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**TEACHING DRACULA'S
ENGLISH IN SECONDARY
SCHOOL EDUCATION**

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1. Abstract

1.1 Abstract and key words

A great variety of studies have shown that extensive reading is a practice directly connected to a large improvement when learning a second or a foreign language. Studies have also proved that the more a learner reads, the more he or she will learn. Extensive reading not only implies improvement in the reading skill, but in the listening, speaking, writing and interaction skills.

Graded readers are a very good option to promote extensive reading. They have been adapted with the FL/SL learners in mind and they are graded at different levels so that everyone is able to read them. Regarding graded readers, it is very important to choose the appropriate one. Teachers should take into account their students' interests, needs and preferences as well as what they are trying to achieve with the use of graded readers. The level is crucial too. The teacher should provide students with graded readers at a suitable level. Graded readers are a very useful tool to let students organise their own learning process. Thus, if students think that the graded reader that they are reading is too easy, they are completely free to move to an upper level. On the contrary, if they think that the graded reader they are using is too difficult, it is better to move to a lower level rather than getting frustrated and giving up. We have, as teachers, the role of motivating students to learn English so we should avoid a stressful situation that will just imply frustration, rejection of the language, and retirement.

Graded readers may be widely exploited and a great amount of activities can be organised to develop motivation and skills. Obviously, this comes after a fair amount of hard work from the teacher, who is in charge of directing the class and guiding and advising the students.

Like anything in life, in order to use a graded reader it is necessary to know how to do so. For instance, teachers should avoid translations word-by-word, the over-use of dictionaries and they should encourage students to guess the meaning of the words from the context and to avoid getting stuck on looking up the unfamiliar words in the dictionary because it will only bring boredom. Teachers should encourage students to be satisfied with just understanding the main elements and the gist of the story. This is the reason why teachers should take into account the experts' advice and follow their guidelines.

Finally, I will present a proposal of a six-session didactic unit developed in relation to a specific literary work and subsequent graded reader: Bram Stoker's *Dracula*. Thus, I will show the variety of activities which may be designed with the aid of a graded reader, all of which may be adapted to any level. I have had the

opportunity of putting this didactic unit into practice and I feel proud to say that it works.

Key words: extensive reading, graded readers, didactic unit, EFL, Secondary Education, Bram Stoker's *Dracula*.

1.2 Resumen y palabras clave

Gran variedad de estudios han demostrado que la práctica de la lectura constante se encuentra estrechamente relacionada con una gran mejora a la hora de aprender un idioma extranjero. Los estudios han demostrado también que, cuanto más lee un alumno, más aprende. La lectura constante no solo contribuye a la mejora de la destreza en lectura, sino también de las denominadas destrezas básicas "listening, speaking, writing and interaction skills".

Los "graded readers" o lecturas graduadas son una muy buena opción para promocionar la lectura constante. Están adaptadas para los alumnos de distintos niveles, por lo que cualquiera puede leerlos. En relación con los "graded readers" es muy importante elegir el libro correcto. Para ello, los profesores deberían tener en cuenta tanto los intereses, necesidades y preferencias de sus alumnos como el objetivo que persiguen al usarlos. El nivel es también crucial. El profesor debe otorgar a sus alumnos los "graded readers" en el nivel adecuado. Estos libros son una herramienta muy útil para dejar que los alumnos sean responsables de su propio proceso de aprendizaje. De esta manera, si un alumno piensa que el libro que está leyendo es demasiado fácil, tiene completa libertad para intentar uno correspondiente a un nivel superior. Por el contrario, si piensa que es demasiado difícil, es mejor cambiar a un nivel más bajo que frustrarse y dejarlo. Nosotros, como profesores, tenemos el papel de motivar a nuestros alumnos a aprender inglés, por lo que debemos evitar situaciones estresantes que solo conllevan frustración, desprecio hacia el idioma y abandono.

Los "graded readers" pueden ser ampliamente explotados y existe un gran número de actividades que pueden ser organizadas para el desarrollo de la motivación y las distintas destrezas. Obviamente, esto supone un gran trabajo por parte del profesor, ya que es el encargado de dirigir la clase e ir guiando y aconsejando a los alumnos.

Como en cualquier otra cosa en la vida, para usar un "graded reader" hay que saber cómo hacerlo. Por ejemplo, los profesores deberían evitar las traducciones palabra por palabra y el uso excesivo de los diccionarios, del mismo modo que deben animar a sus alumnos a deducir el significado de una palabra por el contexto y a no quedarse en la fase de tratar de traducir y entender todas las palabras que no

conocen, porque esto solo acabará en aburrimiento y renuncia. Los profesores deben instar a los alumnos a entender las partes principales de la historia. Por todo esto, deberían tener en cuenta los consejos de los expertos en la materia y seguir sus indicaciones.

Después de toda esta teoría, presentaré un modelo de secuencia didáctica dividida en seis sesiones y basada en un concreto “graded reader”: *Drácula*, de Bram Stoker. De esta forma, mostraré una amplia variedad de actividades que pueden ser desarrolladas simplemente con un “graded reader”, actividades que, obviamente, pueden ser adaptadas a cualquier curso. He tenido la oportunidad de poner la secuencia didáctica en práctica y puedo asegurar que funciona.

Palabras clave: lectura constante, lecturas graduadas, unidad didáctica, enseñanza del inglés como lengua extranjera, enseñanza secundaria, *Drácula* de Bram Stoker.

2. Introduction

How many times have we thought about what to do with our students? How to motivate them? In this project, I propose one option: the use of graded readers. Graded readers are extremely easy to use. In fact, the teacher may organise difficult or easy activities depending on the objective he or she aspires to achieve and the student's level.

Our society suffers from a very important problem: teenagers and children do not read enough. They prefer playing videogames or watching TV. If they do not read books in their mother tongue, they do it even less in a second or foreign language. Motivating students to read seems to be an impossible task. However, we should try with graded readers.

According to a number of studies, students have changed their concept about reading after using graded readers. Students consider reading to be a compulsory activity. Moreover, it is very difficult to convince them to read outside the class. Nevertheless, if we are able to instil in them the value of reading, they will consider this activity as a pleasant one. Indeed, this is what has happened every time that pedagogues have developed experiments related to graded readers. They have successfully managed to motivate students to read.

As experts establish, there are different ways of reading and not all of them are optimal. A distinction between extensive and intensive reading has to be made: intensive reading implies translation word-by-word, indeed, a very slow reading process; however, extensive reading focuses on understanding the main parts of a story and on encouraging students to guess the meaning of the unfamiliar words from the context, avoiding the over-use of dictionaries.

Graded readers are the best option because there are a number of them. They are divided into different levels and genres. A great number of graded readers consist of original versions adapted to different levels. Many of them are accompanied by audio material which may also be used to organise listening activities and improve the student's listening skill. The use of graded readers can also be adapted to the student's level. If they are too easy, just move to a higher level. If they are too difficult, just move to a lower level. Although nowadays learning a foreign language is crucial, cultural aspects are also relevant. Graded readers offer the possibility to study the story's context, the author, the place where the action takes place, and so on. For this reason, graded readers are extremely useful: they provide students with a complete educational programme.

Evidently, students may take advantage of graded readers if they read constantly. It is useless to read one book and give up reading. If they are in the habit of

reading, they will become familiar with new grammar structures, new vocabulary and the correct pronunciation of new words (if audio material is used). It is impossible not to improve.

As theory should be explained in connection with practice, I have designed a didactic unit. All the activities have been created by myself. It is important to be creative when organising didactic units. However, it does not matter if we are not, because there are a number of available resources to give us some ideas about interesting and effective activities. Literature in English classes works, and it works wonderfully right.

3. Contextualisation and State of the art

3.1 Contextualisation

The didactic unit was put into practice in Santa María de la Capilla School (popularly known as Maristas) in Jaén. This school has over 1,300 students. It has three different buildings: one for kindergarten students, one for primary school students, and another one for secondary education students (compulsory secondary education students as well as non-compulsory secondary education students). However, the three buildings are connected with each other through corridors and staircases.

The didactic unit is designed for students of the 1st year of non-compulsory secondary education. The level of English varies with the students. There are some students who have been studying English in English academies for years so their level is B1 or maybe B2 (as is the case of the odd exceptional students); however, students who have studied English at school only do not even have the B1 level, perhaps A2 at the most. All of them belong to a middle class background. It is something that may be appreciated just by looking at their way of dressing, speaking and behaving.

These students are not motivated to learn English, at least in the traditional way. They do not like textbooks and they believe that they have learnt the same type of English every year due to the fact that they always start from the same point (Present Simple) and finish with the same point (Past Tense). Regarding vocabulary, they do not like the way they are taught because teachers provide them with long lists of vocabulary and they have to study the words by heart, having a vocabulary test once a week approximately. Indeed, there are some teachers who do not admit synonyms of the words they are asking, as they want the specific words used in the textbook.

In spite of this, students are very motivated for a change. This school follows the Grammar Translation Method so almost all the classes are based on the teaching of grammar and they hardly ever do any speaking or listening activities; these activities are just developed with advanced students who have a high level because they have achieved it outside the class. The English classes are given in Spanish and this is the reason why students are not motivated to speak in English due to the fact that their teachers usually speak in Spanish. They would like to experience a change: they long for more speaking and less grammar.

Even though students think that the textbook's level is too low for them because most of the activities imply filling the gaps, they have some difficulties when doing exams and the exams are usually similar to the workbook's exercises. Of course, they are not used to reading books in English at all.

This is the reason why I have chosen this topic. Literature in the classroom has

many advantages but there are a many teachers who do not believe in the value of extensive reading. From my point of view, a book may be exploited to make students improve all their skills in an easy and fun way. At least in this school, teachers do not work with graded books so I think it is a good idea to provide the students with different materials. Graded readers offer teachers a number of activities to develop reading, writing, speaking, and interaction skills so I have focused on the extensive reading and the analysis of graded readers to endeavour to prove that a student is able to learn a language or improve it through the extensive practice of the reading skill.

The specific graded reader I have chosen for my students and this project is Bram Stoker's *Dracula* because I think it is an appropriate one for teenagers, who seem to be interested in vampires and all things related to strange creatures. I chose the MacMillan graded reader at an intermediate level. In addition, Bram Stoker's *Dracula* is one of the most popular gothic novels in English literature. Consequently, my didactic unit includes some activities to provide students with information about gothic fiction in general and Bram Stoker in particular. Thus, students not only improve their basic skills, but they also learn something about a relevant literary genre and about one of the most famous writers and novels in the world.

3.2 State of the art

3.2.1 Graded readers

We can find a great number of definitions about what a graded reader is. However, perhaps the most complete definition is the one provided by the British Council. According to the British Council, graded readers are books that have had the language simplified to help second/foreign language learners to read them. The language is graded in terms of vocabulary, complexity of grammar structures and also the number of headwords. They are made to cater for all levels from beginners through to advanced¹.

Students can choose the suitable one and, as they make progress in the foreign/second language, they can reach a higher level and therefore use a reader of a higher level. Learners can find some follow-up activities at the end of the book focused on testing the comprehension of the story as well as different types of activities to check the grammar and vocabulary they may have learnt while reading. Thus, they can learn a foreign language in a fun and easy way because they can choose the book they like at the appropriate level, preferably with the teacher's approval.

In addition, graded readers are a very relevant tool for teachers. It is not compulsory to use the same book and the same level with all the students. For this reason, teachers can give students freedom to choose a graded reader according to

¹ Information extracted from: <https://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/article/using-graded-readers>

their preferences. It is a very comfortable way to provide students with reading material. Students not only improve their reading comprehension and their vocabulary, but they can also improve writing, speaking and interaction skills. Furthermore, they can even improve their listening skills due to the fact that nowadays most graded readers include CDs so that the reader can listen to the story while reading it in order to improve pronunciation, stress, rhythm and intonation.

There are a number of activities that teachers can put into practice with the graded readers in mind for developing and improving the five skills (reading, writing, listening, speaking and interaction). Teachers can base their activities on those provided by the books themselves and modify them according to their specific purposes or interests, or they can also create them altogether according to their student's specific interests and needs.

There is also a very complete definition of graded reader provided by Ion Drew (n.d.: web reference)²:

Graded readers (also known as easy readers) are books written at different levels of difficulty, usually on a scale of 1 to 6/7, where 1 is easiest and 6/7 is most difficult (...) Hundreds of graded readers exist on a wide variety of topics and different levels of difficulty. Graded readers are normally divided into three main categories: Original texts (those which have been originally a graded reader so they have not been adapted), factual texts (those texts written as graded readers on topics) and simplified classics (works of literature simplified and adapted so they just contain the original plot and characters).

Drew (par.8) points out that using graded readers implies some teaching objectives, which are:

- Promoting reading skills and reading fluency
- Increasing motivation and confidence in using English
- Providing differentiated reading material
- Stimulating reading pleasure through self-chosen texts
- Exposing pupils to different genres
- Acquiring the forms of language and vocabulary
- Using readers as a platform for oral and written activities

According to Drew³, the first thing we have to achieve if we want to use graded readers when teaching is to have a number of different graded readers which is not difficult to obtain due to them not being expensive.

² Due to the fact that this reference is an online resource, as well as many others that can be seen in my list of references, I have not included page numbers. The same holds true for all the other web references cited too. However, paragraph numbers are included instead.

³ Information obtained from preparations section.

On the other hand, Drew considers that there are two different ways of using graded readers⁴:

- Shared reading. The teacher chooses a specific graded reader which learners will read aloud in class. In a task-based approach we would be able to provide a pre-reading activity (for example: the teacher shows his/her learners the cover and the title and he/she also reads the synopsis for them. Consequently, students can guess the plot of the story and what can happen in it. They can try to provide some key words that they think they will see in the book too); a while-reading activity (such as making students discuss if they were right or wrong when they predicted the story and if they have seen the key words they thought they would find in the text); a post-reading activity (such as doing a role play to represent the story they have just read in order to improve their speaking skills as well as their gestures and corporal expression or they can write a letter to the author so that they may improve their writing skills).
- Individual reading: the teacher provides the students with at least as many books as the number of learners he or she has. Thus, they can choose a book according to what they see in the cover or what they read in the synopsis and their preferences. Of course, it would be advisable to choose not only a graded reader, but also a graded reader at the suitable level because it is not convenient to choose a book which has a high number of unknown words. This way, students choose one and read it individually. Later, they can do a great number of different activities related to the book (such as writing a log or a report to develop their writing skills as well as creating a story based on the graded reader they have just read). Obviously, some of the shared reading activities could be developed in individual reading as well. In addition, there are also some very interesting speaking activities to take into consideration, such as making students form different groups in which they have to tell the rest of their classmates what they have read about and they can connect what other classmates have read with some stories they have also read.

We should point out that Drew himself adds to the list of writers, authors and teachers who think that graded readers are very important in the way they imply a number of advantages as he says:

Graded readers provide the opportunity for pupils to read attractive books on subjects that interest them. The important issue is for pupils to read extensively, and graded readers play an important role in this respect, both because of their diverse range and their low costs (...) I am convinced that the pupils benefited enormously in terms of language development, self-confidence and motivation, which has also been corroborated in a number of studies in which graded readers have been used in book flood projects.

⁴ Information obtained from the plan of lessons section.

According to Simensen (1987:42), “Some syllabus plans for English as a foreign language suggest that different types of graded readers should be used”. Indeed, regarding types of graded readers, the classification he proposes is authentic readers, pedagogic readers and adapted readers:

➤ Authentic readers: the ones that are not written for an academic use. Alex Case (2012) proposes some advantages and disadvantages of using authentic texts in class. According to him, these are the advantages:

- ❖ Authentic texts can be quick and easy to find: A teacher may easily find interesting texts on the Internet, newspapers, magazines, and so on. As Case (par.6) says, “there are ways of replicating the lucky find method of choosing good texts with texts that are already graded and have tasks”.
- ❖ Authentic texts can be up to date and topical: textbook readings can be based on old-fashioned texts. However, if we try to find up to date and interesting texts in newspapers or in magazines, they will be interesting for a couple of weeks at the most because their stories have an expiry date. According to Case (par.8), we have two options when using graded texts: we can simplify some news we may find on the Internet or we can keep some graded texts and use the one which is best related to an event that may have happened recently.

After all, this is what students will have to cope with eventually. When learners are outside the class and they want to have a conversation with a native speaker, or watch a film in English, or read some news in their second/foreign language, they will face real communication, real English. If teachers provides them with real English as soon as possible, learners will be able to deal with authentic news, films or conversations without problems.

We know that there are a number of teachers who are too faithful to the textbook and the textbook is fine to teach basic vocabulary, but it is not enough to provide the skills that are necessary to have a conversation or deal with authentic material. On the other hand, it is useless to limit yourself to the texts and activities that you find in the textbook because this is not what learners will find outside the class (in reality). Moreover, it is impossible or, at least, unlikely, to be able to learn a language just with a textbook. It is a well-known fact that textbooks are on the whole fairly unsuccessful (at least Spanish ones) to teach a foreign language because the activities are generally too easy (most of them are based on filling in the gaps). Learners know that when they have a conversation with a native speaker they will have to make

the whole sentence and not only the missing words. Furthermore, textbooks are full of pictures but the texts are too short. For this reason, learners will not be likely to understand newspapers or scientific articles by themselves. Nevertheless, if we provide our students with this kind of authentic materials, they will learn a lot and they will find fewer difficulties in getting on in an English-speaking environment.

- ❖ Students have to learn how to cope with different types of authentic texts and situations. If students are provided with material at some levels above their own level, they will have to deal with them. However, we do not want them to get frustrated because they do not understand a single word and give up. For this reason, it is important to provide students with some reading skills previously and organise some activities which may be done easily (such as skimming or scanning). It is important to instil in students the idea of not trying to understand every single word, but the main ideas. This policy should be practised also in graded readers.
- ❖ There is a welcome and inspiring sense of achievement in using authentic texts. Finishing a book implies a sense of achievement for learners. When they finish the last page, they feel happy because they have read a whole book by themselves. Perhaps, learners have skipped some parts of the text or perhaps they have over-used the dictionary but the reality is that they have done something very challenging: to finish a book. It can also be done with graded readers, not only with some other kinds of book. Because all learners have the right to experiment these feelings of achievement, it is a good idea to provide slower learners with easier books or graded readers so that they may also finish them, like the rest of their classmates, and experiment the same feeling of joy. Learners will be probably motivated to read another book if the experience with the previous one has been optimal.
- ❖ It is important to use authentic material because this is the material students will find out of the class: magazines, the Internet, newspapers, and so on. According to Case (par.13), “this is particularly important with students stuck on the intermediate plateau”. In addition, it is important to allow our students to know where to find the material we have given them and where to find similar one. The teacher may also ask his or her students to bring something similar to the next class. This can be done with graded readers too. As Case (par.14) explains “you can partly replicate this effect with graded materials by making sure they

have access to graded readers and magazines and websites for language learners”.

- ❖ There is more material for teachers to choose from. There is a wide variety of authentic texts which are available everywhere (the internet, magazines, books, newspapers, articles, and so on). The truth is that there are a lot more authentic texts than graded readers. Teachers normally have to choose a specific graded reader among those which are available in the school. However, a graded reader can be selected on the Internet because almost all of the publishers have their own websites and you can have a look at every graded reader in stock. The point is that it is easier to find an authentic text about any subject other than a graded reader.
- ❖ You can sometimes find a translation. Even though we do not want our students to translate word by word when reading a text, it may be a good idea to provide them with some information in their mother tongue in order to make the book easier to understand. In spite of this advantage, I may add that a way to make our students understand a graded reader more easily is to give them the opportunity to choose a graded reader whose original text has been read in their mother tongue previously.
- ❖ You can compare several versions of the same story. The same story may be slightly or overtly different depending on where you read it or listen to it. It is something very common to listen to the news and observe several differences between one channel and another. This also happens in newspapers, magazines and websites. Subsequently, the teacher could make his or her students identify the main differences of the story. According to Case (par.17),

There is no particular evidence that conscious examination of factors like this particularly helps the reading comprehension and language production of even higher level learners, and even less that it can be useful with lower level learners and students who read only in order to pick up and revise vocabulary and grammar that can help them speak better. This does remain an interesting activity though.

However, he proposes some tips to make this activity more interesting: finding synonyms, finding words that are nearly synonyms but have different positive and negative meanings or levels of formality, comparing topics and column inches in whole newspapers, and comparing the degree of ease of comprehension.

Despite the aforementioned advantage of using authentic material, I may say that students may also compare different versions of a graded reader. For instance, students can compare the same graded reader in different publishers so they can analyse the similarities and differences between both of them. Students can also compare the graded reader with the original text (if they have read it in their mother tongue), so they can appreciate if some important information is missing as well as give their opinion about the adaptation. The teacher may also make his/her students watch the film (if there is a film version about the story of the graded reader). If there is a film, students may point out the main differences between the graded reader and the film, or they may speak about the characters: if they had imagined them as they have watched them on the film, or if they are well-characterized. It is not an unusual feeling to find that sometimes, after seeing a film we realise that the characters are not transmitting the same feelings as in the book, which is a very relevant issue to comment on. For instance, we may speak about Emily Brontë's "*Wuthering Heights*". If you read the book, you may think that Heathcliff is just a victim of different betrayals (which made him change from a lovely person in his youth to a resentful one in his adulthood) and Catherine has what she deserves because of her own decisions (which are always wrong). She was in love with Heathcliff but she decided to live a wealthy life with a rich man, so she was never happy. In addition, Heathcliff is in love with her and he cannot be happy because she is not with him, but with another man who has more money and land. However, if you see the film (although there are different versions), you may realise that Catherine is clearly the "goodie" and Heathcliff the "baddie". A discussion about all of these issues would be very interesting. We could say that graded readers are very enriching because they do not have just a story, but they can make you think about different topics and they can even make you question your own morality and ethics.

- ❖ Students can follow a story and recycle the vocabulary: when you follow a story in a newspaper, the news, a magazine, or whatever mass medium, the same vocabulary is repeated again and again. If a learner is, for instance, following the story of a shipwreck, he or she will hear the same vocabulary everyday while he or she hears new updates about that given story.
- ❖ The students might know the story already, making comprehension and the guessing of the vocabulary much easier. According to Case (par.22),

“we learn the language easier if it is simplified for us with things like knowing the basics of the story already. This is supported by recent research that suggests that CLIL works better for the learning of language if the topic is revision rather than new information”. In addition, Case (par.22) makes some recommendations when developing this kind of activity: “once the motivating effects of being able to handle a more difficult text for the first time wear off, reading something newsworthy, surprising or controversial that they didn’t know before is bound to add something to the interest of the class, especially for higher level students”.

Alex Case (2012) also suggests some disadvantages of using authentic texts in the process of learning. These are as follows:

- ❖ It is probably idiosyncratic. Indeed, according to him (par.24),

A graded reader text is rewritten not just to be simpler but also so that the language is the kind of generally used thing that students need in order to be able to communicate in the greatest number of typical situations of the English language as it is generally used. This is not the case in most authentic texts, where the skill of a writer is often to make their use of language personal and therefore unrepresentative of how other people use English. Even when the individual writer hasn’t stamped their mark on the text too much, you might also have problems dealing with the idiosyncrasies of particular genres or ways that particular nationalities of native speaker write.

As Case (par.25) says, using authentic texts could be ideal with advanced learners because perhaps, they think that they have learnt everything and, this way, the teacher can show that there are a great number of things they do not know yet. Thus, they could continue learning English. However, it is a worse idea to provide intermediate learners with this authentic material because they are still learning and they will feel unmotivated if the teacher tells them that there are still a great number of new things to learn.

- ❖ The grading of the various parts of the text might be different: Case (par.26) establishes that in novels and magazines, the introduction is usually more complicated than the story, and the same applies to the understanding of the headlines of newspapers. For this reason, he proposes to “give the difficult parts in summary form and just using an extract from the original text”.
- ❖ The information can quickly become out of date: Case (par.27) explains that it could be a problem both for the teacher and students. Students usually forget the language when something more important comes to

their minds. The teacher may have spent a lot of time preparing materials which will be old-fashioned a few days later (this usually happens with newspapers stories). This is the reason why Case (par.27) recommends to “use more long-lasting formats like magazine articles, newspaper articles with more analysis, fiction or biography instead”.

- ❖ The difficulty in understanding a text can put people off reading: it is well-known that every person is different. Consequently, there will be people that take authentic material as a challenge, a way of surpassing himself or herself. Hence, they will be motivated to read authentic material because it is demanding. Unfortunately, not everybody thinks the same way. Subsequently, there will be people who try to read authentic material, but who will see that it is so complicated for them and they will lose their motivation to read in a foreign/second language because they will think that they are not able to make it. Although the teacher may try to disguise the reality through activities such as skimming and scanning and skipping some parts of the story (in order to make learners think they are able to understand it), students can become aware of it and they may think the teacher is trying to lie to them by making them believe they are able to understand a text which they cannot really understand (Case, 2012: par.28). For this reason, Case recommends to use graded readers with no challenging students.
- ❖ The vocabulary is not graded: graded readers use a vocabulary which contains the most frequently used words in English and the words can easily be found in the dictionary. However, in authentic texts it is completely the opposite. Learners will unlikely be able to find uncommon words, which at the same time may also be difficult to find in the dictionary. This is the reason why Case (par.29) believes that authentic material is very useful to check students’ skill at guessing vocabulary from the context. Anyway, he proposes the teacher to provide a glossary with the words which are extremely relevant to the understanding of the text.
- ❖ The grammar is not graded: according to Case (par.30), in a graded reader, the grammar is even more carefully graded than the vocabulary. He establishes that “a good rule of thumb is that most of the grammar in the text should be what they have already studied, and most of the more difficult grammar should be within one level and guessable from context”. In addition, Case (par.30) makes some other proposals, such as telling the students to ignore the grammar or providing them with a

glossary.

It is also relevant to ascertain how to know if we are choosing the correct text concerning grammar. Case (par.31) has the key for it:

The two surest ways of checking that most of the grammar is of the right level are using graded texts and rewriting authentic texts. Another possibility is just using a short passage from an authentic text that only has the right kinds of grammar in it. If you do want to search for an authentic text that has the right kind of grammar, one way of searching is by genre. For example, stories usually have Past Perfect, Past Continuous and Past Simple, but jokes and anecdotes might use present tenses instead.

- ❖ The idiomatic language might quickly become out of date: it is something also characteristic of textbooks, but it seems that publishers are trying to make them in a way they can last for much longer than before. It is obviously known that slang vocabulary is changing continuously. What we say today may change tomorrow because styles and fashions change quickly. For instance, the word “awesome” is trendy now but it was not some time ago and it will be probably out of date in little time, probably in the next generation. Consequently, it is better to avoid slang vocabulary in authentic texts.
- ❖ There could be copyright problems: in many countries you can copy whatever you want and this is not illegal provided you have indicated its source. What is definitely forbidden is to copy something and publish it as your own or without indicating your source.
- ❖ If they want to learn every word in a text, the reading stage can go on forever and will cover loads of useless language. There are some teachers (unfortunately a large number of them) who are interested in making their students understand every single word in a text. Thus, they do not have to prepare the class because they will spend all the time explaining the meaning of words. However, we have repeated a great number of times that it is not necessary to know all the words and that translation word- by-word is more often than not useless. It would be a good idea to instil our students in not falling into the trap.

As Case (par.35) states, most students do not read English in order to improve their reading skills, but to know the vocabulary they will use when speaking, listening, or writing. He makes some proposals in relation to the problems encountered by the students who do not understand the text: you can provide them with a glossary, you can make them choose some words from their unknown ones in order to explain their meanings, you can provide them with activities that make

it possible to guess the meaning from the context, and you can choose easy texts where most of the words are known. Case (par.35) considers these activities easier with graded readers but he explains that they are possible to apply on authentic texts too.

- ❖ Authentic texts are usually too difficult. If students have a very high level of English, perhaps using graded readers is useless because they may be too easy for them. Although we may also find authentic texts which are easy to understand because the language used is very common, we can select authentic materials at higher levels, especially those written for native speakers.
- ❖ There might be language and cultural references that even native speakers from other English-speaking countries, areas or age groups would not easily understand. According to Case (par.37),

This can be a huge problem if the teacher also doesn't understand. Ways of avoiding this include using the English-language press of the country the students are from; using texts about something you know one or more students are interested in and knowledgeable about such as one of their hobbies; and using websites, newspapers and magazines that have an international readership.

- ❖ Authentic texts might include language that is not in the dictionary. As I will explain later, students need to know around 90% of the text in order to be able to guess the meaning of the words from the context. If students are provided with texts which include words that do not appear in the dictionary, they will have no choice but to try to improve their guessing skills. However, they should be at advanced or proficiency levels in order to achieve it with a fair amount of success. As it is very difficult, it will be better to choose texts where students may deal with words which can be easily found in the dictionary.
- ❖ The texts are often too long. Perhaps we are interested in an article or a text but it is too long so it might be considered as unsuitable for learners. In Case's (par.39) words

The shortness of a graded reader can be just as much part of the appeal as the simplified language. One solution with authentic texts is to use only an extract, but this can make understanding it even more difficult unless you can find some way of explaining very clearly what comes before or after the part you give them. There are also shorter news articles in the margins of a newspaper on the Internet, but these rarely have the interesting storylines and language that are supposed to be the selling points of authentic texts. So, unless you are prepared to rewrite the text yourself there is usually no solution but to keep looking till you find the length you are looking for.

- Pedagogic readers. They have been designed specifically for learners of a foreign/second language.
- Adapted readers. They are based on authentic texts but adapted for learners. These graded readers are aimed at simplifying the text, making it more accessible to learners. This is the reason why they are also called “simplified texts”. However, in the words of Simensen (1987:43), it is not an adequate term because we cannot take it for granted that adapted readers are really simpler than the original texts. We should take into account what is difficult or easy for learners when adapting texts. Nevertheless, some publishers have produced written guidelines that can be used by text adapters. According to Simensen (45-53), three principles should be followed when someone adapts a text:
 - ❖ Control of information: although there is not much information about what to include or what to delete in an adapted reader, it is thought that action is very important. Moreover, there are some publishers (such as Heinemann and Longman) who believe that control of information is not just deleting information but to supply the text with extra information. Specifically, Heinemann considers the story’s world and the student’s world as two separate spheres that should be fully taken into account by the writer. In addition, this publisher places due attention to the importance of how the adapter distributes the information. Besides, Heinemann speaks about “density of information” to refer to loads of information since, in his opinion, information must be presented to readers “in easily digestible amounts” (48).
 - ❖ Control of language: by “control of language”, Heinemann means control of vocabulary. In spite of the fact that students will, probably, find in the graded reader words that they do not understand, there is often a glossary at the end of the book so that students may check the meanings of words they do not know. The control of language is also connected to structures and verb forms. The present simple, the present continuous and “going to” are found at the lowest levels; the past tense, shall, will and the present perfect at higher levels; and the future perfect and continuous, the past perfect continuous and conditionals at upper levels. Simensen (50-52) establishes three aspects related to the control of language too: aspects to be avoided (such as ambiguity); aspects to be careful with (such as inversions) and aspects to be encouraged (such as punctuation).
 - ❖ Control of discourse and text structure. Heinemann and Longman are

the only publishers who have provided specific guidelines related to this area. Heinemann emphasises the correct use of pronouns. Both publishers believe that if the text is organised according to the order of the events, learners are not likely to have problems with it.

After analysing these types of texts, we should mention an article written by Rachel Roberts (2014) in which she tries to decide if it is better to use authentic texts or graded readers and she even tries to find a middle way. For Roberts (2014: par.2), there are some positive aspects concerning authentic texts:

The enormous sense of satisfaction to be gained from being able to read something designed for a native speaker [...] which may also encourage the learner to read more extensively outside of the classroom, which has to be a good thing.

She believes that it is important that students are exposed to different genres of texts.

Roberts (par.9) thinks that there is a middle way between authentic and graded texts. In fact, she uses it when writing coursebooks. She establishes that “it is based around a proper respect for genre”. Roberts (par.9) says: “I think that, as a writer, my writing skills are often just as good as someone writing for the Daily Telegraph etc., and, therefore, my texts are, in their own way, just as authentic”. What she does is to look for samples of the genre she would like to write, looks at the structure and the vocabulary of the texts, and observes if the language is formal or informal before writing her own text. She also analyses the vocabulary to know the level of a specific text and she thinks how to replace some words and simplify some structures. This is her middle way.

As regards the different levels, we can turn to The Extensive Reading Foundation (ERF). ERF is a charitable organisation aimed at supporting and promoting extensive reading. ERF has established a scale based on several reasons: it could help teachers to group their graded readers; to unify standards; to offer a framework for publishers and so on. This scale is divided into five levels, although sub-levels are included⁵.

In order to know the level of the students, we just have to encourage them to choose some books at different levels of the scale. Then, we give learners some time so that they can check if they understand most of the whole book without the aid of a dictionary and if they can read the book quickly. If they can, then they know that this is their level. However, they can even try with a higher level to improve their skills. On the contrary, if they cannot understand the book or they need to rely on a dictionary too much, this is a sign of the unsuitable level of the book. In this case, learners should try with a lower level until they reach the suitable one.

⁵ Information obtained from: <http://erfoundation.org/wordpress/>

A graded reader must be evaluated in the same way that we evaluate every learning material which is used in the process of learning. There are some criteria to take into consideration. Peter Viney (2009: par. 3) establishes different sections for assessing a graded reader:

- The graded reader's level: It must be suitable for the learner. There can be differences among students so one level can be appropriate for some students but not for others. This is the reason why Viney says that "level is a potential minefield".
- The language level or readability: It is very relevant that the graded reader's language corresponds to the level of the student's learning process. For Viney, working with corpora in this area is useless because corpora do not take into account simplicity but frequency. If corpora are used to grade, the graded reader could present some structures which learners do not know because they should correspond to a higher level as well as overcomplicated vocabulary. Graded readers' word lists are based on the General Service List of English Words, which was developed by Michael West in 1947.

Traditional graded readers were designed upon a list with a precise number of words and if the author wanted to include more words (between 20 and 40 depending on the level), they had to be glossed and they had to appear more than once in the story. However, we can find some awkwardness here: perhaps a specific word appears in the glossary but it has not the same meaning as the word which appears on the story. Thus, although the learner reads the glossary, he or she will likely have problems to understand the meaning of the word, even more if he/she tries to fit in the meaning he/she has found in the glossary in the word that appears in the text. On the contrary, if the author included international words, he or she did not have to include them in the glossary in the belief that these words were known by everybody. Nowadays, there seems to be a trend in Europe to add more than a hundred words in the glossary.

Regarding sentence length and complexity, it is a very frequent policy not to include semi-colons at lower levels because of the fact that authors do not write complex sentences. However, they can be found in American books. Viney (par.30) points out "as in listening, students need those full stops as pause points". Otherwise, there are some authors who are able to write long sentences without losing clarity.

Learners can have problems with proper names as well. This means that some names which appear in the story may be new for the reader. If he or she has the opportunity to listen to the pronunciation of the new names, the problem

will be solved. If not, the reader will pronounce the name however he or she thinks it should be pronounced. Although it is not a very important problem, the author should take into account that there are bound to be some new names for the learner.

There are some other problems we have to deal with. One of the most important is related to cultural problems. Authors should take nothing for granted. They do not know what type of reader is going to read the book, so they cannot make assumptions. When the author is adapting the book, he or she must add extra information so that everything may be completely understood for whoever reads the book in any part of the world. For example, the writer should write the name of the place (e.g. supermarket) instead of writing the name of a famous chain in some country (e.g. shopping centre instead of Harrods).

Another key issue to take into consideration is that publishers do not usually agree as to where to put the glossary: some of them place it in the middle of the text, some others place it at the bottom of the page and there are a great number of different possibilities. Perhaps the most appropriate policy is to put it at the end of the book so that the glossary does not interrupt the normal flow of the reading. Nowadays, there are some publishers who are translating the glossary but this is not a good idea because they make their books useful only for a specific part of the market.

- Writing quality. This is a very subjective issue because some people believe a precise author to be the best and other people think that the same author is the worst. It is a matter of personal likes and preferences.

A good author should try to get across complex ideas in a simple way. The story is crucial as well. The adapter has to reduce the original story. A small percentage of the original book will probably be included in the graded reader and it is a very difficult task to decide what to include and what to omit.

On the other hand, it is not the same thing to adapt a “great work of literature” and to adapt a short story written by an unknown writer. We normally know the ending of the great works of literature and there is a tendency on the teacher’s and the students’ parts to choose this type of adaptation.

Literary genre is also important. Not all literary genres are equally well adapted. For instance, crime and mystery novels are better adapted than romantic ones. This responds to the fact that a great number of information is lost when adapting romantic books.

- Quality of illustrations and graphic presentation. The objective of illustrations is

to support the text. They can help readers understand some words they do not know without a dictionary or a glossary. This is the reason why illustrations are also important.

Graphic presentation is also relevant. The designer can use bold, italics, underline, colour, and so on, but the title does not need to have these features all together. The cover is crucial as well. There are some covers which do not attract readers. If the cover is too “abstract”, perhaps the potential reader does not know what to find inside the book. A course book is different from than a graded reader. We can find a great number of covers in grammar books but a graded reader’s cover has to fulfil a duty: it must invite the reader. It is said that we must not judge a book by its cover but, obviously, we feel more inclined to choose a specific book if its cover attracts our attention. This is the reason why a cover should be appealing. Moreover, the cover should give us a faithful clue to what we will find in the book.

- General design: it refers to the quality of the typing, which should be clear and readable. Furthermore, the editor’s role is crucial here although his/her job is not pleasant. His/her duty is to identify the mistakes and to make sure that editing fulfils the suitable standards.

The summary of the graded reader. It provides learners with the opportunity to decide if they are interested in the story or not. Thus, they can also decide if they will read that book or they prefer another one.

Regarding credits, Viney considers the author’s role of extreme importance. For this reason, he believes the author’s name should appear on the cover because all authors deserve due recognition for their work. However, sometimes we can find the author’s name after the publisher and the printer.

Finally, it is very useful to include a CD in the graded reader pack, so learners can also listen to the story. Moreover, if there are words which they do not know how to pronounce, they can simply listen to the CD. This way, they are improving not only their reading skills but also their speaking skills at the same time.

3.2.2 Advantages and disadvantages of using graded readers

As any material used in the process of learning, graded readers present positive and negative aspects. Firstly, I will analyse the disadvantages⁶:

- According to Davison (1986:18,23), there are some graded readers which are badly written or graded readers whose content is pedagogically irrelevant.

⁶ Information extracted from
http://www.developingteachers.com/articles_tchtraining/gradedpf_zainab.htm

- Graded readers are sometimes more complicated than their original versions. In the process of adaptation, authors may be using more complicated vocabulary in spite of the fact that graded readers are supposed to be simpler and easier than their original versions.
- Graded readers are considered to be authentic material and, consequently, less qualified and effective. Moreover, there are some teachers and pedagogues who believe that graded readers are useless in the process of learning.
- The presentation and content may not be suitable in every culture for reasons of taboos, sex discrimination, religion, political ideas, etc.
- Graded readers may include wrong grammatical structures if adapted by unqualified authors as well as overcomplicated terms which may reduce learners' comprehension.

On the other hand, there are a number of advantages in using graded readers, which are provided by Shizuoka (2000: par.1):

- It increases the amount of information.
- It provides unauthentic literature.
- It incorporates all students' levels. This is something very positive because each learner has the opportunity to choose a graded reader according to their level and they can try with a higher level as they improve; they may also try with a lower level if they do not feel comfortable with the one they are using.
- Students are responsible of their own learning process. As each person is different, his or her way of learning is also different. Learners do not learn at the same time or at the same pace. Using graded readers is a way to provide each student with suitable material, taking into account their individual progress, needs and difficulties. Moreover, the use of graded readers is associated to the "learning to learn" competence. In every group of students, we can find learners who are faster than others. For this reason, it is not proper to provide all the students with the same material. If teachers do it, faster students may be bored and will not learn as much (in case the material's level is too low); slower students will be discouraged if they do not reach the required level (in case the material's level is too high). Nowadays this is crucial for the correct application of the so called "attention to diversity".
- Students can read at home/outside the class. There are a many students who only read in class. For a number of students reading is more like some kind of homework than a leisure activity. We, as teachers, should encourage our students to read outside the school. Reading should be a pleasure and its

practice is crucial for becoming a well-read person. However, nowadays TV and videogames are preferred by the younger population to reading a book. The more they read the less they will be playing videogames or watching TV. This is the reason why Shizuoka says “graded readers increase students’ knowledge and enjoyment”.

- It focuses on various skills and fields such as politics and social issues. Graded readers can be used in order to improve all the skills, not only the reading one. Students can improve their listening skill by listening to the story (through the accompanying CD, a classmate or the teacher); they can improve their speaking skill, provided that the teacher encourages them to carry out some speaking activities (such as explaining a chapter orally, asking and answering some comprehension questions and so on); they can improve the interaction skill by means of activities such as organising a debate on their opinions of the book or speaking about some key aspects related to it); and they can improve their writing skill, for instance, if the teacher makes them write a summary of the book or a chapter, or create an alternative ending, or describe a specific character, etc.

Furthermore, graded readers can provide some information which is not necessarily related to the story, such as political, cultural, social, geographical issues, and so on. In addition, the teacher can introduce new topics such as moral, civic or ethical ones. For instance, they can organise a debate about who the “goodies” and the “baddies” are, and why. Students can talk about the way that certain circumstances may force characters/real life people do good or bad deeds and some other questions which can make students learn to think and reason by themselves and autonomously. The more they read, the more they know and the more information they have at their disposal when making a decision and, what is more, they will be able to escape from indoctrination.

Obviously, all of these advantages will be achieved if the teachers provide students with the correct graded readers’ and their correct level and if they take advantage of them appropriately. Graded readers may be exploited in a number of different ways but it is up to the teacher to choose how to do it and it depends on her or his creativity. Many teachers limit themselves to following the book line to line and just do the activities that are included in it. Nevertheless, options are really unlimited.

3.2.3 The choice of a graded reader

One important issue in relation to graded readers is to decide the one which is the most appropriate for students. Shizuoka (2000: par.2) proposes three options: either students, or the teacher, or both.

- Students: the teacher can provide students with different graded readers so

they can decide which of them they will read. This way, students have complete freedom to choose a book. On the other hand, the teacher will spend less time deciding a specific book because it is very difficult to choose a suitable book for everybody.

- Teacher: in this case, it is the teacher who decides the graded reader. When all the students read the same book, it is possible to organise collective activities, such as debates or discussions about the story or some other topic related to the book. In addition, they can study together because they will be learning the same vocabulary.
- Students and the teacher: in this case, students participate in the choice so they have a little freedom, but they are allowed to give their opinions. Furthermore, as all of them read the same book, they can partake in collective activities as well.

At the end, teachers can assess the students' comprehension. It can be done through a multiple choice test; an oral presentation; role plays; written exercises and so on.

Paul Nation and Karen Wang (1999:356) establish that

The strongest argument in favour of graded readers is that without them learners would not be able to experience reading in a second language at a level of comfort and fluency approaching first language reading.

As I have said before, students are not used to reading at home for pleasure, even less if the book is not written in their mother tongue.

3.2.4 Graded readers and the process of vocabulary learning

Can learners really learn vocabulary through graded readers? In order to be able to answer this question I will refer to a study made by Nation and Wang (1999: 355-380) where they take into account six different levels of graded readers and forty-two different books. We can start analysing this study by speaking about incidental vocabulary. According to Nation and Wang (360), the term incidental "is taken to mean that the learner's main focus is on the story, not vocabulary learning, and the attention given to vocabulary does not interfere too much with reading the story".

According to the research carried out by Laufer (1989:319) at least 95% of the words in the graded reader should be known by the learner. Nation and Wang (1999:360) consider known words as those words which can be found in a graded reader's lower level and as well as proper names. In spite of the research, Nation and Wang (360) provide a box showing that less than 95% is covered by words from lower levels and proper names at different levels. The reason for the aforementioned data is very difficult to explain. It could be because word lists are wrongly designed or because

there has not been a correct control of the words that appear in the book. Otherwise, as there are some levels which are correctly covered (the higher ones), Nation and Wang (360) consider the second reason as more probable than the first one. Graded readers will probably include some aid with the purpose of allowing students to understand the meaning of some difficult words: these are pictures, illustrations, photographs, or glossaries but students may still find it difficult to guess the meanings of the unknown words just from the context. Nation and Wang (361) recommend the examination of the graded reader's vocabulary at lower levels before reading it, but they also believe that there are good conditions for incidental vocabulary in higher levels.

One of the most important factors to take into account in the process of vocabulary learning is the number of times that a word appears in the book. According to Nation and Wang (363), ten times are desirable but the more time it appears, the better.

Nation and Wang's study shows that if a student reads seven graded readers at different levels, he or she will probably learn a considerable number of new words (363). It is supposed that new words at a given level will appear in the following levels too. Subsequently, the learner can see his or her progress as part of a process (363). That is to say, if the student learns some new words at a specific level, he or she should know the meaning of that word when he or she sees it again at a higher level. This is a very good way of being aware of one's knowledge and progress. Each student will be able to know if he or she is improving in vocabulary without the constant vigilance or supervision of the teacher. Nation and Wang put it the following way:

There are more repetitions of words at subsequent levels than there are at the levels where they are first introduced. This suggests that learners should not read so many books at the early levels but should read more at the later levels providing the vocabulary load is not so heavy. That is, it is not likely to be the level at which the word is introduced that establishes knowledge of that word, it is likely to be the later levels that establish the knowledge. Graded readers are not designed to teach words when they first appear [...] Graded readers have the best effect for vocabulary learning when a substantial number of books at each level are read (363).

Regarding how long a graded reader should be, one way of calculating this is to multiply the number of the word list ten times (required repetitions), but this is not a realistic way (365-366).

Nation and Wang (366) establish three statements:

- If a student learns all the new words that he or she finds in a graded reader, the number of words learnt will rise very quickly and he or she will be able to read another book at the same level comfortably enough.
- It is better to move quickly to a higher level rather than stay at the same one.

- Three graded readers at the same level should be read in order to get a useful number of repetitions.

If we consider the vocabulary learning process as a chain, another important link is to consider how much a learner should spend on reading a book. Naturally, memory plays a crucial role in this process. A graded reader per week (at least) is considered to be appropriate by Nation and Wang (368).

With regard to the level that a graded reader should reach, Nation and Wang (369-371) analyse it by taking into consideration the two following factors:

- The high frequency words of English and academic words. A distinction between the General Service List (provided by West in 1953) and the graded reader list needs to be made. The former contains 2000 word families, 400 words less than the latter. On the other hand, the Academic Word List (provided by Coxhead in 1998) contains 570 word families which are used in academic writing. 126 of those 570 word families appear in the graded reader list too. However, 14 out of the 126 word families were not found in any of the forty-two graded readers that Nation and Wang studied.
- Observing how well the vocabulary of the different level of graded readers covers a variety of different texts.

Nation and Wang also speak about some issues related to the spectrum of the different levels of the graded readers. Thus, we can find the most frequent words at level 1 and the least frequent words at level 2. At lower levels there are more repetitions than at higher levels. Although graded readers should include the same number of repetitions in all the levels so that student can learn new vocabulary, this is not the case in reality. New words should represent 4% of the text at the most. It would be a good idea to create more levels to reach it. Anyway, the conclusion is that the size of the level is not as important as the control of the new words which appear in the text because just 4% of words should be completely new to the learner. The rest of them should be found at lower levels.

However, not all the words that appear in the books can be found in the graded reader list. As Nation and Wang (374) establish, there are some words that appear in the books they analysed which are not in the graded reader list. That is to say, students are able to learn vocabulary from the graded reader although those specific words may not be in the list.

3.2.5 The value of extensive reading

Firstly, I should give a definition of extensive reading. I could say that extensive reading is an activity which consists of reading a variety of materials according to the students' level of a specific second/foreign language. This activity aims at developing the reading

skills; learning new vocabulary; familiarity with language patterns, and the acquisition of some fluency.

It is commonly said that if a learner reads a lot of materials, he or she will improve his/her second/foreign language. Obviously, extensive reading implies constant reading. As learning a language is a continuous process, it is useless to read a book once and stop reading altogether anymore. When we want to learn a second/foreign language, we should be patient and constant. Consequently, extensive reading is connected to the idea of reading almost daily. The more we read in the foreign/second language the better. Firstly, we will probably need a dictionary but, little by little we will be aware of our improvement and rely less and less on reference books. Moreover, as we move to one level to another, we will remember the vocabulary we found at lower levels as well as new vocabulary typical of that new level.

The idea of linguistic immersion when learning a new language is most relevant too. The more you are exposed to the language the better. Extensive reading provides two crucial elements in the process of learning a new language: motivation and confidence⁷.

Timothy Bell (1998)⁸ introduces us to the role of extensive reading in foreign language learning:

- It can provide “comprehensible input”. Some requirements are needed here according to Krashen (1982:63-68): exposure to the language, interesting material and a relaxed, tension-free learning environment. It is known that the environment is crucial when learning. For instance, if it is too cold or too hot, learners will have problems to concentrate as well as if they are too nervous. Obviously, interesting material is also relevant because if students are not interested in the material you provide them with, they will not pay attention to it and they will try to do the least possible. Again, we can repeat that exposure helps students very much when learning a foreign or second language. In relation to this, we can refer to Elley and Manghubai (1983:55), who wrote that “exposure to the second language is normally planned, restricted, gradual and largely artificial”. As we can see, they are not the ideal ingredients for an optimal learning atmosphere.
- It can enhance learners’ general language competence. According to Grabe (1991:391) and Paran (1996:30), extensive reading makes learners recognise words and decode symbols automatically. Moreover, we can refer to a variety of studies that show how extensive reading can improve learners’ competence.

⁷ Information obtained from: <http://2ndnature-online-eikaiwa.com/Articles/ExtensiveReading.htm>

⁸ Information obtained from: <http://iteslj.org/Articles/Bell-Reading.html>

For instance, as Mangubhai (2001:4-9) explains, he and Elley developed “book flood” studies. This study took place in Fiji and was put into practice on elementary school children. It lasted for about three years. Thanks to extensive reading, there was an improvement in language use (oral language, reading comprehension and writing), language knowledge (word recognition, vocabulary knowledge and grammar) and academic performance. Elley repeated the experiment but this time in Singapore and the result was the same, and the same can be said about the study made at a Japanese university. Students who had followed the Reading Acquisition and Language Program (REAP) improved in word recognition and reading comprehension after the first year but they also improved their oral and written skills after two years.

Krashen (2004:2) points out that extensive reading can make learners improve in reading comprehension, writing style, vocabulary, spelling, and grammatical development.

- Extensive reading increases the students’ exposure to the language. The quality of exposure is very important when learning a foreign or second language.
- It can increase the student’s knowledge of vocabulary. In order to learn new vocabulary, it is more useful to read books than to receive a list of new words provided by the teacher. Furthermore, when a learner is provided with a list of vocabulary and he or she is tested later to know if he or she has learnt those new words, the learner will tend to forget them after doing the exam because he or she has just studied those words for a short-term goal and he or she is not able to use them in a context. Subsequently, if we try to make our students learn vocabulary through lists, perhaps we can obtain good results in the tests, but they are likely to forget them soon and they probably will not be able to remember a specific word when having a conversation (although they have just had a test which included that word). It seems to be useless to provide students with sets of vocabulary and make them learn new words by heart. The results are much better if students learn vocabulary in its context and reading books is a very good way to do it.
- It can lead to improvement in the writing skill. There are a great number of studies which shows that the more a student read the better writer he or she is. For instance, Stotsky (1983: 634-636) established that students who are prolific readers in their pre-college years become better writers when they enter college.
- It can motivate learners to read. If the material is selected taking into account the students’ needs, tastes and interests, they will be motivated to continue reading. For instance, it was effectively proved in Yemen, where books about

local culture were used (e.g. *Aladdin and His Lamp*). This is the reason why choosing the correct book is crucial. It is not the same to provide students with boring material as to provide them with material they are interested in. If we try to select the correct material, they will learn without being aware of their learning and they will engage in the activities we propose with gusto. If we achieve it, they are likely to be motivated to continue reading out of the class.

- It can consolidate previously learned language. As we know, graded readers contain a number of repetitions in order to make students maintain and retain the vocabulary. New words are learnt and kept in mind because they are seen again and again. To make sure that students have acquired the new words, they are to be included again at upper levels so they can remember them at the same time they learn new ones.
- It helps to build confidence with extended texts. Even though, teachers normally use short texts when teaching (and course books do tend to include just short texts), it is important to provide our students with long texts as they are able to improve their skills.
- It encourages the exploitation of textual redundancy. We can turn to psychology in order to understand how the brain works when a person is reading. According to this science, it is useless to read and translate word by word: obviously, the brain needs some visual signals to process a word. However, if we repeat and repeat these signals, there will be an overload which will be counter-productive in the process of learning. Consequently, graded readers, and extensive reading in general, constitute a very useful way to learn new vocabulary because they include some repetitions but they do not overload students.
- It facilitates the development of prediction skills. Part of our knowledge is based on previous schema. When a learner is reading a book, he or she is able to decipher some words because his/her schema are activated.

Bell (1998: par.15-24) also gives us some useful advice in relation to how to organise an extensive reading program:

- Maximize the learner's involvement. Using graded readers implies some inevitable problems (even though they cannot be considered to be complicated): for instance, the teacher has to bring the books to the class, give them to the learners and collect them at the end of the class. He or she has to do some paperwork too because he or she should organise inventories, book reports, list of titles, and so on. A way of reducing these problems is to ask students to help the teacher. According to Bell (par.15), "in the Yemen

program, students gained a strong sense of ownership through running the reading resources in an efficient, coordinated and organized manner”.

- The reader’s interview. Communication between the teacher and students is crucial. We should not forget the fact that the teacher is, among other things, a guide. The teacher can guide their learners so they can choose the proper books for themselves. His or her role is to try to change the reading concept in the student’s mind: it should change from being a boring activity to a pleasurable one.
- Read aloud to the class. It is very relevant in order to get rid of the fear of reading in public. Of course, it would be positive that the teacher reads aloud too so learners can become familiar with the pronunciation of new words. In this case, the teacher would be not a guide, but a model. Learners can learn how to pronounce new words. In addition, they should partake in reading trying to decode unfamiliar words.
- Student’s oral presentations. Doing some presentations of the books that the learners have read is crucial because they foster speaking skills. Students are usually more interested in speaking or listening activities rather than in grammar ones. Unfortunately, nowadays there are a number of teachers who follow the Grammar Translation Method and all their classes are based on teaching and learning grammar. This way, learners cannot improve their skills (only writing and reading at the most). Nevertheless, if the teacher organises speaking activities, he or she is likely to observe a radical change of their learners’ attitude towards the new language. They will be motivated to use it as well as become more participative and creative. If we encourage our students to do an oral presentation about the book they have just read, we can easily achieve an improvement in their speaking and interaction skills.

Timothy Bell’s experiment showed that when his learners did their presentations and they explained why they had chosen a specific book, they said that they had followed some recommendations made by friends. Consequently, they trusted their friends more than the teacher. As Bell (par.18) says,

this demonstrates that given the right preparation, encouragement, sense of ownership and belonging, an extensive reading program will achieve a direction and momentum governed by the learners themselves; a large step in the promotion of student independence and autonomy.

- Written work based on the reading. Learners can be asked to do some writing activities according to what they have read. Bell (par.19) proposes some: elementary students can write a short composition about their feelings in

relation to the book or they can make some questions which can be answered by either the teacher or the rest of the students. If we are working with intermediate students, they can answer some questions or work with new vocabulary or activities related to the characters or the story. Writing a summary of the book is a very good activity because learners can check both their reading comprehension and their grammar. Advanced students can also write compositions (longer than the ones which can be asked from students at lower levels).

- Use audio material in the reading program. Audio material is a very relevant tool. If learners can hear what they are reading, they will learn not only new vocabulary, but also how to pronounce it. If we want our students to speak about the story, we should provide them with audio material so that they can learn the pronunciation and feel confidence when speaking. Graded readers are usually accompanied by audio material. Students can listen to the story and improve their pronunciation. This way, they will be able to talk about what they have read with the certainty that they will pronounce the key words properly.
- Avoid the use of tests. According to Davis (1995:329),

An extensive reading programme is a supplementary class library scheme, attached to an English course, in which pupils are given the time, encouragement, and materials to read pleasurably, at their own level, as many books as they can, without the pressures of testing or marks.

If we test our students, we will probably fail in our objective of making extensive reading a pleasurable activity for learners. If students have to pass a test, they will be focused on memorization, lists of vocabulary and homework so they will see extensive reading as a compulsory and boring activity. Students should feel that they have the control of their own learning process. Perhaps teachers may think that it is not possible to control whether their students are doing what they should be doing without the help of an exam. However, there are a number of different activities which can be organised with the aim of evaluating students better than an evaluation done by an exam.

- Discourage the over-use of dictionaries. The use of dictionaries is more appropriate for intensive reading (because it consist of slow word by word reading). If learners are constantly looking words up in the dictionary, they will not be concentrated in the story, just in the language. Of course, there are a great number of unfamiliar words for our learners but learning in context is more useful as they are able to guess the meaning of some words from the context without using a dictionary. Moreover, if they over-use the dictionary, they will get bored immediately because they cannot “get hooked” on the story

as they are too busy using the dictionary.

- Monitor the students' reading. The teacher plays an important role in an extensive reading program because he or she should help students develop optimal reading habits. In addition, the teacher should make sure that learners are exploiting their resources appropriately.
- Maintain the entertainment. For Bell (1998: par.24) this is the most important aspect of promoting extensive reading. The teacher has to think about how to maintain his or her students interested in the reading. Fortunately, nowadays there are a number of ways to achieve this thanks to technology (we can use, audio material, films, personal computers, and so on). Indeed, we cannot forget the most important tool which all of us have: our own mind. We should be creative when teaching so that we can organise interesting activities that make students learn in a fun way. We can do a great number of things with motivated students; they usually seem to be opened to participate in all that you propose to them. On the contrary, you can do nothing with unmotivated students because it seems that whatever you try to do with them, they are not interested. This is the reason why motivation is crucial.

In connection with extensive reading, there is a very interesting experiment carried out by Ratnawati Mohd Asraf and Ismail Sheikh Ahmad (2003). It consisted of promoting English in Malaysian rural schools through extensive reading. They chose this country because there are a lot opportunities for students with proficiency in English to the detriment of those students with lack of proficiency in English (who are usually from rural areas). In rural areas of this country, English is not easily understood and only a few people can speak English in a simple conversation. Mohd Asraf and Sheikh Ahmad (2003: par.8) thought that the most effective way to help these people improve their level of English was through extensive reading. Thus, they created the Guided Extensive Reading (GER) program.

The GER program was adapted from another one (Guided Independent Reading), which was developed by Hsui (2000) and used with upper primary students and lower secondary ones who were able to read at different degrees of proficiency but they did not do it for some reason. The GER program was also inspired by the work of Day and Bamford (1998) on extensive reading. Four classes participated in the program. The students were people who did not speak English out of the class and they spoke Malay even in the English classes when they felt they were not able to communicate in English comfortably.

In Mohd Asraf and Sheik Ahmad's (2003: par.12) words, the GER program was aimed at "motivating students to read extensively, to read as many books as possible, and to be excited about reading".

According to them, these are the main features of the GER program:

- The teachers need to be well-informed about the books and about reading.
- The GER needs to be conducted in a relaxed, informal classroom atmosphere where the teacher may focus on helping students read for pleasure (let us remember that learners are not likely to learn as much as possible under pressure or in a stressful atmosphere).
- The reading materials should be within the students' level of competency (learners can get frustrated if they are working at an upper level because they will find a great number of unfamiliar words. On the other hand, if they work at a lower level it will be too easy, so they will not learn as much as possible).
- Students are given the opportunity to choose the books that they would like to read (if we want our students to consider extensive reading as a pleasurable activity, we cannot impose a book on them; we should let them decide which book they are interested in or allow them to participate in the choice of a specific book).
- The program needs to be conducted on a regular basis.
- Established routines, aimed at encouraging the reading habit and the love of reading amongst students, are an important part of the program (we should be satisfied if we can instil in our students a reading habit and the value of reading in general).
- Students are encouraged to retell to the class the stories they have read (this way they will be able to check their reading comprehension and they will improve their speaking skill at the same time).
- The students' reading progress is monitored and it is reinforced by giving words of praise and encouragement or by awarding them stars (or something else) for books read (which is a very good way to motivate learners).

As Mohd Asraf and Sheik Ahmad (2003: par.14) point out, these features are deeply connected to the "Top Ten Principles for Teaching Extensive Reading" (Day and Bamford, 2002).

Mohd Asraf and Sheik Ahmad decided to use graded readers with their students in the belief that, as Hsueh-chau and Nation (2000:406-407) explained, graded readers do not require as much background knowledge as academic texts or newspapers do, and hence, are likely to represent the most favourable conditions for reading.

For Mohd Asraf and Sheik Ahmad (2003: par.21), unless the teacher believed in the value of extensive reading, the program would not work. As the experiment was

carried out in three different schools, Mohd Asraf and Sheik Ahmad (par.22) provided instructions to make sure that the program was developed in the same way by all the teachers that participated in the experience. All of them chose a specific day of the week to work on the program and they were committed to dedicating that day exclusively to the GER. The program consisted of reading a book individually and retelling the story to the rest of the class. The role of the teacher was to help students with the new vocabulary, to make them write the stories they had read and to take notes about their students' progress in a diary.

Regarding the books which were used in the GER, Mohd Asraf and Sheik Ahmad chose some well-written and well-illustrated graded readers about the students' culture. As they were not able to be sure about the right option, they asked the teachers to help them with the choice because the teachers knew their students and their interests, preferences and likes well enough. Of course, the teachers had the opportunity to examine the different proposed books before making a decision. Mohd Asraf and Sheik Ahmad were surprised because the teachers chose books at a lower level than expected. The teachers explained that their students were not able to understand the dismissed books and that some students were not able to understand even the chosen ones.

To speak about the results obtained by the GER program, we should distinguish different issues:

- The students' initial response to the program. Mohd Asraf and Sheik Ahmad acted as observers-participants. They observed that the students were not motivated to read English books at the beginning. According to the questions that students answered, they were interested in reading, but not in English because they considered English books too complicated to understand. Indeed, Mohd Asraf and Sheik Ahmad found out that the students had problems with two words every sentence. As they wrote every definition, they read very slowly. The students used the dictionary a lot. Mohd Asraf and Sheik Ahmad suggested that the teachers advise the students to try to guess the meaning of the unknown words from the context. However, their level of English was so low that they did not even know basic words so they were not able to guess anything because they did not understand the context either. As I have said, according to Laufer (1989:319), students need to master a vocabulary of at least 19 out of 20 words from its context . More recently, Hsueh-chau and Nation (2000:419) estimated that most learners would need to know around 98% of the words in a text for this to happen. Having these data into consideration, we can understand the lack of interest in the reading skill that these students presented because reading is very boring if you have to look up

some words in the dictionary at all times. For this reason, it is important to provide students with the basic vocabulary so they can handle a graded reader or a book. In addition, the teacher should help students with the meanings and he or she should teach her or his students how to guess the meaning of a word from the context.

Although Mohd Asraf and Sheik Ahmad tried to make the students ask whatever they wanted to know, they were too shy to do it. As the time went by, the students felt more and more confident and they asked a great number of questions related to the meaning of different words. After these sessions, the students were encouraged to read more quickly and to try to guess the meaning of unfamiliar words.

- Retelling the stories. This was something new for the students so it was very challenging for them at the beginning. What they did initially was to copy some parts of the book to read them later but there was no coherence in their summary so it was very difficult to guess what they wanted to say. They did it in that way because they did not feel qualified enough to express their own ideas in English.

After that, Mohd Asraf and Sheik Ahmad encouraged the students to get rid of their notes and to try to express their ideas with their own words (obviously with their teacher's help when they found some difficulties to find the proper word). Mohd Asraf and Sheik Ahmad explained to the students that the important thing was the fact that they had understood the story and they were able to share it with the rest of the class.

The students tried to follow the given instructions and they tried to tell the story they had read with their own words. Nevertheless, it was still very complicated for them. They were scared of making mistakes and they were also afraid of the idea that their classmates could laugh at them. Despite these negative feelings, they tried to do it.

It was noticed that the students switched from one language to another when they felt they could not continue speaking English. When this occurred, they switched to Malay and they could express their ideas quite well. Indeed, each student tried to do the activity with his or her own strategy. For instance, one girl tried to explain the story through some notes she had taken in her own words in English. However, we all know that it is very difficult to maintain people's attention when reading. This is the reason why this girl was encouraged to explain herself in Malay and she did it in an amazing way so her classmates became very interested in listening to her.

According to Mohd Asraf and Sheik Ahmad the students' difficulty in retelling their stories in English and the ease with which they retold it in Malay was consistent with the notion of the silent period, during which learners build competence in the foreign/second language through listening and focusing on trying to understand the language (Krashen, 1982). According to Krashen (1982:26-27), providing learners with the opportunity to go through a silent period would be beneficial for their foreign/second language development.

As Mohd Asraf and Sheik Ahmad realised that it was very difficult for the students to retell the story in English, so they decided to allow them to do it in Malay. The main objective was to make students read extensively in English and to make them consider this activity pleasurable. If they retold the story in Malay, they also showed that they had understood it and that they had learnt something. Perhaps, if the students could retell the story in their mother tongue, they would find the activity even more motivating. Time brought to light that Mohd Asraf and Sheik Ahmad were right: with these new rules the students felt more motivated to express themselves and those who had not done it before did it now that they could speak Malay.

- Classroom atmosphere. Initially, the atmosphere was very formal and stiff. Students were too shy to answer the questions and, when they did, they did it with just one-word replies. The teachers even forced the students to answer. Mohd Asraf and Sheik Ahmad thought that the reason was that the teachers were too stern and strict with their students. Moreover, some teachers corrected students very frequently as they retold the story. This is a very common error of teachers, to correct their students' productions again and again while they are speaking. It causes a very negative effect on them. They get frustrated because the teacher is interrupting them constantly and they are likely to be afraid of speaking in public. What a teacher has to do is to let his/her students speak as much as possible (provided they are communicating or getting their messages through) because we, after all, we are trying to make them improve their speaking skills. At the end of the speaking experience, the teacher should point out the most relevant mistakes the student has made. However, it would be a better idea to wait until all the students have spoken and then expose the main mistakes to the whole class so that the teacher is not saying who has made the mistake and no-one will laugh at no-one.

Mohd Asraf and Sheik Ahmad explained to the teachers that they should be less stern and they should correct students the least possible. The teachers admitted that they had been too formal and strict and they started to be more relaxed.

There was one teacher who maintained her class in a relaxed and informal atmosphere. She spoke softly but loud enough to be heard. Although we might think that students in these conditions are supposed to have a disruptive behaviour, it was completely the opposite: students were participative, asked a great number of questions, and offered themselves as volunteers to read. They were looking forward to learning English (contrary to what is expected in rural areas). She asked all her students to read the same book because she thought that they were not trained enough to read a different book individually. Consequently, all those students read the same book. She started to read to the class and her way of reading attracted her students' attention. After reading half of the story, she stopped to solve her students' doubts about unknown words. She explained the meanings thorough examples, analogies, clues and the words in Malay. On some occasions, she asked her students to look up the words in the dictionary. The students were completely engaged in the class. (We should take into account that if one's purpose is to become an English teacher, and in case we would like to be not just a teacher but a very good one, we should learn from those who are able to attract their students' attention. We should find a good method to motivate our students and, for that reason, we should follow those teachers' example).

- Signs of progress. At the beginning, the students found a great number of difficulties to understand and retell the story. Nevertheless, they experienced a great progress and reading was easier for them as time went by. They were also more participative and they read faster. The teachers were surprised and proud of their students and their improvement. The students read up to nine stories and some of them read even fifteen or twenty. This is an exceptional achievement taking into consideration the place in which this program was developed. The students related that it had been a very positive experience for them and they were motivated to read from then on.

According to Mohd Asraf and Sheik Ahmad, only one teacher believed in the GER program at the beginning. The others did not see the importance of extensive reading. However, they changed their minds as they saw their students' progress. Those teachers who had initially shown little interest in developing the GER program, suddenly became as enthusiastic as their students.

After having analysed this program, we can perceive how extensive reading can help students make great improvements. Those students presented a lack of vocabulary which stopped them from expressing their ideas in English. However, extensive reading provided them with the vocabulary they needed, at the same time it made students motivated to read for pleasure.

Mohd Asraf and Sheik Ahmad establish that the success of a reading program depends on several factors, namely: how we are able to motivate the students to read; how the program is organized and implemented; how their reading is monitored; and how teachers feel about extensive reading.

On the other hand, according to Michael Rabbidge and Nico Lorenzutti (2013:28), when practising extensive reading, the learner reads a wide variety of texts for pleasure and achieves a general understanding of the content while deciphering unknown words through the context. As they point out, it is very different from intensive reading, which basically consists of reading slowly and carefully in order to be able to understand the text completely and to identify both details and general information.

According to Rabbidge and Lorenzutti (28), in East Asian countries there has been a great interest in incorporating extensive reading programmes in the teaching context. Graded readers, novels and short stories are used to promote this policy. However, in Korea intensive reading seems to be predominant. This is the reason why Rabbidge and Lorenzutti (29) provide an alternative policy called Bimodal Narrative Approach (BNA). This method consists of adding listening to extensive reading. Thus, graded readers should incorporate audio packs and listening activities.

They explain how to develop their method (BNA) (29-35): they divided their students into two different groups. The students were provided with a graded reader and an audio (*Billy Elliot*). The learners worked for five weeks. What they had to do was to mix reading and listening activities. Thus, they read two chapters and listened to one. There is a reason for this proportion. Rabbidge and Lorenzutti assessed the students in Korea and they were aware of the fact that the students were better at reading than at listening. In fact, the students needed only one reading in order to comprehend the story but they needed to hear the listening twice to reach that goal. Anyway, Rabbidge and Lorenzutti (29) recommend teachers to analyse their students' skills before making a decision about the proportion of reading and listening. Apart from that, they also used some techniques aimed at helping students with the story comprehension from their previous knowledge.

Rabbidge and Lorenzutti chose *Billy Elliot* because it was a very popular novel. They chose level 3, which was divided into 15 chapters. As it is widely known, *Billy Elliot* is about an 11-year-old English boy who wants to be a dancer. Nowadays, if a man wants to be a dancer, we accept it as something normal and he will probably be encouraged to achieve this goal in life. However, in 1984 (date of the novel) there was another conception about men's role in the world of ballet dancing. This is the reason why the protagonist, Billy Elliot, had to endure a great number of problems due to his interest in becoming a dancer.

The BNA method is based on a task-based approach. Rabbidge and Lorenzutti propose a warm-up activity, a pre-reading activity, several while-reading activities as well as some post-reading ones. For instance, the warm-up activity consisted of introducing some topics which will be dealt with in the novel while the pre-reading one was a prediction activity. This activity was aimed at motivating students: if students make predictions about what they are going to read, they will be motivated to check if their predictions were wrong or right. As I said before, the reading activity consisted of reading two chapters individually. The students were advised not to use a dictionary if they did not know a word because it is better to try to guess the meaning from the context. Finally they ended with a post-reading discussion about their previous predictions and their feelings and opinions in relation to the text they had read. Some other post-reading activities were text reconstructions (students are provided with a poem cut into some pieces and they have to put them together and discuss about the relationship existing between the poem and the book), exploration of analogy (students have to decide the relation between two different novels; for example, in Rabbidge and Lorenzutti's study, students had to compare *Billy Elliot* with *Cinderella*), and lyrical analysis (students have to establish the relationship between the soundtrack of the novel and the characters).

In relation to listening activities, Rabbidge and Lorenzutti decided to include some activities that are typical of extensive reading. As they found some problems such as the fact that the listening activities did not correspond to the student's level or that the listening speed was too fast, they tried to find some solutions. This is a very relevant issue because a teacher should anticipate problems and find solutions to them. Rabbidge and Lorenzutti's solutions consisted in providing the students with information and pictures which may help them understand the listening text and make them predict what they were going to listen to.

According to Waring (2010: par.11), an important rule of thumb to keep in mind is that the graded listening level is usually "reading level minus 2". In spite of this rule, we find a problem here: graded reader's audio packs are not graded. Audio packs are designed to listen to them while reading the text, but they are not designed to listen to them without the text. Consequently, graded readers' audios are not designed to be a listening activity *per se*; in fact all of them are recorded with the same speed. Due to new technologies, teachers can use some programmes in order to reduce the audio's speed.

The listening used by Rabbidge and Lorenzutti lasted seven or eight minutes. As it is a very long time to fully retain the students' attention, they decided to divide the oral text into two parts of three or four minutes each. That is to say, the students listened to the first half of the chapter firstly (and they were not allowed to look at the

text) and to the second one later (when they had to fill in some gaps while they were listening).

The structure of the listening activities includes also a warm-up activity. This is an optimal way of making students be interested in the story. In the specific case of Rabbidge and Lorenzutti's experiment, the warm-up activity consisted of providing the students with some information related to England's political and social situation in 1980 and Margaret Thatcher's politics (she wanted to close all English mines and miners went on strike and this is the novel's social background). Then, there were some listening activities. The students listened to the audio three times. After the first listening comprehension, they had to complete a multiple-choice test and then check it while listening to it twice again. Nonetheless, this activity was changed and the new one consisted of making the students complete some short-answer questions. The students had to fill in some gaps during the third listening but they were provided with some pictures to help them do it. Firstly, they had to fill in some gaps marked with a "G", which stands for guess (they had to do it according to their predictions) and secondly they had to fill the gaps marked with an "A", which stands for answer (according to what they had listened to). Afterwards, all the answers were discussed in the class. Finally, a discussion about similarities and differences between England and Korea took place and students were also encouraged to guess what was going to happen in the next chapter.

Billy Elliot is not just a novel, but also a film. This is the reason why Rabbidge and Lorenzutti created some listening activities related to the film, such as a visually stimulating film review (it is about watching some parts of the film which are connected to the reading and listening activities); who said what (students watch a part of the film but without sound and then they have to guess which character says a specific sentence according to what they have read before); dialogue strips (students receive some pieces of a dialogue from the film which corresponds to what they have already listened to; then they have to work in groups to put the pieces in the correct order and see that specific part of the film in order to check if they have done their task properly); word change (students have to compare what they have listened to with the part of the film related to that listening and identify some key words which have been modified); write and compare (students have to create a dialogue for some chapters of the novel and then compare their ideas with the real dialogue of the film).

At the end of the listening class, the students were provided with the chapter they had listened to. Nevertheless, they were provided with copies about just this chapter because Rabbidge and Lorenzutti did not want the students to read more than the chapter they had listened to.

After the experiment with specific Korean students, Rabbidge and Lorenzutti

explained their conclusions and the evaluation of their BNA method (33-34). They recognised that there are some different ways of evaluating, such as a written essay (students have to select a character from the book and write an essay about his/her role and development in the novel); pen and paper test (it can be a multiple-choice test or a short answer test); a listening test; a video clip test (it consists of selecting a part of the film to make students identify key vocabulary and they can watch it without sound in order to write a description about what they have seen).

Regarding the impact on the reading and listening skills and motivation, Rabbidge and Lorenzutti (34-35) established that they are not able to evaluate it, but they do propose some methods in order to make students evaluate their own progress, such as timed reading (proposed by Bamford and Day, 2004), which consists of making students begin reading for a minute. Later, they have to count how many words they have read throughout that minute. This procedure is repeated with more or less frequency and students can know if the number of read words increases or not as time goes by; and listening scores (students are provided with some questions to answer after listening once and they can know if the number of answered questions increases with the passage of time. If it increases, their listening skill is definitively improving).

Finally, Rabbidge and Lorenzutti (35) speak about one of the best methods to know if the technique that a teacher is using is or not considered to be optimal by students: student feedback. Rabbidge and Lorenzutti found out that students had enjoyed the experience with BNA up to the point that they wanted to repeat the procedure with another graded reader and they even wanted to do it for pleasure out of the class. It was also discovered that the students considered using the film clips as a very good idea to work with as they made them want to see the whole film. Moreover, the students read between three and five graded readers per week, which is much more than they used to read before starting to work with BNA. In addition, teachers set up a listening library, although only some of the students took advantage of it.

After having studied all the benefits of extensive reading, I can say that graded readers are an excellent option for it. It does not matter if a person does not know which level is suitable for him or her. Publishers usually provide some guidelines to know it. One way to find the appropriate level is to take a look at them and follow their tips. For example, the learner can see how many headwords appear in a specific book so it can help him or her to know what level is the most suitable. However, these words can change if we move to another publisher, so this is something relative. On the other hand, the learner can just try to read a book and he or she is not able to do it comfortably because he or she does not know most of the words or he or she does not

comprehend the story, it is better to change to a lower level. On the contrary, if the learner thinks that the specific book is too easy and he/she feels that he/she could deal with a more challenging book, it is time to move to a higher level.

As I said before, motivation is crucial when reading in a second or foreign language. Because of that, we cannot overlook some guidelines provided by Jeremy Taylor (2006). He decided to write his article because he found a particular book in a second-hand bookshop. That book had been used by a former reader to improve his/her English and there were some notes on the margin of the first pages, such as translations of some words which were not be known by the learner (supposedly). However, there were no more notes after a few pages and Taylor assumed that the learner had given up learning English (perhaps because he or she got frustrated?). This is the reason why Taylor advised teachers to encourage their students to read books according to their linguistic level because the purpose of his policy is to discourage the use of the dictionary all the time.

According to Taylor (2006: par.5) it is very important to start with simple stories (SSS). To prove that this is a good idea, he speaks about his student Marzena, whose level of English was very low. She started to read graded readers to improve her English. She read ten graded readers a week and she moved from one level to a higher one very fast. In four months she improved not only her reading skill, but also her writing and speaking skills. Her grammar when speaking was very correct because she had read a lot, so she had seen the structures again and again.

As Taylor (par.8) points out, a great number of students have just a few hours a week for studying English so it is not a good idea to spend these few hours on making them read and read. Motivation to do it outside the class is of paramount importance. Even though extensive reading should be a voluntary activity, teachers may motivate and encourage their students to read in the following manner:

- Under Cover: the teacher provides students with ten different graded readers and they have one minute to decide which one they prefer to read basing their decisions on the different covers.
- How does it end?: the teacher explains his/her students the plot of the story and they have to think about the ending. If they are creative and feel motivated enough, they will be able to create a better ending than the writer him/herself.
- Favourites: the teacher includes some notes about which graded reader he or she had enjoyed reading and why. Later, students can discuss about which one they liked best and which they did not like at all.

3.2.6 Dracula in graded readers

As we know, there are a number of different publishers of graded readers. We will

analyse those which include a graded reader on *Dracula* and at what level it is designed:

- Black Cat-CIDEB: It has several categories of graded readers: earlyreads, easyreads, green apple, reading and training, reading and training discovery, and reading and training professional. Let us see if *Dracula* is included in any of them:
 - ❖ Earlyreads: it is designed for children because these graded readers are full of illustrations. We can find a graded reader related to *Dracula* in this category. It is called *Dracula and his family*. It adds up to 48 pages. This category is divided into five levels and this graded reader is graded at level 4 (this implies that children will find the Present Simple, the Imperative form, Modal verbs, and Going to for future reference).
 - ❖ Reading and training: this category is divided into six steps and each step is divided into grades (up to 10) according to Trinity's certificates. *Dracula* corresponds to step 4 (grade 7) and it is designed to train students for the First Certificate (Trinity). It adds up to 128 pages. A great number of different structures can be found in this graded reader (Present Perfect, Conditionals, Reported Speech, Passive voice, and so on).
- Burlington Books. This publisher publishes graded readers specifically for Compulsory Secondary Education and Non-compulsory secondary education. They are divided into six categories (the six years of secondary education). We can find the novel *Dracula* designed for students of the 4th year of Compulsory Secondary Education. It offers between 900 and 1300 headwords and it corresponds to an easy level.
- Cambridge readers. This publisher divides its graded readers into seven levels, from starter to advanced. Among all the titles that Cambridge offers, *Dracula* is not included.
- Collins Readers: this publisher offers four levels of graded readers (A2, A2-B1, B1, and B2) and the readers are divided into three categories: Agatha Christie's books (which are more difficult than level 4), Amazing people's books, and Big Cat (for kids). Collins does not have *Dracula* among its readers.
- E-future: this publisher publishes only lower levels graded readers. Its graded readers are divided into four levels (high beginning, intermediate/high intermediate, high beginning/low intermediate, and low intermediate/intermediate). We cannot find *Dracula* among its graded readers, perhaps because these graded readers are totally thought of for kids.

- Easy Readers: this publisher has organised its graded readers in four different levels (beginner, elementary, intermediate, and advanced). These levels are also divided into different sublevels. We can find *Dracula* at an intermediate level (B1 easy reader group) and it adds up to 123 pages.
- ELI Publications. This publisher divides graded readers into three large groups: young (divided into four stages: below A1; A1, starters/movers; A1.1, movers; A2, flyers); teen (divided into three stages: A1, movers; A2, flyers; and B1, preliminary); young adult (divided into light (A1) and six more stages: A1, elementary; A2, pre-intermediate; B1, preliminary; B2, FEC, upper-intermediate; C1, CAE, advanced; and C2, CPE, proficiency). *Dracula* is included in young adult stage four. It adds up to 96 pages and 800 headwords.
- Heinle CENGAGE/ National Geographic: this publisher has different grades (starter, beginning, high-beginning, low-intermediate (US), intermediate, high-intermediate, pre-A1, A1, A2, B1, b2, and C1). Although, this publisher offers a number of titles about nature and geography, it also has a great number of graded readers about other topics. It has a program called *Page turners Reading Library* with twelve different levels too. On the other hand, we can find another grade classification (from Pre-K to twelve levels). *Dracula* can be found in grade 7, 9, 10, 11, and 12.
- Helbling Languages: this publisher offers three different groups of graded readers:
 - ❖ Helbling young readers, for primary children (divided into five levels: starters and movers).
 - ❖ Helbling red series, which includes:
 - Helbling classics, which are classic adapted stories divided into three levels.
 - Helbling Fiction Graphic Stories, which are illustrated stories for KET and two Trinity levels.
 - Helbling Fiction Short Reads, which are short books divided into three levels.
 - Helbling Fiction, which is divided into three levels.
 - ❖ Blue series, which includes:
 - Helbling classics, which includes short books at level 4 and 5. In this section, we can find *Dracula* (level 4). It adds up to 32 pages.

- Helbling fiction, which includes original fiction stories at level 4 and 5 too.
- MacMillan Guided Readers: it offers graded readers at all levels (from A1 to C2). The graded readers are divided into three sections:
 - ❖ MacMillan Children's readers: they are designed for children between 6 and 12 years old and divided into six levels.
 - ❖ MacMillan Literature Collections, which include famous simplified books. All of them are at the same level.
 - ❖ MacMillan Readers, which are popular titles adapted to six different levels. We can find *Dracula* here (with and without CD). The didactic unit developed below is based on this specific book. It adds up to 64 pages and it is designed for an intermediate level.
 - Mc Grow Hill (Spain): this publisher offers three levels of graded readers: pre-intermediate, intermediate, and upper-intermediate. However, *Dracula* is not among those graded readers.
 - Penguin readers: this publisher offers seven levels of graded readers (easystarts, beginner, elementary, pre-intermediate, intermediate, upper intermediate, and advanced). Consequently, it offers graded readers from A1 to C1. *Dracula* appears at level 3 (pre-intermediate, A2, 1200 headwords).
 - Scholastic Readers: this publisher offers different graded readers divided into different sections. Thus, we can distinguish between DVD Readers (with DVD material apart from the book at A2 and B1 level); Popcorn ELT Readers (graded readers based on popular films at early beginner, mid-beginner, and high beginner level); and Scholastic ELT Readers (graded readers adapted from classic literature from pre A-1 to B2). *Dracula* is not offered at any level.
 - Richmond Readers: this publisher is very similar to the previous one. It is divided into several sections: little readers (for children); Infoquest Readers (divided into six levels and designed for children and young teenagers); Media Readers (adapted from films and divided into 5 levels from beginner to advance, Pre A1-B1); Popcorn Readers (the same as the previous one but specially designed for children so it is divided into three levels: early beginner, mid-beginner, and high beginner); Ready, Set, Go (designed for children between 3 and 5 and divided into four levels); Superstar (divided into six levels: early reader 1,2; solo reader 1,2; fluent reader 1,2); DVD Readers (graded readers with DVD material). *Dracula* does not appear in any section.
 - Oxford: this publisher offers a variety of graded readers from A1 to C2 level.

Dracula can be found in Oxford Bookworms Library Section. It is a section specifically designed for secondary and adult students. It is divided into six stages and *Dracula* corresponds to stage 2 (A2-B1) and it adds up to 64 pages.

- World-Wide Readers: this publisher offers specialised English for Specific Purposes (Business English, Technical English and Legal English).

3.3 Concepts and objectives

The most important concepts related to this project are the following:

- Extensive reading: an activity which consists of reading a variety of materials according to the students' level of a specific second/foreign language. This activity aims at developing the reading skills; learning new vocabulary; familiarity with language patterns, and the acquisition of some fluency⁹.
- Graded readers: according to the British Council, graded readers are books that have had the language simplified to help second/foreign language learners to read them. The language is graded in terms of vocabulary, complexity of grammar structures and also the number of headwords. They are made to cater for all levels from beginners through to advanced¹⁰.
- Intermediate plateau: a stage in which students seem to be stuck on and they have difficulties to reach a higher level. Students sometimes move quickly from a lower level to another because they have learnt the basic vocabulary and grammar structures. However, when they reach the intermediate level it seems that the process of improvement gets slower and it is very difficult for them to reach the advanced level.¹¹

This project is aimed at achieving the following objectives:

- To bring the value of extensive reading to light
- To show the variety of advantages of using literature in the classroom
- To analyse how literature may imply an improvement of the student's skills when learning a second/foreign languages
- To describe the different elements which should be taken into account when choosing a specific graded readers
- To give some guidelines about what to do and what not to do with graded readers
- To describe the great number of activities which may be developed when using

⁹ Information obtained from: <http://2ndnature-online-eikaiwa.com/Articles/ExtensiveReading.htm>

¹⁰ Information extracted from: <https://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/article/using-graded-readers>

¹¹ Information obtained from: <http://www.cambridge.org/elt/blog/2015/08/moving-beyond-plateau-lower-upper-intermediate/>

a graded reader

- To observe how learners may change their attitude towards a second/foreign language if they are correctly motivated
- To show the fact that it is very easy to adapt graded readers to the teacher's purpose

3.4 Justification

Literature provides a great number of advantages in any student's process of learning. One of the most relevant ingredients when learning a foreign/second language is motivation. Literature may help with motivation. Teachers may develop a number of activities which can make students get engaged with the EFL/SL class. If students are engaged, they will learn much more than if they are bored. Literature offers a great amount of possibilities: students can read; speak about the book's topic, the characters, the background, the author, and so on; listening to audio material, to their classmates when they do oral presentations or debates; interact with each other to exchange opinions or feelings about the book; organise role plays to represent the novel; etc.

Literature implies a change to the traditional development of English classes. Students will be probably more motivated doing this kind of activities rather than following a textbook and doing the same activities in every lesson.

Graded readers offer a way to make students be aware of their own learning process and it is completely connected to the learning to learn and autonomy and initiative (entrepreneurship) competences. The Communicative linguistic competence is obviously improved through reading. However, all the competences which are mentioned in the LOMCE can be put into practice through literature.

Teachers can provide students with some information about the background and the author's novel as well as the culture of the country where the action takes place. Thus, students will develop the cultural and artistic expressions competence. If teachers organise role plays, students will have to organise among them themselves and this way they will develop and improve their social and civic competence. The mathematical, scientific and technological competence may also be developed because students will work with dates, centuries, and places (date of the novel, dates which appear in the book, pinpointing places on a map, etc.). The digital competence is also developed through literature because students will have to deal with personal computers and the Internet when seeing films or looking for information on a given author, period, genre, book, etc.

As we can see, literature is a very useful teaching tool to cover all the basic and transversal competences and to motivate students to learn a second/foreign language.

It is time to use all the resources we have at our disposal and not limit ourselves to textbooks and long lists of vocabulary. Along the project, I have shown that it is more useful to learn in context than through lists of vocabulary. Moreover, students will be able to develop their own strategies to learn vocabulary if they try to guess it from the context: they may ask themselves if the unknown word is a noun, an adverb, and adjective, and so on in order to have some clue to discover the meaning and they will have to make an effort to deduce the meanings. This is very useful because when they face an exam which includes texts they will be able to apply the same strategies if they do not know some words.

In my opinion, these are all reasons to think that using literature in the classroom has a lot advantages but any disadvantages. What a teacher feels when he or she is aware of his or her students' improvement is priceless.

4. Didactic unit

4.1 Justification

The Organic Law of Education 2/2006 of May 3rd (but also The Organic Law for the Improvement of the Quality of Education of 8/2013 of December 9th,) defines a didactic unit as a short-term planning unit that embraces a series of activities and tasks designed for a particular group of students.

It must contain a final goal, (key) competences, objectives, contents, methodological orientations and evaluation criteria. It constitutes the last level of curricular particularization and contributes to the development of the General Objectives of the Stage and the Area, and the attainment of the so-called Key Competences, as specified in the Royal Decree 1105/2014 and the Decree 416/2008.

This didactic unit represents the last one in the Course Planning for the 1st year of non-compulsory secondary education and consequently has been included within the School's Educational Project, that is to say, the prescriptive document by means of which the Official Curriculum (or also Basic Curricular Design) is adapted to our educational reality.

This unit is essential to be included in the course planning because it is the only one dealing with literature in depth, a fantastic opportunity for students to get in contact with authentic material. As it is placed at the end of the academic year, it will also be suitable for a revision of the grammar contents developed in the previous units. *Dracula* is a master piece of the Gothic novel tradition, so students will get to know their defining characteristics and, of course, by means of that, an important part the English culture. In this way, the pedagogic autonomy that the educational system offers to both educational institutions and teachers by means of an open and flexible curriculum will be fulfilled.

4.2 Contextualisation

This didactic unit has been designed for a group of thirty pupils (twenty boys and ten girls). The whole class is flexible, they like working in small groups, in pairs, and individually. The problem may appear because of noise and the use of Spanish when working together. My students do not feel motivated towards the English language because they would like to learn it some other way. This is the reason why I have designed this didactic unit based on literature due to the fact that my students have always attended classes based on a linguistic framework and a Grammar Translation-like Methodology. I believe that some other communicative approach may change my students' mind and their motivation may increase. The didactic unit is based on a Task-based approach.

I have not observed important behavioural problems apart from their scarce level of motivation towards learning a foreign language, which implies they use the Spanish language too much, even with the teacher. I think that a great number of them could pass a B1 level, but there are others which do not practise English out of the class so their level must be A2 at the most. Consequently, I believe that the graded reader I have chosen for them may be suitable for everybody. On the other hand, many of the students have fluency problems when speaking English. They show an important lack of vocabulary so they have problems when they try to find the suitable word when expressing their ideas. However, those students who have improved their English outside the class have a high conversational level and they can speak fluently. They sometimes make pronunciation mistakes but they are able to express themselves relatively well. For this reason, imbalance among students seems to be the main problem.

This group of students feels motivated with the implementation of non-traditional activities such as role plays, videos, and over all the contact with material that is not usually employed in conventional classes. They also feel very attracted by the employment of new technologies in the classroom. They are completely keen on developing this didactic unit because it represents something totally different for them. They usually respect the teacher and the respect among students is observed too. The way in which they are placed in the class is traditional, but the pieces of furniture can be moved and their position changed, so it is possible to create groups and organise discussions in the new layout of the classroom.

The didactic unit is divided into six sessions of fifty or fifty-five minutes each. It focuses on the improvement of the different skills. I will provide students with exercises and activities aimed at practising reading, listening, speaking, interaction, and writing skills as well as grammar. The sessions have different type of activities so students do not get bored during the class. Through collaborative and cooperative work, they will reach a whole understanding of the story and their characters, being able to communicate with their classmates to make them aware of the topic. English is taught three hours per week. Students also have half an hour a week with the language assistant. On Fridays, half of the class stays in class whereas the other half goes with the language assistant and then the opposite. Classes are divided into the following way:

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
8.00-9.00				English	
9.00-10.00					
10.00-11.00					
11.00-11.30	Break	Break	Break	Break	Break
11.30-12.30		English			English
12.30-13.30					
13.30-14.30					

4.3 Competences

The key competences mentioned in The Organic Law for the Improvement of the Quality of Education of 8/2013 of December 9th are the following:

4.3.1 Communicative competence

According to Law 17/2007 of Education in Andalusia, this competence includes communication in one's mother tongue language and in a foreign language. Students will develop the ability to understand both oral and written language as to compose texts in the same way that they will talk when participating in discussions or expressing their own opinions. Therefore they will improve listening, speaking, reading and writing skills and language components, individually and in groups. The activities connected to the communicative competences are:

- All the activities referring to speaking and discussion (pre-tasks and post-tasks).
- Production of written text dealing with the specific theme of the unit.
- Reading and understanding of the main information contained in a literary text.
- Production of oral text in order to make classmates guess a specific character.
- Contributions with chunks of lexical items.
- Fill in the gaps with a specific grammatical tense included in the revision of the whole academic year.

4.3.2 Mathematical, scientific and technological competence

Students will develop the mathematical competence through dates related to the novel, the publication of the original one and its adaptations. Technological and scientific competences will also be developed as English will be used to make frontiers wider in terms of cultural awareness, making students be conscious of the fact that

languages open new doors to new knowledge. Students will develop the ability to interpret cultural, geographical and historical information found in the provided materials and to use them in the communicative exchanges proposed in class.

4.3.3 Digital competence

Students will use digital tools and techniques when looking at and treating the information. They will learn to choose digital sources related to literature adaptations, for academic and entertainment purposes. The projector will be used in every class to make students follow the class easily and to make them partake in different debates according to the boxes or photographs which will be shown on the digital board.

4.3.4 Learning to learn competence

Students will have to notice and find what their inner motivations are and their preferences in literary terms particularly. They will include in their daily routine working habits, doing it in an organised and motivating way. Students will reflect on their learning, becoming the protagonists of their own learning and deciding in which way they want to acquire knowledge. They will do personal contributions as well as they will learn with their classmates' contributions.

4.3.5 Social and civic competence

Students will learn to respect their classmates and to live together in a community or environment, in this case the classroom, through different activities and situations as described in the following lines:

- Discursive exchanges and introduction of discussions and dialogues among students, as there are many sections devoted to the communicative skills (speaking and interaction).
- Learning to live together in a context marked by basic education standards and coexistence, especially taking into account strategies and formulas of courtesy.
- Respecting different views emerged among peers, exposing arguments, and contrasting them. They will learn to respect all the opinions and argue the contrary ones politely.

4.3.6 Autonomy and initiative (Entrepreneurship)

Students will have to rely on themselves in their learning process. They will expose their preferences, opinions, and thoughts; they will learn to be autonomous and independent at the same time they work in a cooperative way. These are possible examples of how they can achieve this:

- Developing planning initiatives through oral presentations of the main features of a character, in order to be understood by their mates.

- Active participation in the different activities proposed in class, over all the oral ones (speaking and interaction), where they must show an open attitude towards the exchange of oral messages.
- Using the extra material the teacher proposes in order to have a wider view of the topic.
- Ability to organise groups or pairs and to collaborate, work and cooperate altogether.

4.3.7 Consciousness and cultural expressions

Students will learn to appreciate cultural diversity, not only from the point of view of theory but involving them in related activities such as:

- Appreciating the different artistic manifestations and adaptations of a literary text.
- Being able to extract knowledge from a particular literary context, connecting it to the cultural aspects from what it has been taken.
- Valuing dialogues, the others' opinions, diversity and cultural awareness through the different contributions made by students in a group, being able to reach a conclusion by means of a group agreement.
- Reproducing and connecting the literary text with different genres (poetry and drama).

4.4 Objectives

Didactic objectives	Stage objectives		Foreign language objectives ¹²	Key competence
	RD ¹³	D ¹⁴		
To understand a literary text and be able to extract the general meaning.	d, e	c	4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9	1, 3, 4
To participate in oral interactions (speaking) giving examples.	a, b, c, e, f, k	a, b	1, 2, 6, 10	1, 3, 5, 6
To use and learn basic rules of spelling and punctuation, and recognize and reproduce sounds, rhythm, stress and intonation.	d, f	c	1, 3, 7	1, 3,
To understand oral text in different contexts (listening).	e, f	c	1, 2, 6, 7	1, 4
To produce written texts with various purposes on specific topics using appropriate strategies and resources in a coherent way (Writing).	d, e, k, l	b, c	3, 4, 6, 7, 10	1, 3, 4, 6
To revise all the grammar tenses developed during the academic year.	f, d	c	3, 4, 6, 7	1, 3, 4
To express ideas using specific vocabulary of personal and physical description.	d, f, k	a, b	1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 10	1, 4, 6
To show a positive attitude towards people who speak another language and have a different culture.	a, b, c, h	a, b, d,	6, 8, 9	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7
To identify customs and features of everyday life from other countries and cultures where the English language is spoken.	a, b, c, h	a, b, c, d,	5, 6, 8, 9	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7
To enjoy reading literary texts selected by their own and relating them with adaptations from other artistic fields	b, c, d, e, g, k, l	a, b, c	5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7

¹² Foreign Language objectives according to Royal Decree 1467/2007

¹³ Stage objectives according to Royal Decree 1105/2014

¹⁴ Stage objectives according to Decree 416/2008 (Andalusia)

(theatre, cinema, radio, the Internet, etc.).

4.5 Contents

The contents of this didactic unit also follow those established by the Spanish legislation (RD 1105/2014). It is customary to classify them according to the items below.

4.5.1 Listening, speaking and interacting

- Listening and understanding
 - ❖ Extracting general and specific information from oral contributions for their mates, from oral and formal presentations in class, and from authentic language presented in a digital format.
 - ❖ Extracting general ideas from discussions in whole-class activities and reaching a personal conclusion from the ideas exposed in a small group activity.
 - ❖ Being able to understand the general message of a video containing authentic material in the English language.
- Speaking and interacting
 - ❖ Making oral contributions to participate in the debates proposed by the teacher with original ideas dealing with cinematic adaptations, poetry and songs based on Bram Stoker's *Dracula*.
 - ❖ Contributing with specific lexical items related to personal and physical descriptions and also with those items referring to the general atmosphere in Gothic novels, especially those of vampires.
 - ❖ Being able to explain the essential information of a specific character to their mates in a small group.
 - ❖ Exchanges of opinions with the teacher in introductory questions about the topic developed.

4.5.2 Reading and writing

- Understanding written texts
 - ❖ Skimming and scanning different literary texts, belonging to different genres (poetry and novel).
 - ❖ Reading and understanding descriptive texts about the characters in *Dracula*, using the appropriate strategies and techniques in order to

extract general ideas and specific information depending on the activities proposed.

- ❖ Being able to select a specific literary text according to their personal preferences and understanding the main parts.
- ❖ Reading comprehensively authentic material in the English language.
- Producing written texts.
 - ❖ Being able to produce a text summarising the general idea of *Dracula*'s plot, using an appropriate level regarding the grammar used during the academic year.
 - ❖ Being able to join together creativity and writing skills producing an alternative end to Bram Stoker's novel.
 - ❖ Being able to express their ideas through a written text.

4.5.3 Linguistic awareness and reflection upon the language

- Linguistic knowledge
 - ❖ Functions
 - To speak, write and reflect about Bram Stoker's *Dracula*.
 - To deliver a presentation about the characters.
 - To explain a specific chapter to the rest of the group.
 - To write a brief summary of the story and provide an alternative end.
 - ❖ Vocabulary
 - Specific vocabulary of vampires and Gothic novel's atmosphere.
 - Adjectives describing personality and physical appearance.
 - Specific vocabulary of the novel.
 - ❖ Grammar
 - Revision of the grammar taught during the academic year.
 - ❖ Pronunciation
 - Pronunciation of the specific vocabulary about this kind of novels and descriptive adjectives.
 - Care about pronunciation in oral presentations about characters and in debates.
- Reflection upon one's learning

- ❖ Reflecting upon the different literary genres and the formal way in which they are written.
- ❖ Selecting literary text according to their specific preferences.
- ❖ Taking part in self and peer corrections of both oral and written tasks.
- ❖ Accepting errors as an integral part of the learning process, and yet show interest to overcome deficiencies.
- ❖ Being aware of their own learning process while reading the book and participating in the different activities proposed in each session.

4.5.4 Sociocultural aspects and multicultural awareness

- Appreciation of the foreign language as a vehicle to learn cultural issues.
- Positive attitude towards other cultures and countries, for example those shown in *Dracula*.
- Awareness of the existence of a culture accompanying the language they are learning through literature.

4.6 Cross-curricular issues

Our educational system presents the so-called cross-curricular topics. They are described by the Royal Decree 1105/2014 (art.6). Cross-curricular topics are identified with transversality. They are not specific subjects, but topics that every didactic area must treat across the curriculum. Each didactic unit has to focus, at least, on one of these topics. By the end of the course, all of them must have appeared in class. They can be found in LEA 17/2007 (Law for Education in Andalusia) as well, under “Educación en valores” and “cultura andaluza” (articles 39 and 40 respectively).

Cross-curricular topics are the following:

- Road safety Education.
- Environmental Education.
- Health Education.
- Consumer Education.
- Coeducation.
- Sexual education.
- Education for Peace.
- Moral and Civic Education (rights & duties of democratic societies)
- Multicultural education
- Andalusian culture (for our specific case).

Cross-curricular contents are related to social matters. In this unit, health education and moral and civic education will be fostered in sessions four and six respectively. Both of them will appear through listening activities.

This didactic unit will deal with health education in relation to blood and diseases, specifically students will learn the blood composition (red cells, white cells and platelets) and some diseases related to blood, such as anaemia and haemophilia.

Regarding moral and civic education, it will be covered through a song (“Another Brick in the Wall” by Pink Floyd). With this song, students will focus on indoctrination. They should know that they must develop critical thinking. We live in a democratic society so everyone has the right to have their own ideas and teachers should not impose their ideas on their young students. They must control their students’ thoughts. Teachers should guide and help, but not be authoritarian dictators. In session six, students will have the opportunity to practise this issue.

4.7 Interdisciplinary aspects

The cooperation with other areas will be needed in this didactic unit (Spanish Language, Universal Literature, Geography and History). We need to cooperate with Spanish Language because students must know the difference between present and past tenses and they should understand the passive voice too. In addition, cooperation between English and Geography will be relevant in order to make students be able to pinpoint the United Kingdom, London, Romania, and Transylvania on a map of Europe. This didactic unit is connected to Literature because we would like our students to know the features of the Gothic Novel and to know something about Bram Stoker. Finally, we will cooperate with History because we will provide students with some information about Vlad Tepes.

4.8 Temporalization

In general, a minimum of six sessions are required (50-55 minutes per session) to develop my didactic unit. The timing may be adjusted depending on the circumstances in which the learning process is developed and the characteristics that define students.

DIDACTIC UNIT	NUMBER OF SESSIONS	TEMPORALIZATION (50’ – 55’ EACH SESSION)
Dracula	6	300-330’

4.9 Attention to diversity

4.9.1 Extension activities for fast finishers

Those students that finish faster than the rest of the class will be given a set of grammar exercises online (including all the tenses worked during the previous terms, and other belonging to the following age), in order to raise their level in that component, as provided in <http://www.burlingtonbooks.com/Spain/Page.aspx?PageID=411>.

Extra material designed by the teacher is also going to be given to them in case they have finished the reading and writing activities proposed.

This is a list of sources to expand knowledge for faster students:

- <http://englishies.blogspot.com.es/2012/09/grammar-review-for-bachillerato.html>
- <http://myenglishclassmarquesdesuanzes.blogspot.com.es/201>
- <http://www.ego4u.com/en/cram-up/grammar>

The teacher will also recommend them some readers with a high level to expand their knowledge about Gothic novels:

<http://www.goodreads.com/series/101357-a-shade-of-vampire>

An example of an activity for faster students may be the following: students have to guess who said the following sentences. The possible answers are in the box. The sentences can be found literally in the book.

LUCY	VAN HELSING	MINA
JONATHAN	DRACULA	ARTHUR

_____ said "Arthur is doing some important work in Professor Van Helsing's hospital. I do not want to worry him".

_____ said "I cannot talk about Castle Dracula now. Terrible things happened there. Was I ill or mad? I don't know".

_____ said "we have to do three things to stop the vampire. First we must open Lucy's coffin. Then we must hammer a sharp piece of wood through her heart. Lastly her head must be cut off. Then she can rest forever".

_____ said "this place smells of blood".

_____ said "you cannot stop me. I have lived and fought my

enemies for hundreds of years. I have fought armies. How can three men stop me now?"

_____ said "then he put his lips to my throat and drank my blood. I could not stop him. And now I have drunk his blood. I am a vampire too".

The solutions are the following:

- **Lucy** said "Arthur is doing some important work in Professor Van Helsing's hospital. I do not want to worry him".
- **Jonathan** said "I cannot talk about Castle Dracula now. Terrible things happened there. Was I ill or mad? I don't know".
- **Van Helsing** said "we have to do three things to stop the vampire. First we must open Lucy's coffin. Then we must hammer a sharp piece of wood through her heart. Lastly her head must be cut off. Then she can rest forever".
- **Arthur** said "this place smells of blood".
- **Dracula** said "you cannot stop me. I have lived and fought my enemies for hundreds of years. I have fought armies. How can three men stop me now?"
- **Mina** said "Then he put his lips to my throat and drank my blood. I could not stop him. And now I have drunk his blood. I am a vampire too".

4.9.3 Reinforcement activities for slow learners

- Providing them with extra input (grammatical chart).
- Reducing their talking time.
- Grouping them with stronger students (equal tutor).
- Giving them more time to do the activities.
- Providing them with the transcriptions of listening activities.

4.10 Step-by-step sessions¹⁵

4.10.1 Session 1

Activity	Interaction	Task	Time
Warm-up activity. Students will be introduced to the topic.	WC	The teacher shows a picture of a castle in the projector	10'
	WC	Students will have a discussion about some questions connected to the topic	
Reading a graded reader based on Bram Stoker's <i>Dracula</i>	WC	Discussion about the novel	45'
	GW	Students are divided into groups and each one reads a chapter	
	GW	Each group explains its chapter (orally)	

Activity 1 (10'). Warm-up activity. With the projector's aid the teacher shows the students a picture of the castle



The teacher asks the students to look at the picture and try to describe what they see. Then, there will be a discussion about the following questions related to the picture. After it, the word *Dracula* will appear on the board.

Who lives here?

Would you like to meet him?

Would you like to spend a night in the castle? Why? Why

¹⁵ Time has been adapted to the real time that students usually spend doing the activities. Initially, there were fewer minutes to complete each activity but when I put the didactic unit into practice, I discovered that students spend more time than expected.

Which country and city do you think it is in?

How old is it?

Activity 2. Reading (45')

→ **Before reading.** Students will have a discussion about what they know about *Dracula*: the novel, the character and the author.

→ **Reading.** Students will be divided into eight groups of three or four people. Each group will read a chapter of the book, which has nine chapters.

→ **After reading.** Each group will do an oral presentation about the chapter they have read so at the end of the presentations, all the students will know the story. Every member of the group has to speak.

4.10.2 Session 2

Activity	Interaction	Task	Time
Warm-up activity	WC	Discussion about the previous class	5'
Grammar review	IW	Fill the gaps with the suitable tense of the verbs provided	15'
Listening to the last chapter of the graded reader	WC	Predictions about <i>Dracula's</i> ending (orally)	25'
	IW	Listening to the last chapter of the graded reader three times (the last one with the books open)	
	PW	Students will discuss if their predictions were right	
Alphabet soup	IW, WC	Students have to find some words in relation to <i>Dracula</i> and add more if they want	10'

Activity 1. Warm-up activity (5'). Students will discuss about what they did in the previous class with the aid of the teacher.

Activity 2. Grammar review (15'). Students will fill in the gaps with the correct tense of the verbs in the box. They will have to bear in mind the information included in the sentences because they are about some novel data of the novel (the author, the background, etc.). The answer will be provided later.

publish– write –assign– touch –not invent – define –adapt

- *Dracula* is a Gothic horror novel _____ by the Irish author Bram Stoker. It _____ in 1897.
- *Dracula* _____ to many literary genres including vampire literature, horror fiction, the gothic novel and invasion literature.
- The novel _____ on themes such as the role of women in Victorian culture, sexual conventions, immigration, colonialism, and post-colonialism.
- Although Stoker _____ the vampire, he _____ its modern form.
- The novel _____ in theatrical, film and television interpretations.

→ **Before listening.** Students will have a discussion about the ending of *Dracula*. In the previous session they read the first eight chapters but they did not read the last one. They will speak about what it is going to happen and how the story ends.

→ **Listening.** Students will listen to the last chapter of the book in order to know the end of the story. They will listen to it three times. The first and the second one they will have to listen very carefully because they will not have the possibility to read the book at the same time. The third time they will follow the book as they listen to the chapter.

→ **After listening.** Students will discuss in pairs if their predictions about the end of *Dracula* were right or not.

Activity 4. Vocabulary (10'). Students have to find some words related to the story in the alphabet soup. Then, the answers will be provided by the students themselves. They can add some other words which do not appear in the alphabet soup if they want.

T	G	A	R	L	I	C	D	B	J	D	B
B	R	B	D	C	S	D	M	U	D	T	I
R	H	A	A	C	Ñ	S	Y	G	N	G	H
J	D	Q	N	F	P	F	T	F	I	F	N
A	R	G	V	S	M	V	H	D	F	R	C
Ñ	A	N	D	T	Y	B	A	U	F	G	V
C	C	E	D	A	X	L	E	W	O	D	I
Y	U	T	A	K	Q	O	V	J	C	V	W
R	L	J	K	E	V	O	A	A	A	H	U
L	A	X	Ñ	F	J	D	M	U	N	D	Y
D	Ñ	B	C	V	P	N	P	V	I	I	K
F	W	W	R	A	Z	A	I	Q	N	J	I
N	R	K	Q	O	D	U	R	Ñ	E	P	A
Q	H	Ñ	Y	T	G	O	E	I	L	K	U

4.10.3 Session 3

Activity	Interaction	Task	Time
Warm-up activity	WC	Students remember what they have done in previous sessions	5'
Writing	TC	Discussion about students' opinions about the story	50'
	GW	Students have to create an alternative ending in groups	
	GW, WC	Each groups presents its group and students vote for the best	

Activity 1. Warm-up activity (5'). Students will discuss what they have done in the previous sessions.

Activity 2. Writing (50')

→ **Before writing.** There will be a discussion about the following questions related to the students' feelings and opinions about the story.

What part did you find...

Most interesting?
Most frightening?
Most difficult to believe?

Do you remember the end of *Dracula*?

→ **Writing.** Students will be divided into eleven groups of three people and they have to create an alternative ending.

→ **After writing.** Each group has to present their ending to the whole class. Then, there will be a voting in order to decide the best alternative ending. Of course, there will be a prize for the winners.



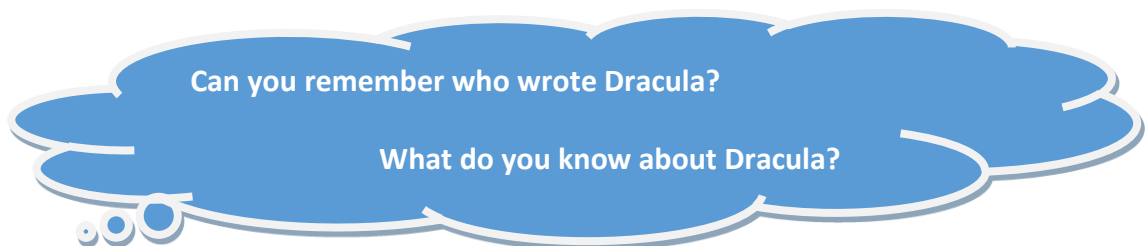
4.10.4 Session 4

Activity	Interaction	Task	Time
Warm-up activity	WC	Students remember what they have done in previous sessions	5'
Reading a text about the people who inspired Bram Stoker	WC	Discussion about some questions related to the novel	20'
	IW	Reading some information about the people who inspired the author	
	PW, WC	Students try to guess the meaning of some expressions included in the text (in pairs)	
Listening. Cross-curricular topic (health education)	GW, WC	In groups, students have to discuss about the meaning of some words connected to blood	25'-30'
	IW	Listening about blood's functions. Students have three paragraphs to fill some gaps, identify the mistakes, and put the sentences in order respectively	
	GW, WC	Discussion about the information students have listened to	

Activity 1. Warm-up activity (5'). Students will remember what they had done in the previous sessions with the aid of the teacher.

Activity 2. Reading (20'). The students have already read the novel. Now it is time to know something about the author (Bram Stoker) and the man who inspired him.

→ **Before reading:** Discussion about some questions:



→ **Reading:**

Dracula was based on two different people who really existed: Vlad Tepes, known as "The Impaler" and Eleanore von Schwarnezberg (the vampire princess).

Vlad Tepes was born in Transylvania. He was Vlad Dracul's son. Dracul means Demon in Rumanian. Tepes was the prince of Valaquia. He was a very good strategist. He had a number of enemies and he killed and impaled thousands of them.

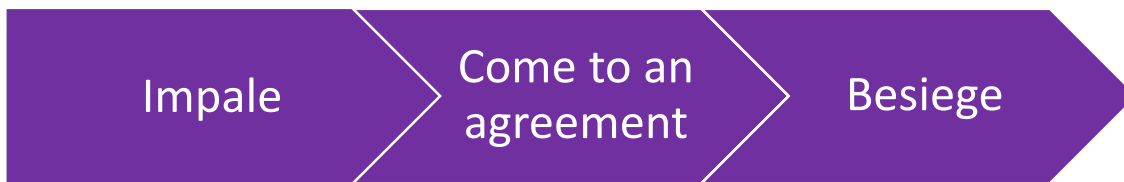


The most powerful enemies Dracula had were the Ottomans. They tried to come to an agreement with him but Vlad refused. He took offence because the Turkish did not put their turbans off in his presence. So he decided to punish them. The punishment consisted of nailing their turbans to their heads. As the Turkish sultan wanted revenge, he besieged Targoviste Castle. However, Vlad was very intelligent and he killed 20.000 Turkish soldiers. Thus, the sultan ran away. Vlad went to Poenari Castle. He came back to Transylvania ten year later because he wanted his throne. Unfortunately, he died. However, Vlad Tepes is considered to be a hero in Romania.



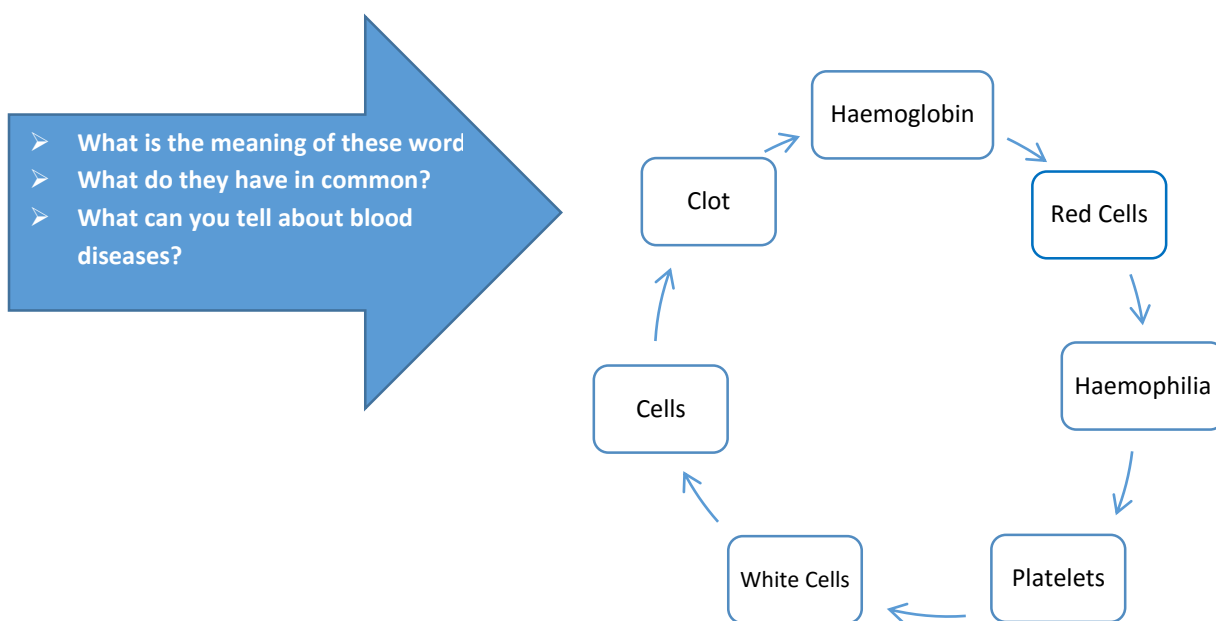
On the other hand, Eleanore was a princess who lived in Krumlov (Czech Republic). People did not trust her because she drank wolves' milk. It was believed that wolves were related to Devil and vampires. Eleanore got ill and her skin turned pale. So she started to be considered a vampire. Krumlov's habitants were terrified: there was a very powerful vampire on the loose because he had made Eleanore become a vampire. The princess died alone. No-one went to her funeral. Not even her son.

→ **After reading.** Now, students will discuss some expressions that appear in the text. Students have to try to guess the meaning from the context in pairs. Then, the teacher will give the solutions to the whole class.



Activity 3. Listening (25'-30')¹⁶. Cross-curricular topic (health education). Students will listen to some information related to blood (because blood is very relevant in the story they are reading).

→ **Before listening.** Discussion about some questions. Firstly, in small groups and, then, the conclusions will be shared with the whole class.



→ **Listening.** Students have to fill in the gaps in the first paragraph, identify the mistakes of the second paragraph and put the sentences in last paragraph in the correct order. They have one minute to read the text. Then, they will have one more minute to make the final notes. Finally, they will hear the listening again but, this time, they have to pay attention to the presentation. The answers will be provided by the teacher later.

¹⁶ Listening extracted from <http://www.burlingtonbooks.com/Spain/page.aspx?PageID=1847>

We all know that we need blood to survive because blood contains different _____. They perform important functions in our _____. The red cells in our blood contain haemoglobin. This takes _____ and oxygen to all the cells in our bodies. _____ fight diseases and _____ and the platelets in our blood make it clot near a cut so the bleeding will stop.

Blood is not essential to our health. But, sometimes, things can go right. If a person hasn't got enough haemoglobin in the white cells, then they have got haemophilia. A person with anaemia feels tired, is pale, and the heart beats faster. Sometimes, the dentist suggests taking iron tablets because they help the body make more red bleed cells.

If a person with this disease falls or gets a cut, they may bleed excessively. Haemophilia is a rare disease of the blood. This means that the blood won't clot and stop any bleeding. Haemophilia is a genetic disease. You can't catch it like the flu. Unfortunately, there isn't any cure for this disease and people with haemophilia must be careful their whole lives.

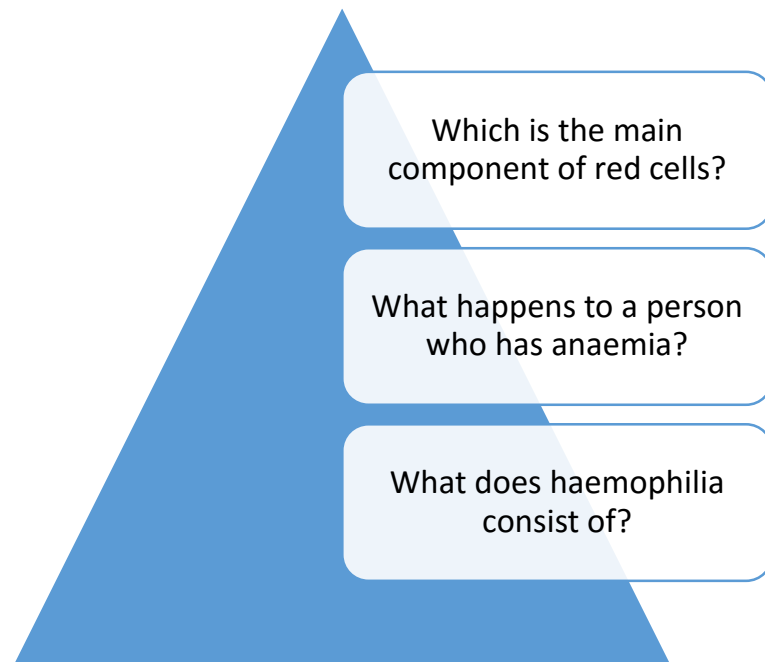
Transcription:

We all know that we need blood to survive because blood contains different cells. They perform important functions in our bodies. The red cells in our blood contain haemoglobin. This takes nutrients and oxygen to all the cells in our bodies. White cells fight diseases and infections and the platelets in our blood make it clot near a cut so the bleeding will stop.

Blood is essential to our health. But, sometimes, things can go wrong. If a person hasn't got enough haemoglobin in the red cells, then they have got anaemia. A person with anaemia feels tired, is pale, and the heart beats faster. Sometimes, the doctor suggests taking iron tablets because they help the body make more red blood cells.

Haemophilia is a rare disease of the blood. This means that the blood won't clot and stop any bleeding. If a person with this disease falls or gets a cut, they may bleed excessively. Unfortunately, there isn't any cure for this disease and people with haemophilia must be careful their whole lives. Haemophilia is a genetic disease. This means some people are born with it. You can't catch like the flu.

→ **After listening:** The teacher gets the listening back because it will be part of the evaluation (before giving the answers). Students will speak about the following questions (firstly in small groups and then with the whole class):



4.10.5 Session 5

Activity	Interaction	Task	Time
Warm-up activity	WC	Students remember what they have done in previous sessions	5'
Reading a poem about Dracula	WC	Students discuss if they have ever read a poem related to Dracula	15'
	WC, IW	The teacher reads the poem and students listen to the pronunciation and intonation. Then, they read it on their own.	
	WC	Volunteers students will read the poem in front of the class	
Grammar review	WC	Students remember the different verb tenses they have studied during the year	15'
	IW	Students complete an extract from the book with the correct verb tenses	
	WC	Students propose different possibilities to the gaps to complete the activity altogether	
Speaking and vocabulary connected to aristocracy	IW, WC	Some students describe a character from the novel and the rest of students guess it	15'
	WC	Students discuss some questions related to <i>Dracula</i>	
	WC	Students do a brainstorming to guess the meaning of some words connected to the aristocracy	
Places on a map	WC	Students see on the board some maps to know where to pinpoint some places in relation to the novel	5'

Activity 1. Warm-up activity (5'). Students will remember what they have done in the previous classes with the aid of the teacher.

Activity 2. Reading a poem¹⁷ (15').

¹⁷ Poem extracted from <http://allpoetry.com/poem/11509888-Dracula-by-Vito-Salvador>

→ **Before reading:** students will discuss if they have ever read a poem related to Dracula.

→ **Reading:** the teacher will read the poem once in order to make students learn the pronunciation of the words and intonation. After that, students will read the poem on their own and they may ask the teacher the meaning of unfamiliar words.

In the darkest of the nights,
Lay a body in his hands.
Dracula is what he calls himself.
His pure white teeth in blood are
drenched.
His face as pale as a chalk cliff-side.
Red eyes with which he can see inside.

You will not change his will,
Nor evade his striking kill.
Penetrating your thick skin,
With his teeth, it's not a sin,
It's his day to day routine.
Just like posh men drinking gin.
His attacks are your death,
Killing you till your last breath.

From this monster you can see,
A romantic man can be.
Kissing women near the tree.
Under moonlight you will see,
Her with him feeling compassion.
Then he'll lure her to his fortress.
Undress her,
Address her,
And obsess her.

She will love him like he's good.
But he'll treat her like raw food.
He will drink her blood for breakfast
And cherish her meat with every bite.
You can fight,
But you'll lose;
Dracula will never lose.

→ **After reading:** some students will read the poem again in front of the class, as a voluntary activity. They can read the whole poem or just one or a few paragraphs, depending on their preferences and the number of volunteers.

Activity 3. Grammar (15').

→ **Pre-task:** Students will remember the different tenses they have studied during the whole year.

→ **Task:** Students will complete this extract from the book with the correct form of the verb. More than one answer is possible.

My name is Jonathan Harker. I _____ be a lawyer and I _____ (live) in London. About seven years ago, some strange and terrible things _____ (happen) to me. Many of my dear friends _____ (be) in danger too. At last we _____ (decide) to tell the story of that terrible time.

Part of my work is to find houses in England for rich people who _____ (live) in foreign countries. At the beginning of 1875, I _____ (receive) a letter from Transylvania, a country in Eastern Europe. The letter _____ (be) from a rich man called Count Dracula. He _____ (want) to buy a house near London.

The Count _____ (ask) me to find him an old house with a large garden. The price of the house _____ (be) not important. I _____ (find) him a large, old house to the east of London. I _____ (write) to the Count and he _____ (agree) to buy it. There were many papers which he had to sign. To my surprise, Count Dracula _____ (invite) me to visit him in the castle in Transylvania. ' _____ (bring) the papers with you', he _____ (write) in his letter. 'I _____ (sign) them here'.

I _____ (be) very busy and _____ (not want) to go. Transylvania _____ (be) far away and few English people _____ (be) there. There was another reason too. I _____ (get) married in the autumn to my darling Mina. I _____ (not want) leave England until we _____ (be) married.

But Mina _____ (say) that I _____ (go).

'The Count _____ (be) a rich man', she _____ (say). 'You _____ (be able to) do more business with him. You _____ (travel) most of the way by train. In two weeks, you _____ (be) home again'.

So I _____ (accept) Count Dracula's invitation. I _____

→ **Post-task:** Students will propose different possibilities for every gap and they will complete the text altogether with the aid of the teacher.

Activity 4. Speaking and vocabulary activity (15').

→ **Pre-task:** Students will have a discussion about the following questions:



4.10.6 Session 6

Activity	Interaction	Task	Time
Warm-up activity	WC	Students will remember what they have done in the previous sessions	5'
Reading comprehension test	IW	Students do a multiple-choice test to check their reading comprehension of the novel	15'
Quiz	GW, WC	Students are divided into groups and answer a quiz with questions in relation to the information provided in class about the novel	5'
Listening to a song (Another brick in the wall) and speaking. Cross-curricular topic (moral and civic education).	WC	Students discuss about some questions connected to the song.	25'
	IW	Students listen to the song and fill in the gaps	
	PW, WC	Students discuss in pairs their opinions about the song and then they share their ideas with the rest of the classmates. There will be a discussion about indoctrination later.	
Feedback	IW	Students give some feedback to the teacher about their improvement	5'

Activity 1. Warm-up activity (5'). Students will remember what they have done in previous classes with the aid of the teacher.

Activity 2. Test (15'). Students have to do a multiple-choice test in order to check their reading comprehension. This test will be taken into account for the evaluation. They have to read the questions carefully. Only one answer is correct. The answers will be provided later.

1. Jonathan Harker is a:
 - a. Lawyer
 - b. Doctor
 - c. Writer

2. Count Dracula is from:
 - a. London
 - b. Transylvania
 - c. Budapest

3. If you would like to go to Transylvania, you should go to:
 - a. Hungary
 - b. Romania
 - c. Bulgaria

4. Count Dracula makes Jonathan write some letters to:
 - a. Mina
 - b. Lucy
 - c. Van Helsing

5. Mina decides to visit her friend Lucy, who lives in:
 - a. London
 - b. Hythe
 - c. Dublin

6. Lucy is married to:
 - a. Arthur
 - b. Van Helsing
 - c. Dracula

7. Jonathan and Mina got married in:
 - a. London
 - b. Transylvania
 - c. Budapest

8. Who wrote to Mina to tell her that Lucy was dead?
 - a. Jonathan
 - b. Van Helsing
 - c. Arthur

9. Who was the beautiful lady of Hythe?
 - a. Mina
 - b. Lucy
 - c. Anna

10. What should you use to kill a vampire?
 - a. A knife
 - b. A bomb
 - c. A stake

11. Who was hypnotized by Van Helsing?
 - a. Lucy
 - b. Jonathan and Mina
 - c. Arthur

12. A vampire cannot enter a house unless he or she:
 - a. Is very powerful
 - b. Is invited
 - c. A vampire can enter a house whenever she or he wants

Activity 3. Quiz (5'). Students are divided into three groups. The teacher will ask each group a question about *Dracula*. The questions are not about the reading comprehension, but about the novel's background.

Who wrote *Dracula*?

Bram Stoker

What kind of novel is it?

Gothic novel

Who inspired Bram Stoker?

Vlad Tepes and Eleanore (the vampire princess)

When was the novel published?

In 1897

In which country can you find Transylvania?

Romania

What do vampires (especially Count Dracula) wear?

Cloak

Can you provide another expression for 'immediately' that is repeated a number of times in the novel?

At once

Activity 3. Listening and speaking (25'). Cross-curricular issue (moral and civic education).

It is said that people who like vampires have a good time listening to groups like The Cure, Pink Floyd, etc. Subsequently, a song by Pink Floyd has been selected (*Another Brick in the Wall*).

→ **Before listening.** Discussion about the song and the group. Students will answer the following questions:

Have you ever listened to the song?

Do you know Pink Floyd?

→ **Listening Comprehension.** Students have to fill in the gaps. They are going to listen to the song twice. Then, they will have one more minute to complete all the gaps.

We don't need no _____
We don't need no thoughts _____
No dark sarcasm in the _____
Teacher, leave them kids _____
Hey! Teacher! Leave them kids alone!
All in all, you're just _____ brick in the

All in all, you're just _____ brick in the

We don't need no _____
We don't need no thoughts _____
No dark sarcasm in the _____
Teacher, leave them kids _____
Hey! Teacher! Leave them kids alone!
All in all, you're just _____ brick in the

All in all, you're just _____ brick in the

"Wrong, do it _____!"
"Wrong, do it _____!"
"If you don't eat yer meat, you can't have any
pudding
How can you have any pudding if you don't eat yer
meat?"
"You! Yes, you behind the bikesheds, stand still,
lady!"

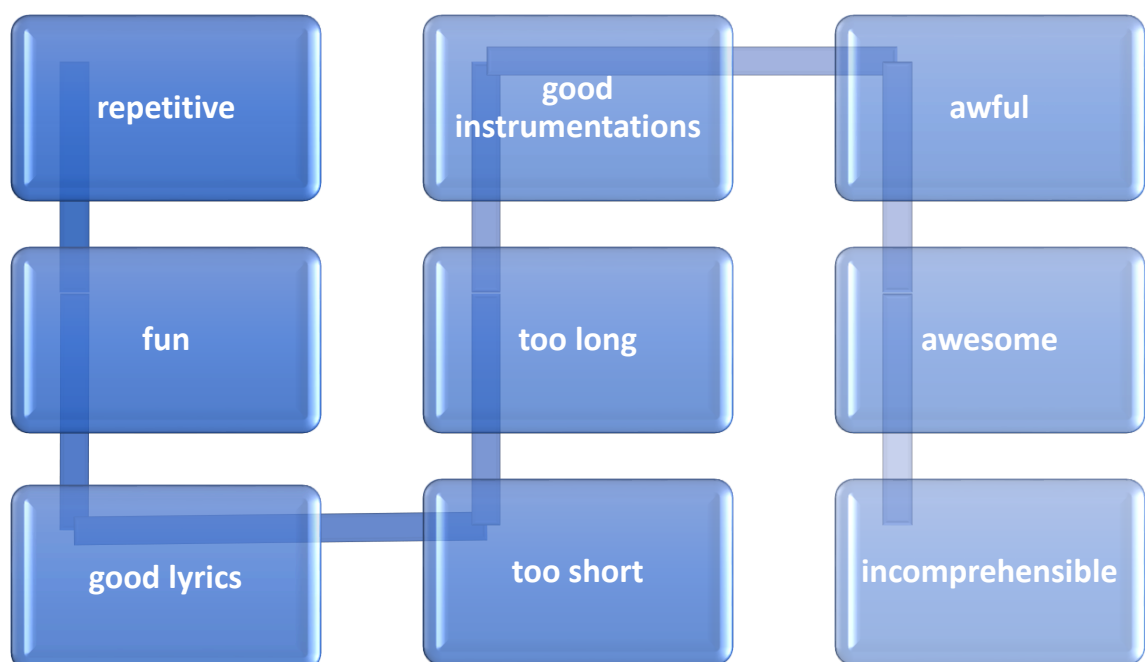
Transcription:

We don't need no education
We don't need no thoughts control
No dark sarcasm in the classroom
Teacher, leave them kids alone
Hey! Teacher! Leave them kids alone!
All in all, it's just another brick in the wall
All in all, you're just another brick in the wall

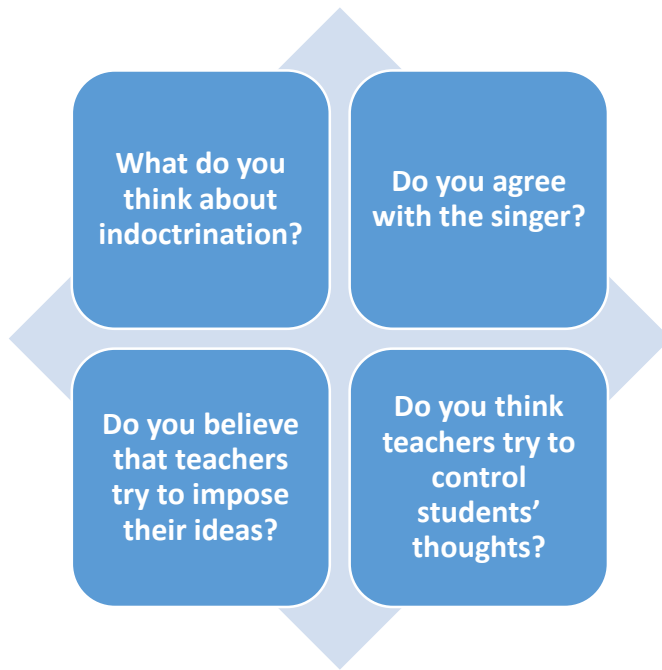
We don't need no education
We don't need no thoughts control
No dark sarcasm in the classroom
Teacher, leave them kids alone
Hey! Teacher! Leave them kids alone!
All in all, you're just another brick in the wall
All in all, you're just another brick in the wall

"Wrong, do it again!"
"Wrong, do it again!"
"If you don't eat yer meat, you can't have any pudding
How can you have any pudding if you don't eat yer meat?"
"You! Yes, you behind the bikesheds, stand still, lady!"

→ **After listening.** The teacher will provide students with the answers. Then, they will discuss their feelings about the song. This box will be presented in order to facilitate the task. Firstly, they can speak in pairs. Later, they will share their ideas with the rest of the classmates.



Finally, students will discuss about the main topic: indoctrination. The teacher will explain to the students that they cannot allow their teachers to control their minds. They have to think by themselves. Teachers are there to guide them, to help them, to be a shoulder to cry on, but they should not impose their ideas on them or force them to think like them. Students should be autonomous and have the capacity for critical thinking by themselves.



Activity 4. Feedback (5'). The teacher will ask the students to write some feedback on a piece of paper in order to know if they have enjoyed the didactic unit and if they would change something. Their opinions will be taken into account for their future to improvement.

4.11 Evaluation

The assessment will be continuous, analysing the student's progression from the beginning to the end of the unit. This process will include the assessment of the daily work of all students. Therefore, students will be evaluated by the whole process of teaching and learning.

The teacher will evaluate the unit with the activities that students do in class as well as those which are corrected by him/herself. It will be considered whether or not students have achieved the objectives. That is to say, every single activity will be taken into account for the students' evaluation. Other issues such as the students' motivation, their active participation, their presentations, the development of the proposed activities, etc. will also be taken into account.

4.11.1 Evaluation criteria

DIDACTIC OBJECTIVES	EVALUATION CRITERIA
To understand a literary text and be able to extract the general meaning	Whether or not students understand and are able to extract the general meaning of a literary text
To participate in oral interactions (speaking) giving examples	If students are able to participate in oral interactions providing examples
To use and learn basic rules of spelling and punctuation, and recognize and reproduce sounds, rhythm, stress and intonation	Whether or not students use and learn basic spelling and punctuation rules and recognize and reproduce sounds, rhythm, stress and intonation
To understand oral texts in different contexts (listening)	If students are able to understand oral texts in different contexts
To produce written texts with various purposes on specific topics using appropriate strategies and resources in a coherent way	Whether or not students are able to produce written texts with various purposes on specific topic using strategies and resources in a coherent way
To revise all grammar tenses developed during the academic year	If students are able to deal with all the grammar tenses developed during the year
To express ideas using specific vocabulary of personal and physical description	Whether or not students are able to express ideas using specific personal and physical vocabulary
To show a positive attitude towards people who speak another language and have a different culture	If students are able to respect other languages and cultures
To identify customs and features of everyday life from other countries and cultures where the English language is	Whether or not students are able to identify customs and features of English speaking countries

spoken	
To enjoy reading literary texts selected by themselves and connecting them with adaptations from other artistic fields (theatre, cinema, radio, the Internet, etc).	Whether or not students are able to select literary texts according to their preferences and connect them with adaptations.

The percentages for the evaluation of students are developed in the following manner:

ASPECTS	CRITERIA AND TOOLS	WEIGHT
Concepts	<p>Correct use of the grammatical and lexical aspects included in the didactic unit</p> <p>Instrument of evaluation: successful interaction with the teacher and the rest of the class, correction of tasks, and oral feedback provided by the teacher and students</p>	30%
Procedures	<p>Oral and written expression</p> <p>Written text and oral presentations (coherence, cohesion, correctness, and adequacy) as well as appropriate pronunciation and intonation</p> <p>Listening exercises</p> <p>Instrument of evaluation: successful interaction with the teacher and the rest of the class, correction of tasks, and oral feedback provided by the teacher and students</p>	40%
Attitude	<p>Active participation in class in the planned activities</p> <p>Instrument of evaluation: teacher's observations and notes</p>	30%

5. References

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