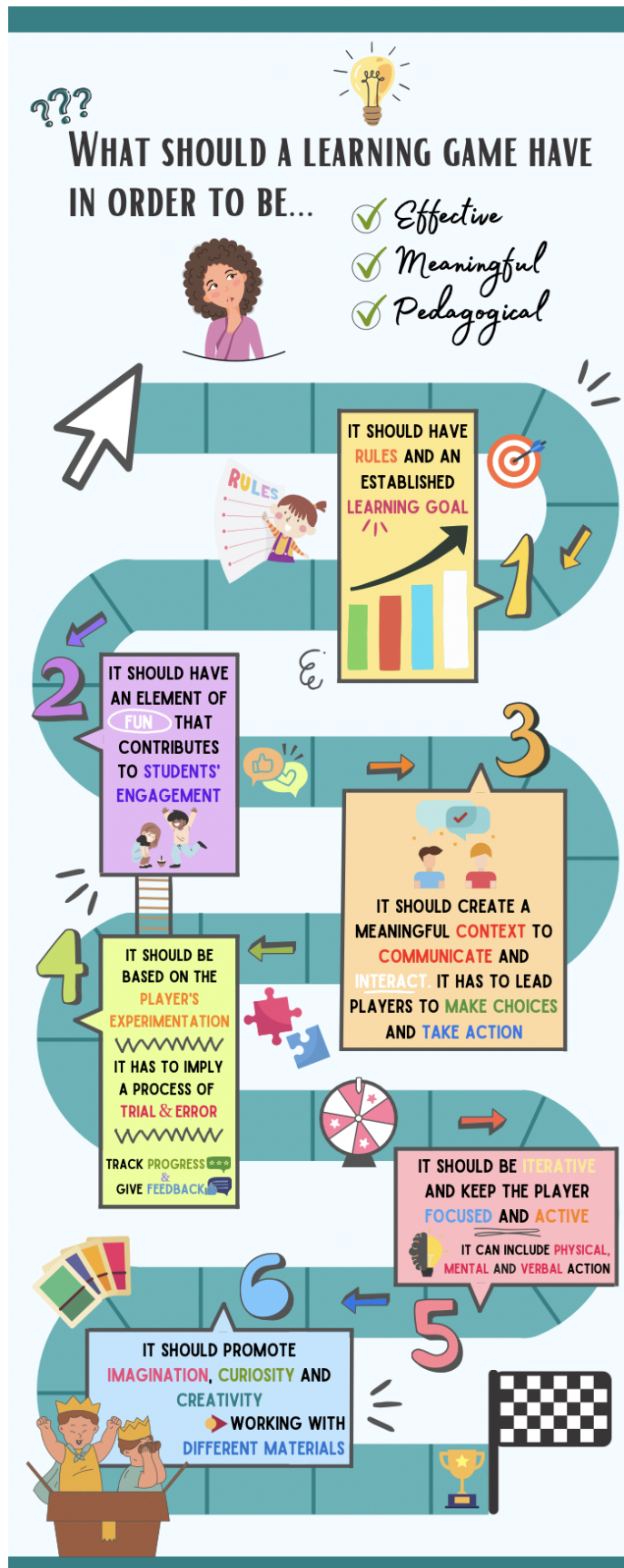
As presented throughout the thesis, there is a need to raise awareness among the teachers to look for alternative teaching methods that promote students' engagement in class and that stimulate their active participation. There is an existing need of moving from transmissionist teaching approaches where students are put in second place and their needs aren't taken into consideration to innovative methodologies that consider the child the center of the whole learning process and meet the students' necessities. This claim is also considered to be contributing with Quality Education and the proposal provided in this dissertation has taken into account not only the school's but also the students' needs. The design of the games has been carried out considering what was best for the child and through which way the acquisition of knowledge could be ensured.

On the other hand, it is worth noting that the guidance for teachers offered throughout the dissertation also contributes to the challenges of the SDG 4 somehow, as it attempts to provide valid arguments so that the current conception of the game among many teachers changes. In addition, the list shared and the resources provided offer a guide that can serve all the teachers who want to contribute with the change and are encouraged to apply these innovative approaches in their classrooms. These guides that the dissertation offers, as well as the example of action plan that is shared, give strategies to teachers to have the necessary notions to apply a gamified resource or a game in the classroom with a clear learning objective and not for simple filler or entertainment.

At the same time, this approach is aligned with the new methodologies that focus not only on the acquisition of curricular contents but also on working on the social relations of the children and all those aspects that help them to communicate assertively with the people around them. In the end, education is the discipline that will shape the future citizens who will lead change, and the way they are educated will strongly influence the way they contribute for a better society.

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Appendix 2:

Infographic *What should a learning game have to be effective, meaningful and pedagogical*

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Appendix 3: Resources related to gamification and game-based learning

Gamification	Tools for gamification management and tracking	• My Class Game (To control the missions, points,...) • Class Dojo (Just to track the points of each student) • Deck Toys (To create routes/maps with activities)
	Summative assessment or to conclude	• Breakouts (Find a code to unlock a vault/box…) • Escape rooms (Escape from the classroom) • Treasure hunts (Find the treasure)
Game-based learning	Manipulative games	• Board games • Card games
	Tools to design quiz games	• Genial.ly (Has multiple templates to adapt quizzes) • Baamboozle • Blooket • Kahoot • Plickers
	Other apps to create interactive games	• Bookwidgets • Cerebriti
Creation, adaptation and exhibition of the material: Genial.ly, Canva and WIX		

Figure 1: Resources related to gamification and game-based learning

Appendix 4: Author's English translation of the quotes in Catalan and Spanish

● *"El joc acompanya l'infant al llarg dels anys, desenvolupa la seva imaginació i creativitat i permet explorar, conèixer i entendre el seu entorn i relacionar-se amb els altres. També és un instrument per donar a conèixer i fer respectar les diverses cultures i tradicions. Facilita l'expressió de diferents sentiments i la gestió i l'autocontrol de les emocions que se'n generen. El joc, a la vegada, facilita el desenvolupament de certes habilitats socials com la negociació i el pacte, l'autogestió de les normes, la comunicació i l'expressió assertiva, la presa de decisions, l'agraïment i la disculpa…"* (Departament d'Educació, 2017, p.144)

   ○ **Translation:** Play accompanies children throughout the years, it develops their imagination and creativity and allows them to explore, get to know and understand their environment as well as to relate with others. It is also an instrument to make different cultures and traditions known and respected. It facilitates the expression of different feelings and the management and self-control of the emotions generated. Play, in turn, facilitates the development of certain social skills such as negotiation and agreement, self-management of rules, communication and assertive expression, decision making, gratitude and apology, among others. (Departament d'Educació, 2017, p.144)

- *(...) "implicación" (I), "diversión" (S), "aprendizaje" (B) and "libertad" (A)*

  - **Translation**: "involvement" (I), "fun" (S), "learning" (B) and "freedom" (A)

- *"Le damos un significado a toda esa teoría que estamos intentando que aprendan, ¿no? (...) con el juego creamos una circunstancia, un momento en el que ellos necesitan utilizarla, (...) le damos contexto a ese vocabulario o gramática."*

  - **Translation**: "We give meaning to all that theory we are trying to teach them, right? (...) with the game we create a circumstance, a moment in which they have the need to use it (...) we give context to that vocabulary or grammar."

- *"Están completamente inmersos"*

  - **Translation**: "They are completely immersed."

- *"(...) lo que les estamos enseñando al final es iniciativa, toma de decisiones, que ante varias opciones tengan que elegir cuál es la que más les interesa y de qué depende."*

  - **Translation**: "(...) in the end, what we are teaching them is initiative, decision making, that when faced with several options they have to choose which is the one they are most interested in and on what it depends."

- *"(...) cinco minutos más de patio o ayuda en un examen, claro, esa va a valer mucho dinero… van a tener que hacer muchas cosas buenas para poder comprar esa acción. (...) Al final se trata de recoger y usar estrategias que se utilizan en juegos y aplicarlas en el aula para poder gestionarla y crear buenos ciudadanos."*

  - **Translation**: "(...) five more minutes of recess or help on a test... of course, that's going to be worth a lot of money, so they're going to have to do a lot of good things to be able to buy that action. Do you understand the dynamic? In the end, it's about picking up and using strategies that are used in games and applying them in the classroom to be able to manage it and create good citizens."

- *"Yo diría que no tienen ningún papel los juegos en esta escuela, simplemente porque, bueno… con el PYP tenemos mucho que abarcar y la verdad es que se nos va el tiempo en eso."*

  - **Translation**: "I would say that games have no role in this school, simply because, well... with the PYP we have a lot to cover and the truth is that we dedicate a lot of time to that."

- *"Però és això, que com no tenim temps potser, per planificar jocs doncs no fas el joc amb un objectiu perquè aprenguin, sinó… més aviat perquè allò que tu has treballat doncs hi juguin i s'ho passin bé a partir d'aquell concepte."*

  - **Translation**: "But that's because we don't have time to plan games, so we don't play the game with a learning goal, but rather to play with what has been worked and have fun from that concept."

- *"(E): Creéis que cuando jugáis también aprendéis cosas? (…) **Various students**: Sí. (…) **I5**: Aprendemos a jugar en equipo (...) **I3**: Y a no enfadarte si pierdes. (E): ¿Creéis que aprendéis mejor si estáis jugando? **I6**: Sí (...) **I5**: Claro, es más divertido (...) **I6**: Sí, porque como es más divertido pues quieres aprenderlo."*

  - **Translation**: "(E): Do you think that when you play you also learn things? (...) **Various students**: Yes. (...) **I5**: We learn to play as a team (...) **I3**: And to not get angry if you lose. **(E)**: Do you think you learn better if you are playing? **I6**: Yes (...) **I5**: Sure, it's more fun (...) **I6**: Yes, because it's more fun so you want to learn it."

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Appendix 5: Didactic proposal; *Let the adventure begin. Welcome to Alaska!*

Primary Years Programme (PYP)		
UNIT OF INQUIRY: How do we express ourselves?	**CENTRAL IDEA:** Stories are told in various ways to achieve different purposes	
GRADE: 4th D	**TOPIC:** Storytelling	**LESSONS (Hours):** 10 hours
LINES OF INQUIRY: - Ways in which stories can be told. - How a reflection on story elements facilitates and enhances comprehension. - Storytelling has been used by generations around the world.	**CONCEPTS:** - Form - Function - Perspective	**RELATED CONCEPTS:** - Pattern - Purpose - Audience
PYP OBJECTIVES: 1. Analyse parts of the story to determine the author's purpose and any problem/solution presented in the story. 2. Listen to others tell their stories. 3. Retell key components of a story. 4. Create and tell their own story.		

DIDACTIC UNIT: *Let the adventure begin! Welcome to Alaska.*	
1. **AREA:** Area of First Foreign Language: English	2. **THEME:** Simple Past Tense and Stories
3. **LEARNING OBJECTIVES:** 1. To understand the global meaning of a story **(O1)** 2. To make predictions about the development of an uncompleted story **(O2)** 3. To understand, follow and respect the instructions given (in games, by the teacher…) **(O3)** 4. To communicate and interact with the teacher and classmates using past simple tense correctly **(O4)** 5. To revise and expand the vocabulary of regular and irregular verbs **(O5)** 6. To reflect upon the learning experiences and missions achieved **(O6)** 7. To analyse and synthesise the components of a story **(O7)** 8. To write a cooperative story with imagination using the correct English written expressions **(O8)** 9. To work respectfully with the whole class and commit to overcoming the common objectives **(O9)**	

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4. KEY COMPETENCIES FROM THE CURRICULUM:

- Communicative, linguistic and audio visual competence **(C1)**
- Artistic and cultural competence **(C2)**
- Digital competence **(C3)**
- Social and citizenship competence **(C4)**
- Learning to learn competence **(C5)**
- Autonomy and personal initiative competence **(C6)**

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5. CONTENTS:

- Stories
- Simple Past Tense
  - Affirmative and negative forms
  - Regular and irregular verbs
  - Interrogative forms and short answers
- Transition words to use when writing stories

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6. ASSESSMENT CRITERIA:

The student:
- Understands the gist of the story **(O1)**
- Makes coherent predictions about the development of an uncompleted story **(O2)**
- Understands, follows and respects the instructions given (in games, by the teacher…) **(O3)**
- Communicates and interacts with the teacher and classmates using past simple tense correctly and the structures learnt **(O4)**
- Uses and applies the vocabulary of regular and irregular verbs **(O5)**
- Reflects critically upon the learning experiences and goals achieved **(O6)**
- Analyses and synthesises the components of a story coherently **(O7)**
- Participates with original ideas to the writing of a cooperative story using the correct English written expressions **(O8)**
- Coordinates with the rest of the classmates with a respectful attitude and shows engagement to overcome the common goals **(O9)**

7. COMMUNICATIVE DIMENSION

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Speaking and conversation

- Creating **contexts** to use Simple Past Tense: activity with the image introduced with questions "What did you see?"; questions to check previous knowledge of the sessions…
- **Communication** and **interaction**:
  - Use of English to express answers, share ideas and opinions (I think that…, I believe that…)
  - Use of the language spontaneously when playing a game (Roll de dice, it's my turn!, Am I next?, shuffle the cards, pick a card, I think it's true/false because…)

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Listening comprehension

- Listening and understanding the main story and peers' stories
- Listening and understanding the instructions of the games and missions
- Listening to the contributions of the classmates'

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● **Pronunciation** and **intonation** of the vocabulary (ex: "ed-sounds" in regular verbs)	

Written expression	**Reading comprehension**
● Writing in the Passport: critical reflection and predictions ● Writing a mixed-up story cooperatively ● Use of transition words to connect ideas in a story	● Reading the stories ● Recognizing regular and irregular verbs ● Reading the instructions of the Passport

8. METHODOLOGY

- Challenge-based didactic proposal: children get engaged through a challenge and feel encouraged to participate and achieve the missions
- Game-based learning methodology
- Communicative Approach to Language Teaching (CLT): Creating contexts to allow children to communicate through English
- Intercultural Communicative Competence (ICC): The culture of the Inuits transmitted through the story

9. EVALUATION CRITERIA	**10. EVALUATION ACTIVITIES**
● He/She can understand the rules of the game and respect them. ● He/She can use the correct English expressions to communicate. ● He/She can reflect upon his/her own learning experience critically. ● He/She can synthesise the key components of a story. ● He/She can present the story with a clear structure and provides visual aids in a organised presentation. ● He/she can give contributions to the group and respects peers' ideas and opinions.	● **Games:** active participation / communication in English ● **Passport**: reflections towards the learning experience and predictions related to the development of the story ● **Mind Map and Story Cubes:** synthesis of the story ● **Mixed-up story:** Draft and final presentation ● **Final breakout:** contributions to the group / respects peers' ideas and opinions.

11. DEALING WITH DIVERSITY	**12. MATERIAL AND RESOURCES**
● The **working groups** are set up by me and the teacher and cater for all the students' needs. ● **Fast finishers**: They will be given the chance to read for pleasure in a platform they have, which is also connected to gamification (KIDS A-Z). Also, a link will be shared with them to access to a story maker from the British Council for Kids.	Link to the shared folder with all the materials ● Text with the Story (divided in five parts) ● Presentation (Guiding Thread) * (Each session has a presentation) ● 24 copies of the Passports * (At the end of each mission, students will be

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- **Slow finishers**: Before starting the activity, the teacher will specify the time the children have to do this activity and will often tell them how much time they have left. They will be provided with some help as well as more specific indications from the teacher.

- The **games** are very **guided** and provide the children with all the **instructions** and hints needed. Moreover, the instructions will be done orally and displayed in a written format with visual aids so all the students can check them as many times as they need during the play time. Before starting to play, the teacher will ask random questions about the game development to check understanding.

- All the material displayed and presented will be very **visual** to attend to diversity and cater for all students' understanding. Since there are some pupils who struggle to understand English, I have illustrated with **drawings** made by myself the whole story to facilitate their comprehension.

- Those students who have difficulty understanding English will receive **help**, as well as translations from other classmates or the teacher. In the groups there will be students with a higher and lower level of English so that those who understand English better can be the "interpreters" for those who have a little difficulty in understanding the instructions.

- The teachers will constantly **walk around the groups proactively** and stay with them to see how they are doing and check their pronunciation as well as initiative to communicate in English.

given a different copy, they'll be pasting and collecting them on their Personal Diaries)

- 6x Board
- 6x Die
- 6x Deck of cards (T/F)
- 6x Hint Card
- 24x coloured counters
- Verbs Roulette Game (Genial.ly link)
- 1-2-3-4 Cards technique
- 24x Battleship copies
- Physical example of a Mind Map
- Notebook of Inquiry
- Tablets
- Physical example of Story Cubes
- 24x Story Cubes templates
- 8x Story Mountain Planning template
- 8 copies of "List of transition words" (infographic)
- Breakout (Genial.ly link)
- Breakout answer sheet
- Kids A-Z app
- Link to British Council Story Maker

13. ACTIVITIES AND STEPS

* Before starting the Didactic Unit, an initial assessment will be made by the tutor to check the previous knowledge of the children.

SESSIONS	TEACHING / LEARNING ACTIVITIES	ORGANISATION	TIMING	MATERIAL	KEY COMPETENCES AND OBJECTIVES
1	**Setting the challenge**: The teacher starts reading an invented story. The rest of the story is missing. The students receive a "pop up alert" saying that if they want to discover the rest of the story they must overcome some missions. The activities of the whole didactic unit will be appearing as some locked icons and those will unlock every time they have to carry out an activity. The first locked icon will introduce the topic with an activity to review previous knowledge.	Children sitting at their tables	30'	Text with the Story (part 1) Presentation (Guiding Thread Session 1)	**C1, C6** **(O1, O3, O9)**
	Introduction to the topic: Drawings of the story told will be shown. Students will be asked, "What's in the slide?" They will have to answer using the Present Simple tense and expressions like "there is/are". After most of the students have said something, the image will be gone. Then students will be asked "What was in the picture?" Here, students will need to use Simple Past using expressions such as "there was/were". (Useful to check previous knowledge). Afterwards, an introduction and revision of the Simple Past Tense will be done. Also, the students will be asked to make predictions about how the story can be followed or possible endings depending on what's in the picture.	Children sitting at their tables	40'	Presentation (Guiding Thread Session 1)	**C1, C6** **(O2, O3, O4, O9)**
	Passport and reflection: The students will be given a passport where they will reflect upon the session. They will have a space to write how they think the story will continue. They will be given the cover as well as the passport sheet session 1 to complete. Once done, they will paste them on	Children sitting at their tables	20'	24 Passports (Cover + Session 1) Fast finisher activity (Passport)	**C1, C6** **(O2, O3, O4, O6)**

	their personal diaries. (**Fast finishers activity**: Make a drawing to complement their predictions / Story Maker / Kids A-Z)			British Council: Story Maker Tablets (Kids A-Z)	
2	**Unlocking new mission:** A new mission will be unlocked: Regular verbs (Phonics). The teacher will ask the students what they know about *regular verbs* and to give examples of the verbs in past tense. The students will need to organise those verbs in different "boxes" according to the pronunciation of the "ed sound".	Children sitting at their tables	20'	Presentation (Guiding Thread Session 2)	**C1, C6** **(O3, O4, O5, O9)**
	Game 1 ("Too good to be true"): The students will be asked to join in 6 groups of 4 pupils each (The teacher will make them). Each group will be given a board, a die, 4 coloured counters, a hint card and a deck of cards. The students will review the pronunciation of past simple regular verbs by giving real or fake answers in a true or false boardgame. Players will have to roll the die and move their counter through the board. Every time a player lands on a square, they will pick up a T/F card from the deck and look at it. The player will have to answer using the correct tense and good pronunciation of the regular verb, giving either true or false information according to what the card indicates. If they struggle to answer, they will have a chance to look at a "hint card" which will be in the middle of the board with some clues on how to answer grammatically correct. When the player has finished talking, the other students will have to guess whether the player's answer is true or false. The player then will reveal the answer and those students who guessed correctly each will move their counters one square. Then, the next player will roll the dice and repeat the same actions. When a player reaches the finish square, the game ends and he/she becomes the winner of the game.	Children sitting at six tables of four pupils each Groups Teachers will go around the class to see how they are playing as well as if they are communicating in English	40'	Presentation (Guiding Thread Session 2) 6 boards 6 Die 6 Deck of cards (T/F) 6 Hint Card 24 colored counters	**C1, C4, C5, C6** **(O3, O4, O5, O9)**

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	Passport and reflection: The teacher will reveal how the story continues. Then, students will reflect upon the learning acquired throughout the mission. They will also have to answer a question about how the story will continue.	Children sitting at their tables	30'	Text with the Story (part 2) 24 Passports (Session 2)	**C1, C6** **(O1, O2, O3, O4, O6)**
3	**Unlocking new mission:** A pop up alert will appear saying that today there is a double mission: Irregular verbs and interrogative forms. First, the teacher will ask the kids to make a brainstorm of all the irregular verbs they remember. They will come up with a list of irregular verbs studied and their past simple forms.	Children sitting at their tables	10'	Presentation (Guiding Thread Session 3)	**C1, C4, C6** **(O3, O4, O5, O9)**
	Game 2 ("Verbs Roulette"): The children will be divided into four different groups (the same as in the previous session). The teacher will give each pupil of each group a number (from 1-4), this strategy will let the teacher have many different spokespersons in the different questions. Before every question she will say "Now, (number) answers". The teacher will project a Genial.ly with a roulette. The first group will spin the wheel and a question with three different answers will appear. The teacher will give one minute to each group to think and talk about the answer. Once this minute has passed, the teacher will ask the group who spined the wheel to answer. If they do it correctly, they get one point on the score, if not, it will be next group's turn.	Children sitting at six tables of four pupils each Groups	30'	Presentation (Guiding Thread Session 3) Genial.ly Presentation: "Verbs Roulette" Game 1-2-3-4 Cards	**C1, C4, C5, C6** **(O3, O4, O5, O9)**
	Second part of the mission: Interrogative forms. The teacher will ask the students about what they did yesterday during the last session. This will be useful to check understanding. Through this, the students will come up altogether with the grammar structure on how to make questions when referring to the past that will be complemented with an infographic projected by the teacher	Children sitting at their tables	10'	Presentation (Guiding Thread Session 3)	**C1, C4, C6** **(O3, O5, O9)**

	for a more visual perception of the structure. Moreover, students will be asked to ask to each other using this grammar structure. The teacher will show a summary and solve the doubts the children may have.				
	Game 3 ("Dare to sink my ship! - Battleship"): Each student will be given a photocopy with their "ocean". As indicated in the presentation, each of them will have three ships, which they will need to place on their "oceans". Once everyone has their boats placed, Student A will start asking questions to find where Student B has placed the ships and vice versa. These questions, as indicated in the photocopy, will follow this structure "Did you (verb + d.o) + (time expression)?". Here, the "verb + d.o" will be referred to the rows of the grid and the time expressions to the columns. If Student A asks and she/he is correct, Student B will say "Yes, I did". If Student A asks and is wrong, Student B will say "No, I didn't". And if Student A asks and not only she/he is correct but they have hit all the boat's spaces, Student B will say "Yes, I did and you sunk my ship!". Students will be repeating this activity until one of them sinks all the boats from the opposite partner.	Children sitting in pairs chosen by themselves Teachers will go around the class to see how they are playing as well as if they are communicating in English	30'	Presentation (Guiding Thread Session 3) 24 Battleship copies	**C1, C4, C5, C6** **(O3, O4, O5, O9)**
4	**Passport and reflection:** The teacher will reveal how the story continues. Then, students will reflect upon those learnings acquired throughout the previous session and will answer a question about the development of the story. Also, the students will reflect upon the story told through a "Window-frame feedback" activity.	Children sitting at their tables	30'	Presentation (Guiding Thread Session 4) Text with the Story (part 3) 24 Passports (Session 3-4 + Window-frame)	**C1, C6** **(O1, O2, O3, O4, O6)**
5	**Unlocking new mission** (Create your own story - Activity within Inquiry). The activity will be presented with a pop-up alert popping on the screen. It will reveal that to discover how	Children sitting at their tables	10'	Presentation (Guiding Thread Session 5)	**C1, C6** **(O3, O9)**

		the story follows they must become writers and show their skills on writing a cooperative story. First, students will be asked whether if they know what a cooperative story is. Once everyone knows it, a slide will be shown where students will see the different steps they have to follow which will be unlocking every time they have to do one.				
		Step 1 - Mind Map (Draft): First, students will think of their favourite book/story or another one they really like. Before doing this, the teacher will review together with them the main elements a story has. Then, they will work individually on their drafts. In a mind map, they will be gathering all the aspects from the story (Title, characters, settings …). The teacher will project an example of hers in the screen. They will have their tablets in case they need to search for information.	Children sitting at their tables

Teachers will go around the class to see how they are doing as well as to solve their doubts | 40' | Presentation (Guiding Thread Session 5) Physical example of the Mind Map Notebook of Inquiry and tablets | **C1, C2, C6**

(O1, O3, O7) |
| | | **Step 2 - Creation of the Story Cubes:** Once most of the students have finished the mind map, the next step to follow will be unlocked. Individually each student will gather the details of their stories in the Story Cubes. They will have time to decorate them. | | 40' | Presentation (Guiding Thread Session 5) Physical example of Story Cubes 24 templates Cubes | **C1, C2, C6**

(O3, O7) |
6		**First part of session 6 (morning)**				
		Continuing with Step 2 (Story Cubes): The students will have time to finish their story cubes for the other part of the session done in the afternoon.	Same than the previous class	30'	Same than the previous class	
		Second part of session 6 (afternoon)				
		Step 3 - Share stories with the group: The children will be divided into eight groups of three students each (the groups will be made by the teacher). They will be sharing their	Children sitting in groups of three

Groups | 20' | Presentation (Guiding Thread Session 6) | **C1, C2, C4, C5, C6**

(O1, O3, O4, O8, O9) |

	stories with the cubes they have created. For the children going to Advance Level of English (parallel English lessons they have), they will say orally the information of the story they like instead of rolling the cubes.	Teachers will go around the class to see how they are doing as well as to solve their doubts		Story cubes created by the children	
	Step 4 - Create the mixed-up story (Draft): Once everyone has been listened by their classmates, each student will roll the cube twice and the group will have to create a mixed-up story according to what has appeared on all the cubes (following the Story Mountain Planning template). The cubes can be rolled as many times as the students prefer, but all the group must agree with what comes out. Once they have their ideas clear, students will create a draft following the planning template given.		35'	Presentation (Guiding Thread Session 6) 8 copies of Story Mountain Planning template	**C1, C2, C4, C5, C6** **(O3, O4, O7, O8, O9)**
	Step 5 - Write the final version: The three students of each group will finally write their story on their tablets with a presentation using some transition words offered by the teacher that will help them link their ideas of the draft. Also, they must include a sentence/expression or word in a different language, whichever they prefer and add pictures.		35'	Presentation (Guiding Thread Session 6) Tablets (Power Point) 8 copies of "List of transition words"	**C1, C2, C3, C4, C5, C6** **(O3, O4, O7, O8, O9)**
7	**Finish their final version of the stories:** Time to finish creating the presentation with the stories. (The presentation with the stories could be displayed through the website of the school or shared on TEAMS so parents and other classmates could also see them). Because of time, the stories cannot be presented in class.	Children sitting in groups of three Groups	30'	Presentation (Guiding Thread Session 7) Tablets	**C1, C2, C3, C4, C5, C6** **(O3, O4, O7, O8, O9)**
	Continuation of the story: The teacher will reveal how the story continues. Directly, the penultimate mystery icon will be unlocked and a pop-up alert will show redirecting to an escape room that will lead them to the end of the story.	Children sitting at their tables	10'	Presentation (Guiding Thread Session 7) Text with the Story (part 4)	**C1, C6** **(O1, O3, O9)**

Breakout: All the class together will be solving the breakout which gathers different questions about the different contents worked throughout the unit. Each group will gather the questions on an answer sheet. This breakout will let them find the hands of Hiti's watch, thus discover the missing part of the story.	Children sitting at six tables of four pupils each Groups	35'	Breakout (Genial.ly) Breakout answer sheet	**C1, C4, C5, C6 (O3, O4, O5, O9)**
Passport and final conclusion: Once the students have reached the end of the breakout thus the end of the story. Each of them will have time to share learning experiences, positive and negative moments lived, anecdotes… orally. Finally, as done throughout the whole didactic unit, they will finally reflect upon the learning acquired and write it on their passports.	Children sitting at their tables	15'	Presentation (Guiding Thread Session 7) Text with the Story (part 5) 24 Passports (Session 7 - End)	**C1, C6** **(O1, O2, O3, O4, O6)**