TEACHING ENGLISH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE AND CULTURE OF THE ENGLISH-SPEAKING COUNTRIES THROUGH ICT IN AND OUT OF CLASSROOM CONTEXTS

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MA DISSERTATION
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1. Introduction

Today’s school is not the one our relatives attended in the past and it will not be the one that our descendants will attend in the future. The evolution of life and society is supposed to have a reflection in the evolution of the school as an institution. Currently, we are being the spectators of the great changes that are taking place. Aspects such as the attention for diversity, programmes to fight bullying and defend equality, mechanisms to protect students or the inclusion of technology in the development of classes are very relevant in the school of the 21\textsuperscript{st} century. This last aspect, the technological, is the one I am going to pay attention to. Technology is present in almost every field of our lives. When we had a doubt with a word in the past, we checked a dictionary. If we have a doubt nowadays, we check Google\textsuperscript{1}. In the past students had books but now they have books and audios, videos, movies, etc. related to what they are studying. The development of the Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) has transformed the field of education by breaking with the traditional instruction that we all know.

The aim of this paper is to show how different ICT tools and resources can be implemented both in and out of the classroom contexts in order to teach English as a foreign language as well as the culture of the English-speaking countries. The paper is divided into two different sections. The first one deals with the theoretical framework. I present aspects such as the methodology, the connectivity of the terms technology, language, and culture as well as the external factors and the shortcomings. The second section deals with the practical part. In this second section I present a didactic unit to be applied in a hypothetical group taking into account aspects such as the characteristics of the group, the ideal conditions, the resources employed as well as the skills treated both in and out of the classroom. Finally, in the concluding part, I talk about the development of future research in the field and the necessity of creating new materials to be tested. I close the paper making a reference to one possible field of investigation for future research that may be considered revolutionary for teaching out of the classroom contexts.

\textsuperscript{1} Check Appendix C in order to see a list of all the ICTs mentioned in the project and a brief explanation of them.
2. Theoretical framework

2.1. Theoretical principles and methodology

The implementation of the model that I present in this project is based on some theoretical principles that are explained here. One of the central authors that support my vision is Krashen (1982) and his Monitor Model approach. One of the hypotheses in this model explains the distinction between learning and acquisition. Learning is described as a conscious process while acquisition is considered an unconscious one. Thus, students attending a formal foreign language class would be learning rather than acquiring. Acquisition takes place in more natural contexts. It is a subconscious process that occurs when we receive messages that we understand. This is what Krashen calls comprehensible input, which is the key concept in his theory since, according to him, comprehensible input is the only way in which language can be acquired. This duality between learning and acquisition is what becomes relevant in the English as a Foreign Language class (EFL). Acquisition is the process thanks to which people are able to learn their L1 and other languages. This means that if students face multiple contexts with both linguistic and cultural input and practise through a wide variety of exercises, they are going to learn without really being aware of the fact that they are learning. These classes cannot be of a strict nature where every single aspect is controlled and pre-planned since this would imply a major role of the learning process in contrast to the acquisition one.

Another important aspect is the one commented by Gee (1992) that says that we acquire a language subconsciously by exposure to a model and then what we acquire is put into practice within social groups without formal instruction. Formal instruction can be a pressure agent where students can feel anxiety when communicating. On the contrary, if we follow an ICT perspective where activities are carried out online this anxiety and pressure can be diminished. Students will face their activities in a natural online context. And answering those activities whenever they want and in the context they prefer is a process of naturalisation. They are answering

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2 Following the investigation carried out by Clavel Arroitia, B. and Zaragoza Ninet, G. (2008)
activities as they could be checking their Facebook account. This is related to Krashen (1982) again. There is a popular quote about interpretation that says that ‘there is no better actor/actress than the one that doesn’t know he/she is acting’. So, in order to learn a language, we do not need to be aware of the fact that we are learning. It is more about what we have acquired and can be applied in one quotidian context such as chatting with friends. Those unconscious processes in which we typically do not focus our attention are there and make us learn more than we think.

According to Mayer (1997) and his Generative Theory of Multimedia Instruction if mixed modes of delivery are applied, teachers are offering to students different ways of employing cognitive processes in order to acquire knowledge. This theory is particularly illustrative of my methodological vision in this project. Of course not everything in the teaching of a Foreign Language is drills or adapted listening comprehension exercises that may sound forced and unnatural. The more varied the activities are, the better. And the more resources the teacher has the more effective the teaching process can be. In this respect, the ICT perspective is fully positive since different technological tools allow a wide variety of multimedia materials ranging from simple pieces of texts to foster reading comprehension to images, videos and real conversations to improve other skills. This high amount of resources of all kinds has, however, a risk. As Sweller (1999) states, all these multimedia resources can be beneficial if they are carefully designed. Not because of having multiple multimedia resources the teaching and learning processes are going to be improved. When those multiple resources are well structured, categorised and used in a wise way both teaching and learning become more fruitful.

In conclusion, these are the approaches that I consider central for the development of my project that can be resumed as:

- The learning/acquisition duality, focusing more in the latter.
- Learning language by exposure and putting it into practice within particular face-to-face and virtual contexts.

3 Krashen established the distinction between Learning and Acquisition in his Acquisition-learning hypothesis. Nonetheless, we tend to say learn a language no matter if the sense is to learn or to acquire. In this particular case I am talking about acquisition.
- The necessity of choosing the positive and carefully designed resources in order to ensure efficacy.

2.2. Language, culture and technology

Since my intention is to present the teaching of English as a Foreign Language and the culture of the places where English is spoken through technological resources, it is obvious the relevance these three terms get. We need to go beyond the traditional assumption of teaching English just from linguistic perspectives. If we consider how students are learning English nowadays in schools we are going to conclude that most of them perfectly know how to construct syntactically the present simple tense but they do not know how to apply it in the real world. Others know how to use the reported speech greatly, but they are not able to recognise the British or American flag. The approach that I defend in the present project is that of the mixture of language and culture. When I talk about mixing language and culture I am not referring to giving more relevance to the typical song that is added in the end of the book rather to the actual units. I refer to the real insertion of cultural aspects of the English-speaking countries in the teaching process. According to Brown (1994:170) ‘culture is deeply ingrained part of the very fibre of our being, but language –the means for communication among members of a culture– is the most visible and available expression of that culture’. Then, if culture is the most visible and available expression of a language, why does it have a poor role in the foreign language instruction?

Learning a language implies learning a culture at the same time. We cannot expect to learn English without knowing how English people are. It is not only talking about fish and chips, the rainy England and queen Elizabeth II. It is about discovering English manners, how to be polite in that country and others such as what is considered taboo there. In other words, this means that cross-cultural pragmatic aspects should be taken into consideration in addition to the traditional linguistic perspective.

Fostering the connectivity of both language and culture is important since it allows students to radically change their view. Most students consider English as other subjects, just as Physics or Mathematics. I want to transmit
the idea that English is not another subject in the curriculum. Of course, technically speaking, it is. But it is a language, something with an own identity spoken by a group of people unknown for the majority of the students that are learning it. Breaking with this barrier will be positive from different reasons.

According to Brown (1994:167) both learners and teachers of a second language need to understand cultural differences to recognise openly that everyone in the world is not ‘just like me’. Brown is right in the sense that this fusion of language and culture in the EFL class is not only a duty for students. The teacher has to know the culture of the language he/she is teaching. All these aspects will help students to think more critically. Learning the culture of the language that is being studied is not a threat to the own culture. In fact, it is a more enriching factor that can make students think about aspects they did not consider before as well as break stereotypes. The question is: How could we do this? And the third key term is a possible answer.

Technology is that great ship as big as the Titanic that concentrates millions of resources, tools, machines, etc. We are currently living in a moment where technology can be used for mainly any activity. In the case of learning a foreign language it can be extraordinarily positive and useful. Resources such as virtual platforms, social networks, cultural quizzes, videos, audio recordings, games and a long etc. are available. We have moved from a time where listening comprehensions where totally adapted and recorded on tapes to a time where a simple YouTube video can show a real English conversation. Teachers can take benefit of all these resources and learners can see how language and reminiscent cultural factors are applied.

2.3. Blended learning: the in and out of the classroom context

I have already mentioned that I believe in the union of language, culture, and technology as well as I have said that the technological field is wide and contains multiple tools and procedures. Nonetheless, for my project I am only interested in what is called Blended Learning. This modality of learning is conceived as ‘learning models that combine traditional classroom practice
with e-learning solutions. This means that students face both different styles of instruction. Traditional face-to-face instruction works together with new ICT tools in order to foster the acquisition of knowledge through different ways. Blended learning implies cooperation between the two modalities rather than a fight to see which one is better.

Some recent research shows that students learn as successfully in online environments as in traditional face-to-face classroom settings (Donnelly, 2010; Woltering, Herrler, Spitzer & Spreckelsen, 2009). I also consider that only web-based instruction cannot have the same effects than traditional instruction from different social perspectives. It is true that working through the Internet can lead to a social status of physical isolation. This would be an interesting contradiction if we defend processes of socialisation in the class group, team work and cooperation among students. What is then the solution for this? Blended learning. The combination of the traditional with the innovative allows both teachers and learners to take the best of each modality.

Jonassen et al. (1999) talk about three major benefits of the inclusion of ICT Blended learning. The first one deals with the access ICT tools guarantee to real materials. A class book, for example, can contain a reading about the Pearl Harbour attack. But a blended learning modality can allow the teacher to publish a resource dealing with what has happened that same morning, without taking into account if it is the weekend or 3 am in the morning. The second major benefit deals with virtual cooperation and collaboration, taking into account culture. Students can deal with American culture in the class and then talk with real students from the United States through ICT tools. Finally, the third major benefit deals with the individual and personalised guidance the teacher can have over his/her students. Many ICT tools with educational purposes have features that allow the teacher to see how learners evolve in the acquisition of knowledge process.

Apart from these three major benefits, I also take into consideration the duality in and out of the classroom context. Blended learning is, after all, a

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4 Definition taken from *ITC in Education* (E-Primers) presented by the United Nations Development Programme.

5 Certain virtual platforms such as social networks really allow a virtual socialisation that could be positive to reduce anxiety in shy students as I explain in section 2.4. Nonetheless I defend both the real and virtual interaction.
resource that plays with this in and out. The class is no longer limited to the traditional fifty or sixty minutes of instruction. Thanks to ICT tools, what has been treated in the face-to-face session can be continued through a virtual platform. Learners can have access to those materials whenever they want, no matter if it is a Sunday at 1 am. Furthermore, teachers can provide learners with different tasks to be solved online. All these online materials could be perfectly useful as class extensions and as a consolidation of what has been treated in the class.

I consider this feature as central in my project. Learning is not limited to the physical classroom anymore and ICT resources can keep the attention of the students on what is being treated. Blended learning does not necessarily imply that all the ICT features are used outside the traditional face-to-face class. A traditional class in which a PowerPoint presentation is used in order to explain anything is already enrolled in the use of ICT tools. In other words, ICT tools in education can be used both in the traditional face-to-face classes and at home. Blended learning is an aid for the teaching process. This means that ICTs cannot eliminate the traditional face-to-face approach. If that happened, then we would be dealing with e-learning. I believe in the aid of technological resources in the acquisition of knowledge process both in and out of the classroom contexts rather than in only one purely traditional or one purely technological (e-learning). That is why blended learning is the best choice for what is being explained here.

2.4. External factors

It is not possible to talk about the teaching and learning processes using new technological resources without taking into account what I have called here external factors. I consider external factors to the teaching of language and culture elements such as:

- Motivation: how certain virtual resources and new procedures can foster learners’ interests.

- The role of anxiety and shyness of the learners: how new virtual tools can break the barrier of nervousness when participation is required and
at the same time foster real face-to-face participation in the classroom environment in the future.

- The evolution of interaction: how new ICT resources have modified and evolved interaction. Traditional student-student, teacher-student, student-teacher interaction has gone beyond. Virtual platforms such as social networks are a great source to analyse the new interactional patterns among the members that participate in the teaching/learning process.

- The pedagogic approach employed by every teacher to the inclusion of ICT resources: Virtual processes will not be applied in a same way by teachers that really believe in the use of ICTs for teaching and those that include ICTs because it is a department requirement. Teachers’ personality has always influenced the way teachers approach a subject and the method they follow. Technology is just an extension for this. Those teachers with greater technological interests may take more advantage of ICT resources.

Motivation has a crucial role in the teaching not only of a second or a foreign language and its associated culture but of any knowledge in general. Not much can be done if the learner does not want to learn. Knowledge is out there and the teacher is responsible of transmitting it in the best way possible. For Gardner, one of the most recognised scholars in the motivation studies, motivation is ‘the extent to which the individual works or strives to learn the language because of a desire to do so and the satisfaction experienced in this activity’ (Gardner 1985:10). This implies, then, that students act in different ways according to their desire and the level of satisfaction they get in the process. We can then determine that very strong and boring classes may diminish that desire and satisfaction Gardner is talking about. Of course it is very difficult to think about trigonometry being explained in a funny way but the way in which trigonometry is explained will change the whole spectrum of a class. This also happens in the other way: areas of knowledge that seem lighter and more approachable and that are, thanks to the teacher, suddenly converted into something really tough. It will depend on each particular class and the type of students but experience tells us that what is new attracts more
than what is already established. Gardner also described two different kinds of motivation. These are called integrative and instrumental motivation. Integrative motivation is related to the own desire of learning a foreign language and culture to be part of the target community, just for interest or for ‘romantic reasons’. In contrast, instrumental motivation implies the necessity of learning the foreign language because it is a requirement for anything else such as a job or just passing a school subject. Every single student has his/her own desires and we as teachers have to bear that in mind. ICT tools can be very helpful in order to foster a positive motivation towards the foreign language and its culture. It is not the same, for example, to teach where Seattle is by just saying it than explain it with a live webcam broadcast of the city projected in the class. I am not saying that ICT may transform the instrumental motivation into an integrative one. But taking into account what can be called technological motivation could have a positive effect.

Furthermore, the particular area of knowledge of language and culture can take benefits from a wide range of resources such as social networks, blogs, videos, audios, etc. This factor of diversity of resources combined with a technological motivation is also linked with my methodological approach. I consider that Krashen’s Monitor Model combined with the plurality ICTs allow and the learners’ technological motivation could have a great impact in the development of the teaching process both in and out of the classroom contexts.

Anxiety and shyness also have a major role in the development of a class, especially if learners are teenagers and adults, an age range where peer pressure is crucial. Here I can make reference again to Krashen and another of his five hypotheses from the Monitor Model. In this case I am talking about the Affective Filter hypothesis. Krashen (1985) explains that the affective filter is like a mental barrier that complicates the process of acquisition because of affective factors such as anxiety or shyness. This means that a student cannot reach full access to comprehensible input under these

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7 I carried this out in an extracurricular English lesson devoted to American culture with successful reactions on the part of the learners.
conditions and consequently to acquisition. In order to talk about this filter, the terms *high* and *low* are used. If an affective filter is high, then the access to comprehensible input is harder and if it is low acquisition will occur in an easier way. Many students are less participative in traditional face-to-face instructions due to the peer pressure, lack of confidence, insecurity, etc. All these factors keep the filter in a high position, preventing acquisition to take place. I consider that new ICT resources can break this barrier by establishing a non face-to-face communication and a sense of equity and equal opportunities for all. I am not defending here a position of social isolation in front of a computer at home. It is more about allowing the learners to give the best of them in a virtual environment controlled by the teacher to really see their aptitudes, potential and knowledge. These factors may be overshadowed in a real face-to-face class. Teachers should be aware of the affective factors. If a student participates less in the traditional face-to-face instruction it does not necessarily mean that it is because he/she does not know how to speak in the foreign language. ICT resources can be useful in order to lower the filter. They can be considered as a starting point to foster future real face-to-face participation. If we imagine for example the case of an activity that has to be solved by writing comments in an online site, we can predict the reduction of peer pressure. Consequently, the student can really show his/her potential. What has to be clear is that as I defend a blended learning approach, I also defend a mixed participation. Online resources can be a starting point for introvert students. What has to be really fostered, both in virtual and in real class sessions, is a good working environment where students feel comfortable to participate.

The implementation of ICT resources both in and out of the classroom contexts leads to a modification in the interactional patterns among the members of the teaching-learning process. If we consider the traditional face-to-face instruction, we can appreciate the strong division between teachers’ active role and learners’ more passive role. Furthermore, the amount of speech occurred in traditional classes is normally carried out by the teacher. Learners have almost no voice or, directly, they do not have a voice. The fact that each teacher has more than twenty-five students per class does not help
either. Speeches are much more impersonalised, just taking into account the transmission of data. Interaction between teacher-student is just instructional and student-teacher interaction may be completely absent. ICT resources have been revolutionary since thanks to them all the interactive patterns have changed. The central part of this argumentation is the development of what is known as Computer Mediated Communication (CMC). CMC is conceived as ‘the communication that takes place between human beings via the instrumentality of computers’. (Herring 1996:1) Then we can determine that any exchange of information carried out through an electronic system is a communication mediated through computers. Any ICT resource employed for the development of a class will imply CMC since whatever done in and/or out of the classroom context will have to be controlled by the teacher. If we imagine for example a student sending an e-mail to the teacher, we are taking into consideration CMC. This way of communication leads to a new approach to interaction between teachers and students. Additionally, the new technological interaction pattern goes beyond allowing teachers to connect with other colleagues and students interacting with other members of the class. The impact of ICTs in the teaching field cannot be fully conceived without taking these CMC patterns into account.

The last external factor that I am going to pay attention to is about the attitudes towards ICTs. Teachers’ personality, epistemological orientation and technological knowledge are crucial if we talk about the use of ICT resources in and out of the classroom contexts. It is obvious that a traditional teacher that is not interested in ICT tools but is obliged under department requirements will introduce ICT resources in a different way from to those teachers with great interest in technological projects and with enough knowledge to carry them out without problems. Moreover, some studies reveal that depending on the point of view of the teacher and also his/her epistemological orientation and personality will affect even the type of ICT resource he/she will employ. This shows, then, that the use of ICT resources in teaching cannot be approached from a neutral point of view since they very

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8 In an investigation Dwyer et al (1994) and Yocum (1996) found that teachers with a more constructivist orientation were more likely to select open ended software.
much depend on teachers’ epistemological orientation. This does not mean that some procedures are always better than others. ICTs offer a wide range of tools and one teacher will consider some of them better than others. What has to be clear is that the same ICT resources will be not applied in the same way by two different teachers. It is as it happens in the traditional face-to-face instruction when the same topic is explained by two different teachers. The explanation will be close but not the same. Each instructor has its own epistemological orientation and while one can consider that any particular ICT resource is not positive, another one can consider it is very positive if used in a certain way.

2.5. Shortcomings

Up to this point, I have approached the inclusion of ICT resources from angles such as methodology, interaction, pedagogy and psychology presupposing the best conditions for teaching. However, it is not possible to talk about ICT resources applied to teaching without exposing some of the major shortcomings that could be faced by teachers and learners. Among the most remarkable problems I can mention:

- Poor budget and investment in ICT for education.
- The Internet.
- The infrastructure.
- Lack of ICT skills.
- Curriculum conflicts.

If we pay attention to traditional education and its costs, we can think about books, notebooks, pens, etc. If we pay attention from an ICT perspective, we have to think about computers, laptops, beamers, broadband connections, virtual platforms and interactive whiteboards. Comparing the two perspectives we can immediately deduce that the cost is going to be much higher in the second case. Investment in ICT resources seems to be quite unequal depending on the region where a school is located. As I have already commented, ICT resources can have very positive results in the educational process taking into account more than just academic purposes. The future of
ICTs depends on multiple factors. Of course money is crucial but what the education community does is going to be important too.

It would be senseless to conceive blended learning in order to teach a foreign or second language and its culture without having access to the Internet. Many of the tools employed in the classroom, such as virtual networks, dictionaries, access to videos, etc. need an Internet connection in order to work. In the case of the tools employed out of the classroom as part of a blended learning approach it can be easily deduced that all of them will require an Internet connection in order to interact with the teacher via e-mails, social networks, etc. The fact of not having access to the Internet would transform entirely the implementation of ICT resources in and out of the classroom contexts. Of course some activities could be readapted, such as handing in materials through CDs instead of sending them via e-mail. Nonetheless, all these would imply much more time and money. Teachers and designers have to be realistic and know the group and the conditions where the teaching with ICT is going to be implemented beforehand.

The infrastructure is more important than the Internet. Without the Internet, we can still do some activities applying ICTs such as projecting a PowerPoint presentation. However, without the basic infrastructure ICTs cannot be used. The infrastructure will not be very sophisticated out of the classroom context. What Personal Computers include and the basic computer peripherals (speakers, printer, scanner and microphone) should be enough to carry out any ICT activity out of the classroom context. In the classroom context the situation changes substantially. If what a classroom could offer technologically was placed in a continuum, in one extreme it would be a room with a computer and a beamer and in the other extreme, a room with different computers, speakers, beamer, interactive whiteboard and a broadband connection to the Internet.

Lack of ICT skills is also an important shortcoming for both instructors and learners. Depending on the level of knowledge regarding technology different types of activities could be carried out. It is important to analyse
these levels in order to avoid problematic situations like teachers with great technological knowledge giving lessons to students without basic ICT notions or instructors that have no ICT skills but are required to use intricate tools while students lose their time. There has to be equilibrium among all the factors. Furthermore, all the agents implicated in the process should be aware of their own capacities and what they can or cannot do.

My last shortcoming here explained deals with the curriculum. If we analyse the multiple possibilities ICTs offer and the wide variety of things that can be taught, we may then face problems with the curriculum. We can contradict parts of it or directly we can take no consideration of some parts. Curricula have a long tradition very well established. ICT resources cannot be applied destroying a system that was established when the new technologies did not even exist. Instructors have to be careful when selecting what they are going to do in order to avoid problems and contradictions with the established curriculum.

2.5.1. False shortcomings

This section has been created specifically to talk about those ideas related to ICT tools in the teaching of language and culture that, at first sight, can be considered a shortcoming but in fact they are not. The technological world evolves sometimes as fast as the speed of light. That is why it is not very rare to read lots of information regarding the benefits, the advantages, how awful they are and the shortcomings of, at times, the same ICT tools. Reading and analysing different opinions9 to this respect I can state that one of the most repeated arguments regarding shortcomings and ICT is the amount of time an instructor has to consume in order to prepare everything. Another aspect is how attention to students with special needs is approached through an ICT perspective. I have considered these two arguments as false shortcomings. It is true that the instructor that follows an ICT approach has to carry out different tasks from those following a pure traditional face-to-face one. Some

9 Through the Internet (mainly) and in some sessions of the Innovation subject in this Master’s degree.
ICT resources really need the investigation of the teacher and class preparation may lead to a major investment of time. Nonetheless, we have to be aware of the facilities ICT tools offer. There are several resources that allow teachers to check the evolution of each student in a fast way. Online tests with multiple choices are normally self-corrective and the teacher does not have to do any extra effort checking everything. Other resources such as virtual classrooms or networks allow teachers to have a constant contact with students, publishing grades online (calculating final marks automatically), adding resources that can be checked by students once they are online, etc. With these arguments I do not want to transmit the idea that ICTs are even better than traditional face-to-face instruction because they work on their own and the teacher just has to follow what ICTs say. Teachers that work preparing their lessons using ICT resources also have to check exams, to pay attention to their students, etc. Nonetheless, the same ICT resources teachers are using can be great helpers to avoid an extra investment of time.

Another aspect that I consider a false shortcoming is that of the attention to students with special needs. People may think that an ICT approach may not take them into account since resources are designed for whole classes. In fact, ICT resources can allow the creation of specific materials and a constant contact with these students to see their evolution. This is positive since the teacher is able to see how each single student in his/her class evolves by checking the activities that they have been carrying out and then decide if some student needs more help than another. This is a very positive aspect of educational tools online since students’ control can be done in a fast way, contrarily to what at first sight can be thought.

3. Practical approach: the implementation of a Didactic Unit

3.1. The groundwork of the Didactic Unit

After having settled down some theoretical notions that support my conceptions for the present project, now I am going to develop the practical part. In order to do this, I have created a didactic unit (DU) to be implemented by means of traditional and ICT resources both in and out of the classroom contexts. The topic of the unit deals with constructions, buildings and
landmarks. I consider that this topic can be very useful in order to connect language and culture since architecture is considered a cultural symbol of a country. The fact that different buildings, landmarks and architects appear along the unit gives a chance for students to go beyond the grammar patterns and vocabulary units.

It has to be clear from the beginning that this DU is hypothetical since it has not been applied to a real audience\(^\text{10}\). This means that I have taken for granted some of the necessary circumstances that this DU could need for its proper implementation. These circumstances are the ideal conditions and the characteristics of the group. I would like to highlight that the fact that this DU is hypothetical does not imply it is not realistic. What has to be taken into account is the context in which it would fit well. For other contexts, then different changes should be applied.

3.2. The ideal conditions

I have called this section the \textit{ideal conditions} since I consider that the following conditions are relevant for a proper implementation of the DU. As this DU is hypothetical, it is necessary to take into account which the ideal circumstances would be and then try to accomplish the most of them in the moment of implementation (if possible). Some of these ideal conditions are:

- Infrastructure and the Internet both in and out of the classroom contexts:
  
  In order to perform activities through ICTs, it is necessary that both the \textit{in} and \textit{out} contexts have, at least, the minimum technical specifications. If not, this DU could not be fully implemented.

- ICT skills by both teachers and learners: The implementation of this DU would be senseless if any member from any of the \textit{teams} had a lack of ICT skills. Teachers could feel a constant insecurity in their explanations while learners could be more anxious about controlling ICT tools rather than learning the subject.

\(^{10}\) That would be part of the future research (check section 4.2 for more information).
- The role of motivation: Students with great levels of motivation are eager to pay more attention and be more centred in the learning process.

These three conditions would settle down a good environment to teach using ICT tools. Teachers should not expect these conditions to be met in all cases. There can be groups with highly motivated learners but with poor ICT skills. Another possibility is a group where both the teacher and learners have ICT skills and are motivated but it is the context of the school and its infrastructure the one that does not allow this modality to take place. This means that the present DU could be applied in those schools where minimum technological requirements were met. If not, its implementation should be modified according to the characteristics of the centre, the students, etc.

3.3. The group and the role of cooperation

I have designed the DU in order to be implemented in the context of a public school with a good technological infrastructure. Classes are equipped with interactive whiteboards and computers with broadband connections to the Internet. The level of the group is 3th of CSE and the number of students in the class is around twenty-five. These students also have a good level of ICT skills. In technical words, this implies knowing how to use basic computer software such as Microsoft Office and traditional web browsers such as Internet Explorer or Mozilla Firefox.

Students at this level have started the second cycle of the CSE. This new stage is the last one of their mandatory education. This hypothetical group of twenty-five students is also receptive with the cooperative work that is fostered in some of the activities.

3.4. ICT resources employed: the class blog\textsuperscript{11}

For the development of the DU both in and out of the classroom contexts I have planned to use different ICT resources. Following the blended learning

\textsuperscript{11} The blog mentioned here is operative. It is used for private and group classes. This blog can be checked at http://englaland.wordpress.com
approach, I do not suppress the use of traditional materials. Nonetheless, the relevance of ICT tools will be higher out of the classroom context. For the development of the lessons in the class, I have considered the use of interactive whiteboards in order to show images, presentations, play games or show video listening comprehension activities. In the out of the classroom context and taking into account hardware, a simple computer with the traditional peripherals and a connection to the Internet is enough. The main resource out of the classroom is going to be the class blog Englaland. I created this blog some years ago with the purpose of having a contact with my students of private and extracurricular English classes.

3.5 Development of the lessons and evaluation

In this section I am going to develop the implementation of each lesson. I am going to talk about factors such as what the lesson is about, what I expect from students, how ICT resources are applied in and out of the classroom contexts in each case and my justification to follow the procedures that are depicted here. The distribution I have followed is:

1. **Warming up:** it deals with cultural aspects and with the skill of listening.

2. **Vocabulary:** it deals with vocabulary related to the world of buildings and constructions. Some activities are related to the skills of reading and speaking.

3. **Grammar:** it deals with the construction of the passive voice and this is connected to culture by means of activities related to the skills of reading and speaking.

4. **Writing:** it deals with synonymy and a description of a building.

5. **Evaluation:** it deals with the testing of what has been learnt.
3.5.1. Warming up (emphasis on listening comprehension)\textsuperscript{12}

3.5.1.1. Description

This first lesson deals with the opening of the unit called \textit{Brick by Brick}. There are three activities in the lesson. The first one is about culture. Students have to determine what those pictures are illustrating, comment if they recognise any of the constructions and then they have to try to match each construction with the city where it is located. This activity is not limited to the English-speaking countries. The second activity follows the line of the previous one. It consists of a quiz with multiple choices where students have to choose the right city or country for each monument, building or landmark. Finally, the third activity is a listening comprehension. It consists of a multiple choice activity where students have to choose the right answer according to what they hear. There are also some concepts that have to be defined before doing the activity. This would be considered a pre-listening stage. These definitions are expected to help students understand the listening in a better way.

3.5.1.2. Expectations

Students are expected to work cooperatively, especially in activities one and two. They are supposed to answer these cultural activities forming small groups in the classroom, sharing information and deciding where all those constructions are located. In the listening comprehension part, students are expected to recognise at least four or five of the concepts from the pre-listening stage. The actual listening comprehension is supposed to be done individually to really see the level of comprehension students have.

3.5.1.3. Implementation of ICTs in the classroom context

The lessons depicted here are supposed to be part of a written material. Students are supposed to write their answers in their books or notebooks.

\textsuperscript{12} Check Appendix A in order to consult the sequence of lessons with all the activities proposed for the \textit{in} the classroom context.
Nonetheless, for the development of the class I have considered some ICT resources such as the interactive whiteboard or beamer. Taking into account the first and second activities, images of the constructions could be shown in order to help students. In fact, searching other images depicting the same constructions could be used as hints for students. Searching more images could be carried out checking sites such as Google Images or Flickr. In the case of the second activity, as there are no pictures, I consider that a good choice to apply ICTs would be again looking for pictures using the sites that I have mentioned above. I consider this option because in one of my classes one student did not know the category ‘St. Paul’s Cathedral’ but having a look to a picture he automatically recognised the building and knew it was in London. In the case of the listening activity, the interactive whiteboard or a beamer would be useful in order to transform the listening into a video listening. In fact, the listening comprehension that I provide in this section has been designed using a video from YouTube which could be perfectly shown in the class.

3.5.1.4. Implementation of ICTs out of the classroom context

As I said before, I have considered the use of my own teaching blog Englaland in order to exemplify the ICT tools that may be used out of the classroom context. The blog is a great tool in order to set homework, provide summaries of classes, links to other websites, etc. This is the case, for example, of the video listening. After doing it in the class with the rest of the partners, students could check the link in the blog. Thus, they could revisit the video whenever they want. Online games related to the topic of the first two activities could also be uploaded. In this case, one of the activities I have considered is a puzzle of the Westminster Palace.

Check Appendix B to see the implementation of virtual resources through screenshots as part of the activities and materials developed for the out of the classroom context.
3.5.1.5. Justification

The topic of landmarks and constructions opens a wide variety of possibilities for the development of the class through ICTs. I consider very positive the fact of using an interactive whiteboard or a beamer in the classroom context in order to show more pictures of the landmarks or give more contexts to the images. I carried out this activity in a private class in this way and it was very positive so I consider that applying it to a bigger group could be even better, especially regarding the cooperation among students. I also think that puzzle games can be fun since students see those types of activities more as pastimes than as real activities. They are learning without noticing it, which is very linked to our methodological foundation. I am aware of the multiple possibilities ICTs offer both in and out of the classroom contexts and I am conscious that this lesson could be implemented in very different ways as are the others but I consider that the one explained here could have positive results.

3.5.2. Vocabulary (emphasis on reading and speaking)

3.5.2.1. Description

The vocabulary section is about different types of buildings, their parts and the materials employed in order to build them. There are four activities in this second lesson. Activities one and two put into practice new lexical units through matching words with images and through fill in the gaps activities. In addition, activity two is also a reading about the Empire State Building in New York City. Activity three consists of a dialogue. Students have to read it and answer some questions. Finally, activity four deals with a speaking that puts into practice specific formulae on how to get to different places by constructing a dialogue between partners. In this lesson, then, different skills are combined.
3.5.2.2. Expectations

Students are expected to learn new vocabulary items by relating them to images and at the same time use these images as an aid. Cooperative work can be implemented for the realisation of some of the activities such as one and two. Students are expected to be able to solve activity three on their own. Cooperative work is obligatory for activity four since the skill practised is speaking. Students are expected to work with partners in order to practise the patterns given in the activity. Students are also expected to be familiar with the formulae employed when giving instructions on how getting to a place.

3.5.2.3. Implementation of ICTs in the classroom context

As in the warming up lesson, the use of an interactive whiteboard or beamer would be positive since students could go beyond from what they see in their books. One possible activity could be a PowerPoint presentation with images related to activity one. Students could determine in a loud voice what they are seeing. In order to carry out the second activity, it would be interesting to use the interactive whiteboard. Some students could participate actively using the specific digital pens to write each answer in the proper gap. For the reading and speaking activities the interactive whiteboard or the beamer could be employed for different purposes. In the case of the reading, for example, the answers for the questions about the text could be shown when checking the activity as an aid for students. In the case of the speaking, more expressions than the ones appearing in the written material could be shown in the interactive whiteboard or beamer. Students would have then a wider repertoire of formulae to be used in their speaking activities.

3.5.2.4. Implementation of ICTs out of the classroom context

New activities and materials dealing with the topic could be uploaded to the blog. One possible activity that could be interesting is the creation of word clouds. They can be a great opportunity to put into practice the new lexical items learnt in the classroom context. In order to build them, there is a
specific ICT tool called Wordle. Students could create a word cloud checking web pages and taking into account the new vocabulary. Later, in the classroom context, some students could show their creations. I also consider that multiple choice activities could be useful as consolidators and the fact of doing them online would be a good way to practise from home. Finally, the inclusion of more texts in order to foster reading comprehension with students writing the answers for the proposed questions using the blog’s commentaries section would be also positive since both reading comprehension and writing would be taken into consideration.

3.5.2.5. Justification

Linking visual elements and lexical items through ICTs may affect learning in a positive way. I have experienced this myself. Having a look to different software created by publishers in order to learn languages, it can be clearly seen that they use lots of visual materials. The fact of using the interactive whiteboard or the beamer in order to show a presentation with images may arouse students’ interest and the class’s development can be then more dynamic. As this lesson has an emphasis on reading and speaking too, I consider very interesting the possibility of uploading to the blog extra texts to practise and materials to prepare speaking activities that could be performed later in class.

3.5.3. Grammar (emphasis on reading and speaking)

3.5.3.1. Description

The grammar section contains eight activities divided into two different lessons. The first one, which deals with the introduction of the passive voice, and the second, which continues with the topic extending it. The first activity is a graphic depiction of the necessary changes that occur in the sentence in order to create the passive voice. The second activity consists of the analysis of some sentences, comparing the active and passive structures and determining some rules. These first two activities are following an inductive approach since examples are given in order to complete the rules. As the
passive voice structure requires the use of the past participle of verbs, there is an extra practice section in order to refresh verbs, especially the irregular ones. The third activity consists of a fill in the gaps about the facts of the Chrysler Building in New York City. The passive of the verbs in the box is needed to complete each gap in each of the fact. Finally, the last activity developed for the first section is about error correction.

The second lesson starts with a classification of sentences. The passive voice in this second section is presented in all its forms and different tenses. This is the basis for the second activity which is about a combination of elements in order to create sentences. Activity three consists of a text with gaps about the British architect Norman Foster. The gaps have to be filled now with passives of every kind (past, present, interrogative, negative…). Finally, there is a speaking in order to close the lesson. The speaking consists of a role playing where some students perform the roles of an architect and others the roles of the owner of a plot.

3.5.3.2. Expectations

Students are expected to learn the passive structure through an inductive approach, analysing the examples provided and completing the rules. Students are also expected to work cooperatively in some of the activities, such as the one about the Chrysler building and, of course, the role playing. Once both lessons are finished, students are supposed to be able to recognise the patterns of the passive and how to create the past participle of typical irregular verbs.

3.5.3.3. Implementation of ICTs in the classroom context

Tools like an interactive whiteboard or beamer would be useful in order to carry out the explanations about the passive voice and talk about them. Different answers from the activities could be also shown on screen in order to help students understand everything in a better way. Also, a good way to practise the pattern would be solving online passive activities dividing students into two big groups in the class and carrying out a sort of game. Showing videos from sources like YouTube with an emphasis on the passive
voice would be also a good activity. Students could see the use of the passive voice in real contexts and situations.

### 3.5.3.4. Implementation of ICTs out of the classroom context

Multiple resources could be uploaded to the blog for students to practise. Some of these could be adding links to online activities for training themselves, questions to be answered, sentences to be transformed from active to passive, irregular verb charts to be completed, real situations where the passive voice would be employed, etc. Extra homework could also be uploaded. As I have explained in the previous two sections, the role of the blog is central for the development of the activities out of the classroom context. In the case of the grammar section, the use of the blog is crucial. Activities of all kinds could be concentrated in this ICT tool.

### 3.5.3.5. Justification

Grammar is usually the toughest part for students. It is not the same when students are learning new lexical items than when they are learning how to build a tense. My own experience as a teacher of private classes and some extra curricular lessons supports this idea. Then, that initial fear to grammar is what has to be fought. Approaching the topic through games in the class using online activities, as I expose above, could be a more interesting way than give different patterns and then a fill in the gaps activity. A combination of styles would be more successful. In my opinion, the use of real context is also vital for learning a language. The fact of having the same topic (constructions) interconnected at the same time in different skills makes students know different details about architecture along the unit. This is realistic, and this gives context since students will face the possibility of learning that *built* is the past participle of *build* and at the same time that the Chrysler Building is in Manhattan. I consider that if that works with culture, it could also work positively with grammar. Particularly, I do not like to learn through isolated chunks of language. Watching videos, reading texts and playing games where
the patterns, in this case the passive voice, are employed will give an overall vision of what is being treated, fostering then the acquisition of knowledge.

3.5.4. Writing

3.5.4.1. Description

The writing section deals with a description of a building and with synonymy. This section has five activities. The first one presents the structure of the description of a building. There are some questions that have to be matched to the structure in order to determine in which paragraph these questions would be answered. Activity two is the exemplification of the structure explained in the previous activity. There is a text about the White House with scrambled paragraphs. The paragraphs have to be reordered and then the questions from activity one have to be answered. These two first activities deal with the structure and how to write the description. Activities three and four deal with synonymy. Activity three is a multiple choice where context is vital to get the meaning. The topic of construction and buildings is kept all the time. Activity four consists of the practical implementation of what has been dealt in the previous activity. The underlined adjectives have to be substituted by more interesting synonyms. The last activity is the actual writing of a description of a place.

3.5.4.2. Expectations

Students are expected to learn the proper structure of the writing through the first activities. As this is the last skill before the evaluation, students are also expected to apply what they have already learnt during previous sessions. Both structure and synonymy are expected to be followed and used in the actual writing. Copying directly from the given text, avoiding the use of some of the synonyms presented and not following the structure are factors not expected. Some of the activities can be done cooperatively, especially the first two ones. Students would be expected to decide in small groups the proper order of the elements in the writing, the organisation of the paragraphs and the
answers for the questions. The actual writing is expected to be done individually and without using ICT tools.

3.5.4.3. Implementation of ICTs in the classroom context

As in previous skills, in order to carry out the initial explanations of the writing an interactive whiteboard or a beamer could be used. Again I follow the position of seeing on screen what is being done. For this skill, nevertheless, I consider that ICTs in the classroom context could be more in the shadow. I do not think the situation with the writing is similar to the one, for example, of the warming up. Working in small groups treating cultural topics where pictures can be very relevant is not the same than working with textual structures. That is why I consider more useful the use of ICTs in the warming up than in the writing. The interactive whiteboard could be used, for example, to show the answers of the questions once students had finished with activities one and two.

3.5.4.4. Implementation of ICTs out of the classroom context

Contrarily to what I said in the previous section, I consider that the skill of writing and the use of ICTs out of the classroom context have a close connection. If it is taken into account that the ICT tool that I am using all the time out of the classroom context is a blog, then the connection between writing and this technology is unbreakable. It is undeniable that major interaction carried out in blogs comes in the written form. In order to take benefit from this, some activities can be planned. In this case, no extra ICT tools are needed. The blog would be enough to plan a cooperative writing. The teacher could upload a task as a new post. The picture of a building to be described would be a good choice for the topic being treated. Students could then do their writings as comments to the main post.
3.5.4.5. Justification

Dealing with the skill of writing in an ICT tool where communication is carried out through written interaction is great. Then, what has to be done is taking benefit from that. I consider that the cooperative writing as a practice out of the classroom context is interesting and positive since students sharpen their style when what they are writing is going to be continued / read by other partners or teachers. With this I am not saying that students make mistakes intentionally or that this is like a way of pressure. I applied something similar to this with two students in my private classes. Although in the end it was more like a communication between pen pals, it was a great opportunity to practise writing in a natural and realistic way. I consider that nowadays students have to be prepared to face situations like these. Who knows if in the future they have to write an e-mail in English?

3.5.5. Evaluation and the role of ICTs

General assessment of the acquisition of knowledge would be carried by means of:

- A general written test covering different skills. (30%)
- Interaction in the blog: since all the activities are available in the blog, it would be a great tool to evaluate students’ participation and contributions. Furthermore, it would be a great chance to see students’ evolution. (50%)
- Attitudes and extra work. (20%)

This division gives more relevance to the interaction in the blog rather than to the exam. I consider this since the exam just shows what the student performed in one single day at one specific moment. The blog, on the contrary, depicts all the contributions carried out along one term, for example. Analysing that wider parameter, teachers would get a more realistic vision of students’ aptitudes and evolution. There is also a percentage kept for the attitudes and extra work. Attitudes go beyond the fact of having a good behaviour. This is more related to be responsible of what has to be done.
For me, the most remarkable and positive connection between evaluation and ICTs is the fact that they allow the teacher to see beyond the simple test and really see the inconsistencies of the system. If a student has a good interaction through the blog and fails the exam, the teacher then can determine that something wrong occurred. With the traditional approach, if a student fails the exam that automatically means that he/she has not studied or that he/she does not know anything. I defend this vision of the ICTs. I consider that all those tools that make the teacher see in a more realistic way what the students are able to do are welcome. With this I am not disavowing the validity of tests. I am just stating that, sometimes, they do not show what students really know and the potential they have.

3.6. Cross-cultural activity: International Speaking

3.6.1. Foundation

This section has been created taking into account one experience that I had in a private class some time ago. I have called this section cross-cultural activity because the purpose is to connect two different cultural contexts which in this case are Spain and an English-speaking country. Thanks to a friend living in Oregon (USA) I could perform a cultural video speaking session via Skype. It was an interesting experience. I consider that it could be extrapolated (always taking into account some conditions) to a more formal class with more students participating in the project.

3.6.2. Conditions and implementation

My experiment with the Skype software had only three subjects: My student, my American friend and I. I am aware of the fact that it would be quite difficult to do something of these characteristics in a real group made up of twenty-five students. Nonetheless, some conditions could be taken into account. For example, this type of activity could be carried out in a major cultural event, like the cultural week of the school or something of those characteristics. Technical infrastructure would be necessary too. In order to avoid messes and problems, I think that the best option would be breaking the
class in small groups, as if it was another cooperative activity. Then each small group, with five or six members, could prepare some questions about culture or interests on the English world. The day of the international call, each group could go to an adapted room with a webcam (for video calling) or just a microphone. Doing it in this way would be more organised.

Regarding the other side, in my case there was just my friend from the US but it would be very interesting if a parallel group like the one formed in Spain could operate in one English-speaking country with teachers being in contact and being able to prepare everything through ICTs. If this could really happen, then I consider that the international speaking could be very successful since everything would be more organised. Small groups could be also formed in the foreign country and then the cultural exchange could be carried out in groups of ten or twelve students (5-6 from each country). My experience with my American friend and with my student was really great and I think that we could take benefit of those ICT tools, such as Skype, that are free and can open so many doors for the future of education.

4. Conclusions and future research
   4.1. Conclusions

   Education cannot be considered a fixed area of study. In this sense, language and education can be two connected terms since both evolve as life goes on. In this project I have analysed how this evolution has made an impact in the area of education. I have provided a model based on the use of new technologies applied to the teaching of language and culture. I have based my views on different authors and models like Krashen and his Monitor Model. I have also reinforced and defended the idea of a blended learning approach, using traditional and new instruction. My emphasis in the investigation has been given to the Information and Communication Technologies and how they can be used in and out of the classroom contexts. I have also illustrated my theoretical assumptions with the implementation of a hypothetical Didactic Unit talking about how each skill could be applied in and out of the classroom contexts using technology. Finally, I provide what in my opinion are the next steps to follow in this line of investigation. The
4.2. Future research

In this paper I have presented a theoretical approximation of what could be implemented in a real classroom. I have based the development in my own experience with private and extracurricular classes and the contact I could have with ICTs during my Practicum period. The teaching environment is not the same in all the cases. That is why more investigation in this line should be followed by creating new didactic units which took into account ICTs in and out of the classroom contexts. Furthermore, previous studies of the centre, the group and the context would be needed. The hypothetical explanation that I propose here would be valid for a group with the specified characteristics. For the real implementation in other groups, these previous studies would permit specific modifications, adaptations and changes if necessary. This could also pave the way to the development and screening of virtual materials specifically designed to be used in or out of the classroom context. Another factor to be investigated in the future would be how cultural aspects are acquired following this system with ICTs.

What is clear is that talking about the topic of technology implies a constant sense of evolution and, sometimes, immediacy. In my opinion, the key is to find the equilibrium between the old and the new and directly discard the negative elements to warrantee a good teaching and learning environment. This can be an arduous task but I consider it crucial in order to achieve success for both teachers and learners. Much is yet to come and that is why the education community has to be flexible and consistent with the times avoiding, that way, to be converted into something obsolete.

4.2.1. New paradigm: M-learning

Sometimes I think that technology evolves so fast that when we learn to use an ICT tool and find it very positive, then a newer one is created and we have to start from the beginning. That is not only limited for teaching
environments but for life in general. Following the footsteps of my project, I am going to close this paper talking about a quite new and revolutionary paradigm in the education world. This new tool to be used out of the classroom context is called M-learning which means Mobile learning. In an era where almost every single person has access to mobile phones, smartphones, tablets, iPods, digital books and a long etcetera, learning on the way has gained a great leadership. This leadership is especially appreciable in those areas where carrying these devices is very common or where different approaches of training and learning are required. One of the countries where m-learning is relevant is Japan. People typically study materials in their portable devices while travelling by train. In addition, the University of Birmingham has a department of m-learning where different experiments are carried out. Different activities have been tested, such as teaching language through the SMS service. I am not sure to what extent this could be positive or not but in an investigation carried out in Japan\textsuperscript{14}, forty-four Japanese students were e-mailed English vocabulary lessons to their mobile phones at timed intervals. The results and later comparisons demonstrated that these forty-four students had learnt more than those studying on the Internet or using written materials.

What is clear is that more investigation is required in the field but I think that it cannot be denied the fact that it is a very interesting way of transmitting knowledge that will have more relevance in the future.

\textsuperscript{14} This project was one of the Mobile CALL Projects based in Nagoya (Japan). Investigators were interested in projects dealing with language learning and mobile platforms.
5. References


For the development of the lessons I have consulted the books *English Alive* 3 and *Exchange 3* published by Oxford University Press.
APPENDICES
APPENDIX A

Sequence of lessons

FIRST LESSON: WARMING UP

1 Look at these pictures. What are they depicting? Do you recognise any of these buildings? What can you say about them? Try to match each construction with the city where it is located.

Athens San Francisco Valencia London Chicago Toronto Dubai Madrid New York
## 2 Brick by brick quiz. Where is...?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Buckingham Palace</th>
<th>L’Hemisfèric</th>
<th>St. Paul’s Cathedral</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dublin</td>
<td>Valencia</td>
<td>New York</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>London</td>
<td>Barcelona</td>
<td>Phoenix</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Berlin</td>
<td>Lleida</td>
<td>London</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Great Wall</td>
<td>Chrysler Building</td>
<td>Taipei 101</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>China</td>
<td>Madrid</td>
<td>Taiwan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canada</td>
<td>New York</td>
<td>Vancouver</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malaysia</td>
<td>London</td>
<td>Lisbon</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Have you heard anything about these constructions?

## 3 Listening. You are going to listen to a man talking about the Petronas twin towers in Malaysia. Answer the following questions.

### Before listening... What do they mean...?

- Architect
- Twin
- Arabesque
- Highest
- Heritage
- Stories
- Gateway

1. Petronas towers were the world’s highest buildings for...
   - a) 4 years  
   - b) 10 years 
   - c) 6 years  
   - d) 25 years

2. The twin towers were designed by architect...
   - a) Cesar Pelli  
   - b) Norman Foster 
   - c) William Pereira  
   - d) Frank Lloyd Wright

3. The towers are...
   - a) A potent symbol of Malaysian achievement. 

4. The towers are connected thanks to a...
   - a) 60 meter sky bridge. 
   - b) 58 meter sky bridge.
SECOND LESSON: VOCABULARY

1 Match words from the word web with pictures.

Types of Building
- 1. Block of flats
- 2. Tower
- 3. Office building

Parts of Building
- 4. Dome
- 5. Stairs
- 6. First storey

Materials
- 7. Concrete
- 8. Steel
- 9. Earth

2 Complete each text with the words in the box.

shopping centre - ground floor - glass - skyscraper - lift - bricks

The Empire State Building was built in 1931. Nowadays, it is one of the most famous ______________ of the world. It is located in New York City. As a tourist, you can visit the top of the building using two different ways: the ______________, which goes up very quickly from the __________ __________, or the stairs, with more than 1500 steps. So if you want to use the stairs you will need to be on fit!

Today I was walking on the street when I saw an accident. A car crashed against one of the walls of the ______________ ______________. There was a lot of __________ around the car because of the broken windows and some __________ fell down from the wall. It was a very scary moment but, fortunately, nobody was hurt and everything ended well.
3 Read the dialogue and answer the questions.

Marta: Hello Eva, how are you?
Eva: Hi Marta. Fine, thanks, and you?
Marta: Fine. How is your first day in our school? Do you like it?
Eva: Yes! It is different, but I really like it.
Marta: Oh! I’m really happy for you! Listen, some friends are coming to my house after school. We are going to do our homework together. Do you want to come?
Eva: Sure! But I don’t know where your house is. Can you explain it to me, please?
Marta: Yes! Can you see that office building with a lot of glass windows next to the TV tower?
Eva: Yes, my father works there.
Marta: Perfect, you just have to turn left. I live in the block of flats made of concrete. You will see it immediately. My flat is on the second storey. It is number 3.
Eva: Ok. I’ll be there. Thank you very much!
Marta: You’re welcome, see you!

a. Does Eva like her new school?
b. What is Marta going to do after school?
c. Where does Eva’s father work? Is it near of Marta’s house?
d. Which kind of building is Marta’s?
e. In which storey is Marta’s house?

4 Imagine there is a new student at your class. Prepare a dialogue inviting him/her to your house and explaining him/her how to arrive there.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Useful expressions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Can you tell / explain me...?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turn left /right</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Walk straight / through...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Go up / down the steps</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
THIRD LESSON: GRAMMAR  The passive

1 Look at this drawing and choose the best alternative.

John visits the Empire State Building

The Empire State Building is visited by John

The subject of an active sentence becomes the object of a passive sentence.

- In an active sentence, the verb affects the object / subject
- In a passive sentence, the verb affects the object / subject

2 Look at these sentences and complete the gaps.

a) Alysson and David bought a car.
b) A car was bought by Alysson and David.
c) Ryan and Jane use computers.
d) Computers are used by Ryan and Jane.

We form the passive with a form of + past
We use to specify the agent of the action. The agent can appear in the sentence if we want to show the doer of an action, if not, we can eliminate it.

Extra practice Write the correct form of the verbs in each case.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Infinitive</th>
<th>Past Simple</th>
<th>Past Participle</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Be</td>
<td>Understood</td>
<td>Written</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drink</td>
<td>Play</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Walk</td>
<td></td>
<td>Avoided</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eat</td>
<td>Spent</td>
<td>Burnt</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3 Complete the sentences with the passive forms of these verbs.

Build Surpass Design Choose Add Inaugurate Use

Chrysler Building Facts

1. The Chrysler Building __________ by William van Allen.
2. It __________ from 1929 to 1930.
3. Stainless steel __________ on the construction of the cuspid.
4. The artistic style that __________ for the building is called Art Deco.
5. The building __________ in the year 1930.
6. Chrysler building’s spire __________ when people thought the building was finished. The spire allowed the Chrysler to be the tallest building in the world.
7. The Chrysler building __________ by the Empire State building in the following year.

4 The following sentences have some mistakes. Look for them and rewrite the sentences in a proper manner. All of the sentences have at least one mistake and all of them are passive.

a) One Canada Square were build by Norman Foster.

____________________________________________________________

b) Melià-Congressos hotel are considered the tall building in Valencia.

____________________________________________________________


____________________________________________________________
FOURTH LESSON: GRAMMAR The passive (II)

1 Compare the following sentences and classify them following these categories as in the example:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Active</th>
<th>Passive</th>
<th>Affirmative</th>
<th>Negative</th>
<th>Interrogative</th>
<th>Present</th>
<th>Past</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

a) Pei C. Freed designed the Los Angeles US Bank Tower

b) Was the Los Angeles US Bank Tower designed by Pei C. Freed?

c) Builders use metal in the construction of buildings.

d) Pei C. Freed didn't design the Los Angeles US Bank Tower

e) Is metal used in the construction of buildings?

f) The Los Angeles US Bank Tower was designed by Pei C. Freed

g) Did Pei C. Freed design the Los Angeles US Bank Tower?

h) The Los Angeles US Bank Tower wasn't designed by Pei C. Freed

i) Metal isn't used in the construction of buildings

2 Match and choose the necessary elements in these boxes in order to create passive sentences. Multiple combinations are possible. You need to create at least two sentences per category.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Affirmative</th>
<th>Negative</th>
<th>Interrogative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Combination of the above elements

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Affirmative</th>
<th>Negative</th>
<th>Interrogative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Active   Passive   Affirmative   Negative   Interrogative   Present   Past
Complete the gaps in this text about Sir Norman Foster. Present and past passives are needed.

Where was Norman Foster born?
Norman Robert Foster was born in Manchester, in 1935.

How many constructions in Spain ________ by Foster?
There are four constructions in Spain. The first one is The Collserola tower. It _________ in Barcelona in 1992. In 1995, it __________ the construction of the Tube entrances in the city of Bilbao. These are known as the Fosteritos. His third project in Spain, the Valencia Congress Centre ________ ________ for different purposes in the city such as conferences and students’ graduation acts. Last but not least, one of the four towers in the Cuatro Torres Business Area in Madrid __________ by him too.

________ the Reichstag and St. Mary Axe also ________ by him?
Yes. Many of the projects that __________ by some cities have been designed by Foster, including St. Mary Axe in London and the renewal of the Reichstag in Berlin.

Although Petronas Towers ________ by him but César Pelli, many people think Foster built them.

Many of Foster’s constructions ________ each year.

Work in teams in order to act out these roles.

ARCHITECTS
You want to buy an enormous skyscraper in the plot. It will be very high, with great quality. You have to try to convince the owners of the plot to allow you apply your designs. Use the vocabulary practiced in the unit and the passive whenever possible.

OWNERS OF A PLOT
You don’t want the architects to apply their designs in your plot. Try to persuade them to change their plans since you hate skyscrapers. Use the vocabulary practiced in the unit and the passive structure whenever possible.
FIFTH LESSON: WRITING

1 Look at the structure of a building description. Which questions are answered in each paragraph?

A DESCRIPTION OF A BUILDING

1. General Information
   a. When and where was it built?
   b. What do you like about it?
   c. What is it made of?

2. Description
   d. What is it like on/from the inside?
   e. Do you know the building?

3. Personal Opinion
   f. Who designed it?
   g. What is it like from the outside?

2 Taking into account the structure presented in exercise 1, put the paragraphs of the text below in the correct order.

....... The building is made of concrete and stone. Then it was painted with white materials. From the outside, it seems a big residential house. The inside has a lot of rooms where the president and his family live and work.

....... The White House is situated in Pennsylvania Avenue in Washington DC. It was designed by James Hoban and it was built between 1792 and 1800. George Washington, the first president of the United States died before the White House was finished. Since John Adams, his successor, all the presidents have lived here.

....... I have visited the White House once and it was spectacular. I love the colour, the windows and the columns of the front door and the gardens that are in the back.
3 Choose the best synonym for each word in blue.

1. The Guggenheim museum is a strange building.
   a. bizarre  b. colourful

2. The Taj Majal is a nice building
   a. gigantic  b. beautiful

3. The Empire State Building is a tall structure.
   a. towering  b. interesting

4. The Tate Modern is a big art gallery.
   a. massive  b. modern day

5. The view from the London Eye is good.
   a. impressive  b. bizarre

6. The Eiffel Tower is a very interesting attraction.
   a. gigantic  b. fascinating

4 Rewrite the text. Replace the underlined adjectives with more interesting synonyms.

   The lovely Sagrada Família is a big Roman Catholic church. It was designed by the good architect, Antoni Gaudí. It has eighteen nice spindle-shaped towers. The Sagrada Família isn’t finished yet, but it’s still a very interesting attraction. Millions of people visit it every year.

Work in pairs: writing task

5 Imagine that you work for a magazine about tourism. Write a description of a building and add some photos.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hints</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Follow the structure presented before.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Try to answer all the questions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use interesting adjectives and synonyms</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX B

Implementation of ICTs

Figure 1.
Depiction of the title section of the blog Englaland.
http://englaland.wordpress.com

Figure 2.
Exemplification of the implementation of ICTs out of the classroom context for the Warming up session with the link to the listening and the Westminster Palace puzzle.
Figure 3.
Depiction of a word cloud and the requirement for students to create their version and practise with vocabulary.

Figure 4.
Exemplification of one item from the multiple choice activity dealing with vocabulary.

Figure 5.
Depiction of a word cloud and the requirement for students to create their version and practise with vocabulary.

Figures 6 & 7.
Depiction of extra ICT materials related to the grammar topic (the passive voice).
Dear students,

Here you have the picture of the building you have to describe. Your answers must be written as comments to this post. Remember what we have learnt in class in order to describe the building. We are going to learn all together!

*The Transamerica Pyramid, San Francisco (USA)*

![Image of Transamerica Pyramid](image)

**Figure 8.**
*Capture of the writing activity that has to be solved by commenting the post in the blog.*

![Image of video call using Skype](image)

**Figure 9.**
*An example of a video calling using Skype.*
## APPENDIX C

### List of ICT tools

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ICTs</th>
<th>Brief explanation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Google</td>
<td>It is an American multinational corporation which provides Internet-related products and services. Its first service was an Internet search engine that is widely used nowadays.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Facebook</td>
<td>It is the most popular social networking site founded in 2004 by Mark Zuckerberg. The site is free and it allows people to be in contact by sending invitations and becoming friends. Facebook allows its users to send private messages, share photographs and videos and much more.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>YouTube</td>
<td>It is a very popular video sharing web site that lets anyone upload short videos for private or public viewing. Google is its owner.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interactive</td>
<td>A white surface that can be written on in meetings, classes, etc. and which can display the contents of a computer screen.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>whiteboard</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beamer</td>
<td>A data projector.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Microsoft</td>
<td>A suite of products developed by Microsoft Corporation. It includes Word, Excel, Access, Publisher, PowerPoint and Outlook. This software is widely used in the western world.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Office</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internet</td>
<td>It is Microsoft’s web browser. It is included in Windows OS since the 1998 version. It is the most widely used browser in desktop computers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Explorer</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mozilla</td>
<td>It is a web browser. It is part of the open-source Mozilla project. It is the most popular web browser after Internet Explorer. As it is open-source software it’s completely free.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Firefox</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Class Blog (Wordpress)</strong></td>
<td>It is a very popular blog service from Automatic Inc. that lets anyone write and publish a blog. <em>Englaland</em>, the class blog, was created using this blog platform. The creation of a blog in Wordpress is free.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Google Images</strong></td>
<td>It is a search service created by Google. It allows users to search the web for image content.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Flickr</strong></td>
<td>It is the leading photograph sharing site. Flickr users can download photographs and then show them to other users. Photographs can be tagged and commentaries added.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>PowerPoint</strong></td>
<td>One of the tools in Microsoft Office. It is a presentation graphics programme from Microsoft for Windows and Mac. It is the most recognisable software employed in academic presentations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Wordle</strong></td>
<td>It is a word cloud generator web site. Clouds can be created by adding bunches of text or a web site route.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Skype</strong></td>
<td>It is an Internet telephone and video calling service. All computer-to-computer calls or video calls between its users are free. Calls to regular telephone service are also available (with costs).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Smart Phone</strong></td>
<td>It is a mobile phone with built-in applications and Internet access. Smart phones can provide voice service, text messaging, e-mail, web browsing, photographs, videos and even video calling.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Tablet</strong></td>
<td>It is a general-purpose computer contained in a single panel. Its most remarkable characteristic is the use of a touch screen as the input device. One of the most famous tablets nowadays is the Apple iPad.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>iPod</strong></td>
<td>A family of extremely popular digital media players from Apple. It has become so famous that the term <em>iPod</em> is sometimes used to refer to any Mp3 player no matter which brand developed it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>E-reader (Digital book)</strong></td>
<td>An e-book reader is similar to a tablet computer. The main advantage of e-book readers are better readability of their...</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
screens especially in bright sunlight and longer battery life. Some e-readers use e-ink, which gives a more paper-like appearance to electronic texts while eyes are more protected. One of the most famous e-readers is the *Kindle* sold by Amazon.

All the definitions from Appendix C have been taken from the *Oxford Dictionary of the Internet Online*, the *Computer Desktop Encyclopedia Online*, *Cambridge Dictionaries Online* and my own technological experience with these ICT tools.