

ACTAS

I Congreso Internacional de Enseñanza de Inglés en Centros Educativos



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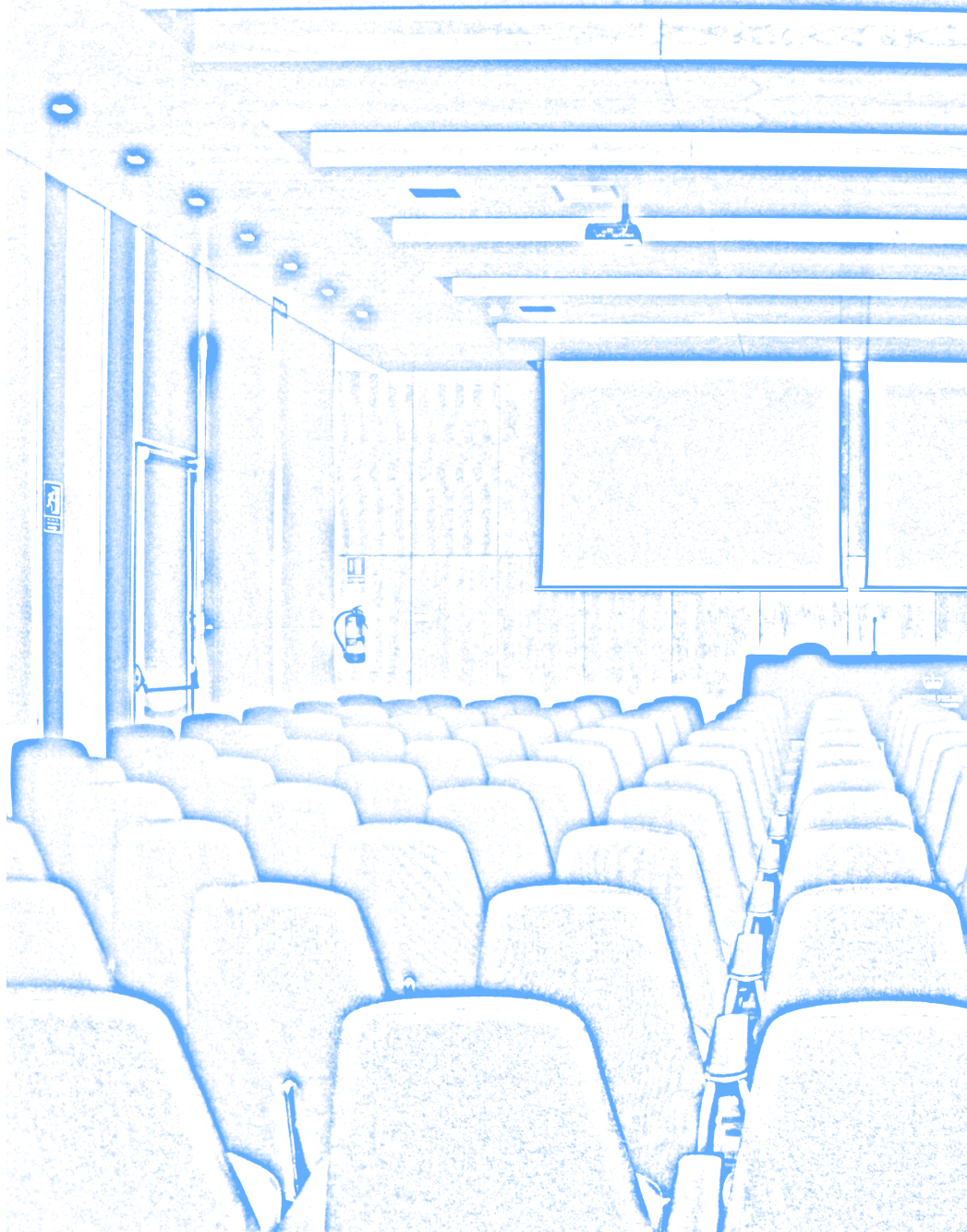


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**Actas del I Congreso Internacional de
Enseñanza de Inglés en Centros Educativos**

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(Coordinadores)



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Circus Project: The educative possibilities of Service-Learning Projects

MARTA ESPLUGUES CEBRIÁN

Resumen

La idea original es un proyecto de aprendizaje servicio donde el alumnado de 5º y 6º participen realizando una actuación circense para infantil/primer ciclo.

La actuación tendrá lugar el tercer trimestre, mientras que los más pequeños desarrollarán el proyecto del circo a lo largo del curso para aprender el vocabulario, desarrollar habilidades sociales y estar así listos para disfrutar del espectáculo. En las diferentes sesiones ellas y ellos prepararán sus botes de malabares, la carpa del circo, la ropa de John el payaso...

El taller mostrará algunas de las actividades con fotos del alumnado y se explicará la importancia de utilizar material reciclado y lo fácil que es hacer felices a las niñas y los niños con materiales muy sencillos.

Abstract

The original idea is a service-learning project where 5th and/or 6th graders participate performing a circus exhibition to the pre-primary students/ 1st graders.

The performance will take place in the 3rd term, while the little children develop a circus project all the year in order to learn their vocabulary, develop social skills and will be ready to enjoy the show. In the different session they will prepare their own juggling bottles, a circus tent, John the clown with his clothes...

The workshop will show some of the activities with student's pictures and it would be explain the importance of re-using material and how easy is to make students happy with very easy materials.

Key words

Service-learning, Project based learning, Critical-dialogical methodology.

Introduction

Our idea with that article and the workshop is to share our teaching experience with other teachers in order to cooperate together such a network. And also to show future teachers a real activity, and different creative tasks that they can develop in their classrooms. The Circus Project is just an example, it can be create as much Project Based Learning¹ as you like it with the different topics that your students be interested in.

The background of this project, is part of my personal experience not only as a teacher, but also when I was a student. Because at the sometime that I attendened lesson at the university, I used to assit to some teachers' meetings where they reveal their experiences, organiced now and again by the textbooks editorials such as: Heinemann, Logman... And there I was surprised many times by different teachers that work in such a special way with their students, and that is why I would like to do the same now and share with other teachers the idea of the Circus Project.

Because as Nieves Blanco and Remei Arnau (2011) say² "... no basta con una comunidad del actuar, hace falta una comunidad del saber. Se dice que las maestras no escriben, no dan a conocer lo que hacen, no

¹ Project Based learning (PBL) known in Spanish as ABP Aprendizaje Basado en Proyectos. The ideas is no to work with textbooks, the teacher use different materials or even creates their own ones related to the students interest, because they are the protagonist of their own learning process. If you would like to learn more, you can read references as: John Dewey, Buck Institute for Education or Helm, J.H., Katz, L. among others.

² "... Not just a community of action, we need a community of knowledge. It is said that teachers do not write, do not disclose what they do not share with others what they do and what they think, their findings and inventions. "

comparten con otras y con otros lo que hacen y lo que piensan, sus hallazgos y sus invenciones.” (p.4). So that, my objective with this workshop is to share my experience after more than ten years teaching in different schools.

In order that other students can learn from my experience as I did it in the past. And also to encourage future teachers that are now studying, because my real motivation to be an English teacher started when I was studying my three years University Degree, specially the General Teaching subject, where Carmen Santacruz showed us different ways of teaching, reading authors such as: Freinet, Freire or Gonzalo Anaya among others. At that time, we learned by cooperative interactions between students instead of using a traditional methodology. But years later, you felt disappointed when you arrived to a school to make your teaching practices, and show how so many teachers continue with the textbooks, doing one activity after another one, you feel disappointed.

That is why I have been always interested in new teaching methodologies, because since I was living in the “Colegio Mayor La Coma”, I acquired a commitment with the students who live in that disfavoured environments. And I realised how that students do not feel reflected in that kind of textbooks, created for homogeneous kids sometimes very far from their realities. Years ago, books do not pay attention to students races, religion or cultures, were even sexist as Torres Santomé (1989) explained in his article. So that made me to become enthused about this “*Critic to the cultural uniformity*” that talks Martínez Bonafé³ (2013):

... Lo que pasa en las escuelas responde a una compleja relación multicultural, en la que la diferencia se muestra tanto en el ejercicio y relaciones de poder, como en los conflictos y luchas por el derecho a la identidad. La obsesión por la uniformidad lingüística y cultural (en ocasiones también religiosa) es una forma de poder frente a los grupos oprimidos que han hecho de su diferencia una forma de combate contra la opresión. (p.29)

For the same reason I have never stop studying and attending to different seminars, related to these questions. Specifically, in one of them, was where it was born the original idea of this Project Based Learning in the *II Jornades d'Educació i Transformació Social organiced by Pensar la Pràctica*⁴. In order to improve how to teach kindergarten students, I attended the Conxa Delgado workshop titled: *El circ de la Pau (Infantil 0-3)* where she explained her experience with her CIPFP Misericordia students. Young boys and girls that are studying to be kindergarten assistance and their experience gave me the idea to create a Service-Learning Project⁵ for next school year, where 5th and/or 6th graders participate performing a circus exhibition to the pre-primary students/ 1st graders.

The performance will take place in the 3rd term, while the little children develop an annual circus project in order to learn their vocabulary, develop social skills and will be ready to enjoy the show at the end of the school year. While the 5th and 6th students will prepare the performance the last term as part of their oral mark.

The year programme for pre-primary students/ 1st graders will be divided in three terms, learning from units such as: The magic balls, where they will prepare their own *juggling bottles*, illustrating the importance of re-using material and how easy is to make students happy with very few materials that they throw to the bin everyday such as: liquid yoghurt pots, toilet paper rolls, shoes boxes... the idea is to raise awareness students to take care of the planet where we live, because there is only one and we are damaging it.

In the unit, Eating at the circus is fun, pupils will do their collective book by drawing their favourite food. In Ginna and John are clowns and your mum? We will try to extol the woman paper in the society by giving importance to their mum jobs even if they are housewives (this unit is thought to take place in the second term coinciding with the woman working day) and teach students in a co-educative environment. John and Ginna prepare their suitcases is a unit where students can be creative and design their own clothes at the sometime you can introduce some controversial subject such as: Can a boy where a dress? ... Ginna and John and their funny house, the caravan is a unit that prepares students to travel around the world and know their mates cultures and others in order to create in the classroom an intercultural atmosphere promoting respect and avoiding xenophobia.

This project confirms that is not so difficult to introduce into school since they are very young. Those Development Education themes that usually do not appeared in the textbooks, even the Spanish Education Law (LOE Ley organic 2/2006) Law that was still working since in the school year 2014-2015 when the LOMCE

³ ... What happens in schools responds to a complex multicultural relationship, which shows the difference in both the exercise and power relations and conflicts and struggles for the right to identity. The obsession with linguistic and cultural uniformity (sometimes also religious) is a form of power against oppressed groups that have made their difference a form of combat against oppression. (p.29)

⁴ Pensar la pràctica (2014), if you would like to know more about them: <https://jeits.wordpress.com/>

⁵ For more information you can read: Puig, Josep M., Battle Roser, Bosch, Carmen. Palos, Josep. (2007)

appeared. In his article 2 of the preliminary title, reflects that in school, teachers have to promote: the human rights respect and the tolerance, the peace and cooperation or the equality between men and woman among others.

All little kids' lesson will start with the assembly, where students can participate orally in the activity. That is part of the Harmer's (1998) ESA planning model, we have adapted of the Engage- Study – Activate model, also known as ESA model, that is centered on the language communication function and the student's motivation. This is very important in order to get their attention and create a relaxing and unstressed atmosphere to work in.

This model is divided into three stages: the Engage, during which, the teachers try to know the students' interest and connect their emotions by asking them about their previous knowledge. In our case, we have asked pupils about their circus experience, if they have been to the circus sometime... and we can accompany it with activities such as: warming up with handmade materials, the puppet atmosphere and the different routines (days of the week, month, weather, numbers, colors ...)

The second stage, the Study phase, where activities are focus on language and how it is constructed, because our students are not native speakers so that we have to let them know how to use the foreign language. Then, younger students can attend different activities such as a *magic exhibition (Jack the magic teacher)*⁶ that come to the school with his show. Or different sessions where they will prepare the dialogues for the performance and the posters in the art and craft subject, or set up part of the show with the physical education teacher, creating an interdisciplinary project, where teachers of the same school cooperate. And the little kids continue doing some worksheets or handmade material to improve their vocabulary.

And finally the Activate stage, where student do not focus on language construction or practice particular language patterns, but use their full knowledge in the selected situation or task. The idea is that the students use the target language as freely and communicatively as possible, for example with role-playing activities, such as the Circus Exhibition where they can show all that they have learned along the Project.

In my opinion and after some years of experience teaching in a critical-dialogical methodology, I think that other way of teaching more funny and closer to the students is possible, without using traditional textbooks written for a homogeneous kind of students. Their content, sometimes do not taking care of their diversity, because there are increasing the works in our country of teachers that creates their own materials as it is shown in Castro Rodríguez, M. Rodríguez Rodríguez, X. y Zapico Barbeito, M. (2013) So everybody can learnt from those experiences and try to do their own ones. Their students will love it.

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⁶ The magic English teacher. www.magicenglishteacher.com

⁷ The bibliography will be adapted to the APA norms, an exception of the first name of the authors that will be appeared completed with the aim of identify their gender.