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Creation of a bilingual kindergarten: “Roots and wings”.

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ABSTRACT

In the present project, a proposal for a bilingual kindergarten in the Balearic Islands will be developed. There is a lack of consciousness of the importance of the English language in our country. Moreover, there is a need for young children to assimilate the language in a more natural environment.

The first part of the dissertation will discuss relevant information on educational methodologies. This research paper also includes an analysis of some current bilingual kindergartens. Finally, the reader will find a proposal for a bilingual kindergarten in which are explained all the necessary information about it.

Keywords: Child education, English language, Respectful methodologies, Kindergarten, Language immersion.

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1. INTRODUCTION

A lot has been studied, researched and analyzed in relation to the teaching of English (Meneses, 2019). In addition, there are some laws that support the idea of teaching English since children are very young. (Barreira, 2015) Despite this, the reality shows us that Spanish people have an undesirable level of English. According to the barometer of Cambridge University (2017, 1) Spain is the country with the worst level of English in the European Union. For all of these reasons, this project has been developed to turn out to be an alternative to this dramatic situation and give a little light on the future of Spanish children.

1.1 Justification

I think that the English language is very useful and important in this globalized world where we live. Nowadays, our way of living the life has changed so much. It is very common for people to change their place of residence for a short or for a long time. This is why people need to learn to be flexible and have lots of social skills to fit in to new way of life.

I also agree that school is a very important place where children acquire lots of knowledge related to several subjects like mathematics, history, etc. But, what I definitely defend is that school must be a place where culture and learning fit together. I do not believe in the type of school from the last decade where students only learned reading or writing. I believe in the type of school that prepares children to be emotionally strong and gives them useful resources and abilities to face the world.

Why am I speaking about this? Because I believe that the English language is one of the ways that would help adults to reach these aims that I have talked in the previous paragraph. Lots of studies agree that knowing the English language has so many benefits on people's lives (Caro, 2015). For this reason, I support the teaching of English from early ages.

Recently, I have been reading and investigating a lot about teaching English to early ages and I think that what it is said does not reflect what it really is. According to the law *Ley orgánica de Educación, 2006* (2014, 1) schools are prepared to teach bilingualism. From 3 years old, children receive English classes to develop their skills in this subject. The fact is, that although there is this law some studies show the terrible level of English of the Spanish people. According to Zafra (2019, 1) “Spain continues to have one of the worst levels of English in Europe”.

For all of these reasons, I support the idea that in our country, Spain, institutional policies do not give enough importance to the learning of English. I also think that you only learn English if you live abroad or if you receive extra school English lessons. That is why, I would like to create my own kindergarten idea which understands the learning of English as a way of life.

1.2 Objectives

The principal objectives of this project are to present an in-depth review of educational methodologies and to collect all the necessary tools and resources needed to teach English at these early ages.

In addition, we will study and analyze the language acquisition in children from early ages. Lots of articles will be read to have an accurate idea related to this topic. Furthermore, we will compare and review bilingual schools. An in-depth study will be done to these schools to get ideas and adapt them to our project.

The second part will be dedicated to the creation of a kindergarten idea adapted to teaching English at ages of 0 till 3 years old in the context of B. Islands. The most important aims are to consider children’s needs and characteristics and offer a quality in the learning of English. To sum up, we want to create a suitable and realistic project that would be easy to develop in a near future.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Methodologies

In this section of the project, different and more named methodologies will be explained. Moreover, different authors dealing with education issues will be analyzed. Our main objective is to deep in this topic to reach general and quality information that it will be used in a near future to create our kindergarten.

We want to establish a solid foundation from which we will grow as an educational center. For this reason, we want to make big research and, afterwards, we will choose the methodologies that best fit our gaze towards childhood.

We will divide this section in two parts. In the first section, general educational methodologies will be studied. These methodologies deal with issues like: how to accompany children of this age, which are the best material and resources for them, etc. Meanwhile, in the second part, resources and methods in teaching English as a foreign language will be analyzed.

2.1.1 General educational methodologies

2.1.1.1 Emmi Pikler

Emmi Pikler was a very empowered woman who studied medicine, specifically, she worked as a pediatrician. Thanks to her studies, was able to carry out some in-depth research in physiologia. For her, the medical practice included the interest in children's lives (Herrán, 2013).

In 1946, she became the head of the Lóczy high school in Budapest. According to Herrán (39, 2013) she proposed an education system to provide personalized care to the fullest, a framework suitable living, an environment adapted to the functional needs of each age and, promoting the complete freedom of movements. Basically, the methodology of Emmi Pikler defends some aims that will be explained in the following paragraphs.

First of all, according to Herrán (39, 2013) teachers' responsibilities include feeding, changing diapers, positioning and making the children as comfortable as possible and putting them to bed. Moreover, they have to act respectfully and tenderly. Teachers have to adapt to the needs and rhythms of each child which generates safety and joy in them.

Secondly, teachers must observe the movements and gestures of each child at any time. In addition, according to Herrán (39, 2013) teachers have to talk to them when they are being cared for and explain what will happen next. In that way, we have to warn children every time we want to pick them up, clean their nose, etc.

In addition, professionals of education, must prepare a right and accurate environment appropriate to children's evolutionary characteristics. The physical environment must be comfortable, safe and favorable. Children have to be able to move around freely and self-effectively. Moreover, the material and toys have to be attractive and be in good condition (Herrán, 2013).

Therefore, the methodology of Emmi Pikler defends the idea that children have to wear comfortable clothes so that they can have complete freedom of actions and movements (Herrán, 2013).

Also, according to Herrán (50, 2013) there are golden rules that must be accepted and respected at any time. These rules are:

- The devil lives in the small details.
- Never put the child in a position that he/she cannot dominate.
- Not even a spoonful more!
- Trust, trust and trust the child's ability.
- Autonomy is not an obligation but a right.
- Do not promise anything that cannot be fulfilled.

To sum up, the vision that Emmy Pickler's methodology has towards childhood is: children are capable of understanding the language that is addressed to them, they can be autonomous in their daily routines and they have enough freedom to move around the environment. Finally, this methodology understands childhood as people that have their capacities. For this reason, they act in such a way that they help children to develop their abilities in a respectful and attentive manner.

2.1.1.2 Loris Malaguzzi

Loris Malaguzzi was a very recognized and important teacher and pedagogue. He was born in Italy in 1920. He grew up in a fascist Italy and, this is the reason why he decided to found a school in which children would learn in different ways (Londoño, 2017).

According to Hoyuelos (1, 2020), Malaguzzi is the initiator and inspiration of the reggiana educational adventure. He was a teacher and a pedagogue who dedicated all his life to building a quality education experience from a huge listening and respect and consideration for children's potentials.

Moreover, according to Hoyuelos (1,2020), Malaguzzi taught us that schools must be in constant motion, in perpetual evolution, with the ability to transgress themselves without ever betraying, knowing how to collect the contemporary challenges of society and of every new child at all times. Learn to research and experiment without giving anything for granted or discounted.

There are some principles that identify these type of schools. The first one is that children will be the protagonist. In that sense, the adult has to believe in children's capacities and let them participate in an active way in all the activities proposed. The second one is that the role of the teacher is to guide children. The role of the teacher explaining knowledge must be removed. The vision they have towards teachers is that they accompany and listen to children during all educational experiences. Another important principle is the importance of the environment. The organization, design and the use of the space are really important because it promotes interactions and communication between all the agents. Family is also an essential principle of the

reggians. Parents have an active role in school and they participate a lot. Finally, they consider really important to document the experiences that arise in school. The documentation serves to evaluate children and to let parents know what do they learn and how do they learn at school (Quicios, 2018).

Therefore, the reggiana philosophy talks about the 100 languages that children have. It is a poem in which Malaguzzi explains all the capacities and possibilities that children have, but we do not respect. It is a call to defend the right and duties of children.

Loris Malaguzzi designed and explained the concept of atelier. According to Filippo quoted in Allen, American and Alliance (2, 2016):

The atelier is considered to be one of the essential elements for operation of the municipal infant-toddler centers and preschools in Reggio Emilia: The atelier is a metaphor for the preschool infant-toddler center as a laboratory that gives value to the expressive potentials and creativity of each individual and of all the children. The atelier underscores the importance of imagination, aesthetics, and the theory of a hundred languages in the formative and knowledge-building paths; it contributes to giving visibility to the listening and the documentation of the learning processes of the children and the adults.

In conclusion, the atelier turns out to be the suitable environment according to the look that reggians have towards childhood.

2.1.1.3 Maria Montessori

Maria Montessori was an Italian pedagogue. She also studied medicine in the University of Rome. Maria started working with children that had disabilities and mental health problems and she discovered that their problems were not related to health problems, but to pedagogic problems (Ruiza, Fernández and Tamaro, 2004).

She travelled and worked with lot of children from different places. That is why, her experience in the world of Education is so deep and has such as an incredible importance nowadays (Ruiza, Fernández and Tamaro, 2004).

Thanks to her big experience in the world of child education, Maria Montessori, could define some universal characteristics of childhood regardless of where children were born or the education they received. According to Britton (19, 2017) these characteristics are the following ones:

- All the children have an absorbing mind.
- All the children go through sensitive periods.
- All the children want to learn.
- All the children learn by playing.
- All the children go through various stages of development.
- All the children want to be independent.

Below, the most important issues about the method of Maria Montessori will be explained. First of all, Maria Montessori analyzed that children have an absorbing mind which differentiates them from adults (Britton, 2017). According to Britton (20, 2017), this is a mind that unconsciously absorbs information from the environment, learning from it in a really quickly way. This is a capacity that children only have during their first six years of life. That is why, their first experiences are so important. However, we must highlight that this happens specially from zero until three years old because the conscious learning has not appeared yet (Britton, 2017).

In addition, Maria Montessori also explained the conscious mind. This one happens from three until six years old. In this phase, the absorbent mind is still present in children's lives but, now the consciousness is born (Britton, 2017). According to Britton (20, 2017), the consciousness appears with the language and the knowledge. During these years, children ask lot of questions, learn lots of abilities and they have an active role in their learning process. For this reason, adults have to give them the adequate resources if we want to respect their natural process of learning. Moreover, giving them protection is really important during these ages (Britton, 2017).

Furthermore, Montessori could also observe that children go through different sensitive periods. She explained that these sensitive periods happen when children are really interested in something in particular (Britton, 2017). According to Britton (22, 2017), children are predisposed to develop new knowledge and skills through their senses.

Britton (22, 2017) says that she identified six different sensitive periods: sensitivity to order, sensitivity to language, sensitivity to walk, sensitivity to social aspects, sensitivity to small objects and sensitivity to learn through senses.

Finally, we will conclude this section talking about the importance of the play and materials for the method of Maria Montessori. According to Britton (29, 2017) play is really important for children because it helps them learning new ideas and put them in practice, to adapt socially and overcome emotional problems. Montessori analyzed two different types of works: the work of the adults and the work of the children. This last one, it refers to the way children learn and this way it is known as playing. So, she believed that the natural way for children to learn new things is playing structured or non-structured games, but playing. For this reason, Montessori elaborated and designed lots of materials and resources for children to learn (Britton, 2017).

2.1.2 General methods in teaching English as a foreign language

In this second section there will be some methods related to the teaching of English as a foreign language. We will analyze them to get a general idea about this topic and choose the best method according to our criteria.

2.1.2.1 Direct Method

According to Kirsh (2008, 52) “The aim of the Direct Method is to enable learners to make direct associations between a concept and the word in a foreign language.”

This method has some features that characterizes it. First of all, in the Direct Method the vocabulary is learned by doing gestures, props and mime. Secondly, grammar is taught inductively because pupils have to deduce the rules of the grammar (Kirsh, 2008). Moreover, speaking skills are really important in this method as Kirsh (2008, 52)

affirms “that a language is a means for communication.” Finally, the learning focuses in doing questions to pupils and wait for their answers (Kirsh, 2008).

This method is often used in the teaching of English at early ages. An example of this, is when teachers use the resource of the flashcards while they are teaching the vocabulary. They show the flashcard to students and they say the corresponding name of it. For example, teacher shows them the flashcard of a banana and says *banana*. In this way, students can make a direct association between the word said by the teacher and the corresponding image.

2.1.2.2 Audiolingualism

Audiolingualism is one of the methods designed to learn a foreign language. This method believes that the importance lies in learning grammatical and phonological structure. Moreover, in this method teachers say different sentences patterns and pupils have to repeat them until they learn them (Kirsh, 2008).

Therefore, this method has been criticized a because does not prepare students for spontaneous talk in real situations of communication. The sentence patterns learned in class are different than the ones used in authentic social situations (Kirsh, 2008).

Audiolingualism is used in child Education lessons but it cannot be the unique method. A situation that perfectly reflects this method is when the teacher says a correct grammatical sentence and pretends that students repeat it in the same way.

2.1.2.3 Total Physical Response

The creator of this method is J.Asher who was a professor of psychology at the San Jose State University in California. He could observe lots of young children learning their first language and that is why he decided to create this method (Asmarani, 2013).

After his observations, Asher reached three conclusions. The first premise was that language is learned primarily by listening. The second premise was that language has to be developed in the right hemisphere of the brain. The last one is that any stress is allowed in the learning of a language (Asmarani, 2013).

Total Physical Response is a method of teaching another language that has its main basis in the importance of the listening comprehension which is the key to language development (Kirsh, 2008).

Moreover, this method defends and supports physical movement as a way of knowing if children have understood the input or not (Kirsh, 2008). For this reason, teachers usually ask questions to students and they have to answer with whole-body actions. (Asmarani, 2013) According to Kirsh (2008, 56) some of these physical movements can be acting out orders, enacting stories, drawing pictures in response to instructions or accompanying songs with actions.

Therefore, this method is really helpful and used in the very early stages of learning. However, it is believed that it must be complemented by other approaches. Teachers of child education use this method because it adapts to the needs and rhythms of young children (Kirsh, 2008).

In conclusion, Total Physical Response is one of the most important methods used for children. Some examples of this method in a child education lesson is when they play games like *Simon says* in which pupils have to do some actions in order to answer what the teacher has said. Specifically, the teacher can say *Simon says touch your nose*. So, students have to touch their nose.

2.1.2.4 Communicative Language Teaching

The Communicative Language Teaching is a way of teaching another language which has its importance in the interaction between the agents who participate in the communication.

This method assumes that language and social context go together hand in hand. Specifically, language could not exist without the social context (Kirsh, 2008).

Moreover, in the Communicative Language Teaching methods' teachers do not usually correct the mistakes done by the pupils but they focus on the meaning rather focusing on the form. In addition, teachers expect that pupils will be able to express different

functions of language (Kirsh, 2008). That is why, according to Kirsh (2008, 59), teachers provide them with the necessary linguistic input.

In addition, Hymes was one of the first authors who proposed a theory of language as communication. He defends that communicative competence implies different things such as the importance of knowing the language, the ability to recognize if a sentence is correct or not or the ability to adapt to the social context (Kirsh, 2008).

Furthermore, the role of the teacher in this theory is to promote useful abilities and resources to students. For this reason, teachers help students to promote themselves in the target language or engage them in conversations (Kirsh, 2008).

To sum up, Communicative Language Teaching is more useful and suitable for older children like students of the high school. For example, a really good activity that can be developed for them are the role-plays. But, to be honest, it is not the most appropriate method for young children.

2.1.3 Useful resources for introducing children in foreign languages

2.1.3.1 The use of puppets

The use of puppets in children education foreign language lessons is very useful and common. This type of resource gives lots of benefits to pupils.

On one side, students lose their fear of speaking English out loud when people are listening to them. It seems like if the puppet gives them courage and strength to face this fear. For this reason, children really want to hold the puppet when they have to talk in English because they feel more secure (Satchwell 1977 quoted in Kirsh).

Moreover, it is important to highlight that teachers can use the puppets however they want. In this case, puppets can be native speakers or not, puppets can correct mistakes or not. It will depend on the use that the teacher wants to make of it (Satchwell 1977 quoted in Kirsh).

2.1.3.2 Working with rhymes and songs

Rhymes and songs are always present and used in the daily routines of a kindergarten. They are a resource which is loved by students and it helps them learning lots of things. For these reasons, songs and rhymes are also used in a foreign language classroom. In addition, it has been analyzed that working with rhymes and songs in a foreign language classroom has so many benefits (Kirsh, 2008).

On the one hand, they help pupils to develop their listening, pronunciation and speaking skills. Moreover, as they are repetitive and have rhythmic patterns children are more likely to remember the new words. In addition, they promote positive feelings and improve the attitude of the children towards the new language.

On the other hand, pupils do not get tired of listening to the songs and rhymes. They can also initiate a range of activities such as drawing, performing, playing, listening or reading (Kirsh, 2008).

Furthermore, depending on the topic that the teacher wants to work, she/he will choose one song or another. There are songs that explain and define topics such as food, colours, days of the week, animals or emotions. The importance lies on choosing the song that best suits to those new learnings (Kirsh, 2008).

2.1.3.3 Working with stories

Nowadays, the resource of stories in foreign language classroom is really used by teachers and professionals of the education (Kirsh, 2008). It has been studied that using stories in the foreign language classroom has lots of benefits (Kirsh, 2008).

On the one hand, students generally like stories and in this way, English teachers use this resource to introduce the new language in the class. It turns out to be an easy and enjoyable way into language learning. Moreover, working with stories helps to develop children's imagination and fantasy.

On the other hand, stories help pupils to develop their concentration span, their listening skills and their learning strategies. In addition, stories help pupils to learn new

vocabulary and grammatical structures. To sum up, stories are good to take a holistic approach (Kirsh, 2008).

The fact is, there are thousands of stories with lots of different topics. Depending on the aim that teachers want to work, they will choose one type of story or another one. Nowadays, there are stories explaining from familiar tales and ordinary topics such as food, animals, days of the week, clothes or weather to stories explaining more ambiguous concepts like death and the importance of some values such as solidarity, respect or empathy (Kirsh, 2008).

Despite this, some teachers prefer to write and create their own stories. In this way, teachers have the chance to design and invent the story according to the level and the interests of the students (Kirsh, 2008).

However, we can also find teachers who use commercial books but they choose to adapt them depending on the needs of the class. For example, it is very common for teachers to use a book (e.g. 'The Three Little Pigs') and explain another version of the story. That is why, teachers usually adapt stories according to the linguistic level and needs of the class. Sometimes teachers simplify the language or sometimes teachers add more vocabulary and language (Kirsh, 2008).

2.2 First language acquisition- (0-3 year-old children)

The acquisition of the language follows some steps which are going to be explained in the following paragraphs.

Language is the basis for human communication. It is important to highlight that language begins its development from the first moment of people's life when babies listen to us and when they observe how we communicate. Since then, babies learn ways to understand and express themselves (Sánchez, 2013).

According to Sánchez (1, 2013) stimulating the language is so important for these reasons: it is a tool for thinking, it contributes to the development of intelligence, it develops our analytical skills, it facilitates understanding and problem solving, it helps

to understand emotions, it is a very important instrument for social relationships and it is closely linked to cognitive development.

Prelinguistic stage (from 0 until 2 years old)

Before the acquisition of the verbal language, babies learn the basis of communication. This stage is called prelinguistic. In this period of time, they use looks, gestures and facial expressions to communicate (Sánchez, 2013).

Therefore, they begin to make their first sounds which are really important because they are the basis of speech that will be developed in a near future (Sánchez, 2013).

Around 20-24 months, the emission of the first words takes place. The reason why this stage is so important is because babies learn that words have a meaning. After this huge emission of words, a big and quick development in language occurs. Babies learn to emit a large number of words in just a few months, In addition, they realize that through language they can name things around them (Sánchez, 2013).

According to Sánchez (1, 2013), there are different ways to stimulate children's language: talk to the babies, use songs, introduce babies to family's conversations, tell them the name of things, say the name of the corresponding object every time a baby points at it and avoid talking as a baby.

Linguistic stage (from 2 until 4 years old)

At this stage, children face a wider world and begin to socially relate with more people. For this reason, children feel the need of improving their speech because they really want to communicate with others. Moreover, the vocabulary and syntactic constructions increase greatly.

According to Sánchez (1, 2013), there are different ways to stimulate children from two to four years old language: talk to them, tell them stories, ask them questions and wait for their answer, correct them when they say a word incorrectly, involve them into conversations and use songs.

2.3 Experiences - bilingual schools

In this section, different bilingual schools will be analyzed. Our main objective is to get some ideas and adapt them to our project.

2.3.1 Escoles Bressol Municipals Albarés i de Ronda-La Mercè

These kindergartens are located in Catalonia. They are different kindergartens but they share the same educational project. That is why, they appear together in the same article.

In 2013 they introduced English language in their lessons. They decided to introduce a second language in a playful way and with the permission of the entire educational team. They think that since children are born, the brain receives and records information from their senses. Moreover, they believe that learning another language at early ages has some benefits (Berenguer et.al, 2014).

On the one hand, they support the idea that listening to different languages stimulates brain activities. They also agree that children who learn more than one language at the same time have some benefits like: They have a better selective attention, the ability to adapt at new changes and finally, understand and talk other languages (Berenguer, et.al., 2014).

On the other hand, children develop their first phonetic learning during their first year. They think that introducing a new language during this stage will improve their intellectual and social development (Berenguer et.al., 2014)

For all of these reasons, they decided to introduce a second language in their lessons, in this case, English (Berenguer et.al., 2014). In every kindergarten there is a teacher of English who is in charge of doing the English lesson. In one kindergarten, all the groups have English lessons once a week during 15 or 20 minutes. If children are really interested in the activity the teacher can enlarge it. Meanwhile, in the other kindergarten, they teach English during all the week. All the groups have English

lessons at least once a week. Their lessons last between 30 and 35 minutes. Moreover, every Friday a story is told to all the groups (Berenguer et.al., 2014)

In relation to the activities, they prepare them according to 4 items: participation, flexibility, playful (game-orientated) and immersion (Berenguer et.al., 2014).

1. Participation: They prepare the activities so that children can participate in them in an active way (Berenguer et.al., 2014).
2. Flexibility: The activities must be adapted to every situation (Berenguer et.al., 2014).
3. Playful (game-orientate): They use a lot of songs and stories. They simplify them if it is necessary (Berenguer et.al., 2014).
4. Immersion: The teacher always speaks in English to do a real immersion in English. The teacher does not translate anything in Spanish or in Catalan (Berenguer et.al., 2014).

In relation to the resources, they divide them in three: characterizers of the teacher, technical resources and emotional or manipulable resources. The first ones, result to be the things that the teacher uses to show that they are doing English lessons. For example, the teacher puts on a diadem with the flag of the United Kingdom or uses a special box. The second ones, are the memory sticks and the speakers. The last ones are the material that the teacher uses like puppies or stories (Berenguer et.al., 2014).

3. MY OWN PROPOSAL: Roots and wings – bilingual kindergarten

3.1 Specific aims of the project

The big aim of this project is to create the idea of a kindergarten that would reflect our way of understanding the education. We really want to fit together our most important objectives: learn English and develop a respectful education.

Moreover, we also want to accomplish some specific aims. Firstly, we want to choose a name for the kindergarten and design a logo. Moreover, we want to establish our main values and get inspired by methodologies that respect children needs that will reflect our look towards childhood. Furthermore, we want to define the importance that has for us the introduction of the English language in our lessons. Finally, we will design a lesson plan specifically for each age.

3.2 General information about Roots and wings – bilingual kindergarten

3.2.1 “Roots and wings”

We chose this name for our kindergarten because we want it to be like a second home for our families and for our little students. We want them to be safe and secure in our kindergarten. We want families to trust our project and our beliefs. That is why, we decided to use the word roots. This word for us means security, home, beginnings, confidence and love. We want to work very hard to mean all these senses to our families and to our children.

Moreover, we decided to use the word wings because one of our main objectives is to give wings to our students to be whatever they want to be. Autonomy and independence are two values that are really important for us. We believe in children’s abilities and we want to enhance them. Our space is ready to develop their motor skills and our project is based on meaningful learning thanks to which children are able to learn in an experiential way. The word wings for us means independence, autonomy, security, self-love and personality. As we have already said in the last paragraph, we want to work very hard to mean these senses to our families and to our children.

Figure 1: Logo (Source own elaboration)

All in all, we believe in our project. We believe in our way of understanding the education. We believe in our team. Therefore, we agree that roots and wings define our project in a perfect way and the look we have towards children.



3.2.2 Location of the kindergarten

You can find our kindergarten in Santa Maria del Camí. It is a village located in the middle of the island of Mallorca.

Facilities of the school:

- There are 6 classrooms. Every classroom has all the facilities that children need like: small and adapted bathrooms, a rest area and a play area.
- There is a very big classroom which it is used to do experimentation workshops.
- There is a small classroom used to do meetings with families.
- There are two small playgrounds. One is only used by the 0-1 years old. Meanwhile, the one other one is used by the 1-2 years old children.
- There is one big playground which is used by the 1-2 and 2-3 years old children.
- We have our own kitchen and we cook fresh, healthy and varied food daily.
- There is a bathroom that can be used for families and for workers.
- There is an office where you can find the headteacher and all the important documents of the kindergarten.

3.2.3 History of Roots and wings

Our kindergarten “Roots and wings” was born with the need to create a kindergarten that reflects our way of understanding education. We believe that there is a lack of consciousness in our society about the importance of the preschool education. According to Tonucci, F. (1, 2020) politicians do not take children into account when making their decisions. Children basically do not exist, they do not appear in their concerns. We agree with this thought because we think that kindergartens are used to satisfy society needs instead of satisfying children needs.

For this reason, we want to make a change in our society. We want to open our kindergarten to listen and attend the needs of the little ones. We want to create a project based on respectful methodologies. We want to be close to children and we want to believe that a better future is possible for our sector.

As it is said, some of our main foundations are to respect children and satisfy their needs. Moreover, another important objective in our project is the introduction of the English language in our lessons. According to Carrel (15, 2004) without a doubt, the richest period is the early childhood. This should be used in every possible and imaginable way through education. The loss of this period is irreparable. Instead of forgetting our first years of life, our duty is to cultivate them with the utmost attention. That is why we believe in the capacities and abilities of the little ones. We also believe that the first education is the most important in a lot of aspects because is when children learn lots of things like: they consolidate their personality, they learn how to manage their emotions or they learn lots of important values.

Therefore, children have critical periods to learn things. This means that if they do not practice and do not continue developing their skills during a certain period of time, it is very possible that some abilities will disappear. For example, in the learning of a second language it is necessary to be constantly in practice and in exposure (Manzanas, s.d.).

For these reasons, we believe that introducing the English language in our project is suitable for children because they are ready and prepared to listen to a new language.

Children's brains are wonderful and provide possibilities for them to learn. However, we always want to highlight that our main and principal aim is to respect them and satisfy their needs. As a second objective, we would have the learning of English.

In conclusion, this project wants to be created as an alternative kindergarten which does not work only for parents needs but also works for children needs. Therefore, we support the importance of learning English at early ages and we want to create a school center where all our beliefs and thoughts fit together in a perfect way.

3.2.4 Values

We cannot create the idea of a kindergarten without consolidating some values that must be present at every step we take in this project. As a team, we believe that we must walk hand in hand towards the same path always respecting the rhythms of each teacher.

That is why, we have chosen some general values that identify our kindergarten in a perfect way.

- **Transparency** → We believe that if we want to be a quality center we must be transparent with the families we treat and with the rest of the society. We want to have a kind of school that shows the reality and does not focuses on appearance but on being.
- **Respect** → To breathe peace and harmony in our kindergarten is very important for us. That is why, everyone will have an attitude of respect towards the entire educational community.
- **Flexibility** → To be flexible with our families and with our children is very important for us. We want families and children to feel like if they were at

home. For this reason, we want to give families all possible help so that they feel supported in our center. Moreover, we feel we have a duty to adapt our schedules and spaces, whenever it is possible, to satisfy their needs and desires.

- **Co-education** → We trust co-education is the only possible education if we want an equitable and equal future between both genders.
- **Loyalty** → We are faithful to our values, our families, our students and our employees.
- **Responsibility** → We work very hard to achieve several aims. Our duty is to work to get these objectives and to always guarantee a better educational center.

3.2.5 Our team

*Figure 2: Photo of Marga.
(source own elaboration)*



¹MARGARITA GELABERT SAMPOL

She is the head of the kindergarten. Marga is a licensed early childhood education teacher from the University of the Balearic Islands. She has the level of English C1 granted by the University of Cambridge. She takes care of organizational and dynamic tasks. Her role in the kindergarten is to face problems and give solutions to them.

Marga thinks that with wonderful people around you, everything is possible.

¹ All photos in section 3.2.5 are reproduced by permission of the owner.

AINA VADELL SIMONET

She is the teacher of 0-1 years old class. Aina is a licensed early childhood education teacher from the University of the Balearic Islands. She has the level of English C1 granted by the University of Cambridge.

Aina thinks education is the only thing that can changes the world.

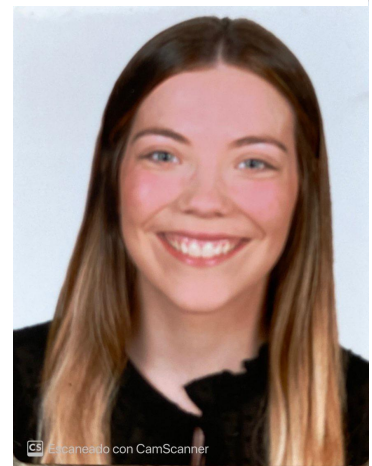
Figure 3: Photo of Aina. (Source own elaboration)



Figure 4: Photo of Maria del Mar. (Source own elaboration)

MARIA DEL MAR NICOLAU RAYO

She is the teacher of the 0-1 years old class. Maria del Mar is a licensed early childhood education teacher from the University of the Balearic Islands. She has the level of English C1 granted by the University of Cambridge.



Maria del Mar thinks love, harmony and peace are essential in a kindergarten.

*Figure 5: Photo of Laura.
(Source own elaboration)*



LAURA MARGARIT TOMÀS

She is the teacher of 1-2 years old class. Laura is a licensed early childhood education teacher from the University of the Balearic Islands. She has the level of English C1 granted by the University of Cambridge. In addition, she is also a psychologist.

Thanks to her marvelous experience in the world of psychology, Laura is the person responsible for giving pedagogical talks to families.

Laura thinks that the school must give us the tools and resources to face this world living.

Figure 6: Photo of Marina. (Source own elaboration)



MARINA CABOT TORRES

She is the teacher of the 1-2 years old class. Marina is a licensed early childhood education teacher from the University of the Balearic Islands. She has the level of English C1 granted by the University of Cambridge. Moreover, she is a specialist in visual and musical arts. For this reason, she is in charge of preparing experimental workshops for all age levels.

Marina thinks that real creativity and real imagination must take part in the early childhood curriculum.

Figure 7: Photo of Cati. (Source own elaboration)



CATALINA ESPEJO CORRALEJO

She is the teacher of 2-3 years old class. Cati is a licensed early childhood education teacher from the University of the Balearic Islands. She has the level of English C1 granted by the University of Cambridge.

Cati believes that teachers are the real influencers.

Figure 8: Photo of Maria. (Source own elaboration)



MARIA MAGDALENA MATEU LLOMPART

She is the teacher of 2-3 years old class. Maria is a licensed early childhood education teacher from the University of the Balearic Islands. She has the level of English C1 granted by the University of Cambridge. Maria did a master in philosophy 3.18 in the University of the Balearic Islands.

Maria believes a real change is needed if we want education to be respected in our society.

Figure 9: Photo of Marigina. (Source own elaboration)

MARIGINA GELABERT FIOL

She is the cook of the kindergarten. She is passionate about the world of cooking. She cooks in our kindergarten with so much love.



3.2.6 The importance of families and students in our kindergarten

We are a type of kindergarten that wants families to find comfort and love in it. We want families to be secure in our space. We want families to come at our kindergarten and do not want to leave. We want families to come and explain us their fears, doubts and problems about parenting issues. We want to be like a second home for them and we really want to work for it.

Ecological and systemic perspectives conceive the school as a complex space in which students, teachers and families form an essential and inseparable part. (Ferrer, M. and Riera, M. A, 2015).

From these perspectives, it is impossible to understand the school without a multilevel analysis that includes the microsystems, mesosystems, the macrosystem and the exosystem with their interactions. Thus, families cannot be conceived as external elements of the school but as agents inherent in the school system. (Ferrer, M. and Riera, M. A, 2015).

In that way, we believe that families, students and teachers take part of something really special and unique. We agree that we cannot do our work without taking into account

families. All in all, our way of understanding the education does not only concern students, but also families.

Moreover, according to De la Guardia (2007), there are three types of relationships between families and school: expert, adviser and co-educator. We feel identified with the co-educator model because is the one that thinks relationship is built on mutual trust and dialogue (Ferrer, M. and Riera, M. A, 2015).

From this model, the teacher recognizes the competence of the parents and tries to negotiate with them within a framework of mutual respect on both sides. In this way, families and teachers have different but complementary roles and knowledge (Ferrer, M. and Riera, M. A, 2015).

We expect to have this kind of relationship with our families because we believe that is the one that best suits our center. We are a team that believes in the importance of a good relationship between families and school to offer the best type of education to our little students.

In conclusion, we understand that there must be a line of separation between families from school and school from families. However, we want to be the type of kindergarten that listens to families and gives them the right role and the enough capacity to decide in our center.

3.2.7 The importance between families and school

As it has been said in the last step, we believe that families, students and school must walk through the same path. In our project, apart from getting inspired by respectful methodologies, we have introduced the English language in our lessons. We agree that this approach between families, students and school is essential to get closer to our little children. We also believe that is approach will be good to develop our English project properly.

We do not concern English language as a learning that has to only be listened and spoken in our kindergarten but must also be present in children's daily routines. For this reason, we want to work very hard to get a good relationship between school and families which will greatly benefit children's learning.

3.3 Our methodology

In this section, you will find the authors and methodologies that have inspired us to create our own proposal of kindergarten. Then, there will be exposed some resources and tools that we use daily.

First of all, we are a type of kindergarten which has got inspired by respectful methodologies. We do not believe that school is a place where teachers just teach knowledges and the role of students is basically listening to them. We believe in the type of school that prepares children to be critical in the future, who believes in their abilities and possibilities. For all of these reasons, we agree that respectful and alternative methodologies are the ones that best adapt to our way of understanding education and thus be able to achieve the proposed objectives.

One important author who inspired us was Emmi Pikler. Her way of understanding the importance of the free-movement in the early ages and the benefits that this provokes to children encouraged us. That is why, the environment is adapted and prepared to children's needs and to develop their motor skills. Every classroom has its own material that perfectly fits to the features of children at every stage. Moreover, it is important to highlight that pupils are totally free to move around the class as this one is perfectly prepared for them.

We want children to feel safe and secure and to have a well-defined personality. For this reason, we do not want to be a type of kindergarten that limits their possibilities, but

enhance them. We agree that psychomotricity is really important in these stages and provides them security.

Maria Montessori also inspired us in some aspects like the ones that will be explained below. She defined that little children's minds were like a sponge. This thought encouraged us in the way that introducing the English language at these early stages was quite adequate and possible. We want to take the advantage of this wonderful feature that children have and believe that doing the things well everything can be achieved.

Loris Malaguzzi was a really important author who created the famous schools called Reggio Emilia. The way of our kindergarten is distributed according to these type of schools. Moreover, the look we have towards children is very similar to the look that their teachers have towards children too. We both believe in the importance of enhancing their creativity and imagination, we both believe in the importance of their free-movement to develop as much as possible their motor skills, we both believe in the importance of respecting their rhythms and needs and, last but not least, we both believe in the importance of attending to their emotions at all times.

In the following section, there will be explained the resources and tools that we use daily in relation to the teaching of English.

- Songs → Songs are really used in our daily routines and listening to music is one of the things we do every day and we love to do. That is why, we always listen at least to three songs: Good morning song, clean up song and bye bye song. In addition, it is important to highlight that in relation to the topic that we are teaching to our little children other songs are incorporated in our routines too.
- Stories → They are introduced in our daily routines too as they are really loved and enjoyed by pupils. The stories we use do not have lot of text but lots of

images and they are really attractive. Moreover, it is important to say that we usually adapt the vocabulary and grammar of each story according to the age of the children. Therefore, every Friday we do a storytelling to which all the pupils of the kindergarten assist.

- Manipulable material → Teachers prepare manipulable material in relation of the topic that we are teaching to children. For example, if the thematic is *colours*, teachers prepare material related to it. We always try to use organic materials such as wood, paper or paperboard.
- Realia → We understand for realia all the toys that help us to teach vocabulary to children. For example, if we want to teach them the farm animals we would use the corresponding animal toys which we call *realia*.
- Flashcards → This resource is also used in our lessons. However, we prefer using realia than flashcards as we think that it is more visual and attractive for them.
- Games → Some games are played with the older children (2-3 years old). Some of these games are: *Simon says* or *Which flashcard is missing?*
- Experimentation workshops → We do an experimentation workshop twice a week. In this kind of workshop children have the opportunity to develop their sensory skills.

3.4 How do we understand the teaching of English?

In our kindergarten the English language is quite important. We really want and expect that children learn the language.

According to Kirsh (2008, 82) “immersion is the ideal situation for language learning at school”. In order to this thought we agree that linguistic immersion is the unique and real way in which children will be able to learn the English language properly. For this reason, teachers will always talk in English to students at all the times and through all different ages. In this way, children will relate that when they are in the kindergarten the English language will only be the one listened to and talked there.

Moreover, teachers will also speak with parents in English. The fact is, all the parents will not know the language. That is why, the head teacher Marga will be the only person allowed to talk in Spanish or in Catalan with them just in case there is any problem or any doubt. In addition, in our kindergarten we have a small classroom prepared to do meetings with parents. So, in this classroom teachers and parents will be able to talk in the language that they prefer. It must be said that children are not allowed in this kind of meetings.

Therefore, in the first parent meeting teachers will explain to them the importance of listening to the English language outside the kindergarten too. In that way, we expect parents to be good models for them. For example, they can listen to English songs at home or watch a cartoon or a movie in the foreign language.

In conclusion, we believe that linguistic immersion is the best way of teaching English that best suits to our beliefs. In order to that, we understand that English language must be talked in our kindergarten from the very first moment you enter in it.

3.5 Our timetables

Table 1. The timetable of the babies

	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
9:00-9:30h	Good morning	Good morning	Good morning	Good morning	Good morning
9:30 – 10:15h	Snack time	Snack time	Snack time	Snack time	Snack time
10:15-11:15h	Experimentation workshop	Psychomotricity	Treasure basket	Experimentation workshop	Storytelling
11:15H – 11:45h	Playground	Playground	Playground	Playground	Playground
11:45-12:15h	Music box	Free play	Music box	Free play	Music box
12:15-13:00h	Lunch time.	Lunch time	Lunch time	Lunch time	Lunch time

Source: own elaboration.

Table 2. A week with the 1-2 years old children

	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
9:00-9:30h	Good morning	Good morning	Good morning	Good morning	Good morning
9:30 – 10:15h	Snack time	Snack time	Snack time	Snack time	Snack time
10:15-11:15h	Experimentation workshop	Psychomotricity	Heuristic game.	Experimentation workshop	Storytelling
11:15– 11:45h	Playground	Playground	Playground	Playground	Playground
11:45-12:15h	Music box	Logical-mathematical games	Music box	Logical-mathematical games	Music box
12:15-13:00h	Lunch time.	Lunch time	Lunch time	Lunch time	Lunch time

Source: own elaboration

Table 3. A week with the 2-3 years old children

	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
9:00-9:30h	Good morning	Good morning	Good morning	Good morning	Good morning
9:30 – 10:15h	Snack time	Snack time	Snack time	Snack time	Snack time
10:15-11:15h	Experimentation workshop	Psychomotricity	Protagonist day	Experimentation workshop	Storytelling
11:15–11:45h	Playground	Playground	Playground	Playground	Playground
11:45-12:15h	Music box	Logical-mathematical games	Music box	Logical-mathematical games	Music box
12:15-13:00h	Lunch time.	Lunch time	Lunch time	Lunch time	Lunch time

Source: own elaboration.

4.CONCLUSION

In order to finish our project, we would like to review all the items that we planned in the very first moment and see if we have accomplished them or not.

First of all, we have presented clear information on topics of general education methodologies. Thanks to this, we were able to have a general idea towards this aspect which helped us to design our kindergarten.

Secondly, with the analysis of the acquisition of the language we have studied the different phases that children go through. Because of that, we are able to distinguish them and act in the best way according to their needs and rhythms.

Additionally, we decided to analyze different kindergartens which also introduced the English language in their lessons. This general research helped us in the way we decided to design our kindergarten too.

Finally, we created the idea of our own kindergarten. In this big project we have designed from the name of the school to different timetables. The fact is, we believe that

the project created is suitable in lots of aspects. First of all, children can develop their abilities in an environment that respects their needs. In addition, we agree that thanks to the linguistic immersion pupils will be able to learn the English language properly.

To sum up, we consider that education is a very powerful weapon. We honestly think that the world must change in lots of aspects and education can do and help a lot.

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