

**FILOLOGÍA Y DIDÁCTICA DE LA
LENGUA**

Paula MORENTIN LARRAURI

**USING A COLOUR CODE TO TEACH
ENGLISH GRAMMAR TO ESL
PRIMARY STUDENTS**

TFG/*GBL* 2018

Grado en Maestro en Educación Primaria
Lehen Hezkuntzako Irakasleen Gradua

Trabajo Fin de Grado
Gradu Bukaerako Lana

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GRAMMAR TO ESL PRIMARY STUDENTS**

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UNIVERSIDAD PÚBLICA DE NAVARRA
NAFARROAKO UNIBERTSITATE PUBLIKOA

Estudiante / Ikaslea

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Título / Izenburua

Using a colour code to teach English grammar to ESL primary students

Grado / Gradu

Grado en Maestro en Educación Primaria / Lehen Hezkuntzako Irakasleen Gradua

Centro / Ikastegia

Facultad de Ciencias Humanas y Sociales / Giza eta Gizarte Zientzien Fakultatea
Universidad Pública de Navarra / Nafarroako Unibertsitate Publikoa

Director-a / Zuzendaria

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Departamento / Saila

Filología y Didáctica de la Lengua/Filologia eta hizkuntzaren Didaktika

Curso académico / Ikasturte akademikoa

2017/2018

Semestre / Seihilekoa

Primavera / Udaberria

Preámbulo

El Real Decreto 1393/2007, de 29 de octubre, modificado por el Real Decreto 861/2010, establece en el Capítulo III, dedicado a las enseñanzas oficiales de Grado, que “estas enseñanzas concluirán con la elaboración y defensa de un Trabajo Fin de Grado [...] El Trabajo Fin de Grado tendrá entre 6 y 30 créditos, deberá realizarse en la fase final del plan de estudios y estar orientado a la evaluación de competencias asociadas al título”.

El Grado en Maestro en Educación Primaria por la Universidad Pública de Navarra tiene una extensión de 12 ECTS, según la memoria del título verificada por la ANECA. El título está regido por la *Orden ECI/3857/2007, de 27 de diciembre, por la que se establecen los requisitos para la verificación de los títulos universitarios oficiales que habiliten para el ejercicio de la profesión de Maestro en Educación Primaria*; con la aplicación, con carácter subsidiario, del reglamento de Trabajos Fin de Grado, aprobado por el Consejo de Gobierno de la Universidad el 12 de marzo de 2013.

Todos los planes de estudios de Maestro en Educación Primaria se estructuran, según la Orden ECI/3857/2007, en tres grandes módulos: uno, *de formación básica*, donde se desarrollan los contenidos socio-psico-pedagógicos; otro, *didáctico y disciplinar*, que recoge los contenidos de las disciplinas y su didáctica; y, por último, *Practicum*, donde se describen las competencias que tendrán que adquirir los estudiantes del Grado en las prácticas escolares. En este último módulo, se enmarca el Trabajo Fin de Grado, que debe reflejar la formación adquirida a lo largo de todas las enseñanzas. Finalmente, dado que la Orden ECI/3857/2007 no concreta la distribución de los 240 ECTS necesarios para la obtención del Grado, las universidades tienen la facultad de determinar un número de créditos, estableciendo, en general, asignaturas de carácter optativo.

Así, en cumplimiento de la Orden ECI/3857/2007, es requisito necesario que en el Trabajo Fin de Grado el estudiante demuestre competencias relativas a los módulos de formación básica, didáctico-disciplinar y practicum, exigidas para todos los títulos universitarios oficiales que habiliten para el ejercicio de la profesión de Maestro en Educación Primaria.

En este trabajo, el módulo *de formación básica* nos ha permitido llevar a cabo el proceso de selección de información para realizar este trabajo. Además, el alumnado que ha participado en el proyecto ha ido realizando actividades de progresiva dificultad en el que ha tenido que llevar a cabo un proceso de adquisición, interiorización y aplicación de nueva información a través del uso de un código de colores relacionándolos con diferentes tipos de palabras para mejorar la formación de estructuras gramaticales en inglés, así como corregir sus propios errores y los de los demás. Para ello, se ha tenido en cuenta la psicología del niño para adecuar las actividades y la progresiva dificultad de estas a sus límites cognitivos y madurativos, aspectos que fueron adquiridos en la asignatura “Desarrollo evolutivo y aprendizaje” del segundo semestre del grado. Por otro lado, la diversidad del alumnado se ha tenido en cuenta para elegir el estudio realizado. Por ello, se utiliza una metodología más dinámica y visual para acercarse al mayor número posible de alumnos y alumnas ya que se ha demostrado que cada persona aprende de manera diferente teniendo en cuenta los distintos estilos de aprendizaje, sus potencialidades particulares y ritmos. Por este motivo, en el análisis de resultados se tiene en cuenta las diferentes situaciones del alumnado, aula y colegio.

El módulo *didáctico y disciplinar* se concreta en el diseño y planificación de las fases y actividades realizadas en el presente estudio. Las diferentes asignaturas que se han tratado en este módulo, entre ellas “Procesos y contextos educativos”, han permitido que el trabajo se desarrolle de forma activa y que se busque un aprendizaje significativo del alumnado. Para ello, se trabaja la gramática de manera contextualizada con el principal objetivo de potenciar la comunicación en una lengua extranjera. Esta se realiza a través del juego donde el alumnado adquiere un papel activo durante todo el proceso. La asignatura de “Diversidad y Respuesta psicopedagógica” es la que se encuentra en la base de este estudio. El uso de colores para la distinción de palabras con niños autistas se aplica para estos estudiantes con el objetivo de comprobar su efectividad en otro contexto.

Asimismo, el módulo *practicum* permite enmarcar este Trabajo de Fin de Grado en un entorno real que proporciona mayor fiabilidad y relevancia al estudio. Para su realización, los conocimientos y aprendizajes obtenidos a lo largo del grado y el

contacto directo con la práctica docente en distintos centros han repercutido en la elección de agrupaciones, actividades y materiales. A su vez, la larga duración del último periodo de prácticas ha permitido dedicar un número considerable de horas para la realización del estudio lo que le otorga una mayor validez a los resultados y conclusiones.

Por último, el módulo *optativo* nos ha permitido desarrollar este proyecto teniendo en cuenta el conocimiento adquirido a través de las asignaturas realizadas durante mi estancia en Roanoke College (Virginia, Estados Unidos) durante el semestre de primavera en 2017 en el que tuve la oportunidad de aprender acerca del trabajo de la diversidad lingüística en el aula y de las estrategias propias del tratamiento y adquisición de una lengua extranjera. De todo ello, surgen las ideas y bases de las adaptaciones en el aprendizaje de una segunda lengua a lo largo del estudio. En concreto, la asignatura *Second Language Learning* (Aprendizaje de una segunda lengua) me ha permitido conocer los antecedentes y contexto del aprendizaje de una segunda lengua. De este modo, las actividades se han pensado según el nivel y conocimiento del alumnado participante, proporcionándoles un input comprensible. Es decir, exponiendo al grupo a un lenguaje que va un paso más allá de su estado actual de competencia lingüística. Por otro lado, la Orden ECI/3857/2007 establece que al finalizar el Grado, los estudiantes deben haber adquirido el nivel C1 en lengua castellana. Por ello, para demostrar esta competencia lingüística, se redactan también en esta lengua los apartados “Introducción” y “Conclusiones”, así como el preceptivo resumen que aparece en el siguiente apartado.

Resumen

Este proyecto presenta un estudio experimental llevado a cabo con alumnado de primero de primaria en un colegio bilingüe en España. Treinta y dos estudiantes participaron en esta investigación en la que se utiliza un código de colores para la creación de estructuras gramaticales en inglés usando diversos materiales manipulativos y estrategias multisensoriales. A partir de un pre-test, se trabajaron diversas actividades siguiendo cuatro fases de progresiva dificultad hasta la realización del post-test. Los resultados obtenidos indican que el uso de un código de colores para mejorar la creación de frases con estructuras correctas en inglés podría considerarse una estrategia muy útil, ya que todos los estudiantes del grupo experimental mejoraron significativamente. Por otra parte, un grupo control de diecisiete personas a las cuales únicamente se les examinó del pre y post- test no presentó mejoras notables después de haber practicado las mismas estructuras de la manera tradicional.

Palabras clave: código de colores; gramática; manipulativos; estrategias multisensoriales; primaria.

Abstract

This project presents an experimental study carried out with first grade Spanish students from a bilingual school in Spain. Thirty-two students took part in this study where they use a colour code to create grammatical structures in English combining the use of manipulatives and multisensory strategies. After doing a pre-test, they worked with different activities following four phases of progressive difficulty until the fulfilment of the post- test. The results obtained indicate that the use of a colour code to enhance the creation of correct structures in English could be a very useful strategy because all the participants in the experimental group improved significantly. On the other hand, a control group of seventeen people who were only examined of the pre and post-test did not improve as much as the experimental one after working the same structures but in a traditional way.

Key words: colour code; grammar; manipulatives; multisensory strategies; primary.

Laburpena

Proiektu honek Espainiako eskola elebidun bateko lehenengo mailako ikasleekin aurrera eramandako ikerketa esperimental bat aurkezten du. Hogeita hamabi ikaslek parte hartu dute ikerketa honetan, bertan, koloretako kode bat erabiltzen da material manipulatio eta estrategia multisensorialen bidez ingeleseko egitura gramatikalak sortzeko. Aurretik pasatako test batetik abiatuz ariketa ezberdinak burutu izan dira zailtasunaren arabera mailakatutako lau fase jarraituz bukaerako test batekin amaitzeko. Lortutako emaitzek erakusten dute koloretako kodea ingeleseko esaldien egituraren sorkuntza hobetzeko oso erabilgarria izan daitekeela ikerketa esperimentalean parte hartu zuten ikasle guztiak nabarmenki hobetu baitzuten. Bestalde, hamazazpi ikaslez osatutako kontrol taldeak, soilik aurre testa eta bukaerako test-a burutu zutenak, ez zuen hobekuntza esanguratsurik aurkeztu egitura berdinarik modu tradizionalen praktikatutako ondoren.

Hitz klabeak: koloretako kodea; gramatika; manipulatio; estrategia multisensorialak; Lehen Hezkuntza.

Résumé

Ce projet présente une étude expérimentale menée avec des élèves de premier cycle dans une école bilingue en Espagne. Trente-deux étudiants ont participé à cette étude lors de laquelle ils ont utilisé un code couleurs pour créer des structures grammaticales en anglais en utilisant différentes ressources pédagogiques et stratégies multisensorielles. A partir d'un pre-test, ils ont travaillé sur diverses activités suivant quatre phases de difficulté progressive jusqu'à la réalisation du post-test. Les résultats obtenus indiquent que l'utilisation d'un code couleur pour améliorer la création de phrases avec des structures correctes en anglais pourrait être considérée comme une stratégie très utile, car tous les participants de l'expérimentation se sont améliorés significativement. De l'autre côté, un groupe de contrôle de dix-sept personnes qui n'a été examiné que sur les pre et post-test n'a pas présenté d'améliorations notables, après avoir pratiqué les mêmes structures de manière traditionnelle.

Mots clés: code couleurs; grammaire; ressources pédagogiques; stratégies multisensorielles; primaire.

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INTRODUCCION

Actualmente, la demanda por parte de las familias y alumnado en los colegios, institutos y universidades de asignaturas en inglés es cada vez mayor. Por ese motivo, desde una edad temprana, el alumnado está expuesto a una gran cantidad de horas de instrucción en inglés, por lo que el nivel de exigencia es mayor y al mismo tiempo el nivel alcanzado por el alumnado es más elevado y se nota desde las primeras etapas.

Cuando comencé mis segundas prácticas de la carrera en el colegio Lorenzo Goicoa con alumnado de primero de primaria, empecé a observar las fortalezas y las debilidades del sistema de enseñanza y cuáles eran los problemas que afrontaba el alumnado con respecto al aprendizaje de una segunda lengua, así como el profesorado a la hora de enseñar. Tras unos días realizando apoyos con alumnado de segundo de primaria, me di cuenta de que tenían serias dificultades a la hora de formar una frase y no se daban cuenta de si se dejaban elementos o partes necesarias para su correcta formación, ya que no distinguían una palabra de otra, ni por su forma ni por su significado. Por este motivo, empecé a pensar en qué podía hacer para enseñarles la gramática sin tener que explicarles teóricamente qué tipo de palabra era cada una y que de una manera sencilla recordaran su orden dentro de la oración.

Recordando asignaturas como “Diversidad y respuesta psicopedagógica”, “Aprendizaje Integrado de Contenidos y Lengua Extranjera (AICLE)” o asignaturas cursadas en mi periodo de intercambio como “Education of Diverse Students” empecé a pensar en diferentes estrategias para la enseñanza del inglés y entonces me encontré con distintas experiencias que coincidían en el uso de colores como estrategia pedagógica para dar respuesta a distintas necesidades educativas. Por ejemplo, para el trabajo con autistas habíamos visto cómo las palabras se describían con un pictograma y dependiendo de la categoría léxica de la palabra en cuestión, se les marcaba con un color diferente para que estos niños y niñas pudieran distinguir una acción de un objeto, etc.

De este modo, pensé en la posibilidad de hacer algo similar con el inglés, asignar a cada palabra de la frase un color dependiendo de si se trataba de un pronombre, artículo, verbo, etc. para que así identificaran las partes que debía contener una frase recordando el orden de los colores y no se dejaran partes sin escribir.

La búsqueda de artículos e investigaciones sobre el tema fue difícil ya que no se conocen muchos estudios realizados sobre este tema en concreto. La investigación realizada por Omar (2016) con láminas de colores fue mi base para la posterior recogida de información que tuviera relación con el tema. La investigación que se explica a continuación surge de la combinación del estudio arriba mencionado con dos propuestas de Schneider y Kulmhofer (2016) que son el uso de estrategias multisensoriales y una serie de fases de progresiva dificultad y autonomía para la realización de las actividades. El resultado de integrar todo lo mencionado, es una investigación que tiene como objetivo conseguir mejoras mediante lo innovador, novedoso y actual captando el interés del alumnado.

Por otra parte, los contenidos que se han tratado durante esta investigación son los que correspondía trabajar al alumnado siguiendo el currículo de primero de primaria. Este se encuentra recogido en el [Decreto Foral 60/2014](#), del 16 de Julio, por el que se establecen los contenidos, criterios y estándares de aprendizaje que regulan las enseñanzas de Educación Primaria en la Comunidad Foral de Navarra. Se trata de estructuras sintácticas básicas que pertenecen al bloque cuarto de los contenidos que deben enseñarse en primero de primaria en la asignatura de inglés como lengua extranjera.

1. LITERATURE REVIEW

1.1. The importance of English in current education systems

Nowadays, bilingualism or multilingualism is the norm rather than the exception. In fact, the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) for the Teaching of Languages establishes that every citizen in Europe should be plurilingual which means that they are able to understand and speak the languages that surround them daily.

Globalization has led to determine English as the language for global communication and, consequently, the lingua franca in EU affecting to countries that in the past had not much influence of it, such as Spain (Caraker, 2016; Lasagabaster & de Zarobe, 2010). In 2007, due to the fact that 27 countries and 23 official languages were part of the EU, the European Council in Barcelona designated that two more languages apart from the mother tongue should be taught in our schools. In an implicit way, English is understood as the first language to learn. Not only has the CEFR expanded English in Europe, also the Bologna Declaration of 1999 tried to enhance the compatibility between universities promoting academic mobility among different countries (Caraker, 2016).

As a result, according to recent information provided by the local newspaper “Diario de Navarra” of February 2018 it seems that most children starting kindergarten will go to PAI (“Programa de Aprendizaje en Inglés” or “English Learning Programme”) or British schools. They show that there is an increase this year in the number of people enrolled in all the linguistic models in public schools and also among the families that choose public schools (62%). From 3.650 applications, 2.141 have chosen PAI or British ([“Las familias navarras vuelven a elegir PAI”](#), 2018).

Therefore, though all roads lead to Rome, there are some of them which are shorter than others. For this reason, when mastering a new language, it is important that the student takes the straightest way.

In Spain, since the 1980s bilingual communities have seen the educational system as a medium of instruction which supports the regional languages. The experience of these communities in immersion programs with the minority language has served as an example for other regions and linguistic models and they have settled CLIL (Content and Language Integrated Learning) as the best approach to incorporate a second

language in the curriculum (Lasagabaster & de Zarobe, 2010). Spain has led the development of CLIL in Europe being one of the countries that started teaching English earlier (Caraker, 2016; Lasagabaster & de Zarobe, 2010).

Since then, CLIL is in continuous and rapid development in Spain. Trying to accommodate to the new demands of the global society, it is becoming a trend in our country. Taking into account that Spain comprises 17 autonomous regions, there is a wide diversity of models although they all follow the aim of achieving effective communication in second language across the curriculum. In broad strokes, the models that exist in Spain are divided in monolingual communities (Spanish is the official language, implementing CLIL for the foreign language) and bilingual communities (Spanish is co-official with another language, undertaking two languages plus one or more with CLIL) according to Lasagabaster and de Zarobe's information (2010). For more information on the field check de Zarobe and Catalán (2009).

In fact, multilingualism is a natural state in human societies (see the Roman Empire and its languages, for example) and throughout the history different methods and methodologies have been used to teach languages. Not all of them have had the same impact and all have received criticism from their counterparts. However, in order to develop the basis of our teaching practice it is important to be aware of the evolution of all of them during the history to be able to take the ideas of each one that one may regard as more suitable in order to base pedagogical decisions in contrasted arguments.

In conclusion, a survey of the evolution of language teaching until the 21st century is a necessary task for any foreign language teacher in order to make personal choices to create a personal teaching style. This is especially important nowadays, when teaching English at early stages is paramount in Spanish schools.

1.2. Second language learning theories

1.2.1. Behaviourism and the Contrastive Analysis Hypothesis

During the history, different perspectives have been trying to explain the process of second language learning (SLL). From 1940 to 1970 the Behaviourist perspective had a great impact on SLL. This theory of learning was proposed by B.F Skinner. He explained learning in terms of imitation and positive reinforcement, formation of habits through

practice and environment importance. In foreign language teaching, Nelson Brooks (1960) and Robert Lado (1964) worked with this type of classrooms based on mimicry and memorization activities (cited in Lightbown & Spada, 2013). This has been linked to the Contrastive Analysis Hypothesis. They thought that the formed habits of the first language will interfere with the new ones needed for the second language. However, researchers found that many errors that learners have in the second language cannot be predicted by the comparison of both languages. Although there is evidence that second language learners draw on what they know in their L1, they sometimes reject to transfer certain patterns, which suggests that the influence of their first language may not be a matter of habits (Lightbown & Spada, 2013).

1.2.2. Cognitivism

Chomsky rejected that perspective and he proposed the innatist perspective. He argued that all human language is based on some innate universal principles, which he calls Universal Grammar (UG hereafter). This language device allows all children to acquire the language at a limited and specific period in life (Critical Period Hypothesis). Nevertheless, he did not develop the idea on second language acquisition. Authors as Robert Bley-Vroman (1990) or Jacqueline Schachter (1990) have suggested that although the UG may be appropriate for understanding the acquisition of the first language, it might not be the case for second language learners who have passed the critical period (as cited in Lightbown & Spada, 2013).

Influenced by Chomsky's theory, Lightbown & Spada (2013) agree that the Stephen Krashen's (1982) Monitor Model is probably the best-known model to explain second language acquisition. His model is defined by five hypotheses:

- The acquisition/learning hypothesis. Krashen suggested that the language is acquired through samples of language that we understand without paying attention to the language form. On the other hand, language is learned through a conscious process putting attention to the language forms and rules. Krashen thinks that we acquire more language than we learn.
- The Monitor Hypothesis argues that the rules and patterns that we have learned are used as a monitor which makes changes in the linguistic production that the acquired system has produced.

- The Natural Order Hypothesis establishes that, as in first language acquisition, in second language acquisition there is also a predictable order to learn the grammatical structures. Krashen states that those language rules that seem easier to say and learn are not the first ones to be acquired.
- The Comprehensible Input refers to the exposure of the learner to input that is a bit beyond their current level of competence. It is represented as “I+1” because it should have language already known by the students (“I”) and some that they have not (“+1”).
- The Affective Filter states that there are some affective variables which facilitate the storage of linguistic information in our memory; however, the absence of some of them, such as motivation or self-esteem will cause feelings of anxiety or negative feelings that will act as a barrier for learners’ acquisition regardless the appropriateness or amount of input.

Subsequently, since the 90s, the cognitive perspective became more important to the understanding of Second Language Learning. Cognitive and Developmental psychologists argue that for first language acquisition as for second language acquisition, it is assured that there is a specific part of the brain for language and that acquisition and learning have different meanings because they imply different mental processes (Lightbown & Spada, 2013).

1.2.3. Socio-cultural theories

Finally, the sociocultural perspective, led by Vygotsky’s theory, assumes that social interaction is essential for cognitive development and so language development. Unlike the psychological theories, the Sociocultural perspective does not see speaking and thinking as independent processes as the speaker needs to internalize what he or she hears. This is possible when two interlocutors talk on their zone of proximal development (ZPD), meaning that the learner is performing better than independently because of the support or scaffolding offered by the interlocutor. In the ZPD the learner co-constructs the knowledge through interaction with others. However, the Krashen’s i+1 is not the same because it focuses the attention on the comprehensible input that comes from outside and which contains language structures of a higher level than their current level (Lightbown & Spada, 2013).

1.3. Evolution of ESL teaching

Along with the offspring of the previously mentioned theories of SLL, linguists and teachers developed parallel theories and methods for the practice of Second Language Teaching (SLT henceforth). However, some traditional pedagogical theories for second language acquisition are rejected or barely used nowadays.

1.3.1. Grammar-Translation method

The “grammar- based” approach or “grammar translation” (GT) did not place enough emphasis on the use of target language (Gerges, 2016). It dominated foreign language teaching from the 1840s to the 1940s. According to Richard and Rodgers (1986), this method was focused only on writing, analysing grammar rules for translating sentences and it was solely teacher-centred. These characteristics make it a non- communicative method for learning (as cited in Lightbown & Spada, 2013).

1.3.2. From the Natural or Direct Method to the Audiolingual Method

Later on, as a reaction against the GT, the Natural Method and afterwards, the “direct method” appeared. It was L. Sauveur who promoted to learn the second language in the same way we learn our first language, placing little emphasis on reading and writing skills and dismissing vocabulary input (Gerges, 2016).

Hence, as a response to these unsuccessful attempts, structuralism defended that the oral language was essential in structural linguistics because we learn to speak before we acquire other elements of the language. For that reason, the “audiolingual method” appeared aimed at developing competence in communicative situations in the USA 1950s. This method was based on the ideas mentioned before by Behaviourists and their Contrastive Analysis Hypothesis. Educators used activities based on oral practice but without support of handouts or written reference; the class participated in mimics and memorization activities which were mainly based on repetition (drills). Despite the fact that these activities were not translations and now the learner had to follow some steps and repeat them, the learner continued having a passive role. This method was not communicative or involved the use of language in real situations (Nunan, 1991).

1.3.3. *Communicative Language Teaching*

Diverse factors as the influence of the works of Chomsky and the increasing emphasis on the communicative aspect of the language brought about the emergence of the Communicative Approach in the 1960s. The Communicative Language Teaching (from now on CLT) appeared as an example of learner-centred approach thanks to which the students acquire language through communication of real meaning and active participation (Gerges, 2016). Its main representatives are Henry Widdowson and Christopher Candlin.

1.4. **Grammar in the Communicative Approach**

According to Richard and Rodgers (1986) and Savignon (2005) the aim of language teaching through this approach is fostering communicative competence and the four skills of the language should be taught but in a comprehensible way (as cited in Lightbown & Spada, 2013).

In this line, Hymes (1972) and Campbell and Wales (1970) describe communicative competence as the one that includes grammatical competence (implicit and explicit rules of grammar) and sociolinguistic competence (rules for language use). They see a strong relation between the use of language and the grammar (as cited in Canale & Swain, 1980).

Grammar teaching has been a controversial issue in the past years: how, when, why or if we should teach it (Canale & Swain, 1980). Saaristo carried out a study in 2015 with Finnish university students about how they see grammar in teaching, and the results showed that they find it essential or at least a quite important aspect of language learning and teaching. She agrees that grammar should not be presented as an isolated part. You need language in use and know the grammatical forms to communicate effectively. Hence, the aim of a communicative approach should be to facilitate the integration of all the types of learning without giving more emphasis to one form of competence in a second language programme (Canale & Swain, 1980).

Within the communicative approaches, a distinction can be made between the general one and post-communicative approaches. Although the Communicative Language Teaching was transformative in SLT, with the CLT arrival, methods like Task-based Language Teaching, Focus-on- Form, Cooperative Language Teaching or

Content-Based Knowledge appeared focusing on the learning processes. These new approaches (post-communicative approaches), consider that grammatical knowledge has a functional-communicational base, and their view of language also supports previous linguistic theories such as cognitive and constructivist ones (Rama & Agulló, 2012).

The shallow-end approach to CLT is based on the thought that in order to be able to use language in a communicative situation, some grammatical rules should be learned to apply them later. According to this, CLT deals with grammar and it does not mean that it is not communicative. Grammar is taught in an inductive way, by examples provided by the teacher that students have to infer themselves. Besides, the teacher makes the students relate their new knowledge with previous knowledge or even with their L1. In this way, learners draw on their previous knowledge and they do not see the new one as something strange or unattached. This way of teaching and the final goal which is to include grammar in the learners' communicative performance are the factors which make this approach meaningful and communicative (Rama & Agulló, 2012).

Rama and Agulló (2012) sum up stating that in all the communicative approaches grammar can be taught without interrupting the communicative mood. What is more, grammar can improve it. Harmer (1997) remarks that "at this stage, it is enough to say that grammar teaching –of both the overt and covert kind- has a real and important place in the classroom" (Rama & Agulló, 2012, p. 185).

1.5. Deductive vs. Inductive approaches to teach grammar

How the grammar rules are presented is also a debated issue. Rama and Agulló (2012), based on authors like Ortega (2000) and Doughty (2012), consider that the competence levels can be improved with the combination of modifications in the input with explicit grammar teaching or focus-on-form teaching. Berendse (2012) and Motha (2013) argue that inside explicit teaching we can find two categories: a deductive approach (when the rules are presented directly) and an inductive approach (when they have to infer them by themselves). Ellis (2010) understands explicit teaching as a rule-learning process (cited in Motha, 2013). He explains that deductive explicit

instruction gives learners the grammar rule while inductive explicit instruction gives the tools for understanding that grammatical rule.

Whilst explicit teaching seems to be more useful than the implicit, in the case of deductive and inductive teaching it is not so clear which one is the best and most effective. Ellis states that inductive methods are more demanding for the learners and if their aim is to make them more conscious, these are sometimes more effective.

According to Berendse (2012), some authors believe that both are necessary depending on the goals, the context and the individual's characteristics and that there is no difference in the effectiveness of both. Kwakernaak (2009) who is named in Berendse, (2012) argues that induction reasoning is beneficial if they get used to it.

Motha (2013) named some different studies on this topic. Herron and Tomasello (1992) carried out a study comparing deductive and guided induction approaches when teaching grammar in French. The results showed that there was higher correctness after working with an inductive methodology. However, some studies (Szkolne, 2005; Van Pattern and Borst, 2012) show that deductive methods are more suitable when there is not much time available and that a prior explanation allows the student to process the information faster. The longitudinal study by Hwu and Sun (2012) suggests that for low aptitude learners deductive methods work better although higher aptitude learners benefit from inductive learning. Their conclusion is that the learner's characteristics and the instructional conditions should be considered in order to make decisions about our teaching practices.

Marzano, Pickering and Pollock (2001), on the other hand, studied which manner should be used in hypothesis generation and testing. They agree with the abovementioned studies on saying that although inductive thinking can be very beneficial, the strategies should have very well-organized experiences so that students infer accurately the principles to make hypotheses. However, if they do not have those experiences, it might be better to present the principles before generating a hypothesis.

Finally, Berendse (2012) conducted a study with secondary pupils to see the effectiveness of both approaches (deductive and inductive) when learning grammatical structures. Half of them were taught following a traditional deductive methodology and the other half through an inductive way which was new for them. The results

showed that both presented significant improvements between the pre-test and the post-test. However, a retention task was done six weeks after the post-test and results significantly differed from each other depending on the type of instruction received. The deductive group did not show differences comparing the post-test and retention task but they significantly improved on one of the grammatical structures which were being tested when comparing pre-test and retention task. On the other hand, the inductive group, which initially improved on a structure from the pre-test to the post-test, showed a significant decrease in the results in that part when comparing retention task with the post-test. As a result, it may be inferred that factors as the motivation of students or the novelty of using inductive methodologies might affect the results.

1.6. When to teach grammar to our students: Developmental stages

As we have previously mentioned, during the early 1970s, Stephen Krashen talked about a model for second language which emphasized the idea of existing different developmental stages that every person follows when learning a new language. However, Krashen's Natural Order Hypothesis (explained in 1.2.2) argues that those stages are normally unmodifiable irrespective of when or how, for example, grammar concepts are presented to the student.

According to Lightbown & Spada (2013) and based on different studies, the appropriate moment to start teaching a second language will depend not only on the age but also on realistic goals settled by the school. Other factors as the amount of time available and opportunities inside and outside the classroom to learn it, the motivation or each individual's aptitude for learning another language affect the rate of learning and the eventual success in it.

According to Rod Ellis (1994), language is a natural process. He argues that through a communicative setting, L2 learners normally experience a silent period, particularly if they are children. Some of them can start talking since the beginning because they already have L1 and others stay silent for a period of time. During this period, they learn about the language and they prepare themselves for the subsequent production. When learners start speaking there are two main characteristics of their speech. One is the production of formulaic chunks. This gives the learners the means of using

language for useful purposes as greetings and requests. The other one is the propositional simplification when they want to make full sentences but as they do not know how, they produce those leaving words out. After this period which seems similar to the learning of the mother tongue, the grammar of the L2 appears. Now the question is if there is an acquisition order and if it follows a sequence of acquisition, as Krashen suggested.

Lightbown and Spada (2013) dedicate an important part of their book to the explanation of developmental sequences in first and second language acquisition. These authors, following the idea mentioned by Krashen (Natural Order Hypothesis), find that there are developmental sequences similar in learners of different language backgrounds and also similar to the ones that they observed in first language acquisition. Articles such as “a” or “the” which are very frequent in English are not the first ones to be learned.

Regarding grammatical morphemes, researches in second language learning have been investigating the development of those aspects in learners studying English as a second language. They identified the obligatory morphemes (the correct place) and then made an order of accuracy for the morphemes. The findings suggested that the order was similar to the developmental sequences of the first language acquisition and similar between learners of different backgrounds. However, some studies on this field (cited in Lightbown and Spada, 2013) show evidence of the influence of the first language on the acquisition sequences of the second one (Krashen, 1982).

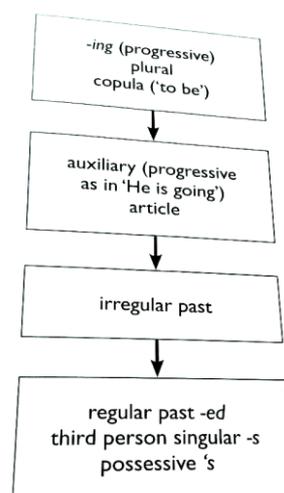


Figure 1. Krashen’s (1982) summary of second language grammatical morpheme acquisition sequence (Lightbown and Spada, 2013, p.47).

The negation acquisition in the second language seems identical to the first language acquisition. However, researchers like John Schumann's (1979) who investigated with Spanish speakers learning English found that second language learners depending on their language background have different behaviours on those stages (as cited in Lightbown & Spada, 2013):

1. Stage 1: Use of "no" or "not" before the verb. In the case of Spanish or Italian speakers they may stay longer using Stage 1 negation because of the similarity with their first language pattern.
2. Stage 2: They may change "no" or "not" to "don't" but not identified with person, number or tense.
3. Stage 3: They continue with mistakes with "don't" but they start placing the negation after auxiliary verbs like are, is or can.
4. Stage 4: in this moment they identify the "don't" with person, number and tense. The sentences seem similar to the target language.

Lightbown and Spada (2013) made an adapted version of the sequence of questions acquisition suggested by Manfred Pienemann, Malcolm Johnston and Geoff Bridley (1988) by learners of English from different backgrounds.

1. Stage 1: They use single words or small fragments.
2. Stage 2: Declarative word order with no inversions or fronting.
3. Stage 3: Do- fronting and wh- fronting but without inversion.
4. Stage 4: The inversions are made in wh- + copula yes and no questions with other auxiliaries.
5. Stage 5: Inversions in wh- questions are made with both an auxiliary and main verb.
6. Stage 6: Ability to make complex questions.

Additionally, they argue that, as it has been mentioned, the movement through developmental sequences can be possible. In fact, stages should not be seen as something separated from another, as learners may experiment behaviours of more than one stage at a time. Some communicative situations of stress or complexity for the learner can make them slip back to an early stage. In addition, the higher stage in which the learner is does not mean fewer errors. Henning Wode (1978) and Helmut Zobl (1980) observed that the relation between the developmental sequences and the

influence of the first language is established when the learners arrive at a stage in which they perceive “crucial similarity” with their first language and they may generalize a pattern of their mother tongue and start making errors that maybe other speakers are less likely to make (as cited in Lightbown & Spada ,2013). This is called “interlanguage”, which refers to learners’ developing second language knowledge. It was Larry Selinker (1972) who gave the name to it. The interlanguage is formed by some characteristics that the learner uses influenced by his or her previous learning, others of the second language and others which happen in all the interlanguages systems (omission of function words and grammatical morphemes). Interlanguages change as learners receive more input and revise their hypotheses about the second language (as cited in Lightbown & Spada, 2013).

Thereupon, there are five stages for second language acquisition: preproduction, early production, speech emergence, intermediate fluency and advanced fluency (Krashen & Terrell, 1983). The first stage would be known as the “Silent Period” mentioned before. At the Early production they are able to use single words, yes or no answers and repetitive language patterns. In the next level they can make simple sentences and then they increase the complexity until they acquire a good fluency. Although they set an approximate time frame for each stage the evolution of the learner through the stages will depend on different factors.

Stage	Characteristics	Approximate Time Frame	Teacher Prompts
<i>Preproduction</i>	The student <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has minimal comprehension • Does not verbalize • Nods “Yes” and “No” • Draws and points 	0–6 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Show me. . . • Circle the. . . • Where is. . . ? • Who has. . . ?
<i>Early Production</i>	The student <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has limited comprehension • Produces one- or two-word responses • Participates using key words and familiar phrases • Uses present-tense verbs 	6 months–1 year	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes/no questions • Either/or questions • One- or two-word answers • Lists • Labels
<i>Speech Emergence</i>	The student <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has good comprehension • Can produce simple sentences • Makes grammar and pronunciation errors • Frequently misunderstands jokes 	1–3 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why. . . ? • How. . . ? • Explain. . . • Phrase or short-sentence answers
<i>Intermediate Fluency</i>	The student <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has excellent comprehension • Makes few grammatical errors 	3–5 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What would happen if. . . ? • Why do you think. . . ?
<i>Advanced Fluency</i>	The student has a near-native level of speech.	5–7 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decide if. . . • Retell. . .

Source: Adapted from Krashen and Terrell (1983).

Figure 2. Stages of Second Language Acquisition (Krashen & Terrell, 1983)

Using a color code to teach English grammar to ESL primary students

Besides, Vygotsky in 1978 affirmed that it is very important to recognize the stage in which the learner is to work in their “Zone of proximal development”. This implies adapting teaching practices to what they can do at that moment and what they can achieve with the help of others. Using scaffolding is essential to let them arrive to a higher level of performance.

1.7. Corrective Feedback

Krashen’s Natural Order states that developmental stages cannot be altered or accelerated by instruction or correction but there can be mobility through them depending on different factors as each learner characteristics. However, there are studies (Liyster & Ranta, 1997; Oliver & Mackley, 2003; Sheen, 2010; Lázaro, 2013) which advocate for the benefits of corrective feedback in SLL.

In the field of corrective feedback, it should be pointed out the study of Roy Lister and Leila Ranta (1997) where they identified six types of corrective feedback through the observation of French immersion classrooms with content- based language teaching. They developed an observation scheme combining categories of the COLT (Communicative Orientation of Language Teaching) scheme and from other models working in first and second language learning. The categories are:

- Explicit correction: The teacher corrects the student explicitly, indicating that he or she is incorrect and providing the correct form.
- Recasts: The teacher reformulates what the student says, generally, in an implicit way.
- Clarification requests: The teacher asks for clarification and the student understands that their utterance is incorrect or that it has been misunderstood.
- Metalinguistic feedback: the teacher makes reference to the correctness of the utterance. The correct form it is not explicitly provided. To indicate that there is an error, the teacher makes metalinguistic comments, questions...
- Elicitation: the teacher uses three techniques to elicit the correct form: starting the sentence to let them finish, using questions to elicit what they need or asking for reformulation.
- Repetition: the teacher repeats the incorrect sentence of the student. A change in the intonation can indicate the error.

Although, in the study they conducted the recast feedback was the most commonly used, they found that student uptake was more probable to happen after clarification requests, metalinguistic feedback and repetitions. They also thought that the two corrective feedbacks that were more likely to lead to a correct form were metalinguistic feedback and elicitation.

After the study of Lyster and Ranta, many other observations have been made. Some of them report that learners notice the recasts in the classroom but others undermine this statement with studies which produced similar results after testing recasts as a corrective feedback in language teaching.

There is a study of Oliver and Mackley (2003) conducted with Australian ESL students (6-12 years old). They identify four contexts in which teacher and learner interact: content exchanges, management exchanges, communication exchanges and explicit language-focused exchanges. They found that the feedback was mostly provided in explicit language exchanges and that the learners reacted more often modifying their output in explicit language focused exchanges (as cited in Lightbown & Spada, 2013).

Youngshee Sheen (2010) conducted a study of corrective feedback (oral and written) on adult ESL learner's. The aim was to see the accuracy in the use of articles. Recasts or metalinguistic information was used for oral feedback and direct correction or direct metalinguistic feedback for written tasks. Learners were divided in groups and each one received a different type of feedback. The results showed that all the groups outperformed the control one except the group which used recasts. These findings show that the medium is less important than the explicitness of the corrective feedback used (as cited in Lightbown & Spada, 2013).

On this matter, regarding corrective feedback, Lázaro (2013) stated that the cognitive abilities of the learners should be taken into account. In the case of low proficiency level students (Ferris, 2004; Ferris & Roberts, 2001), they might not understand the corrections if they are done in an implicit way and are more successful if they are corrected explicitly (cited in Lázaro, 2013). It is necessary that the students have reasoning abilities to solve a cognitive conflict (Tocalli-Beller & Swain, 2005). There are many factors that affect this ability. Lázaro considers that there is not one single type of feedback which provokes cognitive conflict. It is important to

differentiate the influence of the type of corrective feedback and the influence of other aspects that are involved in the process such as learners' proficiency, educational backgrounds, readiness or training depending on how you implement that corrective feedback (cited in Lázaro, 2013).

1.8. Silent way

In all, despite being several views on the matter, the aim of teachers is to make students communicate in English in addition to raising consciousness of the English language structure. Based on such objective, as Wan Shafika Omar did in 2016, the Silent Way is one teaching method that combines several techniques which form the base to make this awareness possible.

Calel Gattengo, who first named this technique as the Silent Way, does not see it as a method, device, system or program but something that has taken into account the reality of the different learning situations (Gattengo, 2010). It is considered to be one of the alternative approaches to language teaching. Young R. (2000) describes a little bit further the main elements of this application. Although language is described as a tool of communication, students need a lot of knowledge and comprehension to be able to understand and respond. On the other hand, what he believes that we can work in class is the expression of thoughts and feelings, perceptions and opinions.

Moreover, according to Gattegno, knowing what is right or wrong, adequate or inadequate, acceptable or unacceptable is very important and that is essential to make mistakes and see them as part of the learning process.

The role of the teachers is to provide instant feedback to the students viewing the learning as problem-solving and creative as well as discovering learner-centred activities. To know how to speak the language is necessary to be exposed to it and speak it.

Firstly, he started finding that the Cuisenaire rods used in mathematics could also be used by the teacher to create step by step input. He used them to make vocabulary walls and painted the letters in different colours to identify always the same colour with a sound and work on pronunciation (phonetic equivalent while using a visual code). Thus, the students appear to become more autonomous, and this makes it

possible for the teacher to be a source of feedback indicating when the changes should be made.

As a result, the idea of using colours in teaching, derived from the Silent Way, will be used in the present paper to teach students the order of sentence constituents from a communicative perspective. In this case the aim is to make ESL learners conscious of the English language structure, become more autonomous and give them resources to know how to apply grammar rules in different communicative situations and contexts.

1.9. Multiple intelligences and Multisensory Strategies:

1.9.1. Multiple intelligences and learning styles

Each learner can become conscious of the necessary grammar to be competent in a language through different ways. Besides, there are plenty of factors that affect the students' learning and acquisition processes. Although it is difficult to predict the reactions of learners, the teacher should provide a learning environment with a wide variety of instructional activities to let all learners with different abilities and learning preferences, master a second language (Lightbown & Spada, 2013).

With regard to multiple intelligences and learning styles, Denig (2004) states that although both concepts are different, we can see them as two complementary dimensions. Based on the construction of learning styles by Rita and Kenneth Dunn and the multiple intelligences of Gardner, the author proposes a synthesis of multiple intelligences and learning styles.

Although both Gardner and the Dunns dare teachers to change the way in which they teach, the two advocated models differ. Whereas Gardner modifies teachers' instruction depending on students' abilities, the Dunns suggest changing the instruction to focus on students' learning styles. That is, the first one concentrates on what you are teaching or the product while the second concentrates on the process of teaching or how you are teaching.

Denig (2004, p. 107) made a proposed synthesis of all learning styles and multiple intelligences. The following, however, are the ones that will be applied to this research paper:

- Verbal-linguistic learn best through reading, hearing, and seeing words and speaking, writing, discussing, and debating ideas.
- Math-logical learn best through working with patterns and relationships, classifying and categorizing, and working with the abstract.
- Spatial learn best in working with pictures and colours, visualizing and using the mind's eye, and drawing.
- Musical learn best with rhythm and melody, singing, and listening to music and melodies.
- Interpersonal learn best through sharing, comparing and relating with others, interviewing, and cooperating.
- Intrapersonal learn best through working alone, doing self-paced projects, and reflecting.
- Bodily-kinaesthetic learn better touching, moving and processing knowledge through bodily sensation.
- Verbal-linguistic learn best through reading, hearing and seeing words and speaking, writing, discussing and debating ideas.

In the present study, different learning styles to address different intelligences have been applied in the activities trying to get to every kid in the class and grab their attention.

In sum, the aforementioned synthesis has been combined with Multisensory Strategies which allow teachers to use different ways and mediums to reach the students and cater for their needs.

1.9.2. Multisensory strategies

Elke Schneider and Andrea Kulmhofer (2016), in their article *Helping struggling learners of English as an additional language succeed with interactive multisensory structured strategies*, highlight the idea of providing explanations and exploiting multisensory strategies (MSL) to improve their students' four skills as well as grammar and vocabulary. Cummins' Linguistic Interdependence Hypothesis (1979) stresses on the benefits that knowing the structures of both the L1 and the foreign language have on the learning of a new language (cited in Schneider & Kulmhofer, 2016). The higher knowledge of one or more languages, the greater achievement one may have in the new language. In addition, building connections between prior knowledge and new concepts seems to be essential when fostering meaningful learning (Villarreal & Ardaiz, 2017).

In fact, this study's findings suggested that anticipating and contextualizing new information and knowledge creates stronger links which allow learners to incorporate, and probably access, the target vocabulary and grammar concepts more effectively and easily. Along these lines, Shamlá's study (2010) brought about similar conclusions after activating reading strategies. Likewise, activating seems to have a very positive reception among students, which makes accessing prior knowledge strategies even more valuable as increased motivation has often been correlated with a higher language competence (Villarreal & Ardaiz, 2017; Nakata, 2006; Prieto & Bueno, 2015; Zenotz, 2012).

Sparks et al. (1998) found in their research that struggling learners as non-struggling learners, achieved proficiency in the foreign language after teaching two years using MSL instruction in that language.

Birsh and Shaywitz (2011) and Henry (1996) state that there are seven principles on which the teacher of the foreign language should be based and which are liable to be integrated on the instruction. Each is described below (cited in Schneider & Kulmhofer, 2016):

1. Simultaneous integration of visual, auditory, tactile and kinaesthetic learning. Asher's (2009) Total Physical Response teaching integrates this principle in FSL teaching (cited in Schneider & Kulmhofer, 2016).

2. Refers to metalinguistic learning and teaching, by learning explicit why and how there are some patterns or procedures that they have to use.
3. Explicit instruction. The teacher makes patterns that learners cannot recognize by themselves explicitly and let them internalize those. As it was previously mentioned in the section devoted to deductive vs. inductive teaching approaches, Schneider & Kulmhofer (2016) also name different authors (Akakura, 2012; Ellis et al., 2009; Sanz & Leow, 2011) who argue that recent researches focus the attention on using explicit language teaching for an effective instruction.
4. Ensure the automaticity of the learner when using language concepts, engaging ways are used through repetitive practice of the concepts.
5. Achieve a high level of learning, the content teaching is carefully structured and sequenced with gradual increase of challenge.
6. Learning is cumulative which means that the prior and recent content is connected with the new one.
7. The teachers' role is to work as a dynamic assessor of the learner progress (Schneider Lidz, 1987) who are cited in Schneider and Kulmhofer (2016).

All the language components are divided in four phases which go from less to a more autonomous and responsible learning. Little (2007) listed: (1) explicit demonstration of a specific language concept, (2) guided student practice, (3) free contextualized student practice and, (4) student summary of learned content (cited in Schneider & Kulmhofer, 2016).

Regarding to MSL grammar instruction, the authors (Akakura, 2012; Hinkel & Fotos, 2002; Muranoi, 2000; Schneider, 1999; Zyzik & Marqués Pascual, 2012) claim that research carried out over the last decade proves that explicit MSL instruction improve the correctness in grammar speaking and writing (as cited in Schneider & Kulmhofer, 2016)

The proposed four phases for grammar are:

- *Phase 1: Introduction of MSL grammar learning and writing strategies:* The foreign language teacher demonstrates where and why specific parts of speech or suffixes have to be placed in certain positions or indicate other grammar

word differences through the use of color-coded manipulatives such as laminated cards, Lego blocks or Cuisenaire rods. They propose that the teacher does it as an example the first time with the manipulatives followed by the students and then adding the written part in each coloured card at the same time as saying it. For questions the proposal is to write the question in both languages (L1 and L2).

- *Phase 2: Guided MSL grammar practice:* Initially, students follow the teacher modelled practice by working in small groups using the colour-coded manipulatives. When they are confident they stop writing in the manipulatives to write down without it. When students say out loud why they have put something in a certain place, they improve their self-correction skills. The authors suggest using also children literature which works with certain patterns with funny illustrations.
- *Phase 3: Free, contextualized MSL grammar practice:* Oral and written contextualized practice. With it, students can be engaged in dialogs and written tasks using new patterns. The authors suggest using songs with such patterns or stimulating their writing skill through realistic pictures of people, places, or things.
- *Phase 4: MSL summary of grammar learning strategies:* The teacher provides a template for students to summarize the grammar concepts learned. This guidance of the teacher provides space on the form to record the steps they have to follow in order to produce a correct grammar pattern (it can be written down in the L1 if needed), illustrating the rule with colours or images, and collecting any mnemonic devices that would be helpful for the students to retain and internalize the rule.

Evidence in L1 research shows that students that are taught language explicitly are better at reading and spelling skills than those who do not receive this explicitness (Brish & Shaywitz, 2011; McCardle & Chhabra, 2004; Moats, 2000), which proves that other researchers and teachers should promote the use of explicit MSL strategies when teaching (as cited in Schneider & Kulmhofer, 2016).

Aligned with this, Schneider & Kulmhofers' (2016) article evidence that MSL strategies are effective with struggling learners as they provide them with a chance to

succeed in second language learning. Although more research is needed to see the effect of Multimedia MSL Learning in different types of groups, ages and learning conditions, Krashen & Terrell (1996) state that these strategies promote learners' integration of information into successful communicative situations in the second language which take place in various socio-cultural contexts (cited in Schneider & Kulmhofer, 2016).

1.10. Influence of colour in memory and attention performance

Colour is an essential and most important visual experience of all humans (Dzulkifli & Mustafar, 2013). It has been found to be able to improve the memory performance and it gives a lot of information to the human cognitive system. Therefore, Wichmann, Sharpe and Gegenfurtner (2002) consider that colours should be recognized as a powerful tool when looking for strategies to make better the learning process due to the capability that colours have to motivate the students to learn and benefit from their educational experiences.

In a classroom, students, and especially young learners, can easily get distracted as they have a very short attention span. What is more, some may face problems in storing the information to long-term memory. That issue can be worsened when they have limited vocabulary. Hence, for the Second Language Teacher, the process of retention and internalization of grammar structures by students is always a struggling challenge. However, integrating colours in the classroom procedures allows these problems to be minimized (Omar, 2016). The use of colour in education can be very wide ranging as it "can be used to get attention, enhance clarity, establish a code, label things in nature and differentiate items" (Olurinola & Tayo, 2015, p.1).

The importance of colour in the educational setting is paramount. In order to acquire a high level of achievement, students need to use their cognitive abilities. These abilities are referred to the strategies which help the students in the learning process. Something that can be the key in their learning process is their motivation making them profit from their academic experiences (Dzulkifli & Mustafar, 2013). Besides, Wilkins (2003) says that learning difficulties, autism, dyslexia or other learning related problems can be better understood with the introduction of colour in specific interventions in the clinical setting (cited in Dzulkifli & Mustafar, 2013).

In order to be remembered, it is important for the stimuli available to have the potential to grab the attention and activate the deeper levels of processing. Research on the field (cited in Dzulkifli & Mustafar, 2013) has shown that colour has that potential of influencing our attentional level and increasing the emotional arousal responsible for an improvement of the memory performance (Farley & Grant, 1976; Pan, 2012; Pan, 2009; Eysenck, 2009; MacKay & Ahmetzanov 2005; Omar, 2016)

Authors like Pan (2012) and MacKay and Ahmetzanov (2005), state that it is undeniable the importance of colour increasing our attentional level when we want to memorize some information.

In addition, Dzulkifli & Mustafar (2013), synthesizing the studies reviewed state that the effectiveness of colour to the better memory performance depends on some factors. On one hand the consistency of colours used during the encoding and the retrieval phases. If the students are exposed to the same colours, they will perform better in the retrieval phase due to the connection of both processes (encoding/retrieval, encoding specificity principle). On the other hand, the right combination of colours as a higher level of contrast will grab more attention and it will make the object or information more visible, and this can influence memory retention.

1.11. Colour election

As there is a wide range of tonalities in the chromatic scale, colours can be divided into two separate groups depending on the perception of light or temperature we receive from them; as a result, there are warm colours, which seem to be perceived as active and stimulating, and cold colours being restful and quiet (Olurinola, O., & Tayo, O., 2015; Gaines, K. S., & Curry, Z. D., 2011).

Greene, Bell and Boyer in 1983 (cited in Dzulkifli & Mustafar, 2013) explained that warm colours such as yellow, red and orange have a greater effect on attention compared with cold colours (the blue range of spectrum). Besides, Engelbrecht (2003) affirm that small kids prefer warm colours while secondary students prefer cold (cited in Gaines, K. S., & Curry, Z. D., 2011).

1. 12. Colour code strip research

Wan Shafika Omar (2016) conducted research into the use of colour coded strips in sentence constructions with eleven years old students in Malaysia. The research has used an adaptation of the Silent way method to help students to write correct sentences. He found that his students were having trouble with being accurate because the core problem was their grammar knowledge.

He used colour strips for representing different word classes in his activities. It gave them confidence in writing and it grabbed their attention. All of the students showed improvement although for some the last test was very difficult and they were not able to do it. He identified that the lack of improvement in the last part could be due to the limited vocabulary of the students which did not allow them to understand the task. However, the students found it funny and easy to remember.

Furthermore, the time that each learner can spend learning a new structure will depend on the learners' link to the function and stylistic use of them. Moreover, the inter-language system development and restructure can make the students start making errors in something that the teacher thought to be learned (Hedge, 2000).

To sum up, the personal need to find something visual to help students with sentence construction constituted the basis of the present research paper. This proposal combines techniques and strategies from different methods, such as the importance of developing language awareness among our students by implementing a model based on the Silent Way; the positive effect of colour on memory and attention, and the necessity of pushing students a little bit further from their current knowledge. In addition, this study's novelty draws on the effectiveness of explicit feedback and the use of multi-sensory strategies which will contribute to the development of our students' linguistic competence by helping them learn and integrate grammar structures and, consequently, improve their ability to communicate in English (writing, speaking, reading and listening) in an effective and enjoyable way

2. HYPOTHESIS

This current paper seeks to investigate the effectiveness of using a colour code to teach English grammar structures to students with low level of proficiency. Particularly, the study addresses the following research question:

- Does the colour code technique taught through MSL strategies help learners to identify the order of the elements within sentences and, consequently, improve their scores by constructing well-ordered sentences?

Based on the studies on the memory and colour field, the results are expected to give us evidence that the use of a colour code in teaching English grammar structures using MSL strategies is a useful technique for teaching grammar in a more effective and conscious way and the students can improve their knowledge and command of the language.

3. METHODOLOGY

An experimental research was set up to analyse how the use of a colour code for teaching English grammar structures through MSL strategies in ESL classes could improve their writing sentences ability in first grade primary students.

In the following sections the participants of the study, the materials and procedures applied are outlined.

3.1. Context and participants

The study has been undertaken in a primary state school in Navarra (Spain), where Bilingual Education is offered through the British Education Project (henceforth BEP). The British Council made this project pioneer in Europe and it has promoted the development of bilingual teaching projects and CLIL (Content and Language Integrated Learning). It increases the opportunities of the youth, prepare them to succeed within a multicultural society and encourage teachers to be innovative. This linguistic project promotes the acquisition and learning of both languages, Spanish and English, through an integrated content-based curriculum (for more information you could refer to the [British Council website](#) or the [Spanish Government Website for Education](#)). The school

dedicates on average the 54% (15 classes) to the L1 and 46% (13 classes) to the L2 (Science, Arts, English and one hour of maths).

The experimental participants are 32 Grade 1 students in Primary Education (6 to 7 years old) divided in two classes (15 and 17 each) who have been learning English progressively since they started kindergarten, most of them in a BEP. There is also a control group formed by 17 students of the same grade. Each classroom was randomly formed according to school procedures at the beginning of the year. The study has been carried out without paying attention to this distinction, assuming that the classes are varied as well as the stage of learning of each student although they all are in the same level of proficiency.

A one-way ANOVA test has been used to see, in this case, if the three classes (two experimental groups and the control group) were initially different. In order to reject the null hypothesis, the value of p should be equal or less than 0.05. The results of the pre-test showed that $p = 0.0449$, so $p < 0.05$. Therefore, the ANOVA test proved that both classes are similar and that there is no statistical difference between EGs and CG prior to the implementation of the test.

3.2. Materials and procedure

The experimental groups as well as the control group completed a pre-test before the beginning of the training (see [appendix I](#)). They were given basic instructions but they were not helped in any way to complete it. The aim of it was to know the most common mistakes, to identify the current level of the students and to be able to see the progress or the absence of it at the end of the project. The results of each student were separated attending to the different types of errors committed. The structures and the types of errors analysed were:

- Order in adjective and noun
- Order in the questions
- Order in subject and verb
- Mistakes in making the negatives
- Order of the article
- Other type of errors
- Not done

In this way, the subsequent activities have been created taking into account the grammatical contents that they had to work on page 73 of unit 6 in the book (Bowen & Hocking, 2009) but using different types of activities and a different methodology to work on them.

In order to carry out the study, several materials were created and adapted for the class context. The basic instrument used for the implementation of this technique was the colour code. Thus, each class had a poster hanging on the wall made up with cardboard in different colours for each type of word (pronoun, verb, adjective, etc.). Due to the necessity of making other sentences, the poster was adapted in order to add the purple words “There” and “The”. Besides, later on the verb “have” was also added to the chart.



Figure 3. First poster



Figure 4. Second poster.



Figure 5. Third poster.

Following the research of Wan Shafika Omar (2016) the Cuisenaire rods of the Silent way were replaced with colour strips with the same length representing different word classes depending on the colour and a word colour chart to help the students identify the subject-verb-object pattern (SVO).

For that reason, 33 small laminated cards were created with transparent plastic laminated sheets and coloured sheets divided in small pieces, and they were given to each student. A strip of velcro was stuck on each table so that learners could stick their cards on it.



Figure 6. Velcro strip on each table

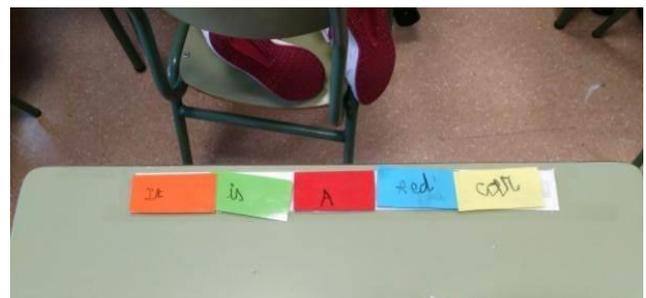


Figure 7. Coloured strips in the Velcro

The treatment consisted of four stages or phases taking into account the multisensory strategies explained in the literature review. All the grammatical structures are divided in four phases which go from less to a more autonomous and

responsible learning. Little (2007) listed: (1) explicit demonstration of a specific language concept, (2) guided student practice, (3) free contextualized student practice and, (4) student summary of learned content (as cited in Schneider & Kulmhofer, 2016).

The activities have been conceived trying to go from the most basic step by step activities to the more complex and autonomous ones, using the manipulatives for the first activities and then changing progressively to less tactile activities. In addition to these principles, the differences individual learners may manifest have also been regarded when making activities of different nature following the multiple intelligences and learning styles to cater for diversity.

3.3. Phases

3.3.1. Phase one: from 15/02/2018 to the 28/02/2018.

Activity 1	
Date	15/02/2018
Objective	The objective of this class was to introduce the colour code to the students. They work on the third person and the adjective position in simple sentences.
Materials	IWB, different coloured manipulatives and markers.
Methodology	<p>Starting with a brainstorming about what the poster was about and following with my explanation about the rules for making right sentences.</p> <p>Using the IWB we work with three photos (a cat, a happy clown and a red car). They have to answer to the question "What is it/he?"</p> <p>The activity change in each photo, divided it in three stages:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. First photo: They answer the question "What is it?" and then the teacher put the colours on each word of the sentence on the IWB. Then, the students use the manipulatives to order the colours. 2. Second photo: They answer the question "What is he?" and repeat the same process. 3. Third photo: They answer the question "What is it?" but the teacher does not put the colours on the IWB. Students order their manipulatives and then write on them the words.
Grouping	The activity is devised to be done by all students at the same time. They work individually with their own manipulatives although they

	are able to help each other.
Error treatment	The type of corrective feedback is metalinguistic feedback saying to them that something is not right (metalinguistic comments, questions...), but letting them find it in the poster; or elicitation (starting the sentence to let them finish, using questions about the colours to elicit what they need or asking for reformulation). Finally, we correct the activity all together (explicit correction).
Learning diversity	Math-logical learners, visual-spatial learners, interpersonal learners and verbal- linguistic learners.

Activity 2	
Date	20/02/2018
Objective	The objective of this activity was to work on the affirmative sentence adding “The” and “There”.
Materials	IWB, manipulatives and markers.
Methodology	To meet the objective mentioned, the activity is based on an exercise from their English Student book (see appendix II). The aim of the activity is to fill the gaps to finish the sentences. They are supported with a square with the words that they have to use in the gaps. It follows a progress divided in four parts. The first sentence is coloured by the teacher after answering orally. The second and third, are ordered and written down by themselves with the manipulatives. For the fourth they are given the colours and the words but in disorder. They have to order all the elements and write them down.
Grouping	They work in pairs.
Error treatment	The type of corrective feedback was explicit. “Hands-up” was used in order to check each sentence. Firstly they are asked to correct it, and finally the teacher says the correct sentence.
Learning diversity	Math-logical learners, visual/spatial learners and interpersonal learners.

Activity 3	
Date	22/02/2018
Objective	The objective is to work on questions and affirmative and negative answers.
Materials	IWB, manipulatives and markers.
Methodology	<p>Four groups of students are needed: 2 of 4 people and 2 of five. They stand up at the back side.</p> <p>The groups are heterogeneous (the best students were separated in the four groups). Each person holds a card. The aim of the activity was to order sentences but using their bodies to order them (see appendix III to see a photo).</p> <p>The activity follows again a progress and the sentences appeared in the IWB (see appendix IV). The activity consists of four sentences in order without colours, three sentences in disorder but with colours and one sentence in disorder and without colours. This last one apart from ordering they had to write on the cards.</p> <p>For each correct sentence, the groups receive a point.</p>
Grouping	Small groups of four or five people.
Error treatment	The corrective feedback is explicit when the time is up for all the groups. There is no correction before.
Learning diversity	Math- logical learners, visual- spatial learners, interpersonal learners, bodily- kinaesthetic learners and verbal-linguistic.
Comments	<p>Before starting the activity, I saw them the new cards: the dark and light green coloured card and the white one. I asked them to guess the meaning and then I saw them two written examples I have projected on the IWB. I told them to pay attention to the order of the colours in the questions and answers and I made the example with the other teacher trying to order ourselves to make a sentence. The examples used are the first two questions of the appendix.</p>

3.3.2. Phase two: From 1/03/2018 to the 13/03/2018.

Activity 1	
Date	1/03/2018, 6/03/2018 and 9/03/2018
Objective	1 st session: The objective was to work on questions and negative answers. 2 nd session: Questions and answers 3 rd session: Affirmative sentences
Materials	IWB, book from Story jumper webpage and manipulatives.
Methodology	I created a story (https://www.storyjumper.com) for working the patterns on the objective and I left sentences in the dialogues in disorder. I project it in the IWB with the audio. When we arrive to the disordered sentence each group order it with their manipulatives. After that, they have to leave them on the table and change to evaluate another group (check appendix V to see the co-evaluation grid). They do it to all the groups in the class. In the next session, we reread the story and continue. Each person orders their manipulatives. Last session is done with the same method but with one set of manipulatives per pair.
Grouping	1st session: small groups of four or five. 2nd session: individually. 3rd: in pairs.
Error treatment	The type of feedback is explicit, being corrected with the audio after they have ordered the sentence.
Learning diversity	Math-logical learners, visual-spatial learners, interpersonal learners, interpersonal learners and verbal- linguistic.

Activity 2	
Date	13/03/18
Objective	The objective was to work with questions and answers with “there”.
Materials	Small cards with scenes of the story (See appendix VI) and vocabulary chart (See appendix VII) Support for speaking written down on the blackboard: IS THERE...? ARE THERE....? YES, THERE IS // NO, THERE IS NOT YES, THERE ARE // NO, THERE ARE NOT.

	THERE IS A _____.
Methodology	<p>Each pair/group has six different cards on the table facing up. The teacher has another set of six cards. The teacher gives one to one person of each group that anyone of the group can see. That card is also in the ones that are facing up. The aim is to make questions to the person holding the card to guess using the vocabulary and sentences given. When they guess one card they ask for another one and cards are swapped among groups. Moreover, the person in charge of keeping the card changes each time depending on who guessed it.</p> <p>In the last ten minutes the same activity is done with a whole-class grouping, using one volunteer to take one card and everyone asking questions.</p>
Grouping	In pairs or groups of three.
Error treatment	The type of corrective feedback is metalinguistic feedback saying to them that something is not right (metalinguistic comments, questions...) but letting them find it in the poster or elicitation (starting the sentence to let them finish, using questions about the colours to elicit what they need or asking for reformulation). Finally, explicit correction is given while the teacher is passing around.
Learning diversity	Visual-spatial learners, interpersonal learners and verbal- linguistic learners.

3.3.3. Phase three: From 15/03/2018 to the 23/03/2018.

Activity 1	
Date	15/03/2018 and 16/03/2018
Objective	<p>1st session: Affirmative sentence and have got/ has got (new grammar content)</p> <p>2nd session: questions and answers.</p>
Materials	Template (see appendix VIII)
Methodology	<p>Each student receives a small paper with the name of someone of the class and a blank template to use. Following the example (see appendix IX) that I prepared in advance, they are supposed to draw that person as she/he is that day and to write some sentences:</p> <p>1º It is a ... happy/sad/angry boy</p> <p>2º He/she is tall / short/ slim</p> <p>3º He/she has got....</p> <p>4º He/she has not got ...</p>

	On the next session, they read what they have written and the whole class have to guess who that person is practicing the questions and answers.
Grouping	They work individually.
Error treatment	The type of corrective feedback is metalinguistic feedback saying to them that something is not right (metalinguistic comments, questions...) but letting them find it in the poster or elicitation (starting the sentence to let them finish, using questions about the colours to elicit what they need or asking for reformulation).
Learning diversity	Visual-spatial learners, intrapersonal learners and verbal- linguistic learners.
Comments	Start of the unit of have got haven't got explained using the colours code and adding to the poster.

Activity 2	
Date	20/03/2018
Objective	The objective was to work with affirmative sentences with "is" and with "has got".
Materials	Teddy bear
Methodology	As we were studying in science "Materials", we asked them to bring one Teddy from their house one day. Students sit down on the floor making a circle, as an assembly, and each person described his or her Teddy: name, colour, what it was made of, properties (soft, bendy...). Previously I had done it as an example.
Grouping	Whole-class grouping.
Error treatment	The type of corrective feedback is metalinguistic feedback saying to them that something is not right (metalinguistic comments, questions...) but letting them find it in the poster, elicitation (starting the sentence to let them finish, using questions about the colours to elicit what they need or asking for reformulation) or clarifications requests.
Learning diversity	Interpersonal learners and verbal- linguistic learners.
Comments	At the same time, these structures were practiced in the next activity in science in which they had a template to draw an object that they

	were given and write some properties of that material as well as two sentences about it. Some patterns were written in the blackboard to help them, we used also a poster with examples of properties and materials with photos.
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Activity 3	
Date	23/03/2018
Objective	Affirmatives, negatives and questions of verb to be. There + affirm/neg.
Materials	IWB for the lyrics.
Methodology	<p>Song rap: I created a song for the class, leaving some gaps to be completed with names of people from the class and with the number of boys and girl in the class (See appendix X). A simple base rap was used as background music taken from YouTube.</p> <p>To work on the song the activity is divided into some steps:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1st Reading the song out loud all together. 2nd Completing the gaps of the song choosing names of volunteers doing a raffle. 3rd Showing them the music and sing all together. 4th Standing up and showing them the movements. 5th Making two groups divided in boys and girls doing a battle and playing the song to dance all together at least two times. <p>For each class the song created is printed and given to them to sing at home.</p>
Grouping	Whole-class grouping.
Error treatment	Not worked. It was implicit learning through repetition.
Learning diversity	Bodily-kinethstetic, musical learners, interpersonal learners, and verbal-linguistic learners.

3.3.4 Phase four: from 10/04/2018 to the 20/04/2018

Activity 1	
Date	10 /04/ 2018
Objective	Work all the grammar concepts through a review.
Materials	Crayons and worksheet.
Methodology	Each person receives a sheet with a photo of a dog and with some sentences in disorder about the dog (see appendix XI). Firstly, the whole class working together, they identify the colours of all the words. After that, they had to order the sentences individually following the patterns and the poster to correct mistakes by themselves underlying each word with the corresponding colour.
Grouping	Individual.
Error treatment	The type of corrective feedback used was implicit, metalinguistic feedback saying to them that something is not right (metalinguistic comments, questions...) but letting them find it in the poster or elicitation (starting the sentence to let them finish, using questions about the colours to elicit what they need or asking for reformulation).
Learning diversity	Math-logical learners, spatial learners, intrapersonal learners and verbal-linguistic learners.

Activity 2	
Date	17/04/ 2018 and 19/04/2018
Objective	Work all the grammar concepts through a review.
Materials	Crayons and worksheet.
Methodology	Before this activity, in a previous game the teachers choose two people who win to participate in this activity as a reward. The students are asked to choose something from the class so they had an object (to work on the third person singular). After that, the teacher takes them a photo and uses it to create the questions for the activity (see appendix XII). In the explanation of the activity I ask them to circle some words from the questions with the correct colour in order to help them to make the answers. Students who need more time to finish, they can finish during the following class

	or session.
Grouping	Individual
Error treatment	The type of corrective feedback used was implicit, metalinguistic feedback saying to them that something is not right (metalinguistic comments, questions...) but letting them find it in the poster or elicitation (starting the sentence to let them finish, using questions about the colours to elicit what they need or asking for reformulation).
Learning diversity	Math-logical learners, spatial learners, intrapersonal learners and verbal- linguistic learners.

Activity 3	
Date	20/04/2018
Objective	Work all the grammar concepts as a review.
Materials	Crayons, worksheet.
Methodology	They are given another classmate's sheet to correct it. The previous activity is anonymous so in this activity they don't know whose work they are marking. Besides, the answers without colours were written down on the board so they can check it with a tick or a cross, and after doing it, they underline the answers with the adequate colours.
Grouping	Individual.
Error treatment	The type of corrective feedback used was implicit, metalinguistic feedback saying to them that something is not right (metalinguistic comments, questions...) but letting them find it in the poster or elicitation (starting the sentence to let them finish, using questions about the colours to elicit what they need or asking for reformulation).
Learning diversity	Math-logical learners, spatial learners, intrapersonal learners and verbal-linguistic learners.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1. Results

The following sections present the results for the pre-test and post- test for both experimental (EG) and control groups (CG).

4.1.1. Comparison between pre and post-test for the EG

Table 1 features the comparative results between both tests for the EG.

Table 1. Results obtained by the experimental groups in pre and post- test.

Students	Pre-TEST	Post-TEST
STUDENT 1	5	9
STUDENT 2	0	4
STUDENT 3	2	10
STUDENT 4	0	10
STUDENT 5	3	9
STUDENT 6	4	11
STUDENT 7	5	11
STUDENT 8	5	9
STUDENT 9	5	11
STUDENT 10	8	12
STUDENT 11	5	9
STUDENT 12	0	2
STUDENT 13	0	11
STUDENT 14	2	5
STUDENT 15	0	5
STUDENT 16	1	5
STUDENT 17	1	10
STUDENT 18	4	10
STUDENT 19	2	11
STUDENT 20	5	10
STUDENT 21	1	3
STUDENT 22	0	4
STUDENT 23	2	9
STUDENT 24	1	8
STUDENT 26	6	11
STUDENT 27	3	7
STUDENT 28	8	10
STUDENT 29	0	2
STUDENT 30	3	9
STUDENT 31	6	9
STUDENT 32	2	9

STUDENT 33	1	4
MEAN	2.8125	8.0938
SD	2.4155	2.9769

As it can be observed in table 1, the second column describes the results for the EG at the initial state, the mean score for the pre-test is 2.8125 (2.4155 SD). Twenty-nine students out of thirty-three did not pass the test (six points out of twelve are needed). Only four students passed the text with a maximum score of 8 points.

On the third column the results for the post-test by the EG are presented. After the treatment the mean score for the post-test changes to 8.0938 (2.9769 SD). Nine students out of thirty-three did not pass the test (six points out of twelve are needed). However, twenty-four students passed the test, some of them attaining a maximum score of 12 points.

A t-test for repeated measures was carried out to confirm that the differences are statistically significant between both tests and the result is consistent with the effectiveness suggested by previous figures (see table 1). The p-value obtained was inferior to 0.05 ($t= 0.000000$; $p<0.05$). With this result, we can conclude that the differences between condition means are not accidental, but respond to the treatment undergone by experimental groups during the research.

4.1.2. Comparison between pre and post-test for the CG

Table 2 features the comparative results between both tests for the CG.

Table 2. Results obtained by the control group in pre and post- test.

Students	PRE-TEST	Post-TEST
STUDENT 35	5	8
STUDENT 36	1	0
STUDENT 37	1	0
STUDENT 38	8	7
STUDENT 39	5	3
STUDENT 40	2	9
STUDENT 41	8	10
STUDENT 42	4	5
STUDENT 43	7	4
STUDENT 44	10	10

STUDENT 45	8	8
STUDENT 46	3	8
STUDENT 47	3	3
STUDENT 48	0	0
STUDENT 49	3	8
STUDENT 50	9	10
STUDENT 51	6	7
MEAN	4.8824	5.8824
SD	3.0798	3.5861

As it can be observed in the table, the second column describes the results for the CG at the initial state. In this case, the mean score for the pre-test is 4.8824 (3.0798 SD), which is considerably higher than the pre-test mean score obtained by the experimental groups (namely, 2.8125). In the CG only ten students out of seventeen did not pass the test (six points out of twelve are needed), while seven students passed the text. The maximum score was ten points out of twelve, which was obtained by student 44.

The third column features the results for the post-test obtained by the CG. After the treatment the mean score for the post-test changes to 5.8824 (3.5861 SD). Seven students out of seventeen did not pass the test in the post-test (six points out of twelve are needed). In comparison to the pre-test, three more students managed to pass the test, which results in ten students' passing the test. This time three students have scored a maximum of ten points out of twelve (students 41, 44 and 50).

A t-test for repeated measures was carried out to confirm that the differences are not statistically significant between both tests and the result is consistent with the lack of effectiveness confirmed by previous figures (see table 2). The p-value obtained was over 0.05 ($t= 0.141977$; $p>0.05$). The result shows that although the average score has increased, the improvement is not enough to be considered statistically significant.

4.1.3. Comparison between both groups (EG and CG)

As previously mentioned, to prove that the students of the CG and EGs chosen were randomly placed and, consequently, to give more reliability to the study, a one-way ANOVA test was carried out in Excel. To confirm this instance, the resulting p-value must be less than 0.05. Thus, the result ($p= 0.0449$; $p < 0.05$) proves that there were not statistical differences between the EGs and the CG at the initial state.

Table 3. Experimental group Mean and SD scores (Pre-test).

EG	Pre-test
MEAN	2.8125
SD	2.4155

Table 4. Control group Mean and SD scores (Pre-test).

CG	Pre-test
MEAN	4.8824
SD	3.0798

The comparison between the scores before implementing the colour code (see table 3 and 4) reflects a clear advantage on the scores of the CG if compared to those obtained by the EG, having a mean score of two points higher. Nevertheless, both of them are scoring under the acceptable level.

Table 5. Experimental group mean and SD scores (Post-test).

EG	Post-test
MEAN	8.0938
SD	2.9769

Table 6. Control group mean and SD scores (Post-test).

CG	Post-test
MEAN	5.8824
SD	3.5861

However, as it can be observed in table 5 and 6, by the end of the study after implementing the colour code, the EG experiences a great increase in the mean scores

achieving an average mark which is superior to 8 points (more than five points above the mean attained before). This score surpasses the minimum level of acceptance. In contrast, despite having exhibited a better initial level, the CG does increase the mean score slightly, but not enough to reach 6 points, and only increasing their mean in one point.

Broadly speaking, a clear picture emerges from the t-test, as the CG slightly improved in the post-test while the EG improved its scores in a noticeable manner. As a matter of fact, it can only be observed statistical significant difference in the EG results. Despite the CG started with higher scores, by the end of the treatment the EG surpassed the CG.

4.2. Discussion

In this section the results obtained and presented in the section above are discussed along the lines of the hypothesis entertained.

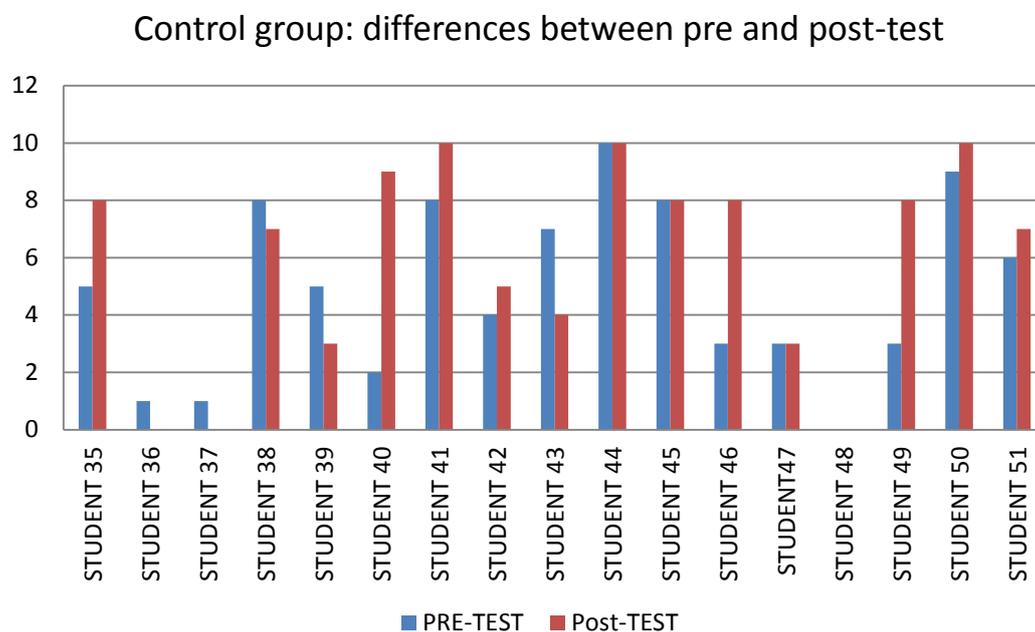


Figure 8. Evolution between the pre and post-test by the CG.

The data showed in table 2 and in the above figure 8 reflect the evolution of the students who had no exposure to the colour code methodology. Surprisingly, not only did some of the students not improve their scores, but they even performed worse than in the pre-test, as it can be seen in students 38, 39 and 43. In contrast, some of them improved considerably and others stayed exactly the same. Considering student number 48, although she took both tests, she is diagnosed with a lower intelligence quotient than the average so what she wrote was a copy of the original word choice given. The case of number 37 is also special because he has a general developmental disorder so for him it is difficult to carry out a task in which he has to follow an order without getting distracted. However, student 36 does not have any difficulties in learning but he performed very poorly in both tests.

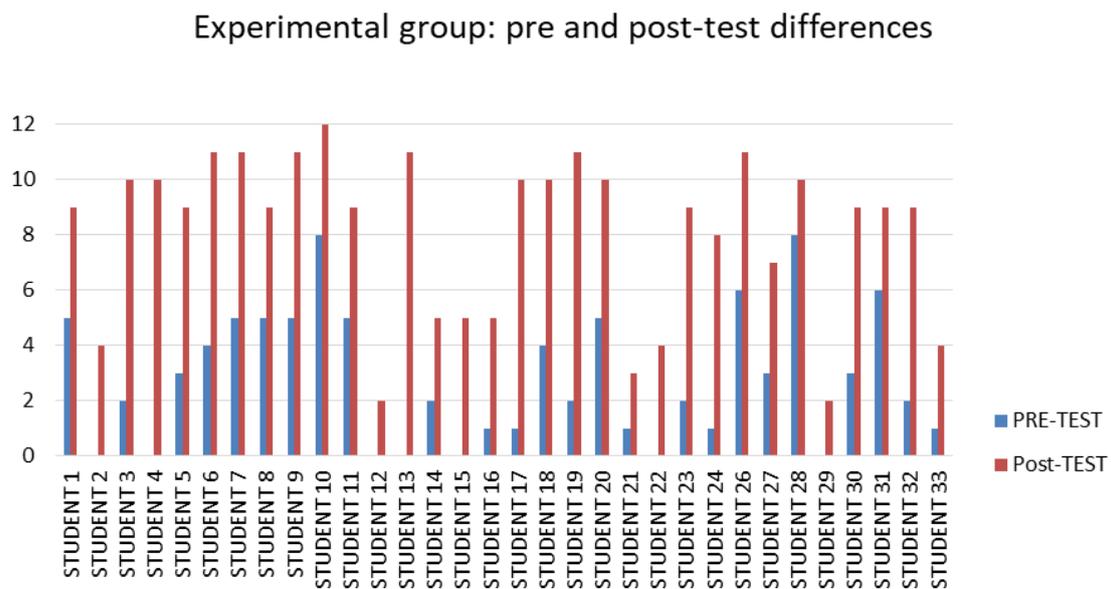


Figure 9. Evolution between the pre and post-test by the EG.

The results displayed earlier in table 1 and the graphic shown by figure 9 reflect the profound effect exerted by the colour code strip methodology, as after its implementation there has been a dramatic increase in the results of all the participants in the study. It is remarkable the difference of scores achieved by some students over time, which is the case of students 3, 17 or 19, for instance. Nevertheless, all students outperformed at least in two points from the pre-test. It should be pointed out that students 2, 4, 12, 13, 15, 22 and 29, who in the pre-test

obtained a mark of 0 points, performed significantly better in the last test, in which some of them (see students 4 and 13, for instance) almost scored the maximum points.

The aim of the research was to investigate the effectiveness of using a colour code for teaching English grammar structures to students with low level of proficiency. Therefore, in the light of the results, it can be said that the evolution of the marks obtained was consistent with the hypothesis and expectations prior to the research.

These findings coincide with Omar's research study (2016), even though his results were less promising. One of the main reasons why this research achieved high results can be because of the use of MSL to improve the mastery of grammar, which was a different way of applying the colour code used by previous researchers (Gattegno, 2010; Omar, 2016). Research conducted in the last decade (Akakura, 2012; Hinkel & Fotos, 2002; Muranoi, 2000; Schneider, 1999; Zyzik & Marqués Pascual, 2012) coincides in that explicit MSL instruction improves the correctness in grammar speaking and writing (as cited in Schneider & Kulmhofer, 2016).

Grammar through a code was pivotal in this study which was carried out with students of first grade of Primary Education (6-7 years old) and with a low proficiency level of English. As a matter of fact, this was the first time for them to learn grammar through a code and to practice it in an explicit way. Hymes (1972) and Campbell and Wales (1970) consider that the role of grammar in the communicative classroom is crucial, since communicative competence includes grammatical competence (implicit and explicit rules of grammar) and sociolinguistic competence (rules for language use). This view (cited in Canale & Swain, 1980) is supported by other researchers, such as Rama and Agulló (2012) or Saaristo (2015).

The conditions and the specific characteristics of students have also been taken into account. In fact, a deductive method (the rules are presented directly) has been applied since we were working with low proficiency students. This was suggested by Hwu and Sun (2012) after conducting their study: learning deductively works better with this type of students (as cited in Motha, 2013). Furthermore, the individual differences of students have led the study to be adapted to different kind of learners in order to cater for everybody's needs in the classroom. Consequently, multiple factors

that affect the students' learning and acquisition processes can be minimized. Thus, a wide variety of instructional activities have been used to give the opportunity to all learners with different abilities and learning preferences to master a second language (Lightbown & Spada, 2013) through a mix of learning styles and different intelligences: the visual code was introduced to the classroom and practiced in several ways which involved the development of the four skills (reading, listening, writing and speaking), the use of different cognitive resources and resorting to various learning strategies (or multiple intelligences).

In this sense, and with regard to how this colour code would improve the teachers' work, I could notice during the time of exposition that when students have internalized the patterns and colours, it is easier to teach new concepts. As Villareal and Ardaiz (2017) state, it is essential to build connections between prior knowledge and new concepts when fostering meaningful learning and the current study allows it to happen. Besides, the struggling process for the SL teacher of making the students internalize the grammar structures, the short attention span and the limited vocabulary that these low proficiency students have are problems that have been minimized with the integration of colours (Omar, 2016).

On the other hand, as cited in Dzulkipli & Mustafar (2013), a better performance on the students' scores can be due to the influence that colour has on students' memory and attentional level making them use more efficiently their cognitive abilities (Pan, 2012; MacKay & Ahmetzanov, 2005; Dzulkipli & Mustafar, 2013). The colours have been the key element in the study having the power to make them learn better due to the capability that colour has for motivating the students to learn and benefit from their educational experiences (Wichmann, Sharpe & Gegenfurtner, 2002; Dzulkipli & Mustafar, 2013). Moreover, the election of the colours was thought to be attractive for them using warm and vivid colours for the code (orange, green, red, blue, yellow and purple), which as Greene, Bell, and Boyer (1983) state, have a greater effect on attention compared with cold colours (cited in Dzulkipli & Mustafar, 2013).

Additionally, another factor that can have an effect in the results is the use of various types of corrective feedback in almost all the activities, which is backed up by other studies (Ranta, 1997; Oliver & Mackley, 2003; Sheen, 2010; Lázaro, 2013) which advocate for the benefits of corrective feedback in SLL. Up to four types of corrective

feedback were used in this study from the categories established by Roy Lister and Leila Ranta (1997): explicit correction, clarification requests, metalinguistic feedback and elicitation. A combination of explicit and more implicit feedback was used in order to improve their performance and their autonomy following the phases that Little (2007) listed for MSL from explicit demonstration and subsequent guided practice to free practice by the student (as cited in Schneider & Kulmhofer, 2016). During the first half of the study the corrective feedback used was always explicit or it combined metalinguistic elicitations with a less explicit correction. Feedback is more likely to happen in explicit language exchanges and learners modify more their outputs in explicit language focus exchanges (Oliver & Mackley, 2003; Sheen, 2010). Besides, as cited in Lázaro (2013), explicit feedback works better with low proficiency level students than implicit alternatives (Ferris, 2004; Ferris & Roberts, 2001). Afterwards, when students had the code more internalized the corrections were always done through metalinguistic comments and elicitations during all the activity until they achieved correctness making them think twice what they were doing and what could be wrong. In fact, this type of feedback is more likely to lead to a correct form (Lister & Ranta, 1997). Singing was the only activity in which there was no correction and learning was implicit through repetition.

Likewise, the time of exposition has been crucial for the effectiveness of the study. In fact, having more than two months to practice with the code has been enough to see outstanding achievements in the students. However, it should be pointed out that we cannot know if they will retain these concepts in their long-term memory after the post-test. A retention task should have been used to prove it. However, there was no time to pass this delayed test, which could be used to prove it. Young students have a very short attention span; what is more, they face problems in storing the information to long-term memory (Wan Shafika Omar, 2016).

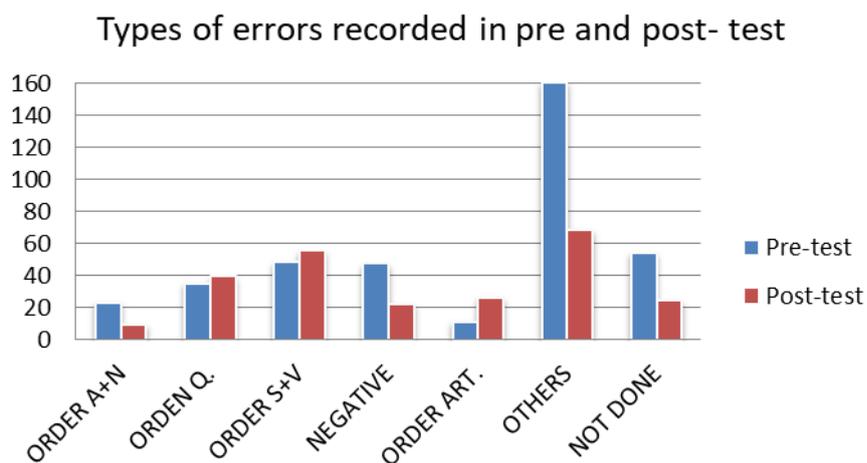


Figure 10. Types of errors founded in both pre- and post-test in all the students.

After analysing the errors made by the students in both pre- and post-tests (see figure 10) we can see that at the beginning most of the errors were of order between the subject and the verb and in negative sentences, without taking into account the sentences that were not done and other types of errors which make reference to sentences that were intelligible or completely in disorder. After the post-test the most common mistakes are again the order of the subject and the verb, and the order of the questions. Both types of errors increased in the post-test. This can be due to different factors, and it can be admitted that Krashen's Natural Order Hypothesis may be right. However, although it might seem that they are doing worse, their general scores improved significantly despite having scored worse in some of the aspects analysed. It does not mean that they are in a lower stage than in then pre-test, because as Lightbown and Spada (2013) state, the higher stage in which the learner is does not mean fewer errors. By contrast, a great decrease in the number of errors can be observed in negative sentences, which was a common mistake, as well as in the order of the article and the noun.

Therefore, the stages stated by Manfred Pienemann, Malcolm Johnston and Geoff Bridley (1988) or John Schumann's (1979) are closely followed (cited in Lightbown & Spada, 2013). Nevertheless, as we mentioned, the movement through stages depending on each learner's characteristics can be possible and they might experiment behaviours of more than one stage at a time. Some students start the test using the right order of elements but at some point, they lose concentration and their tendency

changes completely. Some other students have all the sentences written in the right order, except for the subject-verb order. In fact, some communicative situations of stress or complexity for the learners can make them slip back to an early stage (Lightbown & Spada, 2013).

In sum, there are several reasons to consider that this study has validity due to the results obtained and the positive teaching implications both for teachers and second language learners.

CONCLUSIONES Y CUESTIONES ABIERTAS

Durante dos meses y medio se ha trabajado en las clases utilizando este código de colores para la enseñanza de la gramática en inglés, a través de actividades diseñadas siguiendo estrategias multisensoriales (Schneider & Kulmhofer, 2016) y al mismo tiempo atendiendo a las inteligencias múltiples y estilos de aprendizaje que Denig (2004) menciona. Se trata de una propuesta diferente e innovadora que puede ser mejorada o complementada con más estudios sobre el tema por lo que está a disposición de cualquier docente que crea conveniente ponerlo en práctica, pues se ha demostrado que el uso de esta metodología es altamente positivo.

Entre las estrategias multisensoriales, podemos destacar la creación de la canción que atrajo al alumnado que necesita más movimiento y que por su ritmo y baile fue muy motivadora para los estudiantes, que quisieron repetirla varias veces. Además, otro recurso que se proponía y que fue utilizado es la literatura a través de un cuento digital. Esta actividad les sirvió tanto para el trabajo en grupo como individual, así como para la comunicación oral entre ellos mediante el juego. Estas estrategias, junto con el uso de colores, el código y los materiales manipulativos, han permitido desarrollar las cuatro destrezas (comprensión y expresión oral y escrita) en el aula de una forma activa, participativa e interactiva.

Los resultados indican que existe una mejora significativa en la formación de frases de los participantes, por lo que se podría argumentar que el estudio es altamente positivo, tanto para los docentes como para el alumnado. Por ese motivo, es posible sugerir su puesta en práctica como mejora del aprendizaje del inglés como segunda lengua, aunque no se descarta su idoneidad para la enseñanza de otras materias o lenguas y en otros contextos que no sea el escolar necesariamente.

En este estudio, la metodología ha perseguido el trabajo mediante diferentes tipos de agrupamientos (individuales, parejas, pequeños grupos o grupo grande) para favorecer la diversidad en las actividades, así como el uso de juegos en ellas como factor motivante y atractivo para el alumnado que ha participado en este proyecto. Los agrupamientos han permitido que el alumnado se ayude entre sí y se motive con la actividad sintiéndose capaz de realizarlo y a la vez formando parte de un grupo.

El interés por el uso de los colores por parte del alumnado fue claro desde el principio, ya que la idea de trabajar con una tira de velcro y las tarjetas de colores fue muy bien recibida desde el inicio. De hecho, ese entusiasmo fue en aumento y un claro ejemplo de ello es la facilidad con la que el alumnado iba interiorizando poco a poco la forma de usarlo. Fue tal la ayuda que el código aportaba, que incluso lo usaban en otras actividades que no especificaban el uso de colores. En otras actividades de clase, el alumnado tenía la posibilidad de elegir entre usar los colores o no usarlos. Muchos de ellos, pedían los manipulativos para realizar algún ejercicio de la fotocopia o se les sugería usar los colores cuando estaban muy perdidos. La mayor parte de los estudiantes que han utilizado los colores en actividades que no formaban parte del estudio pertenecía a un grupo de sujetos que luego han obtenido altas puntuaciones en el último test, por lo que puede ser que cuanto mejor sea el nivel, mayor será el beneficio reportado por esta forma de trabajar. Un claro ejemplo de esto es el comentario realizado por otra profesora uno de los últimos días de mis prácticas, quien percibió que en sus clases de apoyo algunos alumnos estaban con la cabeza girada mirando a la pared hasta que se dio cuenta de que estaban mirando al póster a pesar de que ella no había hecho referencia a él en ningún momento.

Por otro lado, el presente estudio requiere de muy pocos recursos por lo que puede adaptarse a cualquier tipo de situación y contexto más desfavorecido. A pesar de que se utilizan las nuevas tecnologías como recurso para la creación o proyección de actividades, no es su recurso principal, aunque sí favorece el desarrollo de las mismas.

Como todo trabajo, se pueden observar algunas debilidades y sugerir mejoras para futuros proyectos sobre este tema. Como debilidades podemos citar el tiempo de realización que podía haber sido más prolongado para obtener mayor fiabilidad de sus resultados. Además, aunque no todas las actividades se dedican a la práctica de la destreza escrita se les examina sólo en estos términos. Una prueba oral podría ser interesante para obtener resultados sobre la repercusión de este modelo de trabajo en el resto de destrezas. Por otro lado, el uso de cartulinas blancas para el “yes” y “no” en las respuestas puede haber tenido impacto negativo o nulo en el alumnado ya que el blanco no era tan distinguible como otros colores. Por eso, la posible aplicación de un color más vivo o llamativo para este tipo de palabras tal vez podría mejorar la capacidad de retención y uso correcto de dichos adverbios.

Otra cuestión pendiente en este estudio es la valoración de la posible repercusión que han podido tener los diferentes tipos de agrupamiento o los modelos de corrección de error utilizados en las actividades. Aunque el objetivo ha sido utilizar distintas variables para llegar al máximo número de estudiantes teniendo en cuenta diferentes estilos y ritmos de aprendizaje, por falta de tiempo y de medios no se han podido estudiar todos los factores que han podido repercutir en los resultados y la consiguiente mejoría observada.

Por último, como ya se ha mencionado anteriormente, la aplicación de una prueba diferida al cabo de uno o varios meses sería útil para comprobar su eficacia real y el impacto que este código de colores trabajado a través de estrategias multisensoriales ha tenido en su memoria a largo plazo, ya que tal vez con el paso del tiempo, si no se prosigue su utilización, los estudiantes pueden perder práctica y dejar de ser tan útil. Por ejemplo, como ya se ha mencionado, Berendese (2012) realizó un estudio donde comparó la enseñanza deductiva e inductiva aplicando un pre y post-test además de una prueba diferida. Esta última prueba demostró que el grupo instruido deductivamente mejoró con respecto a los resultados obtenidos en el pre-test. Por su parte, el grupo inductivo, aunque empezó presentando mejores resultados, estos se mantuvieron similares tras ser examinados posteriormente. De este modo, para conocer con mayor exactitud la fiabilidad del código de colores puesto en práctica a través de estrategias multisensoriales y, en su caso, poder presentar otro argumento a favor del uso de esta metodología, sería conveniente evaluarlo de nuevo en un espacio de tiempo dilatado.

Finalmente, tan solo cabe concluir indicando que las impresiones generales sobre esta investigación son muy positivas. Por mi parte, he visto una clara mejoría mediante el uso del código tanto entre el alumnado, como desde el punto de vista del docente, que ha encontrado una manera efectiva y entretenida de enseñar estos conceptos gramaticales que a menudo resultan arduos y difíciles de integrar en la clase. De hecho, el tutor del colegio a cargo de mis prácticas siempre hacía referencia al código en sus clases y resaltaba la mejoría y utilidad que esta forma de trabajar estaba teniendo en sus aulas. Además, una profesora, atraída por el poster de clase me propuso hacer alguna actividad con su alumnado en cuarto de primaria, ya que creía que algunos estudiantes aún no tenían claro el orden de frases tan básicas como las

que trabajábamos. Después de haber pasado dos sesiones con este alumnado de cuarto, puedo apuntar que es una metodología válida para distintas edades y distintos niveles de dominio de la lengua, ya que se repetían las mismas impresiones que con el grupo experimental. Asimismo, aunque no se ha preguntado al grupo experimental sobre sus impresiones acerca del código y las actividades realizadas durante la puesta en práctica del proyecto, tanto yo como el tutor percibimos muy buenas sensaciones en las clases. De hecho, el grupo estaba muy motivado; la variedad de las actividades permitió que todos pudieran disfrutar en mayor o menor medida de las clases, dependiendo de sus preferencias de aprendizaje, y los resultados indican que su nivel de aprendizaje también se ha visto positivamente afectado.

En definitiva, este Trabajo Fin de Grado es el broche final de estos cuatro intensos años de grado como maestra en Educación Primaria. En este proyecto he intentado integrar mis conocimientos y experiencias. Mi objetivo era ponerme a prueba tratando de buscar una propuesta que fuera atractiva, novedosa y diferente que hiciera de este trabajo algo único y al mismo tiempo ayudara al alumnado a mejorar y disfrutar aprendiendo inglés. La realización de esta pequeña investigación me ha permitido disfrutar de mi periodo de prácticas viviendo la realidad de primera mano. Este proyecto cierra esta etapa universitaria, pero estoy segura de que abre otra. La etapa como docente, en la que el aprendizaje nunca termina ni para el profesorado ni para el alumnado.

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APPENDIXES

Appendix I

Pre-test

- Order these words to describe the picture correctly.

is car a It



1. _____

dog? it is a



2. _____

blue is fish. It a



3. _____

It blue not a is fish.



4. _____

a lorry. It big is



5. _____

umbrella. is an It



6. _____

She happy. is



7. _____

sad? he is

8. _____

No, not. is he



9. _____

cakes. are three There



10. _____

There lollipop. a is



11. _____

- Describe the picture using these words:

tall

boy



Appendix II

1. Talk about the pictures. Finish the sentences.



- NINE
- ANIMALS
- BIRDS
- RABBIT
- WHITE
- ARE
- FISHES
- THREE

1. There are _____.
2. There are two _____.
3. The _____ is _____ and black.
4. **There** fishes **three** **are**

Appendix III



Photograph of one group of students done when they finished ordering themselves to create a correct sentence in activity 3 of phase 1.

Appendix IV

IS SHE HAPPY?
YES, SHE IS.



IS SHE HAPPY?
NO, SHE IS NOT.



1st part :

- 1- Are you sad?
- 2- No, I am not.
- 3- Is it green?
- 4- Yes, it is.

2nd part:

it a Is dog?

it Yes, is.

is not an cat orange It

3rd part:

happy He boy is not a

Appendix V

	Write the correct sentence
 	
 	
 	
 	

Appendix VI



Appendix VII

Vocabulary

TREES 	HOUSE 
FOREST 	PRESENT 
CAKE 	VILLAGE 
LIVING ROOM 	GARDEN 
BALL 	PARENTS 

Appendix VIII



Four horizontal lines spaced evenly down the page, providing a writing area for notes or a legend.

Appendix IX



She is a happy girl.

She is tall.

She has got grey trousers.

She has not got glasses.

Appendix X



HELLO EVERYBODY, WELCOME TO THE CLASS.

HELLO EVERYBODY, COME AND DANCE.

WHO ARE THESE BOYS?

WHO ARE THESE GIRLS?

IS HE _____ ?

YES, HE IS.

IS SHE _____ ?

YES, SHE IS.

HELLO EVERYBODY, WELCOME TO THE CLASS.

HELLO EVERYBODY, COME AND DANCE.

IS HE _____ ?

NO, HE IS NOT.

IS SHE _____ ?

NO, SHE IS NOT.

HELLO EVERYBODY, WELCOME TO THE CLASS.

HELLO EVERYBODY, COME AND DANCE.

HE IS HAPPY.

WE ARE HAPPY.

HELLO EVERYBODY, WELCOME TO THE CLASS.

HELLO EVERYBODY, COME AND DANCE.

THERE ARE _____ BOYS

THERE ARE _____ GIRLS

THERE IS NOT ANYONE ELSE.

Appendix XI

NAME: _____



it	Elephant?	an	is

<u>not.</u>	No,	is	it

<u>dog.</u>	There	one	is

It	<u>dog.</u>	is	funny	a

sad	is	It	not	<u>dog.</u>	a

white	<u>fur.</u>	has got	It

Appendix XII



1. How many people are there?

2. Is she tall?

3. Which colour is it?



4. Has he got blue trousers?

5. Make a question using: He / Is / sad



1. How many people are there?

2. Is she happy?

3. What colour is it?



4. Has he got blue trousers?

5. Make a question using: He / Is / sad
