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Teaching Proficiency Through Reading and
Storytelling

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Abstract

The objective of this work is to design an English didactic unit for Primary Education scholars who study English as foreign language in Spain. This didactic unit will apply Teaching Proficiency through Reading and Storytelling (TPRS) methodology. This approach to second language (L2) teaching was developed by a North American teacher, Ray Blaine, it is strongly founded on Stephen Krashen L2 acquisition theories, and it disassociates itself from the traditional concepts of L2 teaching methods. The purpose of the didactic unit is to engage students in the cooperative design of a narrative guided throughout Teaching Proficiency through Reading and Storytelling. This creative process is used as a tool to improve the acquisition of the L2, especially the students' oral skills.

An analysis of the mentioned methodology was performed in order to comprehend this approach, its implications and the way in which it could be taken from theory to practice, creating a didactic unit for sixth graders. The author reached a well-founded conclusion regarding this method and deems it as a remarkable and resourceful way to improve the students' L2 proficiency and firmly believes it can be successfully applied in accordance with the Spanish Primary Education curriculum.

Key words: TPRS, Comprehensible Input, Storytelling, Teaching English, Second Language Acquisition

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1. Introduction

The topic of the present study is a language teaching method known as Teaching Proficiency through Reading and Storytelling (TPRS). This method was developed by a North American Spanish Teacher in the 1980s and its approach focuses on storytelling and reading as means to acquire a second language (henceforth, L2).

The reason behind this study is the necessity of the author of finding an approach to teaching English that works more efficiently than the one widely spread nowadays based on studying grammar rules and memorizing vocabulary lists. Taking into account the data regarding the European citizens and their languages published in the Eurobarometer in the year 2012, Spain does not appear in a favourable light in comparison to other European countries. The Eurobarometer states that Spanish people are at the end of the list when it comes to be able to have a conversation in at least 2 languages. The Spanish respondents are among the least likely to do it with a percentage of only 18% of respondents answering positively to that question, very far from countries such as Luxemburg (84%) and The Nederland's (78%) and even distant from the average of the European Union (25%). Spain is only above the English speaker countries Ireland and The United Kingdom (which was still in The EU at the time of the document publication) and Portugal, Hungary and Greece (European Commission, 2012, pp. 5, 13-16). From that information it might be inferred that despite the number of hours and resources that are spent in the Spanish State Education System the obtained results are not optimal. The reality seems to be that after fifteen years in the National Education System learning a foreign language many students cannot hold a conversation in English. Thus, from the point of view of the author something has to change in the way L2 is taught in the Spanish classrooms, even more taking into account the fast pacing and globalized world in which our civilization lives at the moment, where speaking two or three languages is vital for our development as citizens of the twenty first century's world. Hence, there is a need for a paradigm shift in L2 education.

Stephen Krashen in his book *Principles and Practice in Second Language Acquisition* specified that language acquisition is a development analogous, almost undistinguishable, to the way kids progress in their ability to learn and master their mother tongue (1982, p. 10). They do not have teachers or planned lessons with never-ending vocabulary lists. They just learn by

listening to their caregivers, time and time again, receiving a great amount of input, observing and mimicking. They are absorbing the language structures in an unconscious way. After some months of receiving all of that input, they are able to produce active language. It can be said that they are acquiring a language not learning it. That is in fact, the aim of TPRS approach to L2 teaching, for the students to acquire the L2 in a similar way children master their first language, instead of trying to learn it through metalanguage or language analysis. TPRS approach is well-founded on the Second Language Acquisition Theory developed by Stephen Krashen in his book *Second language Acquisition and Second Language Learning* (1981), *Principles and Practice in Second Language Acquisition* (1982) and *The Input Hypothesis: The Issues and Implications* (1985). In this theory Krashen lays the emphasis on the term Comprehensible Input which will evolve in latter studies to the term Optimal Input. That is, the input the students need to receive must be intelligible, also captivating and exciting in order to improve language acquisition as John Bracey stated in his study, *TPRS, PQA & Circling* (2019, p. 60). Also, rich in language to get across the message nuances properly and it has to be copious too, in order to provide many occasions for the student to acquire the language as Stephen Krashen and Beniko Mason explained in their work *The Optimal Input Hypothesis: Not all comprehensible input is of equal value* (2020a, p. 1).

Using Stephen Krashen's theories among others, Blaine Ray and Contee Seely developed the TPRS theory which is described in their book *Fluency Through TPR Storytelling* (1997). An approach that the author deems as an interesting and promising method to apply in the Primary Education classroom.

In this piece of study, a didactic unit using this specific teaching proficiency approach, is presented. An English as a foreign language didactic unit aimed at 12 years old students. In this document it will be presented the objectives of the work, the theoretical framework, the contextualization of the school, the peculiarities of the group and the organization in which the didactic unit would be developed. Moreover, the conclusions achieved after having carefully revised the available bibliography and written down the ideas derived from the thorough reading process. Finally, some final considerations about the work, the bibliography references and the annexes.

2. Objectives of the work

General Objective:

To design a didactic unit proposal to improve English fluency skills on Spanish students of age 12, implementing the method known as Teaching Proficiency through Storytelling and Reading or TPRS.

Specific objectives

- To research about Teaching Proficiency through Storytelling and Reading (TPRS) methodology and the theories that support it.
- To reflect on the reviewed literature and analyse it to be able to argue and making a convincing case about the benefits of this language teaching approach.
- To define a didactic unit to implement in the Primary Education schoolroom using the Teaching Proficiency through Storytelling and Reading (TPRS) precepts in order to improve the students' L2 fluency skills.
- To exemplify how this proposal can be moved from theory to practice in the classroom in an engaging and effective way.

3. Theoretical Framework

3.1. Introduction

Firstly, it is interesting to mention a brief explanation about the means utilized by the author to gather the necessary information to conduct the present work. For the researching task, the UNIR online library has been indispensable. Through it, the author has been capable of finding different kind of resources such as academic journals, articles and books where the theories and ideas of interest are explained, analysed and even rebutted. Other tools such as Google Scholar, idUS: *depósito de investigación de la Universidad de Sevilla* and Dialnet has been used too. The latter, which is focus on Spanish scientific production, was used in small extent because the majority of the noteworthy resources on TPRS are from North American researchers or teachers, given the fact that there was in North America where the theory was born and where it has been borne out in practice by language teachers.

The core of the present work is the Teaching Proficiency through Storytelling and Reading approach to the language teaching. However, to actually understand it and be able to apply it to the classroom, it is necessary to go back to the theories and ideas that originally inspired Ray to design the method. For that, in the first place it is essential to study Stephen Krashen theories. Krashen is an American linguist specialised in language acquisition and professor emeritus in South California University, USC. According to the statements of Stephen Krashen in his work, *Second Language Acquisition and Second Language Learning* (1981), *Principles and Practice in Second Language Acquisition* (1982) and *Explorations in Language Acquisition and Use: The Taipei Lectures* (2003), human beings are outstanding at acquiring languages. However, in agreement to Krashen and Mason assertions in their work *Foundations for Story-Listening: Some Basics* (2022, p. 2), people are not so good at learning languages. Understanding learning a language as it is done in most classrooms nowadays, namely, analysing the language structure and trying to memorise grammar rules and vocabulary lists. In other words, in the traditional view, learning a language equals study grammar and vocabulary, thus learning in a conscious manner. Nevertheless, Krashen and Mason states that “there are no cases of people mastering languages through conscious learning alone” (2022, p. 2).

Beniko Mason is a professor emeritus at Shitennoji University Junior College in Osaka, Japan. Her work is mentioned several times in the present study for its significant content, which is highly suitable for this work. She has joined forces with Stephen Krashen in many academic studies regarding language acquisition.

Certainly, it is almost impossible to be able to learn and retain all the rules that underpin a language, and even if it was possible and a person was capable of memorise them and keep them in their mind, when that person was to have a conversation, all that knowledge learnt would be no other than a stopper to having a fluent conversation. That person would be thinking about the correctness of their speech focusing on the form and not on the message they are trying to convey. Besides, in an actual real time conversation a person does not have time to spend going through their brain and retrieving the exact word or structure they have previously learnt. Therefore: “Mastery of vocabulary and grammar, as well as fluency, is the RESULT of language acquisition, not the cause” (Krashen & Mason, 2022, p. 2). This is a really thought-provoking and eye-opening statement, that make the author find herself wondering

whether language teachers are approaching the teaching-learning process in reverse order. What is the cause and what is the consequence? On this basis, let's delve into Krashen's theories.

3.2. Second Language Acquisition Theory by Stephen Krashen

Regarding the Acquisition-Learning distinction theory, it can be said that for Krashen they have completely different meanings. The first one is subconscious, instinctive, the person is unaware of the process and it is focused more on the input received, whereas the second one is the conscious study of a language, in which the students are fully aware of the process they are following, it is related to intellectual skills and focused on the output, on being able to generate active language as Krashen stated in his work *Principles and practice in second language acquisition* (1982). In the psychology field, specialist referred to these two ideas as explicit/implicit knowledge, but essentially, they were explained in the same way as Krashen did, making a similar distinction between those terms. Karen Lichtman and Bill VanPatten in their work *Was Krashen Right? Forty Years Later* (2021, p. 287), mentioned the work of the cognitive psychologist Arthur Reber who in 1967 defined those two terms as they have been described above these lines, being acquisition analogue to obtain implicit knowledge and learning to attain explicit knowledge.

Although with some criticism, in the linguistic theory field, Krashen's ideas were mainly well received. Some researchers even claimed that Krashen's theory was one of the few theories compatible with Chomsky's theory (Schwartz, 1986, mentioned by Lichtman & VanPatten, 2021, p. 286). Briana Sobecks in her study, *Language Acquisition Device and the Origin of Language* (2020, pp. 1-2) reminded us about the fact that in the Language Acquisition Device (LAD) theory, Chomsky stated that given the difficult task that is to acquire a language and the fact that children seem to do it despite its complexity, he argued that acquisition must be an inborn aptitude

It seems to be unanimity in the linguistic theory field about the fact that learning cannot turn into acquisition, and in the same way explicit knowledge cannot become implicit knowledge, these knowledges advance in a different manner, and they do not intersect (Lichtman & VanPatten, 2021, p. 286).

Related to the Input Hypothesis, Krashen (1982, p. 21) stated that this hypothesis is connected to language acquisition not to learning. Furthermore, human beings acquire language by the understanding of input language that holds a structure a little above their existing level of proficiency (i), which he named as i+1. To be able to understand input of that i+1 level, teachers must give context and/or extra-linguistic aid. When that comprehensible input is provided the language is acquired, in fact, that is the only way to accomplish that acquisition. That is to say, comprehensible input is indispensable for second language acquisition as stated by Bill VanPatten, Jessica Williams, Gregory D. Keating and Stephanie Wulff discourse in their book *Theories in Second Language Acquisition: An Introduction* (2020). Another important Krashen's statement from this hypothesis is that language production ability will arise eventually. This faculty is not taught straightforwardly. It is for that reason that beginners are allowed a silent period, in which they will be listening and receiving comprehensible input but not obliged to produce any output, just as babies do until they become toddlers and are able to articulate some words. Recently, Stephen Krashen and Beniko Mason have enunciated the Optimal Input Hypothesis, this optimal input must be endowed with the following characteristics (2020, p. 1):

- It must be comprehensible. Otherwise, it becomes noise in the ears of the student. However, it does not mean that the learner should have a full understanding of every word used in the communication. The message can have some unintelligible bits and bobs.
- The optimal input must be attention-grabbing, so interesting that catches the attention of the student who even may forget they are listening to a foreign language.
- This input must have a rich language using abundant vocabulary that must add to the conveyed message and contribute to the story flow.

Do not forget that the acquisition of a new language is quite gradual. It is interesting to provide the same word in different contexts and structures to give plenty of opportunities for the learner to conform in their mind a complete idea with all the nuances of the significance of a term or to set a mental representation of language structure. The term used here, mental representation instead of grammar and vocabulary rules has not been chosen randomly. That intellectual representation is a more complex and abstract idea compared to language rules. Nonetheless, as VanPatten stated in his academic piece: *The Nature of Language: A short guide to what's in our heads* (2019), apprentices consistently know things about language that

they have never been explained or shown. Hence, there is something beyond metalanguage and language analysis, something more abstract rather than the nuts and bolts of the language. As Lichtman and VanPatten (2021, p. 296) states in a simpler way “the principal data for the acquisition of language is found in the communicatively embedded comprehensible input that learners receive. Comprehension precedes production in the acquisition process”. Being communicatively embedded comprehensible input the one that is inserted in communicative actions such as conversations, dialogues or storytelling, for instance. In this degree, students need to be exposed to that communicatively embedded comprehensible input before anything else, considering that the mentioned input must be compelling and engaging for them. Thereby, the language will be setting in their minds. The fact that the input is implanted in a conversation, or a story is fundamental because in those occasions the main objective is to establish an effective communication between the interlocutor, in this case, the teacher and their students. Therefore, both will be quite keen on getting the message across and capturing the meaning, respectively. When the learner does not comprehend something, the teacher will negotiate the meaning, which interestingly adds more comprehensible input for the student to work on the meaning-making and to generate that mental image of the new language. For that to happen it is imperative that the teacher talks with students rather than talks at them, according to VanPatten paper, *While We're on the Topic... Principles of Contemporary Language Teaching* (2017, mentioned by Lichtman & VanPatten, 2021, p. 298). In other words, it would not be acceptable for the teacher to just talk incessantly without giving students the opportunity of engaging in the conversation, asking questions to them and encouraging them to participate, meanwhile the instructor will ensure that the learners are understanding the message and in fact, they are receiving comprehensible input. Another implication of Krashen’s theory (1981, p. 1) is that explicit teaching must be set aside, because the explicit knowledge plays no role in the language acquisition process. Besides, as it has been mentioned above explicit knowledge usually hinder fluent communication.

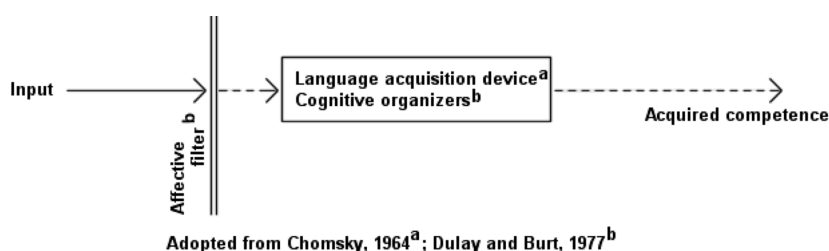
Additionally, another essential extent extracted from Krashen’s work, *Second Language Acquisition and Second Language Learning* (1981, pp. 29-33), that teachers have to bear in mind is the so-called Affective Filter. The characteristics of this filter are:

- Anxiety of being immersed in a foreign language and fear of being forced to speak and committing mistakes.

- Self-Image. There are studies that corroborate that poor learners usually lack self-confidence (Naimon, Frohlich, Stern & Todesco, 1977 mentioned by Krashen, 1981, p. 30).
- Attitude towards the instructor and the lesson, which can be also named as motivation. In their work Naimon et al., mentioned by Krashen (1981, p. 33), stated that the attitude towards learning the L2 was “the best predictor of success”.

Consequently, self-consciousness, lowered self-image, classroom anxiety, thoughts of defencelessness will lead to an increase in the affective filter and therefore to lower the ability to acquire the L2. It may filter the input received and prevent the learner internal mechanism from creating an abstract representation of the language and eventually the acquisition of L2. Thus, in order to be a good L2 learner, the student must receive sufficient comprehensible and compelling input and to maintain a low affective filter to be capable of completing the process of acquiring the language.

Figure 1: Relationship between affective filter and language acquisition



Source: Second language acquisition and second language learning (Krashen, 1981, p. 110)

One of the things the author of the present document finds difficult to tackle while teaching L2 using TPRS approach and therefore Krashen’s Comprehensible Input Theory is the assessment. When all the focus is on the communicatively embedded comprehensible input and on maintaining conversations and practicing storytelling, story-listening or story-asking and not on vocabulary tests or grammar exams or speaking skill checks (which contradicts the silent period hypothesis), it is challenging to assign a numerical grade to each learner as it has been done traditionally. According to Lichtman and VanPatten (2021, p. 301) it might be the time for different models of language education to be thought through, considering the differences between language education and other subjects such as Science or Maths.

Once the theory behind TPRS approach, Krashen's Second Language Acquisition Theory, has been analysed, it is time to tackle the characteristics of Teaching Proficiency through Storytelling and Reading.

3.3. Teaching Proficiency through Storytelling and Reading Introduction

Everything commenced with Total Physical Response (TPR) a theory coined by Professor James Asher in the 1960s. In this methodology the student learns vocabulary and expressions through coordination of language and physical movement as Aprilia Riyana Putri, expressed it in his work *Teaching English for Young Learners using a Total Physical Response (TPR) Method* (2016, p. 1). It is an active and enjoyable approach to L2 teaching and it was the first approach to input based L2 teaching. However, TPR drew criticism because in a way it was not a good enough methodology. This method activities entails games, content related tasks, songs or dances, many complained about the fact that the vocabulary variety was scarce, and the input received by the learners was trivial, petty and not at all interesting or gripping as stated by Beniko Mason and Stephen Krashen, in their publication *The promise of "Optimal Input."* (2020b, p. 3). Then, what kind of activities can satisfy the optimal comprehensible input premises? According to Mason and Krashen academic work *Foundations for Story-Listening: Some Basics* (2022, p. 1) story listening and self-selected reading comply with the conditions that the Comprehensible Input Theory demands. Investigation confirms that listening to stories and reading books the reader is interested in, outcomes in significant language development (Krashen, 2004 mentioned by Krashen and Mason, 2022, p. 3). Stories and books content does not have to be unimportant or trivial and they can deliver rich, captivating and comprehensible input when are well selected. In a Hsieh, Wang and Lee study (2011) mentioned by Mason and Krashen (2022, p. 3) they informed that after analysing 65 pictures books used in a Taiwanese school, they contained three times more words as textbooks used at that specific grade. The important issue here, is the way in which those stories are read by the students or read aloud to the students, it must be done in a conscious manner delivering to the students a proper input. The teacher ought to know the amount of input they are going to comprehend and what part of that input they will not be able to recognise, in other words, it has to be provided the right amount of "i+1".

Storytelling

Mason and Krashen (2020b, pp. 3-4) describe the difference between Storytelling, as a general term, and Story-Listening. The latter is not just telling a story, its main objective is the learners understanding and enjoyment. It uses specific texts to read aloud to students making use of a strategy called Comprehension-Aiding Supplementation (CAS) as Stephen Krashen, Beniko Mason and Ken Smith, described in their study: *Some New Terminology: Comprehension-Aiding Supplementation and Form-Focusing Supplementation* (2018, pp. 1-3). What for? This strategy is used with the aim of turning the no comprehensible input into comprehensible input. How? The instructor must analyse the words of the input they are going to deliver and detects those words whose meaning students are likely to ignore. Then the teacher must prepare some Comprehension-Aiding Supplementations or CAS to use when those words arise in the story or the conversation, these may be pictures, drawing, gestures or pictograms, but also more contextualised input or even translation to L1. Mason and Krashen states that their “studies thus far indicate that using CAS results in better and longer-lasting vocabulary acquisition than traditional methodology” (2020c, p. 1).

TPRS approach focus on another important concept: personalised questions and answers or PQA and what has been mentioned already, Story-Asking. PQA is the process of asking questions to the learners. But personalised questions, so that, inquiries about their interest or their personalities, tastes etc, and of course using L2. Accordingly, the emphasis of the conversation and the theme of the stories will be placed on the students’ interests and circumstances. When practicing with PQA the leader of the conversation must be the teacher, the instructor is the one doing the majority of the talking (Bracey, 2019, p. 60). The learners have to answer the question, but even with a one-word response would be valid, as it has already been mentioned in this approach the focus is on the input learners received not on the output, they are able to produce. That spontaneous production of spoken language will eventually appear, but the silent period stated by Krashen (1981, pp. 8, 111 & 1982, pp. 26-27, 71-72, 81-82, 141) must be respected and to this extent, it is also indispensable to keep an anxiety free lesson, without forcing spoken production. It is vital to remember, for an effective TPRS approach that it has to comply with the principles of SLA Theory.

On the other hand, story-asking is the process through which the whole class collaboratively will put together a story with the teacher guidance. The educator will ask the opinion of the

students regarding the plot, the characters (even they can be the protagonists) and their characteristics or the location so the resultant story is unique and personalised, shaped by that specific group, that makes it very compelling for those students. We are in fact creating and delivering a compelling comprehensible input that can also be used as reading material. Moreover, it is paramount to bear in mind the acquisition only will happen if students are understanding the input (Bracey, 2019, p. 64). That is the reason why Ray and Seely (2015, p. 24) in their work recommend choosing two or three students to focus on doing continuously comprehension checks. They call them barometer students and they must be among the poor learners. In such manner, if they comprehend everybody does. When the teacher senses that those students are not understanding, the task is to find out which is the problematic phrase or word, translate it on the board and produce plenty of expressions and questions in L2 using that phrase. In order not to detract from the comprehension process is better for the students not to focus intentionally on trying to learn or memorise the vocabulary. Finally, another central aspect not to forget is the fact that the acquisition of a language is gradual and requires plenty of exposure and repetition.

Steps to introduce TPR Storytelling in the classroom

Each lesson will focus around three or four target structures, not words nor whole sentences. It has been realised that it is just as easy to teach a word as a phrase, and in such manner, students learn more. High frequency words and structures are used (Ray & Seely, 2015, pp. 24-26). According to Ray and Seely (2015, pp. 31-41) there are three levels of stories: from the shortest to the longest:

Personalised mini situations (PMS). A brief story that places the emphasis on around three phrases. Ray and Seely defined a list of basic structures that will be used in most stories that has to be taught the first weeks of the course and be practiced in every lesson. Things to consider:

- Having posters with questions word (wh. questions) and their translation to L1.
- Having a story line detailed.
- To choose student actors that will help with the dramatization
- To have designed several locations, each location will provide opportunity for repetition.

- The story is moving from the first location where the character encounter a problem to the next one and to the final one. The teacher is making statements and asking questions that contain the target structures, the students will come up with creative ideas and personal contributions to the story which makes it appealing for them.
- The teacher must not forget to provide repetitions.
- The students must be asked to react to the teacher statements with expressions such as: Ooohhh! Amazing! Fantastic! for the teacher to know that they are understanding.
- They can only provide input by answering the teacher question, otherwise the story will drift apart from the teacher's control.
- They must be bizarre, exaggerated and personalised (BEP). They should be focus on students' lives.
- The teacher looks for as many students' responses as possible. An optimal target teacher is to achieve around 50 to 100 repetitions and 500 class responses.
- Work on the vocabulary giving the meaning in L1. Personalised it using PQA.
- Get students actors to dramatize is an option. After every statement ask imaginative questions for them to let their creativity fly. Use translation if needed.

Mini story: Students already know the vocabulary that will arise in the mini story. The teacher will follow the same process mentioned for PMS, asking questions after each statement of the plot. After having taught a mini story, the teacher may start on a new group of words which the class will work on daily in PMS forms, after several PMSs the words will be reutilised in mini stories. Finally, after several mini stories the learners will be ready for a main story.

Chapter Story or main story will contain between 15 to 100 sentences.

From three to five PMS (one per 50-55 min lesson) will provide enough input to start with the second level, mini stories (weekly) and at the same time will provide vocabulary enough for the final level, the main story.

Reading

According to Ray & Seely work, Fluency Through TPR Storytelling: Achieving Real Language Acquisition in School (2015, pp. 113-123) students should read aloud translating and afterwards discuss it, with the aim of strengthening the language abstract representation in

their minds. They also recommend “pop-ups” very often. Pop-up Grammar is a mean of stressing the meaning of a grammatical structure in its actual context. The teacher interrupts briefly the process formulating a quick question or two about a particular grammatical feature that appear in the story. The class should answer. The educator might give a quick explanation.

Guided Self-Selected Reading

Guided Self-Selected Reading is another concept more recently added to TPRS method by Beniko Mason (2020b, p. 4). When applying this method, the key is the guidance of the teacher when it comes to the selection of the book. The teacher must know profoundly the student’s language levels and interests and above that, they must be experienced with a wide variety of titles in order to provide guidance when it comes to recommend a story or written text. The titles recommended by the schoolteacher must include not only graded books, but also actual books created for native speakers (McQuillan, 2016 mentioned by Mason & Krashen, 2020b, p. 4). On this wise, readers are conducted by the instructor towards the book suitable for them considering the level of difficulty of the text and the time they have to dedicate to reading. They are required to keep an individual log of their reading, but there is no need to pass vocabulary tests or make exercises or summaries regarding the story like in other methods, just enjoy the reading. Notwithstanding: “Research has shown that the use of stories and books as done in Story-Listening and Guided Self-Selected Reading are not only effective but also time Efficient for language acquisition” (Mason & Krashen, 2020b, p. 6).

Motivational Pull of TPRS

According to Liam Printer’s research, Student Perceptions on the Motivational Pull of Teaching Proficiency through Reading and Storytelling (TPRS): A Self-Determination Theory Perspective (2021, p. 288), the studies that have been performed until the present moment regarding engagement and motivation in the schoolroom when it comes to TPRS method are scarce, but all of them account for positive conclusions. This author mentions Campbell’s 2016 and Espinoza’s 2015 research to validate the extent that teachers perceive TPRS as an approach to L2 teaching that generate motivation, excitement, involvement and engagement among students (Printer, 2021, pp. 290, 299). Blanton’s (2015) study states that there is a connection between a high intrinsic motivation in the scholars and the use of the TPRS approach in the classroom (Blanton, 2015, mentioned by Printer, 2021, p. 290).

Another interesting angle to this matter is the one related with the environmental context and the kind of atmosphere in which the lesson is developed. As it has been already mentioned, a low affective filter is paramount to the acquisition of the L2. Consequently, a relaxed and anxiety free atmosphere, where the pupils are comfortable, a classroom dynamic that increases self-confidence in the students and promotes personalised education will promote motivation. And those features are applicable to TPRS.

In Printer's qualitative single case of study participated 500 students from Switzerland and its findings show that for the students the experience being subjected of TPRS lessons in L2 lessons was tremendously positive and the technique was extensively celebrated by all contestants (2021, p. 291).

Legislative framework and background

Since the first educational law in Spain adopted in 1970, the LGE or General Law of Education, there has been plenty of different laws. Speaking about the most recent ones, they must be mentioned the LOE, Ley Orgánica 2/2006, de 3 de mayo, de Educación. *Boletín Oficial del Estado*, núm. 106, 24 de mayo de 2006, which repealed all the previous laws (LGE, LOGSE, LOPEG and LOCE). After that, the LOMCE, La Ley Orgánica 8/2013, de 9 de diciembre, para la mejora de la calidad educativa. *Boletín Oficial del Estado*, núm. 295, de 10 de diciembre de 2013, was adopted, this one introduced important modifications to the LOE. Hence, during several years two laws have been effective. Recently, a new law has been introduced, the LOMLOE, Ley Orgánica 3/2020, de 29 de diciembre, por la que se modifica la Ley Orgánica 2/2006, de 3 de mayo, de Educación. *Boletín Oficial del Estado*, núm. 340, 30 de diciembre de 2020, that came into effect in January 2021. However, the implementation of the new law will be done in a staged manner along three years, in the academic years 2021-2022, 2022-2023 and 2023-2024. In the first stage, mostly modifications about evaluation and promotion were established, in the second phase, the full normative is applied to 1st, 3rd and 5th grade and eventually, in the third stage of the implementation, the normative will apply to 2nd, 4th and 6th grade. This didactic unit is created having into account the LOMLOE.

4. Contextualization

4.1. Features of the surroundings

With the aim of contextualise the centre, it is significant to depict how is the neighbourhood in which it is located. The area is well connected via public transport to the vast majority of Madrid. There are underground and bus stops close to the school and bicycle and scooter parking at the main gate. It is easy to reach the school walking since there are some pedestrians paths that are connected to the school. It is mostly a residential area formed by flat buildings where families live, there is not many office buildings. It has good public services nearby, such as parks and playgrounds, hospitals, sport centres and water sport centres which influence the school life, having many students taking part in sports competitions.

4.2. Description of the centre

The centre is a private school subsidised with state funds. It is located in the Retiro district in the centre of the city of Madrid, it was created in the 1980s. It is a non-religious school which is well known because of their progressive and forward-thinking philosophy. The school is pleased to state that their main goals are strengthen democracy, reinforce social justice and support environmental sustainability. Nonetheless, the school promotes projects in which interdisciplinary debate, research and divulgation about ecology, social cohesion, tolerance towards the different, democracy quality and gender equality are fostered. According to their educational project they are committed to nurture, innovative creative and critical thinking citizens respectful with the planet they habit. The school is open-minded and eager to adapt new trends in education as well as adapt those ideas or theories that are proven positive.

Currently, the school caters for around 1200 students from 3 to 12 years old and it has four classes per grade A, B, C and D. In each class there are around 25 pupils. The space in the school is divided between the Early Years' levels (3 to 6) and the Primary levels (6 to 12). The centre is a two-storey building, being the elder students on the second floor. It has two gates, the main one facing a street and the second one communicates the centre with a public park. The courtyard is spacious enough, however, it is an all-fashion courtyard, with sport courts covering the 80% of its grounds. And so forth, it is not very inclusive, lacking some new concepts and improvements that would modernise it and promote more creative and

inclusive ways of playing and spending the free time. The school is bilingual and place a great deal of emphasis on the English language learning, teaching Arts, Natural Science, Music also in English as the main language. There is an English classroom where the teacher remains, and each group goes when they have English class. That way the classroom is absolutely focus on the English language teaching-learning process. Having posters, flashcards, pictograms, books and all the items and aids the English teacher could have.

4.3. Characteristics of the students

The didactic unit is aimed to a group of 24 scholars. 13 girls and 11 boys ages from 11 to 12 years old. They all have a similar level of socio-cultural background. One of the boys have an autism spectrum disorder but he does not show important behavioural nor communicative issues. However, it will be necessary to adapt some parts of the lessons with visual aids for him. Moreover, one girl needs a wheelchair to move around, she will need for the teacher and colleagues to pay attention to the possible obstacles she might encounter in the classroom.

5. Didactic Unit

5.1. Introduction

The didactic unit is contained in the Foreign Language: English subject, for the sixth grade of PE. The title of the didactic unit is: TPRS: Creation of a Narrative: A journey through the UK.

5.2. Justification

The didactic unit proposes the implementation of a method for the teaching-learning of a second language that is quite unknown in Spain. From the author point of view, the implementation of this approach would be beneficial in any school no matter the specificities of the centre, given the fact that this methodology is innovative and different from the approaches followed in Spain and it will contribute positively to the teaching-learning process of the foreign language. Likewise, Teaching Proficiency through Reading and Storytelling has been substantiated as an effective teaching method, having more than 30-year proven track record in the North American schools. Besides, it can be performed with all levels of proficiency from Early Years to Secondary Education, just adapting the level of difficulty, which makes it an outstanding and noteworthy method to use for the second language acquisition process in the Spanish classrooms.

5.3. Legal references

Regarding the current education normative, the didactic unit must be in accordance with the National and regional legislation, that are the following:

- Ley Orgánica 3/2020, de 29 de diciembre, por la que se modifica la Ley Orgánica 2/2006, de 3 de mayo, de Educación. *Boletín Oficial del Estado*, núm. 340, 30 de diciembre de 2020, 122868 a 122953.
- Real Decreto 157/2022, de 1 de marzo, por el que se establecen la ordenación y las enseñanzas mínimas de la Educación Primaria. *Boletín Oficial del Estado*, núm. 52, 2 de marzo de 2022, 24386 a 24504.

Autonomous Community: Community of Madrid

- Decreto 61/2022, de 13 de julio, del Consejo de Gobierno, por el que se establece para la Comunidad de Madrid la ordenación y el currículo de la etapa de Educación Primaria. *Boletín oficial de la Comunidad de Madrid*, núm. 169, 18 de julio de 2022, 15 a 126.

5.4. Objectives of the project

General Objective:

- To participate in the collaboratively creation of a narrative guided through the method Teaching Proficiency through Reading and Storytelling.

Specific objectives

- To be capable of understanding the meaning of the different wh-words and how to use them in different contexts in oral and written texts.
- To be able to establish the meaning of structures and vocabulary in oral and written texts used along the didactic unit sessions.
- To get to know better the British social and cultural reality as well as their heritage.

5.5. Competences

According to the current normative the Real Decreto 157/2022, de 1 de marzo, por el que se establecen la ordenación y las enseñanzas mínimas de la Educación Primaria. *Boletín Oficial del Estado*, núm. 52, 2 de marzo de 2022, students have to achieve key competences and specific competences, being the latter, competences specific of every subject.

The key competences are the adaptation to the Spanish education system of the key competences established in the Recommendation of the Council of the European Union. This adaptation responds to the need to link these competences with the challenges of the 21st century, with the principles and purposes of the educational system established in the LOE and with the school context. In general, it should be understood that the attainment of competences and objectives foreseen in the Ley Orgánica 3/2020, de 29 de diciembre, por la que se modifica la Ley Orgánica 2/2006, de 3 de mayo, de Educación. *Boletín Oficial del Estado*, núm. 340, 30 de diciembre de 2020, for the different educational stages is linked to the acquisition and development of the key competences. Regarding this proposal, the key competences that will be pursued are:

Competence in linguistic communication (CCL)

Competence in linguistic communication involves interacting orally, in writing, signed or multimodal in a coherent and appropriate way in different areas and contexts and for different communicative purposes. It involves mobilizing, in a conscious way, the set of knowledge, skills and attitudes that allow us to understand, interpret and critically evaluate messages, avoiding the risks of manipulation and misinformation, as well as communicating effectively with other people in a cooperative, creative, ethical and respectful way. It is the basis for one's own thinking and for the construction of knowledge in all areas of knowledge.

Multilingual competence (CP)

Multilingual competence involves using different languages, oral or signed, in an appropriate and effective way for learning and communication. This competence means recognizing and respecting individual language profiles and taking advantage of the own experiences to develop strategies that allow mediating and make connections and transfers between languages and, where necessary, maintaining and acquiring skills in the familiar language(s) and official languages. It also integrates historical and intercultural dimensions aimed at knowing, valuing and respecting the linguistic and cultural diversity of society with the goal of promoting democratic coexistence.

Personal, Social and Learning to Learn Competence (CPSAA)

Personal, social and learning to learn competence implies the ability to reflect on oneself to know oneself, accept oneself and promote constant personal growth; manage time and

information effectively; collaborate constructively with others; maintain resilience; and managing lifelong learning. It also includes the ability to cope with uncertainty and complexity.

Competence in Cultural Awareness and Expression (CCEC)

Competence in cultural awareness and expression means understanding and respecting the way ideas, opinions, feelings and emotions are expressed, and communicate in a creative way across cultures by means of a wide range of artistic and cultural manifestations. It also implies a commitment to the understanding, development and expression of one's own ideas. Additionally, it requires the understanding of one's evolving identity and cultural heritage in a world characterized by diversity, as well as awareness regarding the fact that art and other cultural manifestations might involve a different way of seeing the world and shape it.

(BOE, 2022, p. 24404 -24412).

Regarding the specific competences, in this study will be taken into account four of them:

Competence 1: Understanding the general sense of specific and predictable information of short and simple texts expressed clearly and in the standard language, making use of different strategies and resorting, when necessary, to the use of different types of support, to develop the linguistic repertoire and to respond to everyday communicative needs [...] The processes of understanding require dialogic contexts, which favour the construction of a joint knowledge and that stimulate the identification of prejudices and stereotypes of any kind, as well as a genuine interest in ethnocultural differences and similarities. This specific competence connects with the next descriptors, which concretize the development of the competence: CCL2, CCL3, CP1, CP2, CPSSA5, CCEC2 (BOE, 2022, p. 24475-24478).

Competence 3: Interacting with other people using everyday expressions, resorting to cooperation strategies. Interaction is considered the origin of communication and comprises interpersonal, cooperatives and transactional functions. This specific competence connects with the next descriptors, which concretize the development of the competence: CCL5, CP1, CP2, CPSSA3 (BOE, 2022, p. 24475-24478).

Competence 5: Recognizing and using personal linguistic repertoires between different languages, reflecting on their functioning and identifying their own strategies and knowledge to improve the response to specific communicative needs in familiar situations. The use of the linguistic repertoire and reflection on its functioning are linked to the multilingual approach

to language acquisition. [...] Knowledge of different languages makes it possible to recognize and appreciate the linguistic diversity of society as a positive aspect. This specific competence connects with the next descriptors, which concretize the development of the competence: CP2, CPSSA1, CPSSA4, CPSSA5 (BOE, 2022, p. 24475-24478).

Competence 6: Appreciating and respecting linguistic, cultural and artistic diversity of the foreign language, identifying and valuing the differences and similarities between languages and cultures. The recognition and appreciation of diversity should allow students to learn to manage everyday intercultural situations. This specific competence connects with the next descriptors, which concretize the development of the competence: CCL5, CP3, CPSSA1, CPSSA3, CCEC1 (BOE, 2022, p. 24475-24478).

The assessment of the specific competences is performed through the assessment criteria, which measures both results and processes in an open manner, flexible and interconnected within the curriculum (BOE, 2022, p. 24413).

Bellow these lines it can be found a table showing which operational descriptors described in the normative apply to each of the specific competences involved in this didactic unit:

Table 1: Relationship between specific competences and operational descriptors

	CCL2	CCL3	CCL5	CP1	CP2	CP3	CPSAA1	CPSAA3	CPSAA4	CPSAA5	CCEC1	CCEC2
1	X	X		X	X					X		X
3			X	X	X			X				
5					X		X		X	X		
6			X			X	X	X			X	

Being the description of the operational descriptors the following:

CCL2: Understanding, interpreting and valuing oral, written, signed or multimodal texts regarding simple, personal, social and educational topics, with punctual accompaniment, with the aim of participating actively in everyday contexts and building knowledge.

CCL3. Locating, selecting and contrasting simple information from several sources, evaluating its reliability and usefulness depending on the reading objectives, and integrating and

transforming it into knowledge to be able to communicate it by adopting a creative, critical and personal point of view and respectful with the intellectual property.

CCL5: The student places their communicative practice at the service of democratic coexistence, conflict management in a dialogued way, and equal rights for everybody, being able to detect discriminatory uses as well as power abuse, and to favour the use, not only effective, but also ethical of the different communication systems.

CP1: The learner uses at least one language, in addition to the familiar language or languages, to respond to simple and predictable communicative needs, in an appropriate way to their development and interests as well as to everyday situations and contexts in the personal, social and educational spheres.

CP2: From his experiences, the student recognizes the diversity of linguistic profiles and can experiment strategies that guided, allow them to make easy transfers between different languages to communicate in everyday contexts and to expand their linguistic repertoire.

CPSAA1: The scholar is aware of their own emotions, ideas and behaviours and employs strategies to manage them in situations of tension or conflict, adapting to changes and is capable of harmonizing them to achieve their own objectives.

CPSAA3: The student recognizes and respects emotions and experiences of other people, participates actively in group work, assumes the assigned individual responsibilities and employs cooperative strategies aimed at achieving shared goals.

CPSSA4: The scholar recognizes the value of effort and personal dedication to improve their learning and adopts critical positions in guided reflection processes.

CPSAA5: The student is capable of planning short-term goals, using self-regulated learning strategies and participating in self-evaluation and co-evaluation processes, recognizing their limitations and knowing when to seek help in the process of building the knowledge.

CCEC1: The student recognizes and appreciates fundamental aspects of cultural and artistic heritage, understanding the differences between cultures and the need to respect them.

CCEC2: The scholar recognizes and cares about specificities and intentions of the most important artistic and cultural manifestations, identifying the media and systems, as well as the languages and technical elements that characterize them.

5.6 Contents

In the current Real Decreto the contents are called basic knowledge, described as the knowledge, skills and attitudes that constitute the contents of a particular area and whose acquisition is necessary for the attainment of each specific competence. In this case, the didactic unit is going to work on the following:

From Blok C: Interculturality:

- Curiosity for the discover of other social and cultural realities, of other languages, starting from positions of respect and tolerance towards the interlocutor, their customs, traditions, social conventions, rules of courtesy, values and culture.
- Aspects of language, culture and society relating to customs, daily life and personal relationships, basic social conventions in common use, non-verbal language, courtesy of language and digital etiquette specific to countries where the foreign language is spoken.

From Blok D: Discursive syntactic content:

Interrogation: Wh-questions. (BOCM, 2022, p. 85-86)

5.7. Methodology

According to the current educational normative, the teacher must design a learning situation. In other words, a situation that replicates the deployment by students of actions associated with key and specific competences and that contribute to their development. In this DU the learning situation is the collaborative creation of a narrative about a trip across the UK.

This didactic unit follows two methodologies closely related: Teaching Proficiency through Reading and Storytelling (Ray and Seely, 1997) and a Comprehensible Input approach. Actually, both approaches are very intertwined being the Comprehensible Input (CI) approach described in the Second Language Acquisition Theory by Stephen Krashen (1981) the foundation on which TPRS is built, therefore in a way TPRS is a comprehensible input-based activity too. After thorough revision of the TPRS theory, the author reckons necessary to adapt the approach to the specific needs of the current didactic unit. Applying the pure TPRS method following strictly the instructions related by Ray and Seely (1997), namely, creating a personalized mini story, a mini story later on and finally a main story, as is described in the theoretical framework of this very document would require much more sessions than the ones

that there are available for the purpose of this didactic unit. Hence, the author will be using the core of the TPRS method, implementing the three steps:

1. Establishing the meaning.
2. Story Asking.
3. Read and comment.

Besides that, the method will be interspersed with some Comprehensible Input strategies such as picture or video talking, in which a discussion related to the picture or video will be held; or Point and Pause strategies in which the teacher points the word or structure s/he is mentioning and pause for some seconds giving the learners time to process the relationship between the pronunciation and the written form of the word, reinforcing the visual route. Additionally, TPR aspects will be introduced in the sessions, using gestures and corporal language to make the input language comprehensible will be performed as well from time to time. To get started with the methodology it is necessary to do some previous preparations:

First of all, the sessions will be developed with the students seated on their chairs forming a semicircle and looking towards the interactive digital board and the conventional one, where the teacher will be leading each session. Surrounding the board, on the wall, there will be posters with essential information for the development of the didactic unit. These posters will contain frequent expressions, colours, recurrent adjectives, names of emotions, wh-questions or the most frequent verbs. Ph.D., translator and education consultant Terry Waltz in her work *TPRS with Chinese Characteristics: Making Students Fluent and Literate through Comprehensible Input* (2015) introduced a list of frequent verbs, called Super 7 and another named Sweet 16. That might be observed when applying TPRS. They are not a verb list for students to study, but as a way for teachers to focus on those recurrent verbs to be able to practice Circling with them and therefore, to provide the learners with a great deal of linguistic resources to communicate. Those verbs are written down on posters in the third person, because it is the way in which they will be used in stories, and are defined around these concepts: Location: is at a place; Existence: there is; Possession: has; Identity: is; Preference: likes/dislikes; Motion: goes; Desire: wants/feels like (super 7), plus, leaves, make/does, puts, is able to, gives, says, knows, returns, sees (sweet 16). In the first step of the method, the teacher will be using time and again those seven verbs and using the Circling technique to provide those so much needed repetitions. The Circling technique, besides delivering repetitions, gives the teacher the possibility of choosing a question based on the proficiency level of the respondent. For example, if the class is working on there is, the teacher

may choose a question like this: Is there a boy in the picture? The answer is simple, yes or no. But also, the teacher may ask is there a boy or a girl? This one is a tad more complicated; the student must choose to answer there is a boy/girl, or even the teacher may work with open questions, there is a boy, ok, how is he?

At the beginning of the first step the target structures are selected, in this case, the target structures are related to wh-questions which is the syllabus content of study:

- Where auxiliary verb (be, do, have) sh/e + main verb?
- When auxiliary verb (be, do, have) sh/e + main verb?
- What auxiliary verb (be, do, have) sh/e + main verb?
- Which obj. auxiliary verb (be, do, have) sh/e +main verb?
- Why auxiliary verb (be, do, have) sh/e + main verb?
- Who auxiliary verb (be, do, have) sh/e + main verb?
- How auxiliary verb (be, do, have) sh/e + main verb?

Note: “When what, who, which is the subject or part of the subject, we do not use the auxiliary. We use the word order subject + verb” (Cambridge Dictionary, 2022).

All those wh-words must be written down on a poster hung on the wall around the main board. The students must understand the meaning of all of them. To establish the meaning the teacher should contextualized the word, sh/e may ask personalized question to some students, gesticulate, write the words on the board, even draw some pictures and eventually translate the word if needed and write it down below the target word, using a different colour of marker, to assure the fact that the learners are receiving comprehensible input related to those wh-words from that moment onwards. Later, the teacher will work on establishing the meaning of the seven verbs mentioned above these lines, following the same strategies as for the wh-words. Once the wh-words and the most frequent verbs are well-grounded the tutor will continue with the second step of the method. The second step of the method is Story Asking, in this part the whole group will create a character using the previously worked words and structures. This exercise will be useful to review vocabulary learned in the past, such as people characteristics, hobbies, descriptive adjectives, colours, emotions, pieces of clothing etc. After that, a story will be created with the contributions of the apprentices. The teacher will have a script to guide the story. The third step will be read and comment. Here, the teacher must redact a longer and richer in vocabulary version of the story and give away a copy to

each student. That version of the story will be used to build new activities upon. Although the teacher is guiding the classes and sh/e is the ultimate responsible for the direction the story is taking, it is crucial to stay aware of the fact that the sessions must be focused on the students and for that, PQA will be used. It is also important to bear in mind the need to keep the affective filter low, respecting the silent period, personalizing as much as possible (PQA), using the circling technique to give everybody opportunities to answer questions, using difficulty graded questions and slowing down the process. At the end of each session the teacher will ask the students to do an exit-ticket. The teacher will ask the students to close their eyes and show with the fingers in their hands from 0 to 10 how comprehensible they found the class. On average it should be over 7, otherwise the teacher should understand that sh/e is not being understandable enough.

5.8. Activities

Table 2: Sessions and activities

Sessions	Activities								
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1. Establishing meaning: Frequent verbs	X								
2. Establishing meaning: wh-questions		X	X						
3. Create a character				X					
4. Story Asking					X				
5. Playing with story						X	X		
6. Read and write								X	X
7. Assessment									

Table 3: Activity 1

Activity 1. Establishing meaning: super 7 and sweet 16	
Objectives	To get the students to be able to understand the meaning of seven frequent verbs which will be the basis of the narrative they will create.
Description	The teacher will be establishing the meaning of the super 7 verbs: is, there is, has, like/dislike, wants, goes, using all the strategies mentioned in the methodology epigraph, Circling, PQA, TPR,

using Point and Pause, assuring enough repetitions are being provided, verifying comprehension, translating when necessary. Check Annex 1.
Materials and Spaces
Interactive digital board, computer and projector, a marker board, coloured markers, posters with important language hung on the wall surrounding the board. The whole class seated on their chairs placed on a semi-circle facing the teacher and the boards.
Participants and/or grouping
The whole class working together.
Assessment criteria
The student is able to recognize, interpret and analyse the global meaning of a conversation, as well as the meaning of specific words and phrases such as the seven frequent verbs in short, simple oral texts.

Table 4: Activity 2

Activity 2. Establishing meaning: wh-questions
Objectives
To get the scholars to be able to understand the meaning of the wh-words: where, when, what, which, who, what, how... Therefore, interrogative sentences.
Description
The teacher will be establishing the meaning of the wh-words, using all the strategies mentioned in the methodology epigraph, Circling, PQA, TPR, using Point and Pause, assuring enough repetitions are being provided, verifying comprehension, translating when necessary. Check Annex 2.
Materials and Spaces
Interactive digital board, computer and projector, a marker board, coloured markers, posters with important language hung on the wall surrounding the board. The whole class seated on their chairs placed on a semi-circle facing the teacher and the boards.
Participants and/or grouping
The whole class working together.
Assessment criteria
The student is able to recognize, interpret and analyse the meaning of wh-words and interrogative sentences.

Table 5: Activity 3

Activity 3. Picture talking
<p>Objectives</p> <p>To reinforce what has already been studied and set the meaning of the frequent verbs and the wh-words through the discussion of pictures.</p>
<p>Description</p> <p>The teacher will have prepared some picture whose images will lead the class to a discussion using the target structures studied before. Check Annex 3.</p>
<p>Materials and Spaces</p> <p>Interactive digital board, computer and projector, a marker board, coloured markers, posters with important language hung on the wall surrounding the board. Digital pictures to project and to talk about. The whole class seated on their chairs placed on a semi-circle facing the teacher and the boards.</p>
<p>Participants and/or grouping</p> <p>The whole class working together.</p>
<p>Assessment criteria</p> <p>The student is able to recognize, interpret and settle the meaning of specific words and phrases used while discussing images brought up by the teacher.</p>

Table 6: Activity 4

Activity 4. Let's create a character
<p>Objectives</p> <p>To create collaboratively a character who will be the protagonist of the Story Asking exercise.</p>
<p>Description</p> <p>The whole class will create a character who will be the protagonist of the narrative. The protagonist could be a person but also a personified object. The teacher will guide the students in the definition of the main character of the narrative while sh/e is drawing on the board what they are creating. In such wise the scholars will review topics such as physical features, emotions, colours, hobbies, clothing items, family, jobs etc.</p>
<p>Materials and Spaces</p>

Interactive digital board, computer and projector, a marker board, coloured markers, posters with important language hung on the wall surrounding the board. The script for the teacher. The whole class seated on their chairs placed on a semi-circle facing the teacher and the boards.
Participants and/or grouping
The whole class working together.
Assessment criteria
The student actively participates in the creation of the character for the collaborative story, answering the teacher questions, following the thread of the conversation and contributing with their thoughts.

Table 7: Activity 5

Activity 5. Let's create a story
Objectives
To create in a collaborative way a story about the character previously crafted and their adventure traveling throughout the UK.
Description
Materials and Spaces
Interactive digital board, computer and projector, a marker board, coloured markers, posters with important language hung on the wall surrounding the board. The script for the teacher. The whole class seated on their chairs placed on a semi-circle facing the teacher and the boards.
Participants and/or grouping
The whole class working together.
Assessment criteria
The scholar enthusiastically contributes to the creation of the narrative that is led by the Story Asking exercise, answering the teacher's personalised questions, or the Circling technique questions, not losing track of the story and contributing with their thoughts.

Table 8: Activity 6

Activity 6. Find the mistakes in the story
Objectives
To get the students to detect mistakes in the story narrated by the teacher in order to assure their understanding of the words and structures studied.

Description
The teacher tells the story again but this time making mistakes while telling it. Inserting things that never happened in the story created through Story Asking. The scholars must detect the mistake and call them out in order to correct them.
Materials and Spaces
The classroom and their school desks.
Participants and/or grouping
The whole class working together.
Assessment criteria
The pupil is capable of detect the mistakes the teacher purposely introduces in the story proving their understanding of the narrative created by the whole class.

Table 9: Activity 7

Activity 7. Let's create a comic
Objectives
To design a comic that tells the story created in the Story Asking exercise.
Description
The students individually draw the story created by the class in a comic format. They will use a piece of paper and divide it into 6 or 8 comic vignettes. The students will draw the story on the comic strips and write some words or phrases associated to each image using the target structures they will have worked before. Next, in their teams of four, one student will try to tell the story with the support of the comic and the others will listening, that way one at a time.
Materials and Spaces
Student notebooks, pencil cases and paper. The classroom and their school desks.
Participants and/or grouping
They will perform the first part of this activity individually. Later on, in groups of four.
Assessment criteria
The learners are able to recreate the story with their own words and drawing in a comic format.

Table 10: Activity 8

Activity 8. Read & write about our story
Objectives
To get the students to read the story and write questions about it, working again the same structures in a different context to reinforce the understanding of them.
Description
The teacher will distribute a longer version of the story, which previously sh/e will have redacted taking into account the Story Asking session ideas. Some extra vocabulary will be added to it. The story will be read out loud by the teacher in the target language. After that, some of the scholars will read out loud translating to their mother tongue. It is a way of assuring that they understand the meaning of what they are reading. Later on, they will be pairing with the student seated by them, and each member of the pair will write 10 questions about the story, then they will swap their notebooks to answer their partner's questions.
Materials and Spaces
Student notebooks and pencil cases and the copy of the narrative created by the class. The classroom and their school desks.
Participants and/or grouping
In the first part as a whole group and then in pairs.
Assessment criteria
The student is capable of reading the story out loud, translating it, hence demonstrating the understanding of the structures studied and afterwards is able to write 10 questions about the argument and the details of the same history and also answering other 10 questions formulated by their partner.

Table 11: Activity 9

Activity 9. Visual Thinking
Objectives
To get the students to write a different story recycling the structures already studied in the DU.
Description
After showing the class on the digital board different pictures depicting the target structures and discussing them with the learners in order for the scholars to refresh them, in teams of four, they

will have to write a different story recycling those structures in a different context. They will have flashcards with the pictures showcasing the target structures as aid.
Materials and Spaces
Images representing the target structures in digital format and also on paper for each team to have. A3 size cardboard. Markers and students' pencil cases. The classroom and their school desks.
Participants and/or grouping
Teams of 4 students working on their table cooperatively.
Assessment criteria
The student is able to use the target structures and words in a different context writing a new history.

5.9. Timing and Schedule

This didactic unit will be taught in the third trimester of 2023, and it will be divided into seven sessions, each of them consisting of around 50 minutes. It will be performed along two and half weeks. Checking the Annex III of the Decreto 61/2022, de 13 de julio, del Consejo de Gobierno, por el que se establece para la Comunidad de Madrid la ordenación y el currículo de la etapa de Educación Primaria. *Boletín oficial de la Comunidad de Madrid, núm. 169*, 18 de julio de 2022, the weekly sessions established for the teaching of the foreign language for 6th graders is three hours per week. Hence, for this unit two and half weeks will be needed, using three sessions per week.

Table 12: Didactic Unit schedule

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
8 Session I	9	10 Session II	11	12 Session III	13	14
15 Bank Holiday	16	17 Session IV	18	19 Session V	20	21
22 Session VI	23	24 Session VII	25	26	27	28

5.10. Attention to Diversity

In the specific group to which this didactic unit is aimed there are two students with some special needs. On one hand, there is a girl with some movement difficulties that will be remedied having the classroom tidy and without any obstacle that could difficult her movement. In this case is something that apply to everyday situation and subject, thus the class is already aware of the necessities of their partner and there should not be any problem. On the other hand, there is a boy under the autism spectrum, with not significant learning or behavioural dysfunctions. For him, it is important to have pictograms hung on the walls and on his table with information about structures and routines he needs to follow. For an autism spectrum disorder student, providing visual strategies is very important. This method is quite visual, with techniques like picture talking and the way in which meaning is stablished with images, TPR, Point and Pause. The teacher will be careful in providing the student with appropriate, unmistakable clear instructions, anticipation and an activity schedule. Regardless, Teaching Proficiency through Reading and Storytelling method is a very inclusive methodology given the fact that it is a very personalised approach to the teaching of L2, using personalisation techniques during the process such as Circling and PQA with the aim of not leaving anybody behind and being able to ask to each student what they are able to answer, incrementing the difficulty of what they are asked in a staged manner. Apart from that, there is an emphasis on comprehensibility of the input the students receive. The teacher might carry out strategies like teaching to the eyes, use a scholar as a barometer and the performance of exit tickets, which provides the teacher with awareness regarding how much the students are following the lessons and settling the concepts.

5.11. Assessment system

"The operational descriptors of the key competences constitute, together with the objectives of the stage, the referential framework from which the competences are concretised specifically to each area, field or subject. This link between operational descriptors and specific competences promotes that through the evaluation of the latter it can be possible to infer the degree of acquisition of the key competences and, therefore, the achievement of the competences and objectives foreseen for the stage (BOE, 2022, p. 24404) Each assessment criteria is associated to one of the specific competences involved in the didactic unit.

Table 13: Assessment criteria vs expected learning outcomes

Assessment criteria	Learning outcomes
<p>1. The student establishes the meaning of the frequent verbs target structures.</p>	<p>1.1 The student is able to identify and understand those frequent verbs target structures in different oral contexts.</p> <p>1.2 The student is able to identify and understand those target structures in different written contexts.</p> <p>1.3 The student is able to participate and answer questions using the frequent verb structures in short and simple oral interactions.</p> <p>1.4 The student is able to answer questions using the frequent verb structures in written texts.</p> <p>1.5 The student is able to write affirmative sentences using the target structures</p>
<p>2. The student establishes the meaning of the interrogation target structures wh-words.</p>	<p>2.1 The student is able to identify and understand the wh-words structures in different oral contexts.</p> <p>2.2 The student is able to identify and understand those target structures in different written contexts</p> <p>2.3 The student is able to answer questions formulated with interrogation structures in oral interactions.</p> <p>2.4 The student is able to answer questions using the frequent verb structures in written texts.</p> <p>2.5 The student is able to write interrogative sentences using the wh-phrases.</p>
<p>3. The student is able to participate actively and successfully in the collaboratively creation of the narrative following the lead of</p>	<p>3.1 The learner keeps themselves actively engaged with the collaborative process of creating a narrative.</p>

<p>the teacher through the Story Asking technique</p>	<p>3.2 The pupil is willing to contribute to the process in order to achieve a common goal.</p> <p>3.3 The student is able to follow the thread of the conversation and the plot of narrative in the foreign language.</p> <p>3.4 The student progressively and in an autonomous way is able to use the knowledge and strategies learned to improve their ability to communicate using the foreign language.</p>
<p>4. The scholar accepts and respects the linguistic, cultural and artistic diversity of countries where the foreign language is spoken as a source of personal enrichment.</p>	<p>4.1 The student shows interest in understanding basic cultural and linguistic elements about the country where the foreign language is spoken, the UK.</p> <p>4.2 The student gets to know and understand better the British socio-cultural reality.</p> <p>4.3 The student is able to select and apply strategies to understand and appreciate linguistic, cultural and artistic diversity associated to interculturality</p>

Source: own elaboration

5.11.1. Assessment criteria

Regarding the time of the assessment, for this didactic unit there will be:

Initial assessment is done as the lessons move forward. In those first minutes of every session the teacher assesses where the students stand in terms of knowledge of the structures and how fast s/he should advance. Keeping in mind that one of the important strategies in TPRS is slowing down when needed. There will also be a formative assessment: this kind of evaluation is used to grasp the way in which the students are developing their knowledge. This assessment will be done through the observation of the teacher and the consequent fill in information on checklists. Also, the exit tickets performed at the end of every session should provide an idea of the next steps in the process and about whether there is something to improve in the teaching learning process. And finally, a summative assessment, at the end of

each process which ends with a product, a rubric will be applied. Also, a test will be performed at the end of the didactic unit. This test will consist of vocabulary translation and will be unannounced. This way it is possible to find out the pupils who really have understood and acquired the language using their long-term memory, as oppose as the short-time memory which is what they use when study the night before the exam. Bear in mind that at the beginning of the didactic unit the students will be given the checklist and the rubric that will be used by the teacher for their assessment for them to know what is expected from them.

In relation to the type of assessment performed, they will be evaluated through hetero evaluation. The teacher will use checklists during the sessions. These checklists must take into account, the knowledge they acquire, the skills developed and their attitude towards the whole process. The teacher will also create rubric/s to perform the summative evaluation. The rubric/s will evaluate final products such as their comics or the ten questions and answers about the story. Besides that, the scholars will also apply the rubrics to their partners in their grouping (co-evaluation) and also to themselves (self-evaluation).

5.11.2. Assessment tools

The teacher will keep record and write down any particular significant information regarding the development of the learning process of each student during the sessions that might be meaningful for their assessment in an anecdotal record log. Also, the teacher will fill in a checklist during the sessions or at the end of them. The checklists will take into account the performance of each student in activities 1, 2, 3, 4,5 and 6. Check Annex 4 and 5 for the checklists.

Besides that, a rubric will be used to evaluate the products created in the activities performed. In this case, the comic in activity 7, the questions and answers in activity 8 and the new story created in activity 9. Check Annex 6. Finally, a test, with vocabulary translation and the creation of a short story with visual aids will be carried out.

6. Conclusions

The general objective of this work was to design a didactic unit, which bearing in mind the foundations of the Teaching Proficiency through Reading and Storytelling method, was able to be applied in the Primary Education classroom, considering the educational legislation and the local specificities. This extent was accomplished, and the author can affirm that the studied methodology could be applied in the Spanish foreign language classroom and adapted depending on the grade and on the curriculum topic to study. Regarding the specific objectives, a thorough review of bibliography has been performed, going through several books and academic papers from authors such as Blaine Ray, Stephen Krashen, James Asher, Beniko Manson, and other authors whose theories sustain, confront, review and add up to Ray ideas. After reading Ray's theory about the approach, the theories regarding second language acquisition that sustain Blaine Ray ideas and the experiences and opinions of other language specialists and teachers around the world, who are applying the method in actual educational scenarios, the author was able to reflect about the options and possibilities that the method provides, and also to think critically about the benefits of the approach. With all that, the author reached a well-founded opinion about whether this method is an interesting and efficient one to bring to the Spanish educational system and how, actually, to put in into practice. Consequently, the author considers that this approach to second language acquisition is a remarkable option to bring to the Spanish classrooms, pondering it as an approach that is attention-grabbing, motivating, stimulating and useful to improve the student's L2 fluency skills. It is a very different approach from the ones that Spanish teachers widely apply, and it can be an enormous revulsive for the L2 teaching-learning process. Furthermore, with the example of the proposed didactic unit, it has been demonstrated that the method can suit the Spanish curriculum and it would not need a great deal of material or human resources to be able to be applied successfully. This work offers then, a first step into the creation of educational programming for Primary Education within the TPRS method umbrella. This study helps to adapt the TPRS universe, which is broadly spread in North America as a mean to improve L2 skills and scarcely known in Spain, to the Spanish educational legislation in a simple way. This study provides with an example of how to take into practice all those TPRS theoretical ideas. The author firmly believes that something has to change in the L2 teaching-learning process in the Spanish classrooms, for it to become more efficient,

especially in what regards to fluency skills, also that this method could definitely be an essential addition to that process.

This work has some limitations: the author could not quantify the actual improvement that this method provides. It would be advisable to perform extended educational quantitative research in a PE school, a quasi-experimental design where to test the differences on the L2 acquisition and the fluency skills improvement of students whose teacher is following the TPRS approach and contrasting it with those of a control group whose teacher is not following Ray's method in their process. Among other things, it also could be studied which grade of Primary Education would be more likely to reach a more successful outcome being taught within the TPRS approach. It might not be sixth grade.

7. Final considerations

Working in this final project has been a remarkable way to finish the degree. This is the second degree I study, being the first one far from the academic field. Personally, this degree has been an incredible journey in which I have learned plenty about the teaching-learning process, pedagogy and subjects' content and their didactics. It has been a life changing experience. I have discovered my passion and also, I have learnt the school is the place where I want to be, the place where I can contribute more, given my personal characteristics, background and capacities. After, living in the UK for years and studying the bilingual degree, I thought that the natural way to finish it was a final work related to the foreign language education. I was right, for me researching about L2 acquisition theories and interesting and innovative methodologies for teaching proficiency has been a great way to put an end to this journey. It has given me more tools to apply in a classroom, which at the end, provide you with self-confidence to face the first years of work. I started the degree being not sure about the direction I was taking. Month by month I was being more certain about it. In each practicum my skills improved, and I was surer about what kind of teacher I wanted to be. I was more aware of the mistakes and the way to improve things, of how to overcome difficulties, and also, aware of the fact that no teacher is perfect, but you always can research, investigate, prepare yourself and try to do the best for your students every day, catering for diversity, for every one of them in the most personalized way possible. Those are my expectations when it comes to the near future, to teach to nurture and to help students to achieve their best selves.

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9. Annexes

Annex 1: Super 7 and Sweet 16 verbs

Super 7: Location: is at a place; Existence: there is Possession: has; Identity: is

Preference: likes/dislikes; Motion: goes; Desire: wants/feels like

Sweet 16: super 7 plus, leaves, make/does, puts, is able to, gives, says, knows, returns, sees.

Annex 2: Establishing meaning sessions example

In this class are there boys? Yes. And girls? Yes

How many girls are there in the classroom? 12

There are 12 girls in the class. OK

How many boys? 10 There are 12 girls and 10 boys in the classroom, ok.

Is Maria a girl? Yes. Is Maria a boy? No. Ok Maria is a girl. María has a pet, right? (The teacher asks that because she knows Maria has a cat (PQA). Yes

Ok, María has a pet, Is it an Elephant? (Make it compelling, exaggerated and bizarre)

No? Noooooo!!

Ok, Maria does not have an elephant. Does she have a dog or a cat? A Cat.

Does Maria have a cat? Yes

More repetitions with those structures.

How is her cat? Is the cat blue? Noooo

Does the cat have big eyes María? Yes. How many eyes does it have? 4? Noooo, 2.

Repetitions using those structures.

Does the cat like food? Yes. Does your cat like cakes? No. No? So, the cat dislike cakes.

Does your cat go to school? Noooo. The cat does not go to school...

Does anybody want a cat? Another pet? I know Teo wants a crocodile! Do you want a crocodile? No. Don't you want a crocodile? ok

More repetitions with those structures.

Following that structure the teacher will be covering the 16 verbs.

Annex 3: Picture talking activity

Here there are different pictures that can help the teacher to reinforce the structures and guide the students through a journey across British cultural heritage



Source: www.unsplash.com & www.canva.com

Annex 4: Assessment tools: checklist for activities 1, 2, 3 & 6

Name	Understands verbs target structures in conversation	Understands verbs target structures in written contexts.	Answers questions where the studied structures are used.	Understands wh-words structures in conversation	Understands questions formulated with interrogation structures in oral interactions.	Answers questions formulated with interrogation structures in oral interactions.	Shows interest/ understanding of the British social and cultural reality.	Is able to select and apply strategies To understand and appreciate linguistic, cultural and artistic diversity associated to interculturality

Annex 5: Assessment tools: checklist for activities 4 & 5

Student:	Keeps actively engaged with the process of creating a narrative.	Contributes to the collaborative process.	Follows the thread of the conversation and the plot of narrative in the foreign language.	Is able to use the knowledge and strategies learned to improve their ability to communicate.
Student's name				

Annex 6: Assessment tools: Rubric for activities 7, 8 & 9

	Very poor performance	Average performance	Good performance	Excellent performance
The learner is able to recreate the story with their own words in a comic format.	The student is not able to recreate the story.	The student is able to do recreate successfully 50% of the story	The student is able to do recreate successfully 80% of the story	The student is able to create the comic telling the whole story successfully. The learning outcome is achieved.
The student is capable of reading the story out loud and translating it.	The student is not capable or barely capable of reading the story out loud and translating it.	The student is capable of reading 50% of the story out loud and translating it.	The student is capable of reading 80% of the story out loud and translating it making some mistakes.	The student is capable of reading the whole story out loud and translating it without mistakes or only a few minor mistakes.
The student is able to use the target structures and words and use them in a different context writing a new history.	The student is not capable of using the target structures writing a new story.	The student is capable of using half of the target structures to write a new story.	The student is capable of writing a new story using around 80% of the target structures	The student is capable of writing a new story using the vast majority of the target structures studied.
Is able to write questions about the argument of the history and also answering questions formulated by their partner.	The student is not able to write questions about the argument of the history and also answering questions formulated by their partner.	Is able to write questions about the history and also answering questions formulated by their partner 50% of the times.	Is able to write questions about the history and also answering questions formulated by their partner 80% of the times.	Is able to write questions about the history and also answering questions formulated by their partner of the times.