MASTER'S FINAL DISSERTATION

Teaching and learning English in Early Childhood and Primary Education

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How can Gamification help 1st key stage students in the acquisition of speaking and listening skills in an additional language?

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Abstract:

When learning an additional language, no matter the age, we all have experienced occasionally a paralyzing effect when having to perform in a language that is not our mother-tongue; frequently because we feel that we lack the skills to do so. The present study seeks to answer the following question: How can gamification help 1st key stage students in the acquisition of speaking and listening skills in an additional language? The research carried out, through the reading of articles and the realization of interviews to both experts in gamification and teachers, shows that when using gamification this feeling of anguish diminishes and a relaxed and energetic environment, that promotes learning, supports speakers. Consequently, a proposal on how to work through gamification in 1st key stage to promote oral skills has been carried out.

Key words: Gamification, Game-based learning, Speaking skills, Listening skills, Primary Education and Additional Language

Resum:

A l'hora d'aprendre un idioma addicional, sense importat l'edat, tots hem experimentat ocasionalment un efecte paralitzant a l'hora d'actuar en una llengua que no és la nostra llengua materna, sovint perquè sentim que no tenim les habilitats necessàries per fer-ho. El present estudi busca trobar resposta a la següent pregunta: Com pot la gamificació ajudar als alumnes de cicle inicial en l'adquisició d'habilitats de parla i escolta en una llengua addicional? La recerca realitzada a través de la lectura d'articles i la realització d'entrevistes a experts en gamificació i mestres, mostra que quan s'utilitza la gamificació, aquest sentiment d'angoixa disminueix i un ambient relaxat i enèrgic, que promou l'aprenentatge, recolza els parlants. En relació a les dades obtingudes, s'ha dut a terme una proposta sobre com treballar a través de la gamificació en cicle inicial per promoure les habilitats orals.

Paraules clau: Gamificació, Aprenentatge basat en el joc, Habilitats de parla, Habilitats d'escolta, Educació Primària i Llengua Addicional

Introduction

English has become an international language used by millions of speakers all over the world. Therefore, the importance of learning the language is reflected on the Spanish educational system in which most of students start learning English at very young ages and by the end of their University degrees, students are required to have a B2 certificate of the English language according to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages.

In spite of the fact that Spanish students spend a lot of years studying English, a lot of them feel unable to communicate in English orally. That is why this study gives a specific importance to the use of listening and speaking skills in an additional language.

Hereinafter all the allusions and references to L2 and foreign language will be related and linked to the term "additional language", referring at the same time to the English language. Consequently, the research question this article seeks to answer is: *How can Gamification help first-key stage* (1k from now on) *students in the acquisition of speaking and listening skills in an additional language?* A research will be also carried out about language skills associated to gamification, focusing on speaking and listening, and identifying 1k stage student's goals.

Living in a world in which technology, along with games and apps, have evolved from being in the background to being present in everyone's lives, school must take them into account when teaching new generations. Most of today's primary students have been using mobile devices, such as tablets and smartphones, to play and learn since they could not even crawl.

School centres, until relatively recently, focused mainly on book-based teaching and learning which, for most students, seemed to be both boring and demotivating. By integrating technology into the classes, teachers will be able to use game strategies in order to engage their pupils in learning in a funnier and more motivating environment.

Nowadays, games and applications are mastered by very young children. In order to achieve the purpose of education and approach the teaching and learning process to the arising generations, game strategies should be integrated in schooling techniques to challenge students and capture their attention. The term used to define the method where teachers use game-design elements in their classroom is known as gamification.

The article focuses on 1k stage students. Having completed Early-Childhood Education, students take a leap towards Primary Education. Playing is often left behind and classes start being more "serious". Schedules pass from being flexible and modifiable to being established and fixed; and classes go from being active and moving to being, again, fixed.

During primary stage students spend, at least, five hours a day sitting on a chair. There are fewer chances for learning to happen when students do not feel receptive. By using gamification, in the classroom, students get to learn by playing, which approaches the most to their natural way of learning.

Teachers cannot forget that children are children and they like playing and doing, they have to be active agents in their own process of learning. One of the points of interest of this dissertation is based on the hypothesis of games as being one of the most natural ways of approaching knowledge to children. For that reason, gamification is going to be defined and compared to game-based learning.

Moreover, by playing children get more engaged in the learning process and once students get motivated their learning turns out to be more effective. For that reason, a proposal providing an alternative approach to work on some contents of the syllabus through gamification is going to be carried out in the following pages.

To make the additional language learning process more natural and appealing for children, teachers need to promote motivation, and gamification is a good strategy to take into account to engage students, as its main goal is to increase participation and motivate learners by incorporating game elements, providing students with immediate feedback.

Therefore, the aims this article seeks to achieve are: (1) to define gamification and compare it to game-based learning; (2) to research about language skills associated to Gamification: focus on speaking and listening, identifying 1k stage student's goals and (3) to create a proposal providing an alternative approach to work on some contents of the syllabus through Gamification.

Current educational vision: why should games be introduced in education?

Nowadays in education different experts are exposing diverse teaching methodologies and techniques in order to solve the existing problems towards the matter at hand. Regarding education, our country has been confronting a variety of obstacles such as high numbers of school failure, bad scores in international reports and school dropouts (Serrano, L et. al., 2014) which indicates the need for a change in our educational model from the early years.

As time goes, many students each year seem to lack motivation during the classes and therefore, towards learning. In order to increase their motivation, a change in the way of approaching knowledge to the children needs to be carried out.

Numerous studies raised from different epistemological frameworks, conclude that playing is an activity which contributes to the integral development of the child (Garaigordobil, 1995). It has been proved that games play an important role in the intellectual development of a child, it helps them to develop mental structures. "In addition, game encourages egocentric descent (Piaget, 1959 / 1979) and promotes child's creativity and imagination (Vygotsky, 1993) (Bruner, 1986), playing a very positive role in the development of the language"[1](Garaigordobil, 1995).

According to Bruner (1986), the mother-tongue is learned faster through a playful situation. Bruner claims that there is something in games that stimulates the creation of linguistic expressions. "Therefore, we face this interesting paradox: what allows a child to develop all his combinatory power is not the learning of the language or the way of reasoning, but the opportunities that he has to play with the language"[2] (Bruner, 1986).

Other authors, who reflect on the idea that play is an effective intervention method for stimulating language development (Levy, 1984), suggest that play benefits children's language development because it incorporates many of the socially interactive and cognitive elements known to enhance language skills. "Many of these investigations find that language thrives when children are interacting with adults and peers in a playful manner (Hirsh-Pasek and Golinkoff 2003; Smith 2010; Vygotsky 1967; Zigler and Bishop-Josef 2004), suggesting that play can make important contributions to the

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[1] Author's translation.
[2] Author's translation.

learning of language" (Skolnick et al., 2013). Play might also be important for language development because, when children are in control of an interaction, they are engaged. They speak about the topic and listen to what interests them.

By presenting the teaching and learning process of an additional language through games, children get more motivated, their interests are increased, they have fun and, consequently, they are happier. As Elyildirim and Ashton (2006) point out, students who show positive attitudes usually progress faster in additional language learning. "When students have a positive attitude, it acts as a motivational impetus to enable a greater effort to achieve the goal of learning the language" (Elyildirim & Ashton, 2006, pp.2). Therefore, whenever children are present, games should, somehow, also be displayed.

Playing is what children enjoy the most, as playing is a very important part of their nature. Children enjoy having fun, being entertained, investigate and discover the world, among many other things. They have a natural curiosity that leads them to acquire knowledge in order to know more, a kind of knowledge that is acquired without demands in with which they learn and develop, among many other things, their language skills.

Description of Gamification and Game-based learning

- **Gamification**

The term "Gameification" was first used in 2008 by a blogger who described the term as taking game mechanisms and applying them to other web properties to increase engagement, but it was not until 2010 that the term acquired his current form "Gamification", as it became more widespread (Huotari and Hamari, 2012).

Finally, in 2011, Deterding et al. described gamification as "the use of game design elements in non-game context" (Deterding et al., 2011). Although the term gamification, as described above, has been used for a long time, it still is somehow an unknown concept for many professionals related to education.

Gamification is also described as the "process of using game thinking and mechanics to engage audiences and solve problems" (Zichermann, 2010); as "using game techniques

to make activities more engaging and fun" (Kim, 2011) and as "an emergent approach to instruction which facilitates learning and encourages motivation through the use of game elements, mechanics and game-based thinking"(Kapp, 2012).

Basically the purpose of gamification in relation to education is to engage and motivate learners to become active participants in their own learning process by using game-strategies, techniques and mechanisms in a non-game context.

In order for an activity to be properly gamified, it should be placed in the flow channel (Figure 1). The theory by Csikszentmihályi et al. postulates three conditions that activities must have to achieve the flow state: the activity must involve a clear set of goals and progress, as a structure task; the exercise at hand must have immediate feedback, which will allow students to adjust their performance to maintain the flow state and, finally, a good balance must be found between the challenges and the skills (Csikszentmihályi et al., 2005).
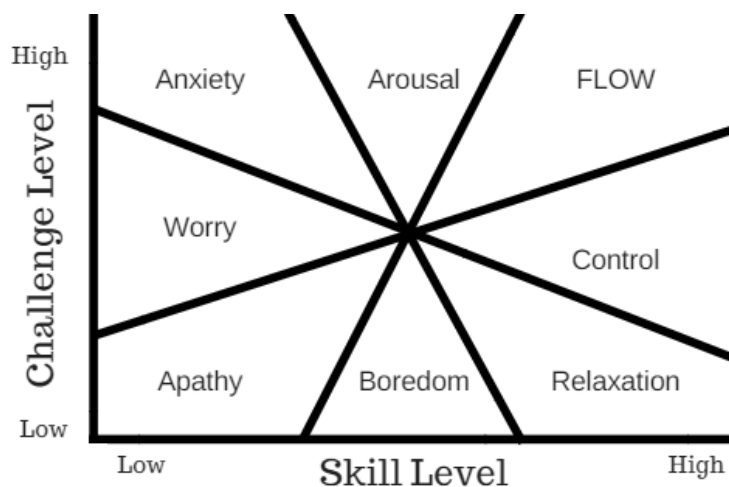

Figure 1. State of flow graphic (Huang and Soman, 2013).

Moreover, to understand gamification it is necessary to understand the core concepts of games, which relate to the conditions to achieve the flow state mentioned above (Figure 2). There are three basic parts in most games: goal-focus activity, reward mechanisms and progress tracking (Dickey, 2005). All games should set out a reachable goal which ought to be, by some means, prized. Moreover, games should track a progress in which once they achieve a level, they get feedback in relation to their performance.
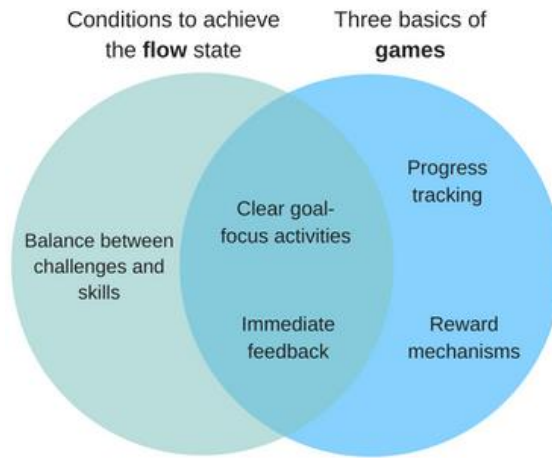
Figure 2. Connection between the state of flow and the basics of games.

Gamification seeks to increase motivation by providing extrinsic recognition and reward for completing activities. Nevertheless, "the primary goal of games is to create entertainment through intrinsic motivation, which is related to flow. [...] Without intrinsic motivation it is virtually impossible to establish flow" (Lowry et al., 2013).

Therefore, gamifying an educational experience alone is not enough to make the experience rewarding. Gamification, as a process which creates participatory learning experiences, is particularly suited to active learners and active learning (Glover, 2013). By using game design elements, teachers improve students' engagement and interest towards the learning process.

Taking into account the multiple intelligences theory by Howard Gardner, which is defended in his book *Frames of Mind* published in 1983, gamification also provides a framework to encourage the use of different types of resources that target other learning styles, such as by incorporating audio, images, and text into a single experience.

- **Game-based learning**

Unlike gamification, game-based learning relates to the use of an actual game to achieve an instructional goal and enhance the learning experience (Isaacs, 2015). This methodology has been used by teachers in their classroom for years.

Game-based learning or Learning Games dates back to the 1970s. This concept refers to learning through playing an already existing game. Learning games have both a game goal, which is achieved by winning the game, and a learning goal, which is achieved through playing the game (Bradbury, 2017). As a result of playing the game, players either know something or are able to do something.

"The main characteristic of an educational game is the fact that instructional content is blurred with fame characteristics.[...] Most researchers agree that an important role in current learning structures is played by "collaborative learning", which allows participants to exchange information as well as to produce ideas, simplify problems, and resolve the tasks"(Pivec et al., 2003). When an already existing game is played, the interaction among the players promotes collaborative learning; as many of the aspects dealt with might enrich somehow their already existing knowledge in relation to a topic.

- **Comparison of concepts**

In order to clarify the differences between the two concepts defined above, gamification and game-based learning, a table has been created to structure the content (Figure 3).

	Gamification	Game-Based Learning
Differences	· Create games (like-game experiences) which impart an educational benefit. · Use game mechanics to make content learning more appealing. · Encourage a specific behaviour. · Promote competition to engage students. · Help students track their own progress. · Increase the importance of actions. · Focus on the multiple intelligences theory.	· Add game-like concepts to a learning process. · Cover an objective using an already existing game with established rules. · Repack academic content. · Promote critical thinking. · Promote strategic thinking. · Engage students not otherwise engaged. · Support struggling and talented students.
Similarities	- Create entertainment through intrinsic motivation. - Involve a clear set of goals. - Facilitate learning, making activities more engaging and fun. - Encourage motivation and make learning more appealing. - Enhances the learning experience. - Promote both collaborative and competitive learning	

Figure 3. Comparison between Gamification and Game-based learning.
(Taken from: Glover, 2013; Kapp, 2010; Negre 2018 and Teach thoughts, 2015).

Language skills in Gamification

"Gamification not only uses game elements and game design techniques in non-game contexts (Werbach & Hunter, 2012), but also empowers and engages the learner with motivational skills towards a learning approach and sustaining a relax atmosphere". Personality factors such as: self-esteem, extroversion and motivation; among others, influence dramatically the L2 learning process. "These personality factors, as Brown (1994) addresses, are fundamental in the teaching and learning of L2" (Figueroa, 2015).

Therefore, Brown (1994) sees motivation as a necessary personality factor that the learner needs in order to acquire a L2. Current L2 educators are well aware of the strategies suited for this time that enhance motivation and engage learners in acquiring L2. From all the strategies that exist, gamification is one that constantly promotes motivation. In addition, it deals with the two clusters of Intrinsic and Extrinsic motivation, which are necessary in the L2 learning experience (Figueroa 2015).

According to Krashen (1982), children acquire, while adults can only learn. Moreover, this language acquisition is a subconscious process while the fact of learning is conscious. Regarding first language acquisition, the process occurs naturally, as children are constantly exposed to language environments. However, second language depends on learning experiences in a more closed and restricted environment.

Nowadays, newer approaches towards learning have been developed. Neurolinguistics show that, concerning language acquisition, L2 seems to be acquired through the same neural devices responsible for first language acquisition (Faruji, 2011).

Consequently, in order to make the additional language learning process more natural and appealing for children, teachers need to promote motivation, and gamification is a good strategy to take into account to engage students. The main goals of gamification focus on increasing participation and motivate learners by incorporating game elements and techniques, providing students with immediate feedback.

As Figueroa (2015) mentions, understanding the basic concepts of games becomes essential at the time of delineating and using gamification as strategy. Each game element used in gamification (Figure 4), enhances the teaching and learning process of additional language.

Points	Numeric accumulation based on certain activities.
Badges	Visual representation of achievements for the use show online.
Leader boards	Show how players are ranked based on success.
Progress bars	Show the status of the player.
Performance graphs	Show players' performance.
Quests	Some of the tasks players have to fulfil in a game.
Levels	A section or part of the game
Avatars	Visual representation of a player or alter ego.
Social elements	Relationships with other users through the game.
Rewards	System to motivate players that accomplish a quest.

Figure 4. Game elements, and definitions, used in Gamification (Figueroa, 2015).

Some of the game elements described above will be included in the educational proposal, as they reinforce the learning experience in relation to an additional language.

On account of that, Figueroa (2015) mentions Class Dojo as a useful educational gamification tool, to keep track of the previous items when gamifying a classroom. Class dojo (Chaudhary & Don 2011) is a website which can be accessed either online or by downloading it as an app, with which teachers manage students' behaviours and give effective feedback.

Class Dojo gives teachers the opportunity for real-time response. In order for feedback to be effective it has to be given in a contextualized moment, which will make teachers' contributions more meaningful for students and will help them develop a sense of purpose in the classroom.

Some of the game elements available in Class Dojo are: avatars, performance graphs, progress bars, points and rewards. By integrating technology into the classes, more game strategies can be used in order to engage pupils towards learning in a funnier and more motivating environment.

The objective for integrating gamification towards education is to unchain a more attractive and effective learning experience for the student. Following this aspect the additional language learner feels attracted towards having this experience. Moreover, they feel more willing to learn and more relaxed. Krashen's affective filter claims that learners with high motivation, self-confidence, good self-image, and a low level of anxiety are better equipped for success in second language acquisition and play a facilitative role in SLA (Schütz, 2007).

Based on the theory presented, it could be said that the use of gamification in additional language acquisition contributes positively to the learning experience. Through gamification, the personality factor of motivation is constantly promoted and motivation has proved to be fundamental in the teaching and learning process of an additional language.

Teachers can create a more meaningful experience that will go further from just a simple game thinking mentality, without forgetting that this strategy must be used as a tool to serve a purpose and not to substitute the target goal.

In order to apply gamification to the teaching and learning process, five steps need to be followed (Figure 5).

Figure 5. Educational Gamification Five Step Model (Huang & Soman, 2013).

For the project to be successful, the target audience must be determined as well as the contexts it is going to be implemented in. Once having defined those elements, it is imperative to establish the learning objectives the project seeks to examine, in relation to the primary curriculum. After that, the objectives must be broken down and the main points need to be identified in order to decide which aspects can and cannot be gamified. The final step is for gamification elements to be selected and applied (Huang & Soman, 2013).

- Speaking goals in 1k stage

Regarding speaking goals in 1k stage, the syllabus demands for students to know: the basic rules which regulate interaction; to be able to memorize short texts and to be able to reproduce the basic lexicon and the messages related to the habitual communicative situations of the classroom (Generalitat de Catalunya, 2017).

Speaking is one of the most important skills and also one of the hardest to acquire. When referring to speaking there are, according to Шпаковская et al. (2015), three areas of knowledge involved: mechanics, regarding pronunciation, grammar and vocabulary; functions, such as transaction and interaction; social and cultural norms like turn-taking, rate of speech, length of pauses between speakers, relative role of participants… they need to understand how to take into account who is speaking to whom, in what circumstances, about what, and for what reason.

- Listening goals in 1k stage

Regarding listening goals in 1k stage, the syllabus demands for students to know: the basic rules which regulate oral interaction; understanding simple instructions and everyday social exchanges messages; recognition and identification of words and brief oral texts accompanied by visual and / or audio-visual support; comprehension of a repetitive structure oral text; specific understanding of the basic lexicon (Generalitat de Catalunya, 2017).

Among the four language skills, listening is considered to be the most important, as is the one that teaches users how language works. According to (ТЕЛИЧКО, 2016) language learning depends on listening, as it provides daily input that serves as the basis for language acquisition. Moreover, listening enables learners to interact in spoken communication".

When presenting listening to students, they need to know the purpose of the listening in order to be able to activate background knowledge related the topic and try to anticipate or predict the content. Moreover, comprehension should be checked while listening and once it is over. Monitoring comprehension helps students detect comprehension failures, directing them to use alternate strategies.

All the strategies mentioned above regarding both speaking and listening skill can be related to additional language learning. Taking into account the interdependence hypothesis by James Cummins (1980), when learning languages, there is always a common underlying proficiency which is present in all languages (Figure 6).
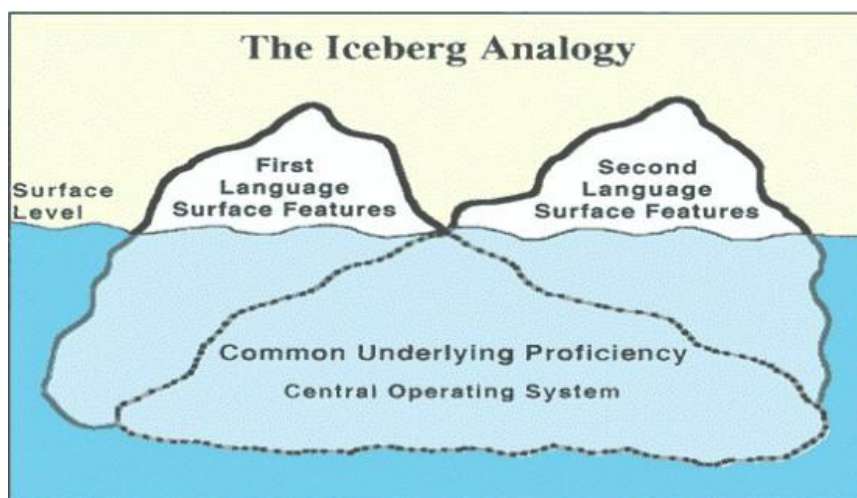

Figure 6. Interdependence Hypothesis (Cummins, 1980).

- Assessment criteria for oral skills:

According to the Catalan Primary syllabus, the Catalan Generalitat has established several assessment criteria. However, regarding gamification the most relevant items to take into account are the following:

- Understand the global message of oral productions.

- Participate actively in oral interactions studied.

- Recognize words and oral expressions in their written form and use them orally.

- Reproduce oral texts taking into account the intonation, rhythm, and intonation according to the model offered.

All the language aspects mentioned above regarding the Catalan Syllabus will be reflected on the final educational proposal this dissertation seeks to create. By observing how children participate in the activities proposed, all the following items will be able to be assessed.

Design:

Method: In order to gather all the evidences needed, the qualitative methodology is going to be used. This method has been chosen due to the need of having real experiences so as to enrich the article. As Gamification is a recent term that has started to become popular in the past years, the authentic beliefs and opinions of the participants are going to be needed to settle a route of action.

Participants: For the data to support the educational proposal and the theory which is based on, three experts on gamification are going to be interviewed in order to confirm the researched theory: Gina Aguirre (GA), Crystal D'Cruz (CD'C) and Christian Negre (CN). Moreover, three teachers are also going to be interviewed, to be aware of which strategies they use when teaching listening and speaking skills and what would be their expectations from a gamification proposal: Anna Buxadé (AB), Cristina Domingo (CD) and Laura Pallàs (LP). Taking into account both experts and teachers, six different interviews will be done.

Instruments: The instruments that are going to be used during the development of the paper are semi-structured interviews, with a list of open questions to guide the interview but always leaving space for improvisation. Two different models of interview will be designed according to the profile of the person who is going to be interviewed (see appendix 1).

Procedure: In order to develop the article, first some research was carried out. Later, several interviews were done to both experts on gamification and teachers. The interviews were done face-to-face, via videoconference and via email.

The goal of interviewing experts on gamification and both teachers who use and do not use gamification in their classes was in order to: expand the knowledge, enrich the article and support the educational proposal exposed in the following pages.

After having the interviews done and analysed, the results are going to be contrasted with the research and the proposal is going to be developed. English contents are going to be selected and an expansion regarding gamification is going to be proposed.

Results and discussion:

- AIM 1: To define Gamification and compare it to Game-based learning.

Gamification is a recent term which has been introduced in the world of education during the past decade. Although the term itself is not new, as teachers have already been using gamification in their classes for a long time, it still is somehow an unknown concept for many professionals related to education.

As a result of that, still not all authors agree on the meaning of gamification. That is why, in order to get a clear definition of the terminology, interviewees were asked about their opinion regarding their interpretation of gamification and their vision comparing it to game-based learning.

Research shows that gamification is the use of game design elements, game thinking, game mechanics and game techniques, in non-game context; to make activities more engaging and fun. The connotation given to the term by the authors coincides with the answers gathered during the interviews.

The different experts, such as CD'C, defined gamification as "the use of game language, features and elements to increase the motivation and the engagement". Moreover, CN mentions that "gamification is a flexible strategy that takes into account the type of students and their motivations" among many other features and is orientated, as GA points out, towards developing 21st century skills. When comparing it to game-based learning, experts mentioned that gamification goes further than just the use of an already existing game in classroom. CD'C states that in game-based learning, learning outcomes accompany the playing of the game itself.

Finally, when using gamification children lose inhibitions and challenge themselves in a non-invasive way. Both of these elements, as mentioned by GA and supported by Brown (1994) regarding the personality factors, are essential for promoting speaking and listening skills.

Gamification, as declared by CN, can be used in all the stages of education. It "allows teachers to incorporate collaborative and cooperative work", as well as competition, according to the aim that is being pursued. It also enhances and develops social skills which are necessary to function in a group.

- AIM 2: To research about language skills associated to Gamification: focus on speaking and listening, identifying 1k stage students' goals.

Once having established, in reference to the primary syllabus, the contents required to be taught in 1k stage, teachers were asked about the different methodologies they used in order to promote speaking and listening skills.

Throughout the research, gamification has been proved to be a strategy which promotes motivation, and motivation to be an essential part of the second language acquisition process. Therefore, teachers were asked about the use of gamification in their classes.

Only one of the teachers interviewed was aware of the meaning of gamification. LP defined it as "an educational tool to incorporate into the classroom game strategies in order to facilitate a more dynamic, participatory and innovative learning".

After knowing the definition of the concept, the other teachers, AB and CD, realised that they used gamification in their classes when introducing new vocabulary and structures or for extension activities and small competitions, because they think these strategies are exciting and motivating for students.

Directing the questions to the importance of speaking and listening skills, teachers showed a very firm stand regarding this subject. AB affirmed that her school believes that, "just like in first language acquisition, initially the focal point has to be on oral skills". As CD mentions, "oral communication, especially in 1k stage, is absolutely essential". However, in early stages, "listening should come before speaking because it is impossible to expect our pupils to produce sentences that have not been heard".

When asking about the teaching methods, heterogeneous answers came forward. First and foremost, they want to ensure that students receive a lot of input. One of the schools has spaces where students are immersed in the English language. As AB claims, "students are given a purpose because teachers create a need for them to use the language".

Due to the low competence in speaking, for activities teachers rely on substitution tables with pictures and written words. Moreover, they promote speaking through flashcards, miming, and drawings; where children need to produce some language using easy structures, as CD and LP assert.

Regarding listening skills, CD uses mainly "adapted material rather than the authentic material provided by the editorials". In listening skills teachers rely on visual materials (pictures, photos, flashcards, drawings…) and non-verbal language (body language, miming, Total Physical Response...). In addition, LP contends that, along with students, they "first identify the purpose of the listening and clarify the information needed to solve it".

In relation to gamification, it is also thought to be a great tool for teaching and learning the four linguistic skills in an integrated way. What is more, all teachers feel that it can be helpful regarding the development of oral skills. One the one hand, because they learn through playing and, on the other hand, AB defends that "learning a language is linked to the experience and by playing they will be more receptive to develop a positive attitude towards the language, making each experience more significant".

Concerning its benefits, teachers believe that gamification can motivate and involve students in their own process of learning. In addition, students can be grouped according to their diverse capacities and abilities. As students feel more interested and find learning more enjoyable, participation will be fostered and their learning process will be more active.

Nevertheless, when they are asked for their opinion regarding a gamification proposal, all teachers interviewed agreed that it is good to use games in class but not to base an entire didactic unit on that. Perhaps what is best, they comment, is to have a few games to introduce the vocabulary and to make a closing for the unit.

- AIM 3: To create a proposal providing an alternative approach to work on syllabus' contents through Gamification.

For the development of the proposal, some aims of the primary syllabus are going to be selected and linked to contents from the Oxford University Press (OUP) books Ace!1 and Ace!2. These books have been selected because they are used by lots of schools in Barcelona and it makes the proposal more realistic and easy to implement.

In regard to the proposal, some content is going to be gamified in relation to the needs that teachers have expressed. Although a whole didactic unit is not going to be presented, a gamified proposal will be described for each selected unit, as a revision of contents.

Concerning the primary syllabus, the contents that are going to appear in all the suggested activities of the proposal, in relation to speaking and listening, are the following:

Speaking goals:

- Basic rules which regulate oral interaction
- Reproduction of memorized oral short texts
- Reproduction of the basic lexicon and messages related to habitual communicative situations of the classroom.

Listening goals:

- Understanding simple instructions for work and acting in the classroom.
- Understanding regular social exchanges messages.
- Recognition and identification of words and brief oral texts accompanied by visual and / or audio-visual support.
- Comprehension of repetitive structures and understanding of the basic lexicon with the help of gestural and iconic elements.

All the units in the books Ace!1 and Ace!2 of the Oxford University Press publishing house work the speaking and listening skills through basic activities such as:

- Listen and point
- Listen and sing
- Listen point and repeat.

However, for each grammatical content of the unit and in order to develop children's oral and written skills, a basic and simple playful activity is proposed when working on new structures. Moreover, the vocabulary used is the one being introduced in the unit.

Each unit of the book has been divided in ten different lessons to go through. Students go from one lesson to another until getting to lesson number ten, which is the review of the content and vocabulary of the unit.

Bearing this division of activities and contents in mind, a proposal to work on lessons through gamification has been displayed, emphasizing a more gamified proposal to work on lesson ten, unifying all content and vocabulary in one review session.

Taking into account the lessons each unit is divided in, these will be seen by teachers and students as levels to go through in order to get to the final level of the unit. This final level will be the more gamified proposal in which both content and vocabulary will be worked on as a revision of the unit.

The process and the progress of student, while going through the different levels, will be tracked by the teacher and will be displayed in a progress bar (Image 1), which will move forward as children learn new contents, making learning visible for students.
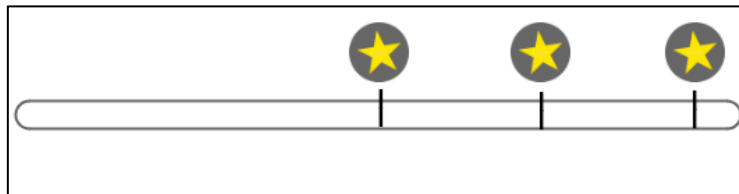
Image 1. Progress bar

For the progress bar to move forward, the teacher can give cards of different colours to students every time they do something right or wrong. According to the colour, each card will have one value or another. At the end of each session they can be counted in order to move the progress bar forward or backward.

Moreover, as students go through the levels, the teacher will reward them by giving points or adding more materials to the final game of the unit. In order to be able to play the final level all students will be asked to have achieved all the previous ones.

After the realization of each activity, children will receive an amount of points and, in order to get to the next level, they will have to reach a minimum. If the points got by the children are not enough, they will have the chance to try again.

In order to track all the process, and for the teacher to be easier to go through the process of gamifying their classes, Class Dojo is going to be used. The idea of this platform, as mentioned above, is to help teachers control the progress of students in those aspects that we want to improve. Moreover, it can be used to encourage positive behaviours such as participation or team work and to set up a reward system too. Furthermore, the avatars (Image 2) can be grouped by teams and final graphs with groups' performances will be able to appreciate.
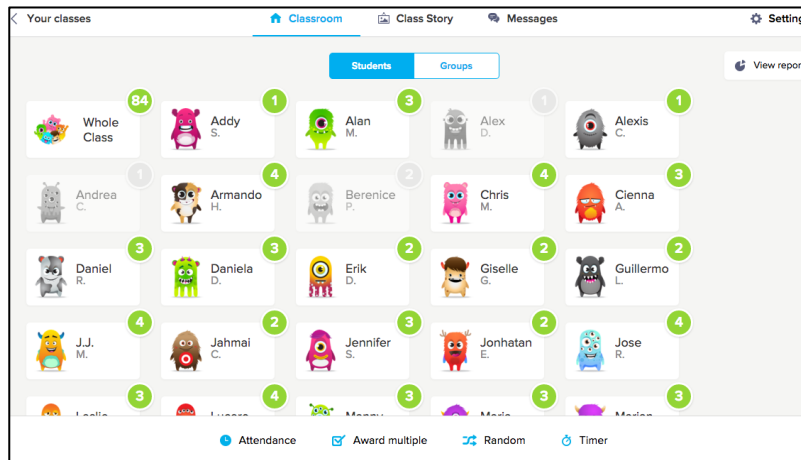
Image 2. Avatars from Class Dojo

By using Class Dojo, the teacher has available a set of tools (Image 3) which are very useful when developing the sessions. Teachers have the chance to make groups randomly, to choose a random student to answer a question or to perform an activity, timers and stopwatches can be also used and, moreover, it has a noise meter to control the volume of the class.
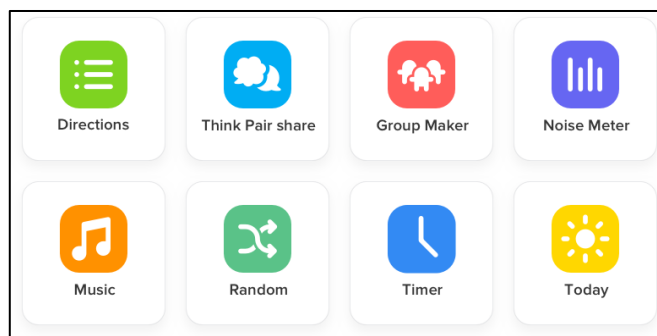

Image 3. Toolkit of Class Dojo

Class Dojo also allows the teacher to give immediate feedback to their students which, besides from making it more meaningful, because the feedback time is shorten, the resulting positive reinforcement helps students develop a sense of purpose on the classroom, which enhances intrinsic motivation over time, a personality factor which has proved to be essential in additional language learning.

Finally, once students have reached level ten, some examples of gamified proposals to work on the unit review have been displayed in the following table, unifying all the content and the vocabulary of the unit in.

Contents on OUP	Playful activity on OUP	Proposal to gamify the unit content.
Monty the artist: • Colours • Classroom material **Grammar:** • It's *red / blue / green* • What's missing?	**Colours:** I spy with my little eye but only saying the colour (*it's green* // the door // *no* // the bin // *yes*). **School material:** Students, in pairs, have pictures of the materials. One of the students removes an object and the other has to guess what's missing.	**What is missing?** The teacher hides classroom materials under a blanket. Students will have to paint their pictures like the real objects. In groups of four, two students will have to go near the blanket. One will look under the blanket and the other will wait for the description (as this will be done near the teacher, <u>immediate feedback</u> will be given). The other two will stay in the table with pictures of the objects, waiting for instructions on how to paint them (Appendix 2). The first two have to dictate the colour of the objects to the ones painting. After having dictated all the objects, there will be two of them in blank. Those objects will be the ones missing under the blanket and, together, they will have to tell the teacher. After that, as a <u>reward</u>, the teacher will give the students one sequence of pictures and a worksheet "Join the dots" (Appendix 2). This time, the ones painting will have to dictate the pictures to the other students and they will have to join the dots (which will have the word next to each) in order to see what classroom material appears.
Monty the clown: • Family members • Physical description (face and hair)	**Family members:** Draw their family members and explain them to a classmate. Each family member has one number and the partner has to guess each.	**Guess who is being described** The teacher gives students coloured cut-outs of face parts and hair (Appendix 3). In pairs, one student will have the picture of a person and he will have to describe it to his classmate. The partner will have to put the pieces together and create the person. Once they have the person created, the student will have to go to the family tree (Appendix 3) and say who the person he has created is.

Grammar:	Physical description:	Later, he will have to say the family relation between his character and another family member. To do so, next to the family tree they will have a box with names. They will have to take one name out and say who his picture is in relation to the person they have taken from the box.
• This is my *grandma* • These are my *cousins* • He / She's got *long hair*	One student describes a person and the other has to build the character using paper cut-out toys.	Students will have to show the two pictures to the teacher and, if they are similar and correct, students will put the initial picture of the person in a progress bar (Image 1) that will have been created for them, to <u>track their progress</u>.
Lola the pilot: • Clothes • Weather **Grammar:** • I'm wearing *a jacket* • It's cold / hot • It's raining / sunny…	**Clothes:** One student makes an action and says *I'm wearing…* and the other has to guess what it is *…a jacket*. **Weather:** Students have to say how the weather in the Artic, the Jungle and the Desert is.	**Why are they dressed like that?** In groups, students will be given a suitcase with laminated clothes (Appendix 4). According to the clothes they find in the suitcase, students will have to dress two figures of a boy and a girl in relation to the weather conditions of the Artic, the Jungle and the Desert. After having decided, each student of the group will have to say a sentence, for example, I'm wearing a jacket because it's cold. After having all the students said a sentence, their classmates will have to guess the area in which they are. If there is time, a second round can be done changing suitcases. During the development of this session, the teacher will be able to give <u>immediate feedback</u> and <u>points</u> to students.
Monty the diver: • Seaside words • Sea animal **Grammar:** • Is it a *dolphin*?	**Seaside words:** One student chooses a drawing and the other has to guess what drawing has she/he chosen. **Sea animal:**	**Is it a… dolphin?** In teams, students will be given few envelopes with some clues inside (Appendix 5). They will place themselves along the classroom creating a relay race. Two students will stay with the envelope. One to order the clues and the other to pass the first message. Students will be <u>aware of their progress</u> as they go through the envelopes.

• Yes it is / No it isn't • They're *penguins*	Each student has some animal cards and they have to flip them without looking and say what they are. If they match they have to say SNAP.	Students will go to the next classmate on the relay race and tell them the clue. When the message arrives to the last person, this one has to write down the clue and, once he has the three clues, he has to take the animal he thinks is being described. The group who accumulates more than four animal flashcards will get a <u>badge</u> with an animal on it. In order to get the flashcard students have to read the clues to the teacher and ask him/her: Is it a turtle? If it is correct the teacher will let them take the flashcard but, if not, they will have to go through the next clues leaving this one to the end. Doing it this way, students get <u>immediate feedback</u> from the teacher.
Lola the witch: • Furniture • Objects **Grammar:** • Is he/she in *the bed*? • Yes he/she is • No he /she isn't • Where's the *camera?* • It's *next to / between / under* the shelf	**Furniture:** There are pictures with children on them and one student has to pick a character and the other has to guess the character by asking: *Is she in the bed?* **Objects:** There is a board with squares and pictures of the object on them. They have to ask each other about the location of the object using: *Where's the camera? It's next to the watch*	**Where's the camera?** In fours, each pair of students will have a different picture. One will be A and the other B (Appendix 6). They will have some objects on top of the page (different for each pair) and they will have to complete the pictures so both look the same. Students will need to ask to their partners where their objects are and the other pair will have to answer honestly by using the right prepositions of place. They will have to start by asking: *Is there a watch? // Yes there is // Where's the watch? // Between the books and the lamp.* Once they get one of the answers, they will have to paint a square of the <u>progress bar</u> that will be placed next to their <u>avatars</u>. With four squares they would get one star, with six they would get two and with the eight squares they would get the three stars. Star stickers can be given to students as <u>rewards</u> for them to stick on their books. By doing this, the teacher will be able to <u>track their progress</u> and give <u>immediate feedback</u> to students regarding their language skills and performances.

All the activities proposed, in order to be placed in the flow channel, have a clear set of goals and show a good balance between challenges and skills. Moreover, social elements are also integrated in the different activities described above.

Finally, in order to assess the activities of the proposal and the content worked through the development of the session, the criteria mentioned above are going to be followed. Students will be assessed regarding their capacities and abilities to:

- Understand the global message of the oral productions.

- Participate actively in oral interactions studied.

- Recognize words and oral expressions in their written form and use them orally.

- Reproduce oral texts taking into account the intonation, rhythm, and intonation according to the model offered.

To do so, the different items selected by the teacher can be added to the Class Dojo platform and students can be given points concerning their performances (Image 4). When given points, students can be rewarded individually or in groups, according to the aim that is being persuaded in that specific session.
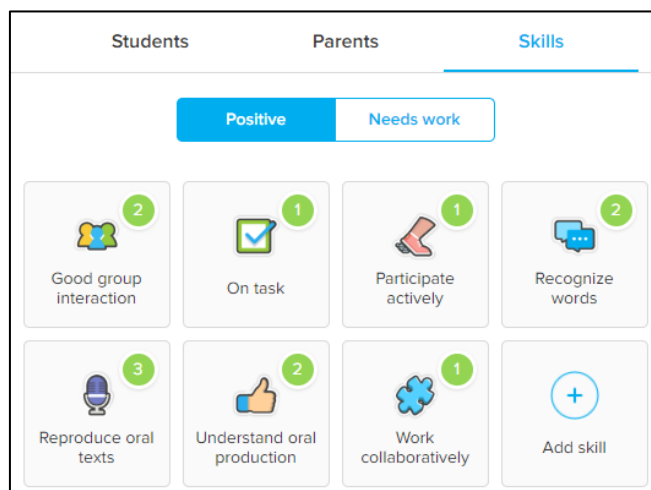

Image 4. Positive points of Class Dojo

Moreover, in relation to the achievements made by the students, the points given can have one value or another (Image 4). The value of each achievement will be decided by the teacher, according to the importance that he/she gives to the skill selected in the process of additional language learning.

Not only positive points can be given but also negative (Image 5), if the teacher considers so. At the end of each session, lesson or unit, the teacher can check students' average points.
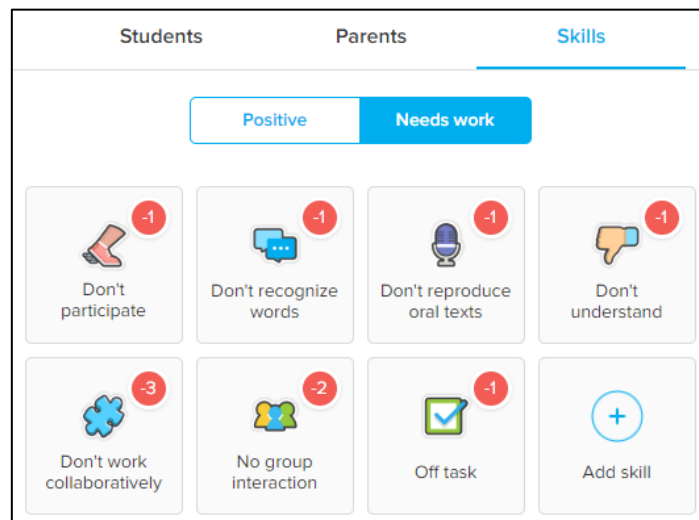

Image 5. Negative points of Class Dojo

For the teacher to be able to give immediate feedback to their students and assess their progress by observing them while performing the activity, the Class Dojo app can be downloaded into a tablet. The fact of having the app will help the teacher access easily and faster and will allow him/her to move around the classroom in order to have a better control of the students' performances and attitudes while learning.

To conclude, after having completed the activities, Class Dojo gives teachers the option to share their students' performances with the parents or tutors of the children, showing a graph (Image 6) in relation to their evolution and progress. What is more, these graphs can also be printed and given to students for them to reflect on their practice, improve and be aware of their progress.
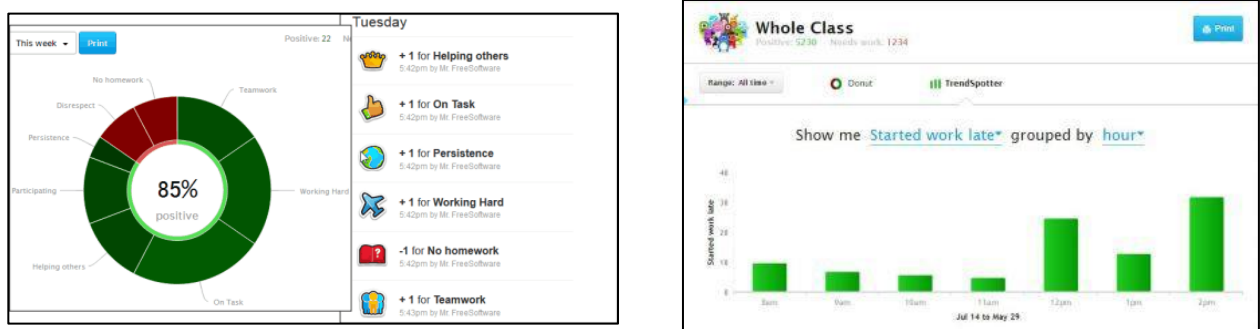

Image 6. Performance graphs of Class Dojo.

Conclusions:

"How can Gamification help 1k stage students in the acquisition of speaking and listening skills in an additional language?" is the question the present article has dealt with.

Initially, gamification was related just with the use of level and points present on video-games but, after having researched about the topic, it has been proved that all situations in which any game mechanic is involved can be called gamification. As a result, the fact of modifying an already existing game adapting it to the content that teachers want to work on in class is also gamification.

Moreover, by applying gamification strategies we are using the natural tendencies of children in order to capitalize for learning objectives, creating a more relaxed environment for them to engage in the process of additional language learning.

After having had many conversations with teachers about gamification, I have verified that they use learning techniques based on game strategies and, although they do not know that the terminology given to this methodology is gamification, they believe without doubt in the positive results that students can extract from its techniques.

Regarding the limitations of the article we have to bear in mind that the proposal developed in the previous pages could not have been put into practice and, therefore, could not have been evaluated. Moreover, due to the extension of the article, only a few proposals have been made in relation to the gamification of the OUP content.

However, further research can be done by expanding the proposal and applying it in a classroom in which students are not used to learn through games and teachers do not take game mechanics and techniques into account when teaching an additional language.

Nevertheless, to see the real effects of gamification in students' performance, the results extracted from the realization of the practice should be compared to the results obtained from a classroom with a more traditional way of teaching, where gamification strategies were not used to enhance the teaching and learning process of an additional language. Not only academic results obtained by students ought to be taken into account but also their attitude towards the learning process.

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Appendices:

Appendix 1: Model of interviews.

- Interview to experts on gamification:
  - Crystal D'Cruz (CD'C), Christian Negre (CN) and Gina Aguirre (GA)

1. Gamification

   1.1 What exactly is Gamification? How would you define it?

   1.2 What similarities and differences can you talk about in relation to game-based learning? Which are the main characteristics which differentiate one term from another?

   1.3 When did Gamification start?

   1.4 Do you consider Gamification a methodology, a strategy…?

2. How do you think can Gamification help in the development of the oral skills regarding an additional language in 1k stage?

3. Which strategies do you use in class in order to develop students' speaking skills?

4. Which strategies do you use in class in order to develop students' listening skills?

5. How can teachers approach knowledge / content to students by using Gamification?

6. Which steps do you believe have to be followed in order to gamify content?

7. How do you feel / what is your opinion in relation to the use of Gamification in order to promote speaking and listening skills?

8. In which aspects do you think gamification can be beneficial to students?

- Interview to teachers
  - Anna Buxadé (AB), Cristina Domingo (CD) and Laura Pallàs (LP)

1. Are you familiar with the term Gamification?
   If so, could you define what this term means to you?

2. Do you consider you use Gamification elements in your sessions?

3. What do you think are 1k stage student's goals in an additional language regarding speaking skills?

   3.1 Which strategies do you use to teach speaking skills?

4. What do you think are 1k stage student's goals in an additional language regarding listening skills?

   4.1 Which strategies do you use to teach listening skills?

5. Do you think can Gamification help in the development of the oral skills regarding an additional language in 1k stage?

6. How do you feel / what is your opinion in relation to the use of Gamification in order to promote speaking and listening skills?

7. In which aspects do you think gamification can be beneficial to students?

8. Do you think it would be helpful to have a didactic unit based on Gamification for 1k stage students to practice their oral skills?

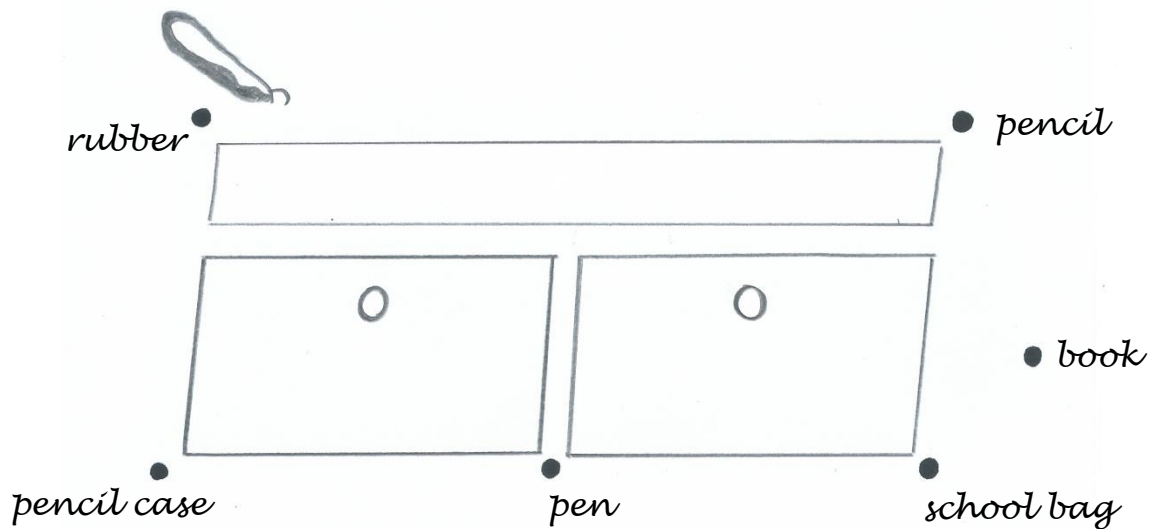9. What would you expect from such a proposal?

Appendix 2: Classroom material to paint + Join the dots worksheet.

- Join the dots worksheet:

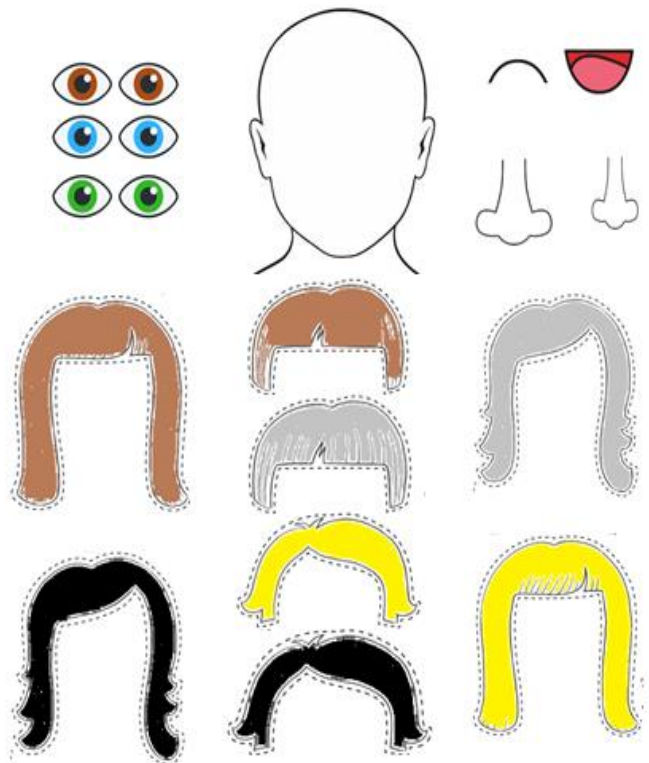1. Dictate the pictures to your classmate

pencil	book	school bag	pencil
rubber	pencil case	pen	school bag

- -
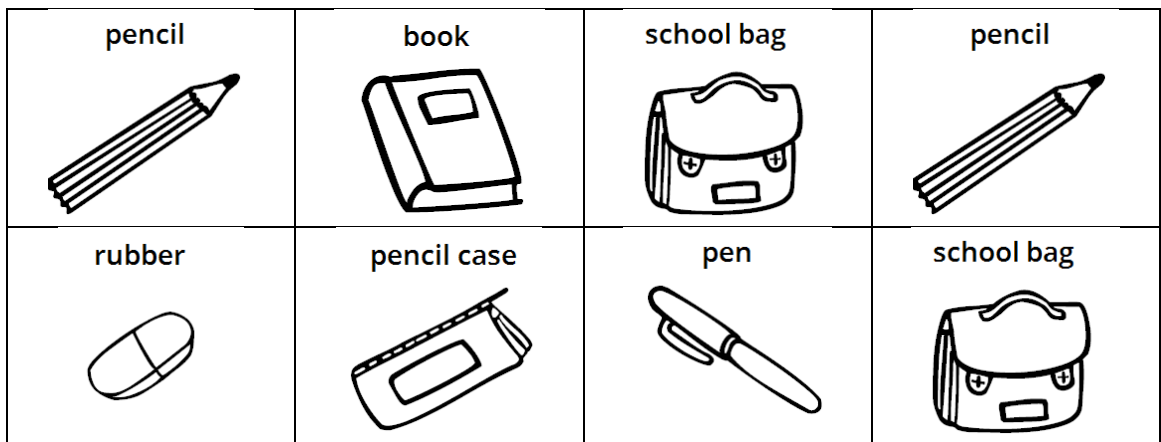
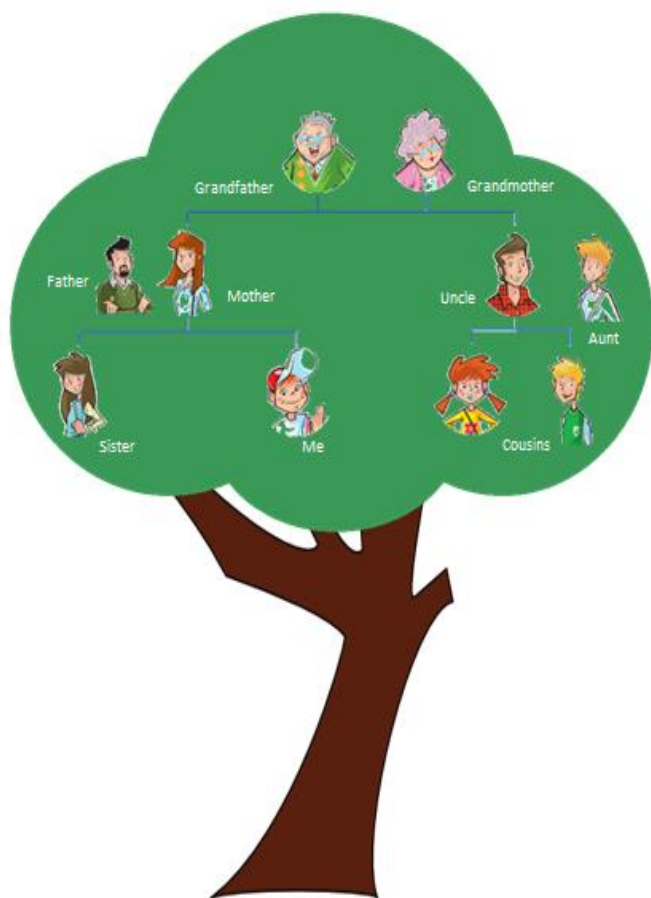1. Listen and join the dots

rubber

pencil

book

pencil case

pen

school bag

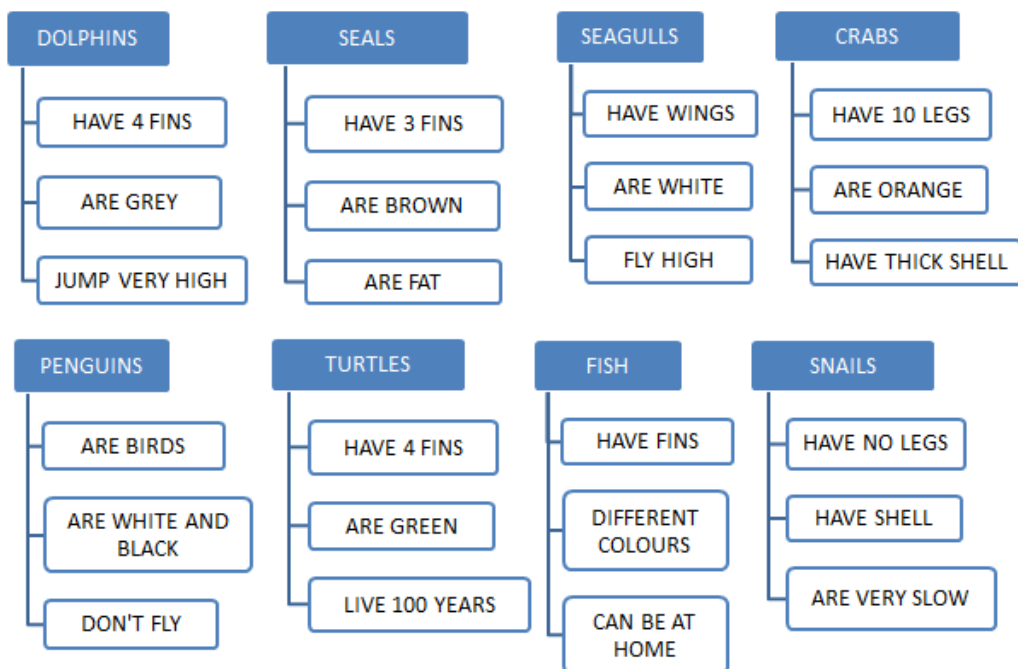- Classroom material to paint

Appendix 3: Family tree + cut-outs.

Appendix 4: Suitcase + figures + clothes.

Appendix 5: Three clues for each animal inside the envelope.

DOLPHINS	SEALS	SEAGULLS	CRABS
HAVE 4 FINS	HAVE 3 FINS	HAVE WINGS	HAVE 10 LEGS
ARE GREY	ARE BROWN	ARE WHITE	ARE ORANGE
JUMP VERY HIGH	ARE FAT	FLY HIGH	HAVE THICK SHELL

PENGUINS	TURTLES	FISH	SNAILS
ARE BIRDS	HAVE 4 FINS	HAVE FINS	HAVE NO LEGS
ARE WHITE AND BLACK	ARE GREEN	DIFFERENT COLOURS	HAVE SHELL
DON'T FLY	LIVE 100 YEARS	CAN BE AT HOME	ARE VERY SLOW

Appendix 6: Pictures.