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Official Master's Degree in Teaching in Secondary Schools, Vocational Training and Language Centres



**Improving 7th Grade Students' Collaborative Skills: Exploratory Talk
in the EFL Classroom**

Master's Dissertation

Year 2019 - 2020

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I would like to dedicate this master's dissertation to my family, who have always supported me; and to all those teachers I had in the past, who made me want to become one myself.

Abstract

ENG

The aim of this master's Dissertation is to design an innovation project, its materials and its assessment. Its first objective is to improve 7th Grade students (12-13-year olds) collaborative skills by having them work in groups during the course in the EFL classroom. Secondly, its aim is to develop their ability to interact with their peers in conversations and discussions characterised by exploratory talk. Thirdly, its purpose is to create a classroom atmosphere with shared rules where learners feel safe when participating and, finally, to develop their critical thinking and their reasoning through language. This dissertation analyses students' starting point and their needs considering their context. An action plan follows, starting with a literature review on collaborative work and exploratory talk and a detailed and structured description of all the components of the innovation project. An annual plan, an example of a teaching unit, a series of materials and recurring structures and solutions to expected problems are provided as well as a connection of those to the Catalan curriculum. Finally, the assessment plan for the project and its participants is described, followed by a communication plan to inform of the process and its results to the teaching and learning community of the school.

Key words: Collaborative work, exploratory talk, innovation project, interaction, group discussion, EFL (English as a Foreign Language)

SP

El objetivo principal de este trabajo de fin de máster es diseñar un proyecto de innovación, sus respectivos materiales y su evaluación. En primer lugar, su propósito es mejorar las habilidades colaborativas de los alumnos de 1º de la ESO (Educación Secundaria Obligatoria) a través del trabajo en clase en el aula de inglés como lengua extranjera. En segundo lugar, su finalidad es desarrollar las habilidades de interacción entre iguales en conversaciones y debates caracterizados por el habla exploratoria. En tercer lugar, su objetivo es crear un ambiente de clase con normas comunes donde los alumnos se puedan sentir cómodos y seguros para participar y, finalmente, desarrollar el pensamiento crítico de los alumnos además de su razonamiento a través del lenguaje. Este trabajo analiza el punto de partida de los aprendices junto a sus necesidades teniendo en cuenta su contexto. Seguidamente, se ha diseñado un plan de acción, partiendo de una revisión de la literatura existente sobre el trabajo colaborativo y el habla exploratoria, seguida de una descripción detallada y estructurada de los componentes del proyecto. Se ofrecen un plan anual, un ejemplo de unidad didáctica, una serie de materiales y estructuras recurrentes y soluciones posibles a esperados problemas. Además, se establece una conexión entre estos y el currículo catalán. Por último, se describe un plan de evaluación del proyecto y de los participantes, seguido de un plan de comunicación con el objetivo de informar del proceso y de sus resultados a la comunidad educativa del centro.

Palabras clave: trabajo colaborativo, habla exploratoria, proyecto de innovación, debate de grupo, ILE (Inglés como Lengua Extranjera)

1. Introduction

The use of collaborative work in the classroom has been strengthened and incremented over the last years. With the implementation of learning methodologies such as PBL (Project-Based Learning) and TBL (Task-Based Learning), collaboration among learners has become a key practice in primary and secondary education. Research has shown that group work has a wide range of benefits for students when it is used efficiently. However, its effectiveness is not always guaranteed and sometimes collaboration may result in unproductiveness and discouragement from the learners. In order for students to productively engage in collaborative tasks, they need to be provided with enough tools to perform and to feel they are fulfilling the objectives of the activity or project. Similarly, students' talk when interacting and discussing between peers shows signs of ineffectiveness, it being far from the ultimately aimed exploratory talk, the kind of discourse in which members of a group engage in a critical and constructive way with each other's opinions (Rojas-Drummond & Mercer, 2003).

Interactional discourse plays an essential role in collaboration as options must be discussed among the members of the group and decisions must be made together. Therefore, exploratory talk becomes an essential goal that must be worked with and offered to students. In other words, learners must be instructed on how to express opinions, agreement and disagreement in an effective way, illustrating and developing their critical thinking. They must learn and get used to asking for clarifications by requesting repetition and making questions, as well as clarifying themselves in order to justify and give arguments to their ideas and opinions. They must become aware of the importance of respecting turns and not interrupting their peers. Finally, but not least, learners have to be able to arrive to common conclusions.

I have observed this common lack in the effectiveness of collaborative work between students in a high school in Barcelona where English is taught as the main foreign language. Here, PBL (Project-Based Learning) is used for some hours within the students' schedule, although they are taught in Catalan. Nevertheless, after some observation and analysis, the outcomes of the subject and its methodology are believed to be doubtful. Moreover, seldom is collaborative work seen in other subjects. Thus, most students lack interactional abilities as well as an efficient interactional discourse.

Most research about the development of exploratory talk among students has been done with the English language as the learners' L1. Neil Mercer (1996, 1999, 2003, 2008, 2010) is one of the key researchers to shed light on this topic. Most of his findings and experiments

have been carried out in the United Kingdom having English as the participants' L1. In contrast, little research has been done on how to develop the use of exploratory talk with foreign students of this language. Thus, I aim to design an innovation project with which I want to contribute to providing tools and solutions to this problem with English as the L2.

2. Objectives and Relevance

I have designed an innovation project with which I can offer students enough tools and strategies with the objective of improving their interactive discourse and skills. I aim to help students develop their IC (Interactional Competence) skills and their ability to participate in conversations characterised by exploratory talk.

If we want to make use of collaborative activities and methodologies in our classrooms, it is essential as teachers to help our students to improve their skills when interacting with their peers. Learners should not be expected to know how to collaborate efficiently without being properly instructed and without having been offered the necessary tools. Teaching these skills is not only part of teaching English as a language but it also implies working on transversal competences in the English classroom such as the social and the personal ones. We are helping learners develop their skills when socialising as well as raising their awareness of their learning process. All in all, not only do we teach English, but we also educate people and prepare them for real life. Finally, by carrying out innovative projects and dealing with unexplored areas or topics which have not been developed enough, a teacher's professional growth is benefited.

2.1. Limitations

The process of writing the following master's dissertation has encountered several limitations. The main obstacle has been the COVID-19 pandemic. Consequently, a state of alert was imposed and, hence, a lockdown. In the beginning, it was aimed to be a classroom-based research which was going to be implemented in the high school where I was carrying out my internship. Since educational centres were obliged to close due to the pandemic, online teaching was implemented, and the initial research had to be terminated. As a result of these obstacles, a different perspective and method were used in the creation of this project. Furthermore, it has not been possible to implement it. Despite this, I aim to do it in the future and, additionally, the process of creation of this project has provided me with very useful knowledge for my professional career as a teacher.

2.2. Sections of the innovation project

This master's dissertation is divided into different sections. First, the needs of the informants and the school are analysed. A glimpse into the context and the starting point is presented considering data that was collected by means of observation and an interview with the English teacher. Moreover, pieces of research on similar situations are presented. The action plan follows, introducing a literature review on collaborative work and exploratory talk. In addition, the innovation project is introduced along with the designed annual plan, a teaching unit and some materials and solutions to expected difficulties. A connection is made with the Catalan curriculum in this section as well. In the next part, the assessment plan is specified by describing how both students and the project will be assessed and what data is going to be collected. A communication plan follows, where it is indicated how the teaching and learning community will be informed about the project. Finally, some conclusions and personal reflections on the project and the process of its design are made.

3. Needs Analysis

3.1. School

The project will be implemented in a regular school of Barcelona, in Montbau, a neighbourhood in Horta-Guinardó district. This high school is part of an enclosure where other educational institutions such as the University of Barcelona are placed too. The environment that surrounds the school is characterised by nature and, more specifically, Collserola. Moreover, a wide range of commodities, such as free public transport, are available for the members of the educational community and the enclosure. Therefore, the conditions and characteristics of the neighbourhood and the location where this high school is found are exceptional.

The centre presents large dimensions. It offers a wide range of study possibilities including compulsory secondary education as well as post-obligatory college preparation and Vocational Training. Each course of compulsory secondary education has two lines, although this year a third one has been added in 7th grade due to an increase in the applications for the school. In general, there are approximately 25 or 30 students per class. All groups are heterogeneous, having students with different levels and some learners with learning difficulties. Furthermore, some students attend what is called the *Intensive Improvement Program* for some particular subjects, for instance, English.

3.2. Informants

The innovation project will be carried out with 7th grade students of English as a foreign language. It will be implemented in three classes, with a ratio of approximately 25 students each. Being heterogeneous groups, the students show varied levels of this foreign language as well as different social and educational contexts.

Even though some learners have a higher level of English, it could be said that, in general terms, the students' level is between A1 and A2. They have English class three times a week and, therefore, a total of three hours. Despite being divided into three classes, all groups tend to carry out the same activities. However, those students with more learning difficulties do not attend these classes as they attend the Intensive Improvement Program during these hours.

3.3. Starting point

3.3.1. English Classroom Context

As it is stated in the Educational Project of the school (INS Montbau, 2007), language is one of its central concepts. International exchanges and full immersion trips are offered to students throughout their education. The two foreign languages taught in the school are French and English, the latter being the compulsory one since 7th grade. Learners of the school study English three hours a week. Even though there are different English teachers in the Language Department of the high school, only one of them is responsible for the 7th Grade. Despite there being only one teacher, a wide range of methodologies and strategies are used in her classes, hence, not opting just for a single one but rather mixing and varying. Textbooks are not used in this subject. On the contrary, diverse digital resources are preferred and used in every session, following the focus on the development of student' digital abilities as it is mentioned in the school's Educational Project. For this reason, laptops and the students' mobile phones are often used for several activities.

As data previous to the design of the innovation project, the teacher of the three groups of 7th Grade was interviewed. Several questions were asked about the students' abilities and habits when collaborating and discussing. Additionally, she answered some questions about the activities she carries out in the class to boost interaction between the students. The following figure sums up the students' situation before carrying out the designed project, their

weaknesses and strengths.

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
10 minutes of collaborative activities in small groups or pairs.	Lack of basic vocabulary.
Turns tend to be respected.	Some interruptions as a way of showing popularity or power.
Opinions are given.	Lack of competence in order to justify and give arguments for their opinions.
Communication through non-verbal language and key words.	Most students cannot produce intelligible speech.
Encouragement to express agreement and disagreement.	Lack of familiarity with target forms.
Gestures are used to help classmates.	Not much scaffolding between peers.
Tendency to ask for peers' opinions.	Clarifications are made only when they are asked by the teacher.
Use of cards, tables and models when collaborating or discussing.	Lack of collaborative projects, tasks or debates.

Figure 1: Students' strengths and weaknesses

When it comes to students' Interactional Competence, she stated that she does not expect all students to interact by speaking at first but rather that they are allowed to respond by doing too. Her aim is for the class to use English as much as possible. However, L1 is not completely avoided. Students often lack basic vocabulary, which prevents them from being able to express themselves as they would like to.

Learners are expected to work in small groups in at least two of the three weekly hours for approximately 10 minutes. This time is used for activities in which students exchange information that they must remember later. Moreover, although groups of four are sometimes used, they usually work in pairs or groups of three. When it comes to turn-taking, she claimed that students have improved and that one of her major concerns is improving her way of helping them to do that. Some students tend to interrupt their classmates as a way of showing their power or popularity. However, it is not the teacher's biggest concern as she mentions that they tend to be more respectful once they are engaged in the activity and once they want to exchange their opinions. It was also stated in the interview that students give their opinion but that they

are not competent enough to give arguments for them. Their answers are often structured by key words instead of whole utterances. Nevertheless, students are not expected to discuss as the teacher believes that they do not have the required language yet. They can give answers but very few learners can produce intelligible speech. In regard to expressing agreement and disagreement, students are encouraged to do it and they are able to do it although with grammatical mistakes or non-verbally. She claims that they are not used to the target forms.

With respect to peer scaffolding or clarifications, she informed that rarely do learners help each other. When they do it, they focus on what is being said rather than paying attention to how it is being said. They sometimes make some gestures in order to indicate if their classmates are giving the right answer to a question. In contrast, they show a more prominent habit when it comes to asking for their classmates' opinion although not in a spontaneous way. Although it is still being built in, they are invited to do it and to exchange information. They are especially encouraged when their classmates say something or give an opinion they did not expect. In addition, they do ask for clarifications although not as often as the teacher would like them to. Sometimes, they do it due to interest in the information. Students only clarify themselves when the teacher interacts and asks them to.

As I have observed, a variety of teaching methodologies are used in the school and in the English subject. Nevertheless, seldom is collaborative work as seen in the innovation project used in the English classroom. As indicated in the interview, they sometimes do some activities in pairs where they have to get information from one another, but collaboration is not used for long-term tasks or projects. As support, students are provided with cards or tables that are used to exchange information as well as models and language they can use. Debates and group discussions do not predominate the methodology of the classes, although students are often asked questions where they can give their opinion.

3.3.2. PBL in the school

In order to collect data before designing the innovation project, observation was carried out for 5 weeks in the high school too. Most of this observation was done during the English classes. Nevertheless, those hours dedicated to PBL (Project-Based Learning) were also observed since they were essential to analyse students' interactional discourse and how they do collaborative work.

These hours are used to carry out varied long-term projects in Catalan where students often collaborate in pairs or groups of three. The final objective is always creating a final product, which changes depending on the project. These projects are interdisciplinary, focusing on a topic from different perspectives belonging to different areas of knowledge. Furthermore, due to the projects' interdisciplinary nature, some intermediate tasks are carried out in Spanish and in English. However, these are usually instructed by a teacher from another subject different from English.

During those observed hours, students showed difficulties in making shared decisions. Some of those decisions implied determining information for the project and its outcome such as choosing the format of the final product, what to include in it or mixing both members' ideas. Usually, it was solved by accepting one of the students' options, although this sometimes resulted in an adverse atmosphere among the members of the team.

All in all, although they are on the good track, these hours of Project-Based Learning do not achieve the real purpose of the methodology yet. Despite these three weekly hours where they work in groups, individual work predominates the school's pedagogical focus as well as the students' preferences. This also affects the results of these projects and the students' attitude when collaborating. Students lack training on collaboration and productive interactional discourse as it will be later mentioned.

3.4. Research on similar situations

Research on collaborative work and on exploratory talk has shown that similar situations can be found in schools all around the world. Despite using collaboration with students, it can be observed how they often lack practice, skills and, hence, motivation. In the case of Jacobs and Inn (2003), teachers' reservations and rejection when using collaboration in class was seen in Southeast Asia. Teachers felt overwhelmed by questions and a sense of lack of control when having learners working in groups. They worried about the size of the classrooms, the ratio of students, and the noise and the chaos caused by this kind of practices. Their lack of knowledge and practice resulted in prejudices such as believing collaboration was a waste of time and that it was impossible to monitor all the groups. However, what the authors demonstrate with their claims is that all these fears and insecurities the teacher may feel towards collaborative work can be overcome once they realise all its benefits.

Sylvia Rojas-Drummond and Neil Mercer (2003) encountered a similar situation where they carried out their research, in Mexico and in England. It was observed that collaboration and students' talk were rarely on-task, efficient and of educational value due to the lack of instruction. Were students taught how to talk, think and work together in an efficient way, collaboration would be productive. Mercer's and Rojas-Drummond's research was carried out in primary schools. Conclusions from both countries showed positive results. They showed individual and collective development and benefits, having students improved their talk, interaction and collective thinking as well as having developed their critical thinking and reasoning as individuals.

The contexts of these pieces of research are similar to the one found in the school where the innovation project is aimed to be implemented. Similarly, students are not used to collaborative work and, additionally, they are not taught on how to productively work in groups and interact with each other. Hence, they cannot achieve the main goal: exploratory talk. What distinguishes this designed project with the mentioned pieces of research is that, in this case, English is taught as a foreign language. Thus, this innovation project is going to be implemented in an EFL classroom.

4. Action Plan

In the following section, the design and procedure of the innovation project is described and justified. By analysing what has been claimed and demonstrated about collaborative work and exploratory talk by other authors and their research, the rationale of the project is presented. Furthermore, the action plan of the project is introduced by looking at the annual plan and the teaching unit that have been created with this purpose. Their objectives, the overview and the materials that have been designed are introduced. Finally, a connection between the Catalan curriculum and the project is made.

4.1. Rationale

4.1.1. Collaborative Work

Collaboration between learners has become a recurrent pedagogical practice among primary and secondary education. Some of the most employed teaching methodologies, such as TBL (Task-Based Learning) and PBL (Project-Based Learning), go hand in hand with collaboration.

This rise in the use of collaborative practices can be justified by all the recent research that has shed light on the benefits of its implementation.

As Rojas-Drummond and Neil Mercer (2003) claim, the processes of thinking and learning have an intrinsic relation with humans' social and communicative nature. By working in groups, students develop both their 'intramental' or, in other words, individual cognition as well as their social and interactional abilities, which can also be called 'intermental' (Rojas-Drummond & Mercer, 2003). This interaction between peers helps them to develop their sensitivity towards perspectives which are different from theirs (Mercer, 1996). By creating conflicts where different world-views contrast, we are stimulating "some cognitive restructuring some learning and improved understanding". (Mercer, 1996, p. 360). What has also been shown is that collaborative activities allow students to develop their ability to generalize what they learn (Mercer, 1996), as well as their ability to express and justify their opinions and ideas.

Nevertheless, in order for collaborative work to give productive results and to benefit students in their development and learning, some factors must be guaranteed. Having learners working in groups does not ensure the educational value of their interactions (Patterson, 2009). Mercer (1996) states that research on collaborative learning tend to focus more on the student as an individual, often influenced by the neo-Piagetian approach. Some findings from this kind of research have shown positive values of collaborating in the learning process. Nevertheless, others have shed light on its negative outcomes when some conditions are not guaranteed. As Patterson argues (2009), students tend not to clearly understand the purpose of the tasks when they involve collaboration. Since they are seldom given the structures and tools to work in groups in an effective way, little interaction ends up benefiting students' learning process. Thus, students will only learn from collaboration with their peers if they know how to work together. However, most learners do not have this knowledge and most schools and teachers do not consider the educational value of this skill and, hence, they do not prioritize its teaching and practice enough (Simpson & Mercer, 2010).

Students are always the centre of any educational activity. For this reason, the creation of groups and collaboration activities must revolve around students' necessities and benefits instead of trying to adapt and accommodate them to the teacher's ease or wishes. Teachers need to clearly understand the objectives and the nature of the collaborative activities and the talk students are going to be involved in (Patterson, 2009). Students need to be provided with

the right conditions for them to communicate and collaborate productively (Mercer, 1996). Teachers have to build an atmosphere where they feel comfortable and safe, characterised by open questions for which there is a wide range of possible answers, by opportunities to talk and by active learning. All in all, students must be given the opportunity to participate, to discuss and to think by themselves (Barnes, 2010).

4.1.2. Students' interactional discourse and exploratory talk

In order to appreciate the value of collaborative work between students, it is essential to understand that “education is seen as taking place through dialogue” (Rojas-Drummond & Mercer, 2003, p. 100) and, hence, attention must be paid to interactional discourse in the classroom. This interaction is seen to happen between teacher and students, but also between learners.

When it comes to teacher-student interaction, Scott (2007) distinguishes between two types of talk: ‘authoritative’ talk, which is claimed to be the one that usually domains in the classroom; and ‘dialogue’, which often lacks. Furthermore, we encounter another problem when we look at the kind of questions that are normally asked by teachers, since they tend to be ‘closed’ ones (Simpson & Mercer, 2010). If teachers pay too much attention to what they consider to be right answers, they are preventing students from benefiting from discussion and from opportunities to interact with each other. As Barnes (2010) argues, learners must be offered contexts where they obtain knowledge that they can retain and that can help them shape their judgments and their daily actions. This is known as active learning and it can be achieved by engaging students in discussions where they can reflect what they have learned and where they develop skills that will benefit their learning process (Simpson & Mercer, 2010). Teachers should encourage their students to verbally express, elaborate and justify their own opinions and ideas, using language “as a tool for reasoning” (Simpson & Mercer, 2010, p.3). Encouraging interaction between students is not enough since “not all kinds of talk and collaboration are of equal educational value” (Mercer, 1996 p. 362) and it is teachers that must provide students with “scaffolding”, so they achieve the ultimate goal: using exploratory talk.

The most well-known author who has done innovative and relevant research about exploratory talk is Neil Mercer (1996, 1999, 2003, 2008, 2010). Nevertheless, it is Douglas Barnes (2010) that first identified and did research about the idea of this concept. Neil Mercer (2008) distinguishes between three types of talk. The first one and the least productive is

‘disputational talk’, where students share their ideas but disagree as they compete between each other. Thus, criticism is made in an unconstructive way and decisions are made individually.

The second talk that Mercer identifies is ‘cumulative talk’, in which competition is left behind and in which learners share their opinions and agree among each other in an uncritical way. Therefore, they do not evaluate the ideas. Finally, ‘exploratory talk’ arises as the most productive and efficient talk where students actively listen to each other, they ask for opinions, justifications and clarifications, they challenge each other’s ideas in a critical and respectful way and, finally, common decisions are made. The concept of ‘exploratory talk’ appears as an essential tool that must be taught and developed in the classroom so students can “explore unknown social or cognitive territor[ies] in order to make meaning[s] that [are] significant to their personal needs” (Mercer & , 2010, p. 1). In the following figure, the characteristics of all the three types of talk are summarised.

Characteristics of Talk (Adaptation from Mercer, 2008, p. 1)		
Disputational talk	Cumulative talk	Exploratory talk
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Disagreement and individual decisions. - Lack of constructive criticism. - Competition between members. - Lack of cooperation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Knowledge is shared. - Uncritical agreement. - Repetition and elaboration of ideas but lack of evaluation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Active listening. - Questions are asked. - Information is shared and ideas are challenged with arguments. - Contributions are made by all members of the group. - All ideas and members are respected. - Decisions are made together.

Figure 2: Characteristics of Talk (Adaptation from Mercer, 2008, p.1)

Patterson (2009) identifies ‘co-construction’ as another characteristic of exploratory talk since students develop a “new shared understanding” (p. 3) that emerges from their interaction. That is to say, there is no sign of superiority as students equally participate and share knowledge. In contrast, Patterson relates the concept of ‘scaffolding’ to cumulative talk as more competent learners tend to dominate, and those students with a lower level or less information may end up imitating and agreeing without really participating (Patterson, 2009). All in all, exploratory talk is “a way of using language effectively for joint, explicit, collaborative reasoning” (Mercer et al., 1999).

However, this kind of talk will not happen immediately. Therefore, this goal is required to be worked on in the classroom for students to have enough tools to master it. Once they have received instruction, small-group discussions and collaborative tasks can be set up (Barnes, 2010). Nonetheless, what Rojas-Drummond and Mercer (2003) observed in their research is that collaborative talk in the classroom receives low educational value and that learners do not receive instruction on how to work, interact and think together in an efficient way in spite of all its advantages. By helping learners develop their interactional skills and exploratory talk, they develop their ability to co-reason, to evaluate evidence and to contemplate alternatives (Rojas-Drummond & Mercer, 2003).

Although exploratory talk may arise in teacher-led discussions, students' participation and engagement are more likely to be boosted when discussing and collaborating "with peers outside the visible control of their teacher" (Mercer, 1996, p. 362). Hence, they will show more signs of comfort, activeness, a more "independent ownership of knowledge" (Mercer, 1996, p. 362). However, before giving this independence to students, some common ground rules must be set up together with the teacher as part of the previous instruction mentioned in the paragraph above. Activities must be carried out to raise learners' awareness on what is correct and on what should be avoided so as to "develop children's understanding and use of Exploratory Talk" (Rojas-Drummond & Mercer, 2003, p. 103) and to create a safe and comfortable atmosphere for them. The nature and the creation of these rules will be explained later on (see section 4.3.3.).

All in all, providing students with the tools and strategies to efficiently collaborate and to master exploratory talk should be a priority in the classroom. Not only is talk used to share thoughts but also to think socially and construct knowledge jointly (Mercer, 1996).

4.2. Project components

As it has been explained (see Section 2), the main objective of this innovation project is to improve 7th Grade students' collaborative skills and their exploratory talk. More specifically, several tools have been designed to teach them how to give and justify opinions and ideas, to express agreement and disagreement, respect turn-taking, ask for and make clarifications, challenge others' ideas and reach common conclusions or decisions.

Several materials are provided. First of all, an annual plan (see Appendix 9.9) has been designed where the course has been structured in different teaching units in which collaborative

work becomes the basis and main pedagogical practice. An example of a teaching unit is offered too (see Appendix 9.10). Being this the second unit of the course, some activities can only be used once as it will be described later. Others will become recurrent structures for the whole course. An assessment plan is described, offering varied methods and designed materials to collect data. Additionally, a communication plan has been designed too.

4.2.1. Annual plan

A whole academic year is planned for 7th Grade (See appendix 9.9). It is divided into seven teaching units where PBL (Project-Based Learning) and TBL (Task-Based Learning) are used as the predominant pedagogical methodologies. Each unit is designed focusing on a specific topic and having the creation of a collaborative product as the final objective. Hence, collaboration between students and teamwork are the centre of all the proposed units. Each of them is planned to last approximately four weeks and, hence, twelve hours. Nevertheless, some may require more time due to unexpected difficulties or holidays. For this reason, the schedule presented in the annual plan is approximate and not fixed.

The main objectives of the first unit are group cohesion, helping students get to know each other, getting them used to collaborative work and boosting team spirit. This unit is essential as it is the beginning of a whole course where students will have to work with each other. Moreover, being their first year in the school means some of them may have never met as they might come from different primary schools. Therefore, it is vital that they know each other and they, along with the teacher, create a comfortable and safe atmosphere in the classroom for collaboration to work. In addition, with this unit the teacher will be able to observe students' prior knowledge and collaborative and interactional skills.

The second unit is the one used as an illustration in this master's dissertation and, hence, it will be described in the next sections (see Sections 4.2.3. & 4.2.4). The following ones focus on different topics and work on varied competencies from the Catalan curriculum. Every topic has been chosen in order to help students develop relevant abilities and acquire useful knowledge for their daily life and their future. Moreover, others focus on topics that tend to be left behind and are not valued enough in the English classroom, such as literature.

As it has been stated, every unit is designed to develop different competencies with the purpose of having worked on all dimensions by the end of the course. However, what all units have in common is that they all involve collaborative work and, hence, interaction between

students. Students will always work in groups, although they will change every trimester, and the final products will be created collaboratively. Therefore, all tasks and units implicate in a special manner Competence 3, using oral interactional strategies adapted to the communicative situation in order to start, keep and finish the discourse.

4.2.2. Creation of the groups

Classes in primary and secondary compulsory education are characterised by being heterogeneous as diversity of levels and styles of learning is beneficial for learners. However, different views exist on the question whether groups of students should be heterogeneous or more homogenous when collaborating. Mercer's research showed that symmetrical groups or pairs "seemed to learn better than those in asymmetrical" ones (1996, p. 361). This may be explained by the fact that having a partner or member of the group "who dominates decision making" (Mercer, 1996, p. 361) may result in a more disadvantageous situation for those students with a lower level. Following his claims, groups with students of similar levels will be created for this project. Were this decision to have negative results, heterogeneous groups would be created for the following teaching units of the course. These groups will be created taking into account the observations made in the initial unit of the course.

4.2.3. Teaching Unit

This innovation project revolves around the second unit of the annual plan as an illustration of how units are going to be presented throughout the course. It is called "One School, Many Cultures" and as its title illustrates, it focuses on multiculturalism. As stated in the annual plan, our society is characterised by a diversity of cultures and, being the school a microcosmos of it, multiculturalism is present too. With this teaching unit, students will get to know the different cultures that are represented by the school's students. Additionally, awareness will be raised on the benefits that multiculturalism has. On this matter, attention is paid to racism and its disadvantages too.

With this unit, several competencies are worked on, such as Competencies 1, 2, 4, 6, 7, 8 and 9 (see Figure 3, section 4.2.6.). Competencies 1 and 2 relate to the creation of the meet-up session, where students will have to give an oral presentation about the country they have chosen. This involves reading and listening to examples and to their classmates as well as planning and producing their own. Additionally, they will be provided with input before having to create their own final product and they will have to consult and use tools to acquire the

necessary knowledge to create their own, which involves Competence 6. Finally, Competencies 7, 8 and 9 relate to the creation of their own poster, which is a written product. Nevertheless, the main focus is Competence 3, which is intrinsically related to the main objectives of the teaching unit that will be argued in the following sections: group discussion and exploratory talk.

4.2.4. Unit overview

This unit is planned to last a total of twelve sessions and, thus, four weeks (See Appendix 9.10). However, the schedule can be modified if more time is required and if any difficulties arise. Its final objective is the creation of a poster about a country which will be accompanied by an oral presentation. The final products of every group will be presented in a Meet-Up session at the end of the unit.

Each session is initiated with an activity to activate knowledge. That is to say, a task is carried out to refresh students' memory about what was done in the previous session. As it can be seen in the unit overview, some time is dedicated in every session to some kind of task connected to group discussion and exploratory talk. For this reason, every class is concluded by having students complete a checklist that will be collected as data, as it will be stated later (see Section 5.2.1.3).

4.2.5. Objectives of the teaching unit

Apart from aiming to raise learners' awareness on the advantages of multiculturalism and on its importance, this unit presents other linguistic and discursive objectives. First of all, it concentrates on improving students' collaborative skills, their talk when discussing and working in groups and their ability to make common decisions. These three aims are connected to the concept of 'exploratory talk'. In other words, students will be given tools and strategies during this unit in order to help them to improve their talk when carrying out debates and collaborating and, therefore, to improve their outcomes when working in groups. This will be done by using original and adapted materials in the classroom that aim to develop student's different skills. Some of these materials focus on expressions and target forms and aim to develop learners' ability to express agreement and disagreement, to respect turns, to ask for clarifications, to give opinions and to propose alternatives. Similar materials have been designed to help students distinguish between productive and unproductive actions when collaborating and discussing, which will lead to the creation of common ground rules for the

classroom. Additionally, other tasks which imply making decisions together in groups will be carried out at different times during the teaching unit.

Moreover, this unit has two other objectives which are not related to exploratory talk and collaboration. On the one hand, students will be taught to select key ideas. This will help them organise their ideas and create a visual and clear final product. On the other hand, they will learn how to search for information as part of the process of creation of their poster and, later, their oral presentation.

4.2.6. Connections to the Catalan Curriculum

The Catalan educational system is characterised by what are called basic competencies, as stated in Decret 187/2015 (Departament d'Educació, 2015). These are the essential abilities that students should successfully accomplish by the end of their compulsory studies. This information is stated in what are called curricula. A different curriculum has been designed for each area of knowledge, where competencies are divided into dimensions. Apart from having a specific curriculum for every subject, there are two curricula that are transversal. Therefore, these competencies must be worked and developed in all subjects. These are the social and personal competencies and the digital ones.

Two curricula have been used in the design of this project. Similarly, the teaching unit presented as the main example in this innovation project follows the same pattern and connections to the Catalan curricula. On the one hand, taking into account that it will be carried out in the English classroom where this language is taught as foreign language, I have focused on the curriculum for teaching foreign languages (Escobar Urmeneta et al., 2015). On the other hand, attention has been paid to the personal and social curriculum (Sarramona, 2018) since the development of collaborative work, interactional skills and exploratory talk is intrinsically related to these competencies. In the following figures, all the dimensions and the competencies of each of these two curricula are specified.

Foreign Language Dimensions and Competencies (Adapted and Translated from Escobar et al., 2015)	
Oral communication dimension	Competence 1: Obtaining information and interpreting oral texts from daily life, from the media and from the academic field.
	Competence 2: Planning and producing oral texts of different types adapted to a specific communicative situation.
	Competence 3: Using oral interactional strategies adapted to the communicative situation in order to start, keep and finishing the discourse.
Oral comprehension dimension	Competence 4: Applying different strategies to comprehend, to obtain information and to interpret the content of texts from daily life, from the media and from the academic field.
	Competence 5: Interpreting the formal, discursive and linguistic characteristics of a text and recognising its typology in order to comprehend it.
	Competence 6: Selecting and using tools to consult and access information or order to comprehend texts and acquiring knowledge.
Written expression dimension	Competence 7: Planning written texts of different typologies and using elements adapted to a specific communicative situation.
	Competence 8: Producing written texts of different typologies and forms by applying diverse strategies.
	Competence 9: Revising texts in order to improve it according to the communicative purpose with support.
Literary dimension	Competence 10: Orally reproducing, reciting and dramatizing adapted or authentic literary texts.
	Competence 11: Comprehending and valuing adapted or authentic literary texts.
Attitudinal transversal and plurilingual dimension	

Figure 3: Foreign language dimensions and competencies (Adapted and Translated from Escobar et al., 2015)

Personal and Social Competencies (Adapted and Translated from Sarramona, 2018)	
Self-knowledge dimension	Competence 1: Raising awareness of oneself and getting involved in the process of personal growth.
Learning to learn dimension	Competence 2: Getting to know and applying strategies and habits related to one's learning process.
	Competence 3: developing abilities and attitudes in order to confront learning challenges.
Participation dimension	Competence 4: Participating in the classroom, in the school and in the surroundings in a reflexive and responsible way.

Figure 4: Personal and social competencies (Adapted and Translated from Sarramona, 2018)

In the case of the foreign language curriculum, the project and the teaching unit focus especially on Competence 3, which is part of the oral communication dimension. That is to say, interaction is essential to all the materials of the teaching unit and the main goal of the innovation project. In regard to the personal and social curriculum, the project relates to all its competencies. First of all, its objective focuses on Competence 1 or, in other words, on students' self-knowledge and ability to get involved in their personal growth. This is intrinsically related to Competencies 2 and 3, which are involved in the process of learning to learn and of raising students' awareness about strategies, attitudes and habits to learn better. Finally, Competence 4 has an essential role too since exploratory talk is fundamentally related to students' responsible and reflexive participation in the classroom.

4.3. Materials and recurring structures

Different kinds of materials have been designed to fulfil the objectives of the innovation project. As it will be seen in the following sections, all materials revolve around the improvement and development of students' interactional skills when collaborating and discussing as well as the use of exploratory talk. Although some of the examples illustrated have been adapted to the topic of the second teaching unit of the annual plan, most of them will be recurring resources that will be used throughout the course as part of the innovation project.

Descriptions of the different designed materials and structures are provided in the following sections. Each of them focuses on one of these activities and it includes information about their design or adaptation as well as their practical procedure.

4.3.1. Debates: teacher-led and small-group

The teaching unit and its topic will be introduced with a debate led by the teacher. Using Google Slides, the students will be presented with different images and situations that will lead to questions and discussion about multiculturalism, countries and racism. These images will be accompanied by open questions to which students will have the opportunity to give answers. These questions will not have an only correct answer but, instead, they will be subjective and all respectful and responsible answers will be welcome. This initial debate will be helpful for the teacher as students' prior knowledge and prior collaborative and discursive abilities will be observed.

Other teacher-led debates will take place during the unit as, for instance, in session 5, where they will discuss the benefits of multiculturalism using a Kahoot; or in session 9, in which they will have a debate about how we can fight racism using. During the previous sessions, students will have carried out tasks and will have received instructions on how to collaborate and discuss productively, responsibly and collaboratively. Therefore, students will be offered more autonomously when sharing and challenging their ideas. Moreover, debates between learners will be recurrent throughout the school year.

However, as it has been mentioned before, although teacher-led discussions are advantageous, teachers need to create opportunities for students to carry out collaborative activities so they can practice a kind of language that is more unlikely to appear with a teacher monitoring the situation (Mercer, 1996). Moreover, some learners do not feel comfortable when whole-class debates take place and they presume all their classmates are listening to them. For this reason, most discussions throughout this teaching unit and the whole course will be carried out by the small groups autonomously although students will usually be provided with support. After these small-group debates, the results and decisions of each group will be shared with the whole class in order to establish a common knowledge “through exchanges between teacher and pupils” (Barnes, 2010 p. 8).

4.3.2. Making collective choices and decisions

Making common decisions and agreeing together is one of the characteristics of exploratory talk and its end goal. For this reason, most of the tasks and the project itself involve making choices in small groups. In session 2, the groups will carry out the initial task involving decision making. Every group will be given five different cards, each of them corresponding to one of

the countries represented in the school (See Appendix 9.4). Since there may be a wide range of cultures in the centre, each group may have different cards and they may not be repeated. Each card has the name of the country, the continent where it is found and nine images illustrating facts about its culture, geography and other characteristics. The objective is that, by looking at these images, they have to decide which country they are going to choose for their final product. This time, they will not receive any instruction on how to efficiently discuss and collaborate. It will serve as data to analyse their prior abilities and talk.



Figure 5: Example of a country card

Similar activities will be carried out throughout the unit and the school year. For instance, in session 6, where they will have to choose the items they will include in their poster. In session 7, they will have to decide which cultural item of the country they will exemplify and bring to class in the meet-up session. Finally, in session 8, they will choose the parts of their poster and how they are going to divide them. During some of these tasks, they will have support such as some debate cards that will be mentioned later on in the following sections (see

section 4.3.4.). Usually, after these small-group debates, the decisions will be again shared with the rest of the class.

4.3.3. Traffic lights: expressions and actions

One of Neil Mercer's (1996, 1999, 2003, 2008, 2010) most important contributions to the research of exploratory talk is the creation of the Thinking Together programme. On its website, different resources for teachers are offered, among which we can find an activity called 'Ground Rules for talk: traffic lights'. It was designed by Lyn Dawes (2008) and it is described as an activity to be used with younger children in order to help them decide together how they have to talk efficiently when they work in groups. Different actions related to collaborative work and exploratory talk appear in different shapes. Students must decide if they are good ideas, bad ideas or if they are not sure about them. They must colour the good ones in green, the bad ones in red and the ones they are not sure about in orange, following the colours represented in traffic lights. In addition, each group has to add two more good ideas.

This activity by Dawes (2008) has been adapted for this project in two different ways. First of all, the actions were replaced by expressions (See Appendix 9.5). Each group is provided with a worksheet where each expression appears inside a different shape. They have to choose which of these are good to use when discussing with their classmates. Following again the colours of traffic lights, the expressions they think are good must be stuck on a green circular paper. The ones they are sure are bad must be stuck on a red triangular paper. Finally, the expressions they are not sure about have to be stuck on an orange rectangular paper. It was decided to have the expressions stuck instead of colour to ensure all students would be able to carry out the activity and to prevent colour-blind students from having difficulties when doing the task. Once all groups have finished, the results are shared with the whole class and a mural is created with all the helpful expressions classified according to their use: expressing agreement, expressing disagreement, asking for clarification, challenging an idea, asking for opinions and turn-taking. This mural will be stuck on the wall of the classroom and used during small-group and teacher-led debates as support for students.

Following the same mechanic, the activity will be done by making students decide which actions are good or bad when collaborating and discussing in groups (See Appendix 9.6). Once all groups have decided and shared the results with the whole class, the ground rules for the classroom will be set up. As Neil Mercer (1996) claims, some specific requirements

have to be met for classroom discussion to be effective. Ground rules are understood as those implicit forms that are required to consider in order to interact in an educational context. It is not enough for the teacher to take them into account, but they have to be taught and negotiated with the students instead. It is key for the ground rules to be mutually understood so, ideally, they should not be imposed by the teacher. Furthermore, ground rules may be interpreted differently by students if they are not explicitly discussed and set up with the learners (Mercer, 1996). It is essential to carry out this type of activities in an early stage of the course or the unit in order to guarantee that all students are aware of them and to ensure that collaboration can be productive. In contrast to most of the designed and proposed materials, both 'Traffic lights' activities will only be done at the beginning of the school year. Thus, it will not be necessary to repeat them in the next teaching units. Nevertheless, other kind of activities could be carried out to refresh students' knowledge about the ground rules and about useful expressions.

4.3.4. Debate cards

As mentioned by the 7th Grade teacher, students tend to lack knowledge about target forms to carry out a productive debate with their classmates (see Section 3.3.1.). This is why this activity has been designed. In session 4, a small-group debate will be carried out using what have been called 'debate cards' (See Appendix 9.7). Each member of the group is given five different cards, each with a different expression and in different colours. The orange card can be used to express agreement or disagreement. The red one is used to ask for repetition or clarification. The green card will be used to give an opinion and the blue one to ask for them. Finally, the yellow card is used to ask for a turn to speak. The objective is that each student must have used all cards before finishing the discussion.

I agree with you / I don't agree with you	I don't understand. Can you repeat, please?	In my opinion, ... / I think that ...	What do you think? / Do you agree with me?	Can I interrupt? / Can I share my opinion?
--	---	--	---	--

Figure 6: Debate cards

The aim of these debate cards is to provide students with target forms to be able to discuss productively. Before carrying out the activity, instructions will be given in order to understand when each expression is used and with which purpose. The first time students will

use them during the teaching unit, they will have an autonomous debate in their small groups, without being led by the teacher. Nevertheless, they will be used more than once, and they can also be helpful during teacher-led discussions.

4.3.5. The negative role-play

Once students have been instructed on what expressions are efficient when collaborating and once ground rules have been set up, a role play will be carried out in the classroom (See Appendix 9.2). It will illustrate a negative example of a group discussion between learners. Four volunteers will be asked and each of them will be provided with a piece of paper where his or her role is specified. There they will be offered an explanation of their attitude as members of the group as well as some examples of expressions they can use according to their role.

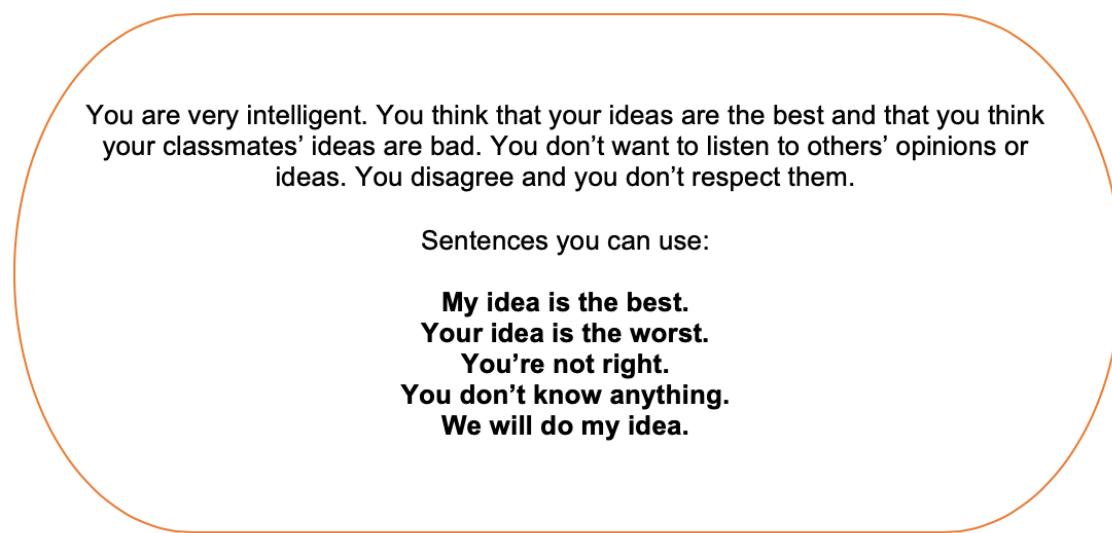


Figure 7: Fragment from the negative role play

The rest of the class will observe the role play and will have to identify what is the problem with each of their classmates' personifications. Having finished the role play, the whole class will decide what each character's mistake was. and how they would change it. Thus, with this activity, the set-up ground rules and of the useful expressions that learners' have learnt will be revised. Ideally, were there enough time during the session, the role play could be repeated using the solutions the students may have proposed and having a representation of a productive collaborative discussion.

4.3.6. Other necessary resources

As it was mentioned in Section 3.3.1, books are not used in the English classroom. Therefore, they are not required material for the implementation of the designed innovation project. Following the common use of digital materials as part of the English classes, a projector and computer will be needed by the teacher to, for instance, carry out the teacher-led debates using Google Slides or Kahoot. In addition, a computer per group will be required as several activities, as well as the creation of the final product, need the use of digital resources. Moreover, students will need to search for information and access to the Internet will be essential. Other kinds of materials required will be the worksheets of the designed materials, that will be printed and provided by the school; and pens and pencils that are brought by the students themselves. Finally, since students will be divided into groups of four, classes with enough space will be preferred. Additionally, it will be required to rearrange tables so learners can sit together and see each other.

4.4. Overcoming expected difficulties

Teaching any subject and using any kind of pedagogical methodology or strategy implies being prepared to overcome unexpected difficulties. Teachers should always be prepared to improvise. Nevertheless, using collaborative activities in class can result in some obstacles that can be solved beforehand.

As it has been stated before, enough space is required for students to be arranged in groups. Having this into consideration beforehand may prevent some management problems in the classroom. Having enough space between tables and groups will allow the teacher to easily monitor students. Furthermore, this also facilitates the use of a lower voice tone by the students, as they will be close to each other and they will be able to listen to their classmates (Jacobs & Inn, 2003). Keeping the same groups for several weeks or even months prevents learners from spending too much time arranging groups and tables at the beginning of the class. Since they will be always working together with the same team and in the same table, time will be saved.

One of the most common questions that tend to arise when teachers decide to use collaborative work with their students is how they are going to manage to monitor every group at the same time. This can be solved by using some strategies such as TTT (Team Then Teacher). When using it, “students should first turn to their group mates for help” (Jacobs &

Inn, 2003 p. 8). Only will they ask the teacher if the group cannot find the solution or the answer. Using this kind of strategies results in the development of autonomy in the group.

Finally, another difficulty that teachers may encounter is having students who do not like to work in groups and who do not want to collaborate. The origin of this problem may be that they are not used to this way of working or that they do not feel comfortable in their group. In order to prevent that from happening, groups must be created consciously by the teacher, being aware of the relationships between students in the class. For this reason, and in order to improve the cohesion of the class and getting students used to working with each other, an initial teaching unit is implemented with these purposes.

5. Assessment Plan

As part of any teaching process, students need to be assessed. Furthermore, implementing an innovation project implies assessing the results and the design of it as well. In this section, the assessment methods for both aspects will be specified.

5.1. Assessing students

Assessment throughout the course will be formative and continuous. Evaluation and marks will be not taken into account for the results of the innovative project. In contrast, students' improvement of their collaborative skills and their use of exploratory talk will be assessed using several methods and materials that will later be used to reach conclusions and analyse the outcomes of the designed project. For this reason, only those final products that involve discussion and the use of exploratory talk will be considered relevant and taken into account.

First of all, their previous knowledge will be analysed by having an initial teaching unit focused on group cohesion. Later on, in the second teaching unit and the one described in this dissertation, some tasks in which they will not receive instructions will be carried out. This will help the teacher and researcher to know the starting point and it can also help in the creation of the groups. Once groups are created and their collaborative abilities have been observed, every task where collaboration and exploratory talk are required will be assessed having audios and videos recorded. This collected data will allow the teacher to have access to every group's work. Attention will be paid to the students' progress. The same checklists that are provided to the students, which are explained in the following paragraph, can be used by the teacher and/or researcher to assess how learners have done in the activities.

A lot of emphasis will be given to students' self-assessment and peer-assessment. After every collaborative task, they will be asked to complete a checklist about their task completion as well as their group's (see Appendix 9.1). In this checklist, several indicators are considered. Additionally, a learning diary will be completed by every group where every week each member of the group will write their entry (see Appendix 9.3). There, they will have to reflect on their progress and weekly work by answering some questions. Throughout the project, students' awareness of their learning progress and their improvement of their collaborative and interactional skills is aimed to be raised.

5.2. Assessing the innovation project and data collection

The two main foci of this innovation project are exploratory talk as part of their interactional skills and students' collaborative abilities in the classroom. These can be analysed using different methods: quantitative or qualitative ones. If we decide to focus more on the linguistic aspects, quantitative methods are more useful. If more emphasis is given to observation and field notes, qualitative methods will be more productive. A mix of both kind of methods will be used to assess this innovation project. Different kinds of data will be collected not only through the project but also before and after having finished it.

5.2.1. Ensuring reliability

For the purpose of avoiding students to feel uncomfortable when being recorded, students will be filmed throughout the first unit, although those videos and audios will not be used. This will help them get used to having cameras and recorders near when talking to each other. Moreover, the teacher or researcher will try to gain the students' trust and to create an atmosphere where they feel comfortable and safe when speaking and participating.

In order to ensure results are reliable, triangulation is essential. More than one class of 7th Grade will be recorded, so the project will be carried out in three classes of the same grade and data from three groups from every class will be collected. Moreover, a wide range of data will be collected in different forms and using different methods. Some will be recorded, and they will allow to be analysed more than one time. Other will be written by the students themselves or by the teacher or observer. In the following sections, all different kinds of data that will be collected are described.

5.2.1.1. Field notes

Field notes will be taken based on the observation of the classes and of the students carrying out the tasks in their groups. This qualitative method is possible due to “the researchers’ continuous and close involvement in the social environment” (Mercer, 2010, p. 6) or, in other words, in the classroom. Notes will be taken about the talk the students use, the way they collaborate as well as any other situation or aspect the observer may find relevant for the project.

5.2.1.2. Audio and video recordings

Taken into account the impossibility to monitor and observe all groups at once, using cameras and recorders is indispensable. Recordings will be later analysed and will allow the researcher to re-watch as many times as necessary. They will provide rich and detailed illustrations of the events. Having both image and voice recorded, language as well as non-verbal aspects will be considered. Moreover, it will facilitate to distinguish between learners.

These recordings can be later transcribed and extracts from those can be used to illustrate certain situations of relevance. They can be used for qualitative purposes although they also allow quantitative analysis. In other words, particular situations can be observed at the same time that the amount of, for instance, certain keywords can be compared. For example, the times that students use some specific expressions can be counted in order to analyse their type of talk. So as to do that, computer-based analysis should be implemented as it allows faster transcriptions and comparisons.

Videos and audios will be recorded of every group individually as well as a video from a perspective where the whole class can be seen. These will include the previous instructions will be received before every task. All activities that involve group discussion will be recorded, as well as the teacher-led debates. A table as the following will be used to control all the recorded data:

Example of a Data Collection Table					
Data Source	Date	Material required	Group	Other	Storage
Video-audio recording	First group session	3 video cameras Assistance of TA	7 th Grade B	Three small groups will be recorded	Group_1B1_T1 Group_1B2_T1 Group_1B3_T1 GroupAudio_1B1_T1 GroupAudio_1B2_T1 GroupAudio_1B3_T1

Figure 8: Example of a data collection table

5.2.1.3. Checklists

As mentioned above, after every collaborative activity where students need to discuss and reach common conclusions, learners will be asked to complete a checklist (see Appendix 9.1). This document will always be the same, so they become familiar with the questions and they become aware of their own learning process. Moreover, it will be easy and fast for them to answer. Students need to mark whether they have done certain actions during the activity or the session. These are related to their collaborative and interactional skills. For instance, they are required to mark whether they have given their opinion, respected turn-taking, justified their ideas and other aspects also related to exploratory talk. The checklist is divided into two different parts. On the one hand, the first one corresponds to individual work and, therefore, they have to pay attention to their own attitude and their completion of the task. On the other hand, the second part focuses more in how the whole group has carried out the task. In other words, learners have to individually complete this part considering how they have collaborated. Finally, a last section is left to possible comments students would like to make.

These checklists can be completed using photocopied worksheets or they can be transformed into a digital form using, for instance, Google Forms so the results are digitised and automatically analysed. They will be used to control the students' progress and their answers will be compared throughout the project. The expected outcome is to observe an improvement of their collaborative skills and of their interactional discourse. Ideally, students will become aware of their own improvement too.

5.2.1.4. KPSI

A designed KPSI (Knowledge and Prior Study Inventory) will be used to monitor students' self-awareness of their process and improvement (see Appendix 9.8). They will be asked to complete the worksheet at the beginning and at the end of every unit. Learners are presented with a list of affirmations related to the content and the objectives of the teaching unit. They have to mark a number from 1 to 4 depending on their knowledge of that aspect. In the following table, the value of each number is specified.

1. I don't know (how to do) it.	2. I have a small idea of it.	3. I know what it is, but I don't know how to explain / do it.	4. I can explain / do it.
---------------------------------	-------------------------------	--	---------------------------

Figure 9: Number values from KPSI

The KPSI provided as Appendix 9.8 has been designed taking into account the objectives and the content of the second unit of the annual plan. Thus, students are asked to reflect on their knowledge about multiculturalism and on their abilities to carry out the final products for this unit: a poster and an oral presentation. What all KPSIs throughout the course will have in common is that students will always be presented with items related to their collaborative skills and exploratory talk as this is the main purpose of the innovation project. So, apart from reflecting students' improvement through the teaching unit, this data will be used to analyse their whole progress throughout the course.

5.2.1.5. Learning diary

The learning diary is a document each group will be given once they start a new teaching unit (see Appendix 9.3). Every member of the group will have to individually complete a weekly entry where they will answer some questions. These will help them reflect on how they and their team have worked during the week. It is important for the students to carry out this task individually in order to prevent them from being influenced by other members. They will be given the opportunity to comment on any obstacle they have encountered or on any problem they may have had with a classmate. Therefore, each member will have a different paper and the learning diary will be monitored and kept by the teacher.

The questions learners will have to answer are divided into two parts, similar to checklists. First, they are provided with questions to reflect on themselves and their work. They

are asked about what they have learnt, what they have liked and how they have felt during the week. Then, some questions are presented about their team, focusing on how they have worked together and whether they have encountered any problem. Finally, they are given the opportunity to write any other comments they feel are worth mentioning.

This learning diary, apart from offering the students the chance to reflect on their week and collaboration, provides the teacher and researcher with information about students' feelings and individual thoughts. Considering that some students may not feel at ease expressing and communicating their problems or emotions, the learning diary becomes a very useful tool to have a deeper insight into students' opinions about collaborative work. Their answers will serve as feedback to consider when assessing the project and its design.

5.2.1.6. Written worksheets

Several written activities related to students' interactional discourse will be carried out. These worksheets or written documents by the students will also be used as data to consider when assessing the project, its design and its results. For instance, when it comes to the second unit, the traffic lights activities can be useful to see what learners' prior knowledge about productive actions and useful expressions were when collaborating and discussing (see Appendices 9.5 and 9.6).

5.2.1.7. Trimestral interviews

As stated in previous sections (see section 4.2.2.), groups of students are aimed to remain the same during a trimester. Therefore, being the course divided into three, students will be arranged in three different groups throughout the scholar year. Once the trimester has finished, a meeting with each group will be arranged in order to interview them. Learners will be asked about their feelings, their likes, their progress and their learning process when collaborating. They would be video, and audio recorded. Interviews will be given an informal atmosphere for students to feel comfortable when answering and questions will vary depending on their answers. In the following figure some questions are offered as some examples.

What have you liked the most about this trimester?
How have you felt working together?
What would you change?
What have you learnt or improved?
Have you liked working together? Why?

Figure 10: Possible questions for the trimestral interview

6. Communication Plan

A communication plan has been designed to inform the different members of the learning and teaching community that may be involved in the process of implementing the designed innovation project. In the following sections, the steps previous to the procedure of the innovation project are described. Furthermore, the process of communicating the results and the possible further steps are presented.

6.1. Communication with the students

As part of any educational activity, students must be aware of the objectives of every teaching unit and the course. They must be informed about what they will be expected to do and work on. The annual plan will be provided so students know about how the course will be structured. Additionally, learners will be told about how they will work in the English classroom and that collaboration, TBL (Task-Based Learning) and PBL (Project-based Learning) will be the basis of every teaching unit.

As a way of ensuring ethical aspects of the research, students must be told about the fact that they will be recorded throughout the course. Moreover, authorizations must be signed by their parents or legal tutors. Nevertheless, they are usually asked to sign these authorizations every course as part of the school's policy. Nonetheless, explicit information about the innovation project and the research should not be given in order to avoid any bias and guarantee objective results.

6.2. Communication with the schools' teaching community

6.2.1. With the management team

Several parties of the teaching community must be informed of the procedure, the design and the results of the innovation project at different moments of the process. It is the management team that should be informed in the previous steps of designing and implementing the innovation project. Permission must be asked to carry out the designed annual plan in 7th Grade and the head of the school's approval is required to implement the project. A meeting will be arranged to introduce the project, its objectives, its expected outcomes and the procedure to the management team. The project will be justified by providing examples of other pieces of research and their existing data. A clear connection to the Catalan curriculum will be made as well. The materials will be presented as well as detailed overviews of the planning of every teaching unit and how the project will affect assessment. Furthermore, information about the whole process of data collection will be offered and permissions will be asked. The team management will have the opportunity to make suggestions and ask for any necessary clarifications.

Once the project has been approved and all permissions have been arranged, the management team will be informed of the process and the results in monthly or trimestral meetings. In the final meeting, a detailed analysis and results will be provided about the whole project and course. Were the results the expected and were they to prove the benefits of its implementation, permission would be asked to implement the project in other courses and in other subjects.

6.2.2. With the teachers

Having the management team's approval, a meeting with the school's teaching community can be arranged to inform the rest of the teachers about the results of the implemented project. After being presented with its benefits in a similar way the management team was informed in their initial and their final reunions, the possibility to design similar innovation projects for the rest of the English courses and the other subjects will be suggested. The existing data and other pieces of research will be used to illustrate the benefits that collaborative work and the improvement of students' exploratory talk can have in all areas of knowledge. Were any teachers interested in implementing the project, training on teaching and using collaboration in the classroom would be offered.

7. Conclusions and Personal Reflection

Writing my master's dissertation has provided me with experience I had not had the chance to gain before. I have had the golden opportunity to learn different aspects from the whole process. Designing an innovation project has made me study exploratory talk and collaborative work in detail. Consequently, I have reached some conclusions and I have reflected on the present educational system, on my own experiences as a student and as a teacher and, finally, and on the situation that we are living today.

Being in direct contact with literature and research about exploratory talk during months has provided me with plenty of knowledge I did not have before. Reading about different situations and the positive results of various pieces of research has raised my awareness on the importance of instructing students on how to collaborate in a productive way. Furthermore, it has made me reflect on my own experiences as a student who had to carry out tasks and projects in group but whom was never taught on how to do it correctly. This lack of instruction resulted in groups where work was never equitable and where discouragement become one of the most common characteristics. In the same way that we cannot expect learners to write a recipe of their favourite dish, we cannot take for granted that they will be able to work in groups efficiently. In the same way, they need to be taught how to discuss and interact with each other in order for them to reach positive results. Exploratory talk is essential not only in the English classroom but in all areas of knowledge.

In that sense, collaborative work should be a common characteristic of all subjects in a school. Teachers should be instructed and informed about its benefits and on efficient tools, materials and practices to use in class and help our students develop their collaborative and interactional skills. On the whole, being able to work in groups and to discuss responsibly and reflexively. By teaching our students about collaboration, we are helping them improve their reasoning (Mercer, 1996) at the same time that we are aiding learners think critically. After all, we are not only teaching English, Biology, Maths or History. We are educating our students to become adults prepared for real life.

Finally, having this project designed during the COVID-19 pandemic has made me realise the importance that improvisation has in the life of teacher. I have always believed that being able to think of solutions or new ideas or activities when problems arise in the classroom is essential. However, living this situation first-hand has made me realise teachers' ability to adapt to different and very difficult situations. In my case, my colleagues and I had to adapt

our internship, which was scary but ended up being a great experience from which we have learnt a lot. Nevertheless, I think of all those teachers that have had to modify whole annual plans and that, apart from adapting themselves to this situation, have had to help their students to get used to a new way of learning. All in all, teachers' professional vocation and aim to help their students is one of strongest forces that may ever exist.

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9. APPENDICES

9.1 Checklist

INDIVIDUAL WORK

Mark with a tick (✓) how often you have carried out this actions when doing the activities.

	A lot	Often	Sometimes	Once	Never
I have given my opinion.					
I have asked my classmates to repeat when I didn't understand something.					
I have said when I didn't agree with somebody's ideas or opinions.					
I have said when I agreed with somebody's ideas or opinions.					
I have asked for more information about my classmate's opinions or ideas.					
I have respected turns.					
I have justified my ideas and opinions.					
I have repeated information if any of my classmates asked me to.					

TEAMWORK

Mark with a tick (✓) how often your team have carried out this actions when doing the activities.

	A lot	Often	Sometimes	Once	Never
We have all given our opinions.					
We have all respected turns and talked one by one.					
We have asked questions to each other.					
We have repeated information when necessary.					

We have justified our opinions or ideas.					
We have respected all opinions even when somebody did not agree with it.					
We have expressed when we agreed or did not agreed.					
We have reached a conclusion with which everybody agreed.					

OTHER COMMENTS

If you have any other comments, you can use this box:

9.2. The Negative Role Play

The teacher asks for four voluntary students to do a role-play. Each student will be given a piece of paper with his or her role. Every character will do something bad when discussing and making decisions in group. The rest of the class will have to observe and think what each person is doing wrong. Once they finish the role-play, the whole class will decide what was each character's mistake and how they would change it.

You are very intelligent. You think that your ideas are the best and that you think your classmates' ideas are bad. You don't want to listen to others' opinions or ideas. You disagree and you don't respect them.

Sentences you can use:

My idea is the best.

Your idea is the worst.

You talk a lot. You love speaking! You interrupt your classmates when they are giving their opinions or ideas. You don't let them talk.

Sentences you can use:

Shut up.

You can't speak now.

You don't want to do this activity. You are bored and you want to go home. You don't want to participate. You don't care about the decisions and you don't listen to your classmates

Sentences you can use:

I don't know.

I don't care.

You don't like that your classmates get angry. You control the situation, but you don't give your opinions or ideas.

Sentences you can use:

I love your ideas.

I think you are all right.

Yes!

9.3. Learning Diary

OUR LEARNING DIARY

One School, Many Cultures!



1

Name of the team:

Members:

¹ This image is free from copyright. It has been downloaded from Flaticon (<https://www.flaticon.com>)

How does it work?

Welcome! This is your learning diary for this teaching unit.

Here, every member of the group will **individually** answer some **questions** and write his or her entry in the diary. With these questions, you will think about how you and your team have worked during the week. You can also write other comments if you want to.

Every member will have a different paper with his or her questions. Your answers must be individual.

This will be done at the **end of every week**.

²My Learning Diary: Week 1



Name:

Questions about me

What have I learnt this week?

How have I felt?

What have I liked from this week?

What would I change?

Questions about my team

Have we had any problem? Which one?

How did we solve it?

How have we worked together?

Other comments:

² This image is free from Copyright. It has been downloaded from Flaticon (<https://www.flaticon.com>)

9.4. Country cards

This is an example of one of the cards designed for this activity. A total of 10 have been created as an example. They are meant to be adapted to the countries represented in the school where the activity is going to be implemented. They can be consulted on the following link: <https://bit.ly/countriesdebate>

3



CHINA

Asia

OneSchool, ManyCultures

³ All images are free from Copyright. They have been downloaded from Flaticon (<https://www.flaticon.com>) and Canva (<https://www.canva.com>).

9.5. Traffic lights: Expressions when discussing

Activity adapted from Dawes, L. (2008). Ground Rules: Traffic Lights Activity “Thinking Together” University of Cambridge. Retrieved from https://thinkingtogether.educ.cam.ac.uk/resources/Ground_rules-traffic_lights.pdf

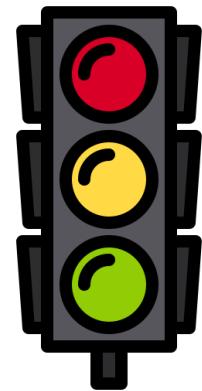
MEMBER 1: _____

MEMBER 2: _____

MEMBER 3: _____

MEMBER 4: _____

4



In your teams, think if these expressions are good or bad when discussing or making decisions in groups. Write those expressions that you think are **good** in the **rectangular GREEN** paper. Write those that you think are **bad** in the **triangular RED** paper. If you are **not sure** of some of these expressions, write them in the **circular ORANGE** paper.

Once all the teams have finished, we will all share it **together** and create a mural with useful expressions.

⁴ This image is free from Copyright. It has been downloaded from Flaticon (<https://www.flaticon.com>)

You're not right.

My idea is the best.

I see your point, but...

It's my turn now.

I think that...

You can't speak now.

I really like your idea.

I don't agree with

Your idea is bad.

You're right!

I'm not sure about that.

Can you repeat please?

I disagree

I agree with that/you.

I don't see it that way

Say it again.

Can I interrupt?

Your idea is the worst.

Can I share my opinion?

Do you agree with me?

What do you think?

In my opinion...

9.6. Traffic lights: actions when collaborating

Activity adapted from Dawes, L. (2008). Ground Rules: Traffic Lights Activity “Thinking Together” University of Cambridge. Retrieved from https://thinkingtogether.educ.cam.ac.uk/resources/Ground_rules-traffic_lights.pdf

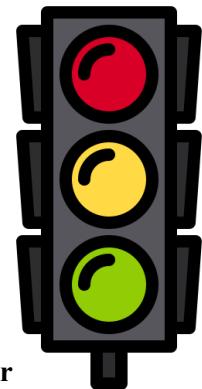
MEMBER 1: _____

MEMBER 2: _____

MEMBER 3: _____

MEMBER 4: _____

5



In your teams, think if these actions are good or bad when working in groups. Stick those actions that you think are **good** in the **rectangular GREEN** paper. Stick those that you think are **bad** in the **triangular RED** paper. If you are **not sure** of some of these actions, stick them in the **circular ORANGE** paper.

There are **two extra balloons** where you have to write two more actions. They can be good or bad. Stick them in the correct paper.

Once all the teams have finished, we will all share it **together** and create the rules.

⁵ This image is free from Copyright. It has been downloaded from Flaticon (<https://www.flaticon.com>)

We must listen to other members' ideas and opinions.

Decisions can be made by one only person in the team.

We must all respect turns and wait when other member is speaking.

It is OK if we don't listen to one person's ideas.

It is OK if somebody disagrees with us.

We must share our opinions and ideas with the other members of our team.

We must try to understand everybody's opinions and ideas.

We can all talk at the same time.

We must all respect each other.

It is OK if we don't reach a common conclusion.

We can shout if necessary.

9.7. Debate cards

One photocopy per group. Each member of the team will have one card of each colour. **ORANGE:** Expressing agreement/disagreement. **RED:** Asking for repetition to understand. **GREEN:** Giving your opinion. **BLUE:** Asking for opinions. **YELLOW:** Asking for a turn to speak.

I agree with you / I don't agree with you	I don't understand. Can you repeat, please?	In my opinion, ... / I think that ...	What do you think? / Do you agree with me?	Can I interrupt? / Can I share my opinion?
I agree with you / I don't agree with you	I don't understand. Can you repeat, please?	In my opinion, ... / I think that ...	What do you think? / Do you agree with me?	Can I interrupt? / Can I share my opinion?
I agree with you / I don't agree with you	I don't understand. Can you repeat, please?	In my opinion, ... / I think that ...	What do you think? / Do you agree with me?	Can I interrupt? / Can I share my opinion?
I agree with you / I don't agree with you	I don't understand. Can you repeat, please?	In my opinion, ... / I think that ...	What do you think? / Do you agree with me?	Can I interrupt? / Can I share my opinion?

9.8. KPSI: Knowledge and Prior Study Inventory

Name Class Date 1 Date 2

The objective of this document is to compare what you knew at the beginning of the teaching unit to what you know at the end of it. You will complete the table the first day and the last. Choose a number from 1 to 4 to indicate if you know how to do these things.

1. I don't know (how to do) it.	2. I have a small idea of it.	3. I know what it is, but I don't know how to explain / do it.	4. I can explain / do it.
---------------------------------	-------------------------------	--	---------------------------

One School, Many Cultures!	Day 1				Last day				Comments
	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	
I know what multiculturalism is.									
I know about the cultures and countries represented in my school.									
I know how to look for information on the Internet.									
I can choose the key items of a topic.									
I know how to make posters with key ideas.									

I can work in group.							
I can do a short oral presentation.							
I can do debates with my classmates.							
I can express my opinions.							
I can express when I don't agree with my classmates' opinions.							
I know expressions that can help me discuss ideas.							
I can make decisions in group.							
I can distinguish between a good and a bad debate.							

Other Comments

9.9. Annual Plan

Schedule	Teaching Units	Topic and Objectives	Final product	Competencies
SEP	1. We're in this together	<p>After having arrived in a new school with new classmates, this unit is about creating a comfortable atmosphere in the classroom for all students.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Group cohesion. - Getting to know your classmates. - Getting used to collaborative work. - Boosting team spirit within the class. 	A video about the characteristics of the group/class.	C1, C2, C3, C6, C7
OCT	2. One School, Many Cultures	<p>Multiculturalism is a social reality and, being the school a microcosmos of our society, cultural diversity is present too. This unit is about getting to know the different cultures that are represented by the school's students and about being aware of all the benefits of multiculturalism.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Raising awareness on the advantages of multiculturalism and on its importance. 	Meet-Up poster session with oral presentations.	C1, C2, C3, C4, C6, C7, C8

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Improving talk when collaborating. - Improving collaborative work and making decisions together. - Learning how to select key ideas. - Learning how to search for information. 		
NOV	3. Living Hundreds of Different Lives	<p>Rarely are students used to literature in English. This unit is about getting to know different literary texts in English from varied genres (poetry, novel, theatre). Students will be introduced to old and contemporary famous authors and texts, some of which will be adapted if necessary.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reading selected literary texts in English. - Boosting the students' interest in literature. - Getting used to reading different genres in English. 	A book trailer	C2, C3, C4, C5, C6, C10, C11
DEC JAN	4. Real-fooding Is Cool	<p>A teenager's diet is essential since they are still growing and preparing their body for adulthood. Being often surrounded by fast and unhealthy food, they need to know how to value real food. This unit is about the new movement called realfooding, which is about having a balanced diet and about valuing traditional and authentic food.</p>	Collective recipe book	C1, C3, C4, C6, C7, C8, C9

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Raising awareness about healthy and real food. - Learning about the properties of food. - Getting to know typical dishes from other countries. - Growing our own vegetables. - Discussing in debates. - Sharing responsibilities and making collective decisions. 		
JAN FEB	5. Let's Improve Our Neighbourhood!	<p>Teenagers often feel that they do not have a voice. They spend a huge part of their leisure time in their neighbourhood and, sometimes, they lack entertainment. This unit is about proposing improvements to the major of the city, making critical and affordable suggestions and distinguishing when it is necessary to use more formal language.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Designing improvements for our neighbourhood - Making collective decisions. - Writing formal letters 	Formal letter to the major of the city	C3, C4, C6, C7, C8, C9
MAR APR	6. "Lord, what fools these mortals be!"	<p>One of the most famous British writers is Shakespeare. His works were sometimes ahead of its time when it comes to their treatment of certain topics. One of the best examples to illustrate this is his play A Midsummer Night's Dream. This unit is about being in contact with the English culture better and adapting the play.</p>	A play for the whole high school	C1, C2, C3, C10, C11

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Learning about William Shakespeare and his context - Producing a play: A Midsummer Night's Dream. - Boosting students' interest in theatre and in the English culture. - Sharing responsibilities and making decisions together. - Adapting the play. 		
MAY JUN	7. The Future Is in Our Hands	<p>Teenagers, as one of the next generations, need to be aware of the environmental crisis and to be able to find solutions for it. This unit is about raising awareness on the problems that need to be overcome and about looking for those actions that we can incorporate in our daily life and that can make a difference.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Raising awareness on the importance of taking care of our planet. - Making predictions and looking for solutions. 	<p>Mural to raise awareness of the dangers and to propose solutions</p>	C3, C4, C6, C7, C8, C9

9.10. Teaching Unit Overview

<u>Session</u>	<u>Activities</u>		<u>Materials / Equipment</u>	<u>Competencies</u>
1	Creation of the groups	The groups for the whole teaching unit are created. Students need to find three common aspects shared by the whole team. Taking into account these findings, they have to choose a name for their team.		C3
	Teacher-led debate	An introductory Google Slides with images will be used to discuss and introduce the topic of the unit. The teacher will lead the debate asking students several questions about multiculturalism and the scenes illustrated in the images. This activity will help the teacher know about the students' previous knowledge as well as it will help see how they interact and discuss.	Google Slides	C1, C2, C3
	Introduction to the unit and the final product	The teacher explains to students what the unit is about and what final product they will have to create.	Example of a final product	C1, C3

	KPSI	Students are asked to complete a KPSI	KPSI	C4, C5
	Checklist	Students complete a checklist about the debate and how they have worked in their teams	Checklist	C4, C5
2	Activating knowledge			
	Cultures in our school	<p>The teacher asks students if there is multiculturalism in their school. Students are asked to say which countries are represented in the centre and if they know anything about them.</p> <p>Padlet is used to write all the ideas shared by the learners.</p>	Padlet	C1, C3, C8
	Choosing a country	<p>Each team is provided with 5 cards with information about 5 different countries represented in the school.</p> <p>Each card has the name of the country, the continent where it is found and several images illustrating the main characteristics of its culture.</p> <p>Students have to discuss which country they will choose to do their final product about.</p> <p>Students will not receive any instructions on how to interact between them. Therefore, this activity will also be used to see their abilities and previous</p>	Countries cards	C3, C5

		knowledge.		
	Sharing the results	Once all the teams have decided and chosen a country, all groups share with the whole class what they have decided and why.		C3
	Checklist	Students complete a checklist about the debate they have carried out to choose the country and about how they have worked in their teams.	Checklist	C4, C5
3	Activating knowledge			
	Traffic lights: expressions	Activity adapted from Dawes (2008). Students are provided with a worksheet per group. They have to choose which expressions are good to use when discussing with their classmates. Following the colours of traffic lights, the expressions they think they are good must be stuck on a green circular paper. The ones they are sure they are bad must be stuck on a red triangular paper. The expressions they are not sure about have to be stuck on an orange rectangular paper.	Traffic lights: Expressions worksheet	C1, C3, C4, C5, C8
	Creation of a mural	Once all groups have finished deciding which expressions are good when discussing, they all share their results with the whole class. A mural with all the useful expressions will be created by all students. It will be stuck on the wall for learners to have it when they need it.		C3, C7, C8, C9

	Checklist	Students complete a checklist about the debate they have carried out to choose the country and about how they have worked in their teams.		C4, C5
	Learning diary	Each group is provided with a learning diary. At the end of each week, every member of the group will write his or her own entry by answering some questions in a worksheet. This is carried out individually.	Learning diary worksheet	C4, C5, C7
4	Activating knowledge			
	Debate with expression cards	<p>A debate is carried out in the different groups between the students. This debate will not be led by the teacher but autonomously by the students of each team.</p> <p>They will have to discuss and share their opinions about different images related to multiculturalism. Each image will be provided with some questions for students to know what they have to talk about.</p> <p>Learners will be provided with cards with different expressions. These will be used to express agreement and disagreement, to ask for opinions, to ask for repetition and, finally, for turn-taking.</p> <p>Each student must use all cards before finishing the discussion.</p>	Debate cards worksheet	C3, C4

	Working on a poster	The teacher provides each group with an example of a poster. They have to think of its characteristics.	Example of an already created poster	C3, C4, C5, C6
	Checklist	Students complete a checklist about the debate they have carried out to choose the country and about how they have worked in their teams.	Checklist	C4, C5
5	Activating knowledge			
	Traffic lights: actions	Activity adapted from: Students are provided with a worksheet per group. They have to choose which actions are good to use when discussing and collaborating with their classmates. Following the colours of traffic lights, the actions they think they are good must be stuck on a green paper. The ones they are sure they are bad must be stuck in a red paper. The actions they are not sure about have to be stuck on an orange paper.	Traffic lights: Actions worksheet	C1, C3, C4, C5, C8
	Creation of ground rules	Once all groups have finished deciding which expressions are good when discussing, they all share their results with the whole class. The ground rules for collaborating and discussing in class will be decided. These will be written using Mindmap. A photocopy of it will be provided to every student and another will be stuck on the wall of the classroom for	Mindmap	C3

		students to always have it available.		
	Teacher-led debate about benefits of multiculturalism	<p>A Kahoot with different situations, affirmations and questions will be used by the teacher to lead the discussion.</p> <p>The teacher will lead the debate asking students several questions about multiculturalism. Several options will be given to students and they will have to choose using their mobile phones. Once they answer each question, open questions will be asked by the teacher about students' opinion.</p> <p>Once they finish with the Kahoot, the debate will be concluded by making a list of the benefits multiculturalism have, taking into account the questions and the information from the Kahoot and the discussion.</p>	Kahoot	C1, C3, C5, C8
	Checklist	Students complete a checklist about the debate they have carried out to choose the country and about how they have worked in their teams.	Checklist	C4, C5
6	Activating knowledge: Negative Role Play	The teacher asks for four voluntary students to do a role-play. Each student will be given a piece of paper with his or her role. Every character will do something bad when discussing and making decisions in group. The rest of the class will have to observe and think what each person is doing wrong. Once they finish the role-play, the whole class will decide what was each character's mistake and how they would change it.	Negative Role Play worksheet	C1, C3

Brainstorming: information about countries	The teacher asks the group to think what relevant characteristics about a country can be included in their posters. They share it with the whole class and a list of all the options is made.	Padlet	C3
Choosing items for their own poster (using debate cards)	Once the list has been made, each group decides 10 items they are going to choose for their poster about the country they chose. This debate is carried out using the debate cards.	Debate cards	C3
Share information with the whole class.	Every group shares the results of their discussion with the rest of the class.		C3
Checklist	Students complete a checklist about the debate they have carried out to choose the country and about how they have worked in their teams.	Checklist	C4, C5
Learning diary	Each group is provided with a learning diary. At the end of each week, every member of the group will write his or her own entry by answering some questions in a worksheet. This is carried out individually.	Learning diary worksheet	C4, C5, C7
7	Activating knowledge		
Teacher's example of a poster about a country + example of	The teacher shows an example of a poster similar to the final product students will have to produce. S/he brings to the class the traditional dish of that country as the most relevant cultural item.	Teacher's poster + dish	C1

	traditional dish			
	Looking for information about their country	Each group looks for information about their country taking into account the items they decided to include during the previous session.	Computers	C1, C3, C4, C5, C6
	Deciding the starring information/example of a tradition (Dish? Song? Clothes? Sport? Dance?)	Every group has to decide the most relevant cultural item of their country for them to be illustrated in the class during the final meet-up session. It can be a traditional dish, a song, a sport, a dance or any other.		C3
	Checklist	Students complete a checklist about the debate they have carried out to choose the country and about how they have worked in their teams.	Checklist	C4, C5
8		Activating knowledge		
	Analysing and choosing parts/division of a poster	Using the example of a poster the teacher brought in the previous session, each group analyses which parts a poster has to have and how they can be divided.	Teacher's poster	C3, C4, C5
	Creating and negotiating the	The rubric for the assessment of students' final product is negotiated with	Rubric	C3

	rubric for the final product	them.		
	Creating the poster (digitally using Canva or manually)	Students are given time to create their poster. They are given two options: they can do it using Canva on their computers or manually.	Computers	C7, C8, C9
	Checklist	Students complete a checklist about the debate they have carried out to choose the country and about how they have worked in their teams.	Checklist	C4, C5
9	Activating knowledge			
	Teacher-led debate: how to fight against racism	<p>A Kahoot with different situations, affirmations and questions will be used by the teacher to lead the discussion.</p> <p>The teacher will lead the debate asking students several questions about how to fight racism. Several options will be given to students and they will have to choose using their mobile phones. Once they answer each question, open questions will be asked by the teacher about students' opinion.</p> <p>Once they finish with the Kahoot, the debate will be concluded by making a list of the ways that racism can be fought, taking into account the questions and the information from the Kahoot and the discussion.</p>	Kahoot	C3

	Finishing the poster	Students are given time to finish their poster	Computers	C7, C8, C9
	Checklist	Students complete a checklist about the debate they have carried out to choose the country and about how they have worked in their teams.	Checklist	C4, C5
	Learning diary	Each group is provided with a learning diary. At the end of each week, every member of the group will write his or her own entry by answering some questions in a worksheet. This is carried out individually.	Learning diary worksheet	C4, C5, C8
10	Activating knowledge			
	Preparing and practising the oral presentation	Students are given time to prepare and practice their oral presentation about their poster and country.		C2, C3
	Checklist	Students complete a checklist about the debate they have carried out to choose the country and about how they have worked in their teams.	Checklist	C4, C5
11	Activating knowledge & setting up			
	Posters Meet-Up	A Meet-up session is carried out. All posters are stuck on the walls. In turns, groups go around to see their classmates' work and each group gives their oral presentation to those groups. Then, the groups who were presenting go around and the others present their final products.	Posters	C1, C2, C3, C4, C5

	Peer assessment	While doing the meet-up section, students assess other groups by completing a checklist that will be based on the negotiated rubric.	Peer-assessment worksheet	C4, C5, C8
12	Activating knowledge			
	KPSI + Self-Assessment + final learning diary	The KPSI is completed again by the students. A self-assessment checklist must be completed to, based on the rubric negotiated with the students. The last entry of this unit's learning diary is written.	KPSI, Self-Assessment worksheet, Learning diary worksheet	C4, C5, C8
	Closing the project: thread activity	To conclude the teaching unit, the whole class stands up in a circle. They pass a woollen yarn among each other and give opinions about these weeks, this unit, the topic and so on and so forth.	A woollen yarn	C3