

**UNIVERSIDAD DE QUINTANA ROO**

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**División de Ciencias Políticas y Humanidades**

**CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT FOR TEACHING EFL FOR  
CHILDREN USING A CONTENT BASED APPROACH:**

**MY EXPERIENCE AS A TEACHER IN CENTRO  
PEDAGOGICO INFANTIL IN CHETUMAL**

**TRABAJO MONOGRÁFICO**

**En la modalidad de experiencia laboral**

**Para obtener el grado de  
Licenciada en Lengua Inglesa**

**Presenta**

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**Chetumal, Quintana Roo, México, marzo de 2013.**



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División de Ciencias Políticas y Humanidades

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LICENCIADA EN LENGUA INGLESA

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## **Chapter I: Introduction**

### **1.1. Background**

I have always loved to work with children. Therefore I had decided to work as an English teacher in a primary school; a decision that I made while I was studying my first semesters in the English major at the University of Quintana Roo. After finishing all my courses, I felt that I was ready to achieve my goal: teaching children.

When I finished my English major, I started working in a primary school where I did not have any benefits and medical attention as an employee. Being aware of my condition, because I was pregnant; I had to think carefully about what my future was going to be. An old friend told me that in Centro Pedagógico Infantil (CEPI), a private school where he was working, the opportunity to work as an English teacher in a primary school existed. Nevertheless, I knew that it was difficult to hire me due to the fact that I was expecting; however, I decided to apply for the job and hope for the best.

The first day that I went to the Centro Pedagógico Infantil, I could notice that this private school offered classes to different levels: maternal, kindergarten, primary and secondary. I had the opportunity to talk with the English supervisor who told me that I had to prepare a microteaching session (it was like a normal class but in 10 minutes) and make a little presentation in front of the principal and her. I felt excited because of the opportunity.

I did the microteaching and three days later they called me to confirm an appointment. Among other things, in this appointment we talked about my benefits, the rules, the English program and the elementary grade that I was going to be in charge of. In order to prepare myself for this task, I began to learn more about CEPI. In that moment I was assigned to teach in first grade, and my students were about to be little children among 5 to 6 years old. Many of these children could not write and read because they had just graduated from kindergarten. I knew this was going to be a challenge.

One of the things that I was really amazed about is that this private primary school does not provide English as subject like Math or Spanish. There were classes in English such as Vocabulary and Math, Science, Reading and Spelling. In addition, the English classes were taught in English and teachers encourage and motivate their students to speak in English. As a graduated student with very little experience and having previously taught in a public school I had the certainty that many challenges were about to come and I needed to learn from them.

## **1.2. Focus**

This paper will focus on my experience about and learning from classroom management for children studying in CEPI. I think it is important to mention that there are many things that we need to consider in order to have a successful class with children; moreover, it can be more energy-consuming and stressful if you are not well-prepared to teach kids. The English language major teaches us how to teach our students English; it gives us strategies and techniques to teach our students of a general English class but children are a really different story.

There are many things that we need to know in order to control our English class and to be the teacher, the leader, the guide. During the development of this monographic paper, the subject of classroom management will be discussed because it is a primary concern in providing English Classes. Some of the topics related to classroom management that will be considered are discipline, behavior, group control, motivation and the treatment of unexpected situations. As it may be assumed, the comprehension of such a discipline is a major task for anybody who wants to improve his/her skills in English language teaching. For the previous reason, in this paper I want to share my personal experience as an English teacher with students from elementary school who attend a private institution.

It is important to mention that there is no intention to minimize the importance of the labor done by the public institutions in matters of education. This paper will show how both types of institutions have different methods of education and focus on how the teaching approach offered by CEPI is a good option to consider in public education. In addition, I attempt to reduce the gap between the English major classes and teaching English in real life. Thus, by sharing my experience with English students who are taking the English major and do not have the opportunity to teach or know



how teaching is like with real students will be not only rewarding but important for their learning. Finally, I consider important to mention that every student is different and learns differently; for that reason I will try to strengthen this idea along my professional experience written in this monographic paper.

### **1.3 Rationale**

I decided to share my experience through this monographic paper due to the fact that I want to improve my own practice, my strategies and techniques regarding teaching English as a Foreign Language. I consider that by doing this paper I can generate my own reflection about what I am doing good within my classes and what areas I could improve. This will encourage me to continue teaching and improving myself in a continuum.

In the same sense this monograph will focus on my own experience of dealing with classroommanagement in a context where kids are the main actors. Classroom management will include the circumstances and conflicts that a teacher faces every day in a classroom such as lesson planning, classroom guidance, material design, motivation, solving unexpected situations with students, involving parents and working with administrative staff. My objective and the reason why I consider doing a paper of this nature is important is because I pretend English Language major studentsat the University of Quintana Roo realize that there is something more to learn than just English. Working with children as an English teacher involves love, empathy, responsibility, patience and knowledge.

Also, I consider that it is important for the University of Quintana Roo to listen to the voice of the graduated students who are working in the area. A vision of a graduated student can help the university to have a vision of what it is expected from an English teacher working in an institution such as CEPI. Tools and strategies, techniques and methods can be provided to the under-graduated so they can be more prepared to deal with situations similar to mine. Working with kids is challenging and, despite all the knowledge that I acquired and learned from my classes, I still consider that there is a lot to learn. Somehow I trust that my experience will provide a piece of knowledge to nurture those who read this monograph.

Finally, the fact that CEPI includes a Content-Based Language program can be useful for students. It is a different approach to teaching that demands knowledge not just about the language but about transmitting information about other subjects. It is important to know how methods studied in the major are developed in real contexts. I hope that this monograph can help students, teachers, the major and me.

## **1.4 Objectives**

### **Main Objective**

The purpose of this paper is sharing with the readers my experience about how much I have learned and how important classroom management is when working with kids in a content-based teaching environment, in this case, Centro Pedagógico Infantil of Chetumal.

### **Specific Objectives**

The specific objectives of this monograph are:

1. To describe the Content Based Teaching approach used in CEPI.
2. To present and analyze the diverse subjects taught in CEPI as well as providing a view of the teaching challenges for both teacher and students that these subjects include.
3. To describe the impact of university preparation in my teaching practice as a graduated student.

To provide a reflection of my own practice in CEPI that will include achievements, challenges faced and general learning from the experience.

## **Chapter II: CONTEXT**

### **2.1 CEPI: Centro Pedagógico Infantil**

#### **2.1.1 History**

Centro Pedagógico Infantil (CEPI) is a private school located in the city of Chetumal. In the early 1989 the first class in this institution was provided to 7 children. They were the first students who stayed in CEPI for years; its first generation. The classroom was a former party center called “The Little Castle” and was located at Revolution Avenue # 115 in the city of Chetumal, Quintana Roo. It was not a school with classrooms nor had the structure of a common educational institution. The only things available were spaces to teach, places for leisure time activities with the kids and bathrooms, it was enough for the 7 students who studied their kindergarten in this emerging school.

In 1994 the demand of students grew so the school was moved to a place in Adolfo López Mateos Avenue # 426. The Elementary program was successfully incorporated to CEPI and bilingual classes started. In order to accomplish the bilingual program CEPI managers looked for human resources trained for such task. There was an agreement between the University of Quintana Roo and CEPI where English Language students who wanted to undergo their social services could work in CEPI as teachers. By the time these students finish their English language major, could be hired as an official CEPI teacher. It was a great opportunity and a great agreement.

In 2008 and 2009 CEPI changed to a new building located in Alvaro Obregon Avenue almost outside the city borders. The new institute is bigger and its architecture provides spaces enough to succeed covering the actual number of students. In addition to the new building, the institution’s educational offer has increased from three to four levels: maternal, kindergarten, primary and secondary. Nowadays the school continues offering bilingual courses and its fame is spreading faster due to the approach to education they sell.

#### **2.1.2. School’s objectives**

The most important endeavor of the Centro Pedagógico Infantil is teaching with objectivity; even its slogan and philosophy of CEPI is 'Developing your competences'. For them, it is necessary to encourage students to learn and solve real life problems by means of using the previous knowledge learned in the classroom. In CEPI motivating students to be honorable and integral persons, able to understand, analyze, respect and stand different ideologies and thus, contribute to the society is an idea that is reflected in every single moment inside the classes. It is even reflected in its own mission:

*'Our mission is to give the children from Chetumal Quintana Roo an integral education and at the same time develop their conceptual, procedural, and attitudinal competences. In addition we provide them with harmony that will be reflected in their behavior, family and society.'*

### **2.1.3 Program**

CEPI works with an English program that involves 4 subjects meant to be taught in English for first and second grade of the primary level, and 5 for the third, fourth, fifth and sixth grade. The purpose is to prepare the students with a progressive immersion into the language while developing their procedural competences.

#### *1. First and second grade*

Children from first and second grade are between 5 to 7 years old. The English program has four subjects which are taught in English: Spelling, Sciences, Reading and Vocabulary. Students sing, dance, paint, draw, write and read in order to feel comfortable while learning English in the classroom. By offering them a safe, fun environment it is easier for them to learn and acquire all the competences designed for them in the program.

Once a week students take Lab classes where they use computers so they can practice what they have learned in class. In the lab, they practice previous contents learned in class using English games or some programs included in their books. Depending on the students, teachers decide what subject should be reworked. By doing this students can have practice, feedback and reinforcement of their competences.

## *2. Third to sixth grade.*

The program used in third grade to sixth grade includes five different subjects which are Spelling, Reading, Grammar, Science and Vocabulary. This program includes a subject called Grammar which is one of the most interesting for kids. Students love Grammar because of the book which is illustrated with fascinating pictures, easy exercises to practice with as well as having grammar explanations easy to understand. It is important to mention that grammar is first taught implicitly and then made explicitly by teacher's explanation.

With this we can notice two things: first, the syllabus of this school is closely designed for a content-based instruction and secondly, that in elementary level, CEPI tries to develop procedural competences at the same time they teach English to kids. This could sound complicated, and it is at the beginning of the practice; however, it provides you as a teacher with an understanding of how English is a tool to increase a competence. This will be described later on this paper.

This paper will focus only in students of the first grade. It is important to define that the Content Based Instruction is mainly reflected on the subject of Science due to the nature of the topics given to the students. The other subjects Spelling, Reading and Grammar are, in other words, English divided in three subjects; nevertheless, the design of the subjects are based on contents that are equivalent to those students study in the subjects taking in Spanish. Classes are not meant to be focused on grammar but to develop their knowledge (reading, writing, speaking, and listening) through diverse contents despite of the fact these contents cannot be classified within an area of knowledge such as Science.

### **2.1.4 Methodology for Teaching in CEPI**

The method is a tool that a teacher should never lose, it is like a guide and instructions used to provide the learning to students according to some specific aspects in the method selected. Richards & Renandya (2002) describe that for many beginner teachers it is important to have it clear about what method they should develop during their lessons.

The English methodology used in this institute is the Content Based Approach, because English is not just a class, there are many subjects being taught in the

foreign language (English): Science, Spelling, Vocabulary, Reading, and Grammar are some of the subjects taught in English. Apart from this, all the different lessons are trying to encourage the students to show evidence of their learning through small projects where skills obtained help them to achieve learning goals

Tena Díaz(2009) adds that a competence is the capacity to move all resources that are inside a person such as knowledge, virtues, attitude, experience, abilities, skills etc; for developing a project or an activity based in real life. Undoubtedly, nowadays education has suffered some changes; changes that have made an evolution in the teaching – learning process.

In case of CEPI using this approach in the English subjects is successful to achieve learning goals in the students; nevertheless, it is a challenge when designing classes.

### **2.1.5 Teaching Staff**

When we talk about a school we know that it involves materials and infrastructure, but the first thing that comes to mind is the professor who is going to be in charge of forming the students. Educators are commonly known as guides for achieving learning goals.

The *teacher* plays an important role in the children's learning but in particular they are the backbone of the school. It is because teachers are in charge of almost everything that makes the school move. A good relationship among them is helpful in order to get the school's objectives; therefore, the principal and the supervisor are completely necessary pieces in the development of the students learning and the teacher's practice; they also help the organization and well constructed working relationships among teachers.

In this private school there is a variety of teachers but the Primary level, where I have had most of my experience, it is as follows: but in Primary, where I got most of my experience working in, is composed by the following personnel.

- ❖ A principal who has the responsibility of checking and coordinating all the teachers and students, also he is the most important person in the school and his/her work demands the highest responsibility.

- ❖ An English supervisor who works checking and organizing all the activities and coordinating English teachers; also he analyzes the English lesson plans and gives the teachers suggestions, provides advices and even reprimands if necessary.
- ❖ Three teachers who teach all the subjects in the students' mother tongue such as Biology, Math, Spanish, Calligraphy etc;
- ❖ A teacher in charge of arts and music
- ❖ A teacher in charge of computer classes.
- ❖ A P.E (Physical Education) teacher.
- ❖ A teacher who provides a workshop of art and dancing.
- ❖ A teacher who verifies that values are learned (similar to a psychologist or social worker).
- ❖ Three teachers in charge of all the English subjects

CEPI, being a private school, has an owner who pays the teacher's salary and controls the institution's economy. It is possible to appreciate how is the personal divided and related (fig.1).

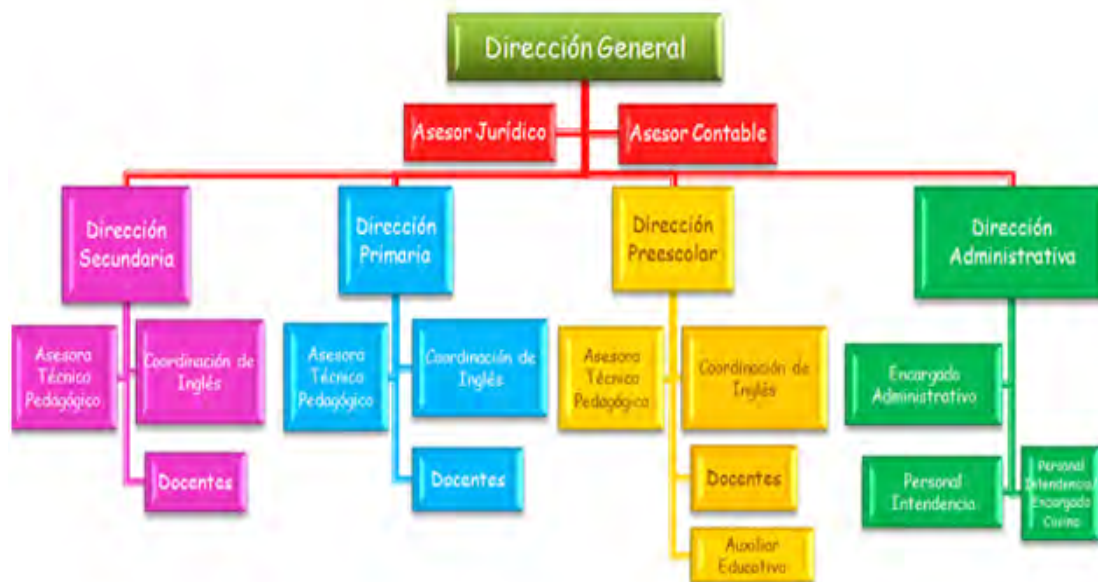


Fig. 1 CEPI's organigram

### 2.1.6 Evaluations

Evaluation is the evidence of the teaching–learning process; it is done to analyze if the students are learning the contents or improving their previous knowledge. Thus, evaluation is very important and meaningful in all the levels of education.

Evaluations in primary and secondary are every two months, students take an exam or project before the end of every second month of the course. They can take this exam or the teacher can take the decision of asking the students to make a presentation in the class. There are many subjects, so students have two weeks programmed to take examinations. The first week Spanish subjects are taken, but computer, music, and values classes are evaluated with a work or research projects. The second week English exams are taken through exams or projects such as experiments in science class or a short presentation about a specific topic during class.

In kindergarten and in pre-kindergarten the evaluation is based on observations, dialogues, and interviews, the psychomotor activity, expression and participation in class. The evaluation in all the levels of education is based on the evidence the student show about his skills, abilities, attitudes and meaningful participation in class because the exam gives a result but it is not the final grade. There are other points that will be taken in order to help student to pass the next grade.

As a teacher, the results of the evaluations help me to understand several things about my students. First, I can observe what their weak areas are to reinforce them after evaluation; secondly, whenever the students take a test in the form of a science project or a presentation I can see how their obtained knowledge is applied. Evaluations of this nature are positive for students according to my own experience; the fact students take these examinations constantly help them not to feel the normal anxiety of a test while the presentations or projects are close to what is looked for in educations nowadays.

On the other hand grades of all the subjects such as in English and in Spanish are written in the school report, but at the end of the year there is a school report which is



provided for the SEQ (Ministry of Education); in this school report only the subjects taught in the mother tongue are written because these are the ones The Ministry of Education (SEP) is concerned about and accepted for all the private and public schools in the state. The role of English classes then is an extra to increase the quality of the student's education.

## **Chapter III: Theoretical Framework**

### **3.1 Definition**

#### **3.1.1 Content Based Teaching**

In Content Based Teaching students learn a foreign language by approaching to contents where they can obtain linguistic knowledge. This approach is thought to be a more natural way of developing language ability and one that corresponds more to the way we originally learn our first language.

According to Lever & Striker (1997) Content Based foreign language in other hand, encourages students to learn a new language by playing real pieces of language-actually using that language as a real means of communication. Furthermore, the philosophy of Content Based Instruction (CBI) aims at empowering students to become independent learners and continue the learning process beyond the classroom. It is always useful to teach a foreign language involving the students in real life situations, where teachers are situated as guides and not as the main actors. Students feel the necessity of learning the foreign language by practicing, playing, repeating, talking, reading and following instructions.

Grabe & Stoller (n/d) Motivation, positive attribution and interest are critical factors which support students' success with challenging informational activities and which help them learn a complex skill. Grade & Stoller consider motivation and interest as important points to deal with in Content Based Teaching. They mention that students need of to succeed in the process of learning a foreign language.

Brewster (2004) defines Content- Based Language teaching as a version of bilingual education and subject-teaching which simultaneously teaches the language required for school learning and promotes thinking skills. Teachers teach different subjects in the foreign language taught; most of the time teachers look for an interesting topic,

and during the lesson they try to divide the class in groups or in pairs in order to make students feel comfortable in communicating in the foreign language. Moreover, teachers encourage students to think in English; it means that students must try not to translate the information that he wants to say, he should try to speak in the foreign language using familiar phrases and sentences used in class.

In addition, it is important to mention that during the lesson students are focused on learning about something. This could be anything that interests them from a serious science subject to their favorite pop star or even a topical news story or film. They learn about this subject using the language they are trying to learn, rather than their native language, as a tool for developing knowledge and so they develop their linguistic ability in the target language. This is thought to be a more natural way of developing language ability and one that corresponds more to the way we originally learn our first language (BBC, 2003).

Content Based Teaching in CEPI includes different subjects like science, vocabulary, spelling, etc. all these subjects are taught in the foreign language, thus students feel the necessity to communicate through the foreign language, and also they feel excited to try to communicate something in the language taught. Moreover students take their foreign language subjects as these where in their native language, even when they do not speak the foreign perfectly the foreign language.

### **3.1.2 Characteristics**

The following section of this paper will describe the most important features of the Content Based Approach.

One of the most important characteristics of the Content Based Approach is that students feel motivated to learn a foreign language; it is interesting and exciting. It is like learning to ride a bicycle or a car. Students learn the foreign language by practicing every day in the classroom, the foreign language is spoken by the teacher and students. In order to learn the foreign language student needs to get closer to the contents and this develops linguistic knowledge.

Other characteristics that identify the Content Based Approach are

- It can make learning a language more interesting and motivating. Students can use the language to fulfill a real purpose, which can make students both more independent and confident.
- Students can also develop a much wider knowledge of the world through CB which can feed back into improving and supporting their general educational needs.
- Content Based is very popular among EAP (English for Academic Purposes) teachers as it helps students to develop valuable study skills such as note taking, summarizing and extracting key information from texts.
- Taking information from different sources, re-evaluating and restructuring that information can help students to develop very valuable thinking skills that can then be transferred to other subjects.
- The inclusion of group work can also help students to develop their collaborative skills, which can have great social value.
- There is a noticeable increase in the vocabulary of the students

### **3.1.3 A Content Based class design**

It is necessary to understand the guidelines that are usually followed when designing a class using CB. These are the common steps followed.

#### **3.1.3.1 *Preparation of a Content Based class***

- a. It is important to have the topic to be taught clear (living and non- living things)
- b. Find three or four suitable sources that deal with different aspects of the subject. These could be websites, reference books, audio or video of lectures or even real people.
- c. The educational material can be flash cards, white board, markers, and student's books.
- d. Remember that suggestions, explanations and advice will be given in English. The mother language is not used.

### **3.1.3.2 During the lesson**

- e. Make warm- up about the topic / content.
- f. Make a presentation about the topic / content, talk about it and encourage students to participate in class giving their point of view or ideas about it.
- g. Encourage students to speak and make questions about the topic.
- h. Divide the class into small groups and assign each group a small research task and a source of information to use to help them to show evidence of their opinion about the topic
- i. In groups they fulfill the activities book in the correct page.
- j. Then once they have done their book activities they form new groups with students that used other information sources and share and compare their information.
- k. They should make a presentation in the foreign language about the learned content.

### **3.1.4 Content Based used in CEPI (Centro Pedagógico Infantil)**

CEPI is a bilingual school where half of the subjects students take are taught in English. All the classes are Content Based because students learn English while they are learning and knowing about other subjects of interest. The subjects children from first grade take are Science, Spelling, Vocabulary and Reading

English teachers have a daily schedule in which the subjects are organized. This is a layout of a CEPI's Content Based class:

#### **3.1.4.1 Previous to the class**

- ✓ Teacher checks the class program.
- ✓ Teacher studies the subject which is going to be taught.
- ✓ Teacher verifies the students' book so he can have an idea of how this material can match with his planning (the books are very important due to institutional regulations)
- ✓ Teacher organizes and prepares the materials that will be used in the class.

### **3.1.4.2 During the class**

- ✓ Warm up (about the topic to taught)
- ✓ Teacher encourages students to participate, at the same time students talk to their classmates about the topic. Sometimes it is hard for them to do it in English because they are still learning the language but as a strategy it forces their minds to acquire the language through the speaking practice.
- ✓ Teacher introduces the date. (Date is written every day on the board and students should copy the date in each of their books and notebooks used in that day).
- ✓ Teacher introduces the content / topic to learn.
- ✓ Teacher uses the material prepared for the class.
- ✓ Teacher motivates students to give their opinion in order to practice their speaking.
- ✓ Teacher checks the answers with the students' help, and the students give their answers and pass in front of the class to write it on the board. This ends up being a motivation strategy that gives them a sense of achievement.
- ✓ Teacher writes on the board extra activities.
- ✓ Teacher encourages students to solve them.
- ✓ Students copy these activities solved in their notebooks as reinforcement to writing and learning.
- ✓ Teacher writes the homework for the next class.
- ✓ Finally, students copy the homework in their homework notebook.

This is a structure that is followed in every class with all the different subjects. I must point out that there are variations and adaptation is needed when certain topics require dynamic activities or experiments.. Content Based classes are not simple and, in certain occasions, generate certain situations that are important to describe.

### **3.1.5 Disadvantages in Content Based.**

- ✓ Instructions and tasks are given in English and if there are questions, the answers are in the foreign language (English), and this can be confusing for

some students, because they can be frustrated when they do not hear their mother tongue and the explanation is in the foreign language.

- √ Because Content Based is not explicitly focused on language learning (it focuses in some subjects like science some students may feel confused or may even feel that they are not improving their language skills. To deal with this some form of language focused follow-up exercises are included to help draw attention to linguistic features within the materials and consolidate any difficult vocabulary or grammar points.

Peachey(2003) mentions that there are some potential problems in the Content Based Approach.

- *Particularly in monolingual classes, the overuse of the students' native language during parts of the lesson can be a problem. Because the lesson is not explicitly focused on language practice students find it much easier and quicker to use their mother tongue. It is important to share your rationale with students and explain the benefits of using the target language rather than their mother tongue.*
- *It can be hard to find information sources and texts that lower levels can understand. Also the sharing of information in the target language may cause great difficulties. A possible way around this at lower levels is either to use texts in the students' native language and then get them to use the target language for the sharing of information and end product, or to have texts in the target language, but allow the students to present the end product in their native language.*
- *Some students may copy directly from the source texts they use to get their information. Avoid this by designing tasks that demand students evaluate the information in some way, to draw conclusions or actually to put it to some practical use. Having information sources that have conflicting information can also be helpful as students have to decide which information they agree with or most believe.*

In CEPI, there is a constant encouragement to use the foreign language during the lessons. Teachers try to repeat lines, practice pronunciation, reading out loud in order the students have the necessary input to produce results using the foreign language, In case of the students just copying the resources or re-writing exercises, there are exercises specially designed for them to reinforce what is learned and they can use the vocabulary they acquire fro the readings or contents they are in contact with.

### **3.2 Classroom Management**

In this section the meaning and the definition of Classroom Management will be introduced. This is because there are many teachers working hard and worried about the discipline, behavior, problems with parents, addictions, social status, personalities, anxiety, depression, and low self esteem that their students may have. However, teachers improve their strategies, techniques, and methods, for

encouraging students to learn how to be conscious (or not) that sometimes there is a good result or that sometimes it is not completely certain.

### **a) What classroom management is?**

There are many approaches to what Classroom management is

“Classroom management is a complex set of behaviors the teacher uses to establish and maintain classroom conditions that will enable students to achieve their instructional objectives efficiently that will enable them to learn. Classroom management may be considered the most fundamental and the most difficult task the teacher performs.”(Instructor, 1995)

Classroom Management is one of the most important parts of teaching and learning; this is one of the most difficult aspects of teaching for many teachers. The negative attitude, discipline and the bad behavior of students do not allow the teacher do his work, and thus the learning is not achieved. *There can be no question that schools need sound disciplinary systems to maintain school safety and promote students learning (Evertson, 2006, p.1063).*

In addition, Classroom Management is linked with the control of a class; a teacher must be patient, innovator, friendly, kind, sensitivity, respectful, disciplined and very creative.

*“Well classroom management provides an environment in which teaching and learning can flourish. But a well classroom management does not just appear out of nowhere. It takes a good deal of effort to create and the person who is most responsible for creating it is the teacher.”(Manzano, Marzana, & Pickering, 2003)*

It is well known that the main preoccupation of a teacher is to develop good classroom management skills; when there is not a teacher authority, students and teachers suffer for the lack of it. According to Manzano, Marzana& Pickering (2003, p.5) teachers“...generally believe that they are not only unprepared to deal with disruptive behavior, but the amount of disruptive behavior in their classes substantially interferes with their teachings”

### **b) What does it involve?**

Allen (1986) claims that an effective classroom management involves clear communication of behavioral and academic expectations as well as a cooperative learning environment.

According to Méndez López (2007, pp.69-88), classroom management involves different strategies in order to be effective. She identifies five important aspects for an effective classroom management.

1. **The classroom environment:** a classroom where a foreign language is being learnt develops different feelings and emotions in students. Usually they feel frightened, anxious and nervous. If a teacher is able to modify some of the physical conditions of a classroom, students will feel more comfortable and they will be able to pay more attention and participate more actively in class.
  
2. **Organizing your class:** the different types of interaction that you can find in a classroom are going to be determined by what the teacher has in mind for a particular group of students. There are different interactions patterns that are usually used in ELT: lockstep, individual work, pair work and group work.
  - A. Lockstep: this is the traditional pattern where students interact with the teacher and the teacher with the students. Teachers teach at the same time to the entire group.
  - B. Individual work: this is used in activities where students need to think and express their feeling and emotions or pay special attention. T-S and S-T.
  - C. Pair work: this is used to work with a classmate, in activities where students need to talk and heard their point of view. Interaction S-S
  - D. Students work with a group of classmates, Interact every one. SS-SS
  
3. **Classroom presence and control:** one of the most important characteristics of a teacher is his voice. Through the voice you will model the language as well as give instructions, set up task and activities and ask questions. But another important aspect is the time spends talking. Another important factor in the organization of your classes is instructions; teacher should be clear and concise so students do not get confused.
 

In order to be clear Gebbard (1996) mentions that we should follow instructions:

  - a) Writing down instructions and giving them verbally
  - b) Giving instructions verbally and role-playing them: showing the students what they are to do.
  - c) Having a student read the instructions, then having a student or two paraphrases these instructions to the class.
  - d) Writing down the instructions, letting the students read them silently, then having them tell you what it is you expect from them.
  - e) Giving instructions as a dictation.
  - f) Miming the instructions as students guess and tell you what they are supposed to do.
  - g) Whispering the instructions as students learn forward in their seats, having them repeat the instructions to the persons next to them a whisper.
  
4. **Teacher´s roles and styles:** teacher is the central figure of a class, so it is important the teacher takes different roles in order to central the student's attention on him.
 

During a class, teachers will play different roles according to the different activities or tasks in class.

On the other hand teachers should implement some approaches to be clear and precise.

  - a) Organizer: activities and task have to be clear and unambiguous instructions.
  - b) Guide: be close the students in order to solve problems and answer questions that they could have at the moment of doing their activities.
  - c) Monitor: some students have started an activity or task you will have to monitor their errors.
  - d) Materials producer: most textbooks do not bring enough practice activities or the ones in books do not seem to be done for your particular group.
  
  - e) Resource: some students need your assistance in new language structures and vocabulary, so you need to solve their questions and problems.

## 5. Enriching the atmosphere

In order to make a good connections and interaction with your students you need to provide warm and positive climate in your classroom.



*Teachers must be creative and supportive because students should be confident with your class, so it is important to create a supportive learning environment so as to minimize the impact those effects can have in our classes.*

*Materials used in class help teachers to provide a fun environment where students will feel motivate to see and touch the new material used. Besides students like to know that teacher uses different materials, and want to know the new material for the new topic*

### **3.2.1 Teaching children**

Teaching children is fun, nice, exciting, and interesting but it is one of the most difficult challenges that a teacher has. They learn in different ways of adults, they are mischievous and intrepid. Teaching children demands a great deal of creativity and energy. Children will surprise and will question their teachers and then, teachers will most likely feel exhausted after every class, but they should not show this tiredness, a professor should be always happy and full of energy.

Teachers must work with the students' personalities and attitudes because that is the key for a class success; maybe many teachers cannot play an instrument, or are funny and mysterious (Scott & Ytreberg,1990). We come to the job with our personalities already formed, but there are abilities and attitudes that we can learn and work on. As a teacher of young children it helps a lot of if you have a sense of humor, you are open minded, adaptable, patient, etc.

Sometimes teachers think teaching is easy, and then when they are working with children they realize that there are many considerations to take into account. In addition a graduated teacher should consider many things to teach English to children

There are some suggestions in order to get successful classes. Pesce (2007) mentions that there are ten important things to consider teaching English for children.

- ❖ **Identify if you really want to be a teacher**
- ❖ **Prepare your classes**
- ❖ **Catch and identify the multiple intelligences.**
- ❖ **Don't let kids get bored.**
- ❖ **Mix it up. (English classes may include singing, dancing, and jumping, as well as writing, reading, or listening).**
- ❖ **Be prepared to deal with parents.**
- ❖ **Gather an arsenal of materials.**
- ❖ **Remember it's not all about the games**
- ❖ **Teach in context**
- ❖ **Keep them motivated.**

#### **3.2.1.1 What do authors say about teaching to small children?**

To start to write about teaching English to kids, it is necessary to mention the child's critical period, the correct way of teaching, the perfect teacher for them, or some of them only give suggestion for teachers in order to attract the attention to kids. In my opinion the most important thing is to know experts' opinion about teaching English as a foreign language and learn from them

Lipman (1998) mentions that when children who are in their first five years are curious, interrogatives, creative, mischievous and imaginative but at the time that they begin to understand and grow up they change to become passive persons and they might lose their curiosity.

In addition, children go to school and feel excited to be with other children, they create and they break, play and run because it is fun, but when then they realize that school is not passionate and they return home they will be tired and not motivated. Lipman (1998) mentions that young children very often engage in reasoning that professional philosophers can recognize as philosophical, but typically their parents or teachers don't react in a way that encourages them. They might say, 'That's cute,' but they don't engage the children in thinking further about whatever the issue is." As Goognough (2010) mentions in her article Education Life in the newspaper The New York Times.

As it can be noted Lipman was a psychologist who was concerned about children and their behaviour in the classroom and how teachers and parents will stop their interest for learning.

Garcia Mayo & Garcia Lecumberri (2003) as well as Hyltenstam and Abrahamsson (2000) state that young learners acquire language automatically from mere exposure, while older learners have to make conscious and labored efforts. This means that children are not very conscious and worried about learning the foreign language, they only hear and repeat. In contrast adults practice, get nervous, worried, and frustrated if they do not learn in a period of time.

Thirdly, when we talk about children we imagine a variety of children from different ages these can be from two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine and ten years old; and then the authors Scott & Ytreberg(1990) mentions that we select or divide the English classes for ages because there is a big difference in what a four-year-old child can learn from what a 6-year-old can. Some children develop early and some later, sometimes it is impossible to know what a four-year-old child can do X, or a 6-year-old can do Y. Obviously authors are concerned about having a big mix of Children from different ages in the same classroom.

### **3.2.1.2 Teaching English to CEPI's Children**

In this school, as all the schools in México, the primary level is divided for grades, there are six grades. In my experience working and teaching English as a foreign language to children in the first grade was a great experience.

Teaching children provides teachers a new experience; we learn everyday about being teachers because they change us into creative and passionate persons, also we smile more than other times, and their ingenuity is surprising and fascinating even when we arrive home with little color papers in our clothes or glue in our hair, or with our backpack broken because this day they were learning to use scissors and glue. This is a great experience and I will never change it for other thing.

Children are dynamic, intrepid, and learn a foreign language very quickly a foreign language; in addition if they studied the kindergarten in this same school they have a previous knowledge about English and know the way teachers work.

CEPI's students take different classes in their mother tongue among these computer classes, sport, arts, Spanish, values, etc; and four classes in the foreign language and once a week they can go to the lab and do some extra activities to reinforce what they have learned

CEPI's professors from different subjects are concerned about working with CEPI's children because they feel limited in controlling their behavior. There are many rules that allow teachers to feel free and relaxed In this institution teachers cannot break the paradigms, they cannot try different strategies and techniques or dynamics and they have to modulate their tone of voice. Sometimes this gets a little bit more challenging due to the intervention of parents who try to control the way their children are being taught.

### **3.2.2Materials**

Materials are very important in learning a foreign language (Méndez López, 2007, p. 102). Teachers will sometimes feel the need to prepare some materials on their own because of diverse reasons:

- Time:

Sometimes the time devoted is short and your students need more.

- Activities:

The activities in books and in textbooks are boring or students are tired.

- Explanation of grammar

The explanation of grammar in the books is not clear and ambiguous, students will need support to understand it, and extra material will be clear and specific.

- Level of material

The text in textbooks will be either too difficult or too easy for your particular students, so you will need to supplement these with extra material.

- Content

The information found in textbooks sometimes is about different countries, students may find it difficult to understand and not get connection with them.

### **3.2.2.1 CEPI's materials**

CEPI provides teachers some materials in order to help them to teach English.

- At the beginning of the school year the English supervisor provides the teachers the materials that will be used in the next English course.

a) Books

Teacher books: spelling, grammar, science and reading

b) Some posters

Posters to help some topics: for example the parts of the body of second grade.

c) Some flash cards

Flash cards about some topics: for example wild animals for third grade.

d) Grades Record Books

Grades Record Book for each class; in this record grade teacher will take attendance, write the grades for each subject and check the works and home-works.

Teachers then they need to take care of this material because he needs to return them at the end of the course, if teacher does not return them in good conditions, he must pay.

- At the beginning of each month, teachers write a list of the materials that they will use in their next contents. The materials needed for the classes are:

a) Markers

b) Pencils

c) Pens

d) Paper

- e) Cards
- f) some papers for decorating the classroom
- g) Notebook

The institution supervisor checks the materials and verifies if it is used in the classroom and in the classes, if it is not used, the teacher must pay for it.

- At the beginning of the school year the first grade is provided with one assistant. First grade teachers have one assistant that will help to give books, control the class, and to take care taking care of the students if the teacher is not in the classroom.

Most of the time the materials provided by the supervisor to teach the English classes are not enough and so, the teachers should look for more extra flash cards, posters, videos, images, books, activities, games, reading novels or CD tales and CD players. There are only two CD players for all the English teachers, and then they have to buy their own CD players to improve the students' listening skill.

### **3.2.3 Lesson plan**

A lesson plan helps teachers to have an organization and a control about his contents, materials, time, activities and homework, but a lesson plan should not lose its flexibility and variety.

There are many different situations in a day that are not considered in the lesson plan, or sometimes students are not concentrated or do not feel okay to take the class; consequently, that is why the lesson plan can be flexible and adapted to the different circumstances.

Flexibility refers when a content written in the lesson plan is not appropriate and it does not work in a specific day or with specific students, so it can be changed and adapted.

Variety, planning must involve distinct students in a classroom, because it should mention different activities teaching in a classroom.

According to Méndez López(2007, p.51) lesson planning is an essential tool that every beginning teacher must exercise because of many reasons:

- It will lead you through the class.
- You'll have everything you need prepared.
- You'll have something tangible to come back to whenever you feel lost.

- It will allow you to review any teaching point (grammar, vocabulary, etc.) you are not sure about.
- It will help you to design a class with different components to keep your students' motivation and interest.

### 3.2.4 Special cases

How many teachers have we heard to say that students are uncontrolled and others are undisciplined and do not follow the rules of the classroom? As English teachers we suffer from this problem, because in a classroom some cases of 'problem' students exist, obviously the difference is because of their home education and other aspects which have developed their personality.

Truman( 2012) mentions that there are three kinds of groups of troublemakers in a classroom who can get into the teachers' nerves if he does not know how to control the class:

- **The Bad Egg Group:** *There's usually one or two of these in every class. Sometimes it seems to be a manifestation of other problems they're having. The overlap between Bad Eggs and special instruction is not insignificant. Sometimes, though, they're just Bad Eggs.*
- **The Impulse Group:** *This is the most perplexing. It's also the smallest group. It's the kid, who is basically a Really Good Kid, save for some serious impulse control problems. They want to be quiet. They want to be good. They try harder than any other student in the classroom to help you. But they're also among the biggest troublemakers. They just can't help themselves. I had to report to the teacher that the single-most helpful kid in the room was one of a handful on the Worst List.*

**The Osmosis Group.:** *This is absorbed the mood of the class. You get the sense that in a good environment or on a good day, they're fine. But they become a part of any problem that exists. These are actually the most problematic only because they are the most numerous. You try to get them to behave and they simply point the finger at someone who is behaving worse (typically an Egg or an Impulse). These are also the Give Them An Inch kids. You give them an inch, which they may or not be able to handle, but then Bad Egg and Impulse will take a mile and these kids will be right behind them.*

On the other hand McCamley(2012) comments that there are four troublemakers and based on her experience teaching 18 students in the same group she was able to identify the more common:

- **Attention Seekers** - *They show off to get the rest of the class laughing.*
- **Power seekers** - *They want to put one over you all the time.*

- **Revenge seekers** - Act defiant, e.g. a student who won't move to another section of the class when you think his or her behavior is not acceptable.
- **Withdrawn or depressed** – They get depressed all the time if they do or not an activity.

Working in CEPI with a group of 28 students from five to six years old, I had special cases as every teacher. I had three *attention seekers* who were the funniest of the class and every single thing that happened in the class was funny for them; everything that teachers said or did was a joke to them and they were distracters from the other students. At the beginning of the year it was difficult, but when I really got to know them I benefited from them to make a more entertaining and productive English class.

I had a *power seeker* in my class; it is one who felt superior, and wanted to do everything as he wished. I tried to never argue with this little student, even when I felt that it was enough. With a little observation and attention to him I could understand that he wanted to attract my attention. I could notice that when I said, “thanks” “great work” or some motivating phrases that made him feel better.

### **3.3 Language Competencies for Children**

#### **3.3.1 Competencies wished for Children**

Aguerrondo (2009) explains that the concept refers to the idea of significant learning, where the notion of competence has multiple connotations capacity, expressed through knowledge, the abilities and the attitudes required to carry out an assignment in an intelligent way, in a real environment or in another context), all of which have four common characteristics: is the result of a process of integration, is associated with criteria of execution or performance, and implies responsibility.

As Aguerrondo mentions competences are the abilities, the skills, attitudes that a children needs to develop in order to be competent in a specific area or in a general area. For example a student from first grade needs to develop his ability to read in Spanish like in English; and so the teacher needs to encourage him to practice, and provide him with reading activities or projects that will help him increase his capacity to read. When this student learns to read in Spanish or English, he is competent due to his reading competence and the evidence that supports it.

Another common example is a child, who is shy to make a speech or talk in public or in front of the class. The teacher should encourage him and give him tools to be more confident, also understand how important and necessary it is for him to develop his speech. As we can see the teacher is the most important key who develops in students their competences.

One of the advantages of developing competences is that little students learn to take decisions and think for themselves; also students feel competent and able to do something specific, without fear or being nervous.

As parents the education of their children is completely necessary because they are thinking about the future; all of them are looking for an education based in competences where his child will be independent and able to deal with the different circumstances of life and find solutions related to his problems.

For this reason in CEPI the development of competences in children is necessary for creating integrated persons prepared, responsible, and perseverant workers who surely will be hired in the labor field; because of the way they think, act and deal with problems in real life.



## Chapter IV: Memory

### 4.1 My First Year Teaching in CEPI

I started working in CEPI when an old friend told me that there was the opportunity to be part of this institution. I was pregnant, so I was confused about applying for this job. The hesitation became part of the challenge and I decided to go for it. Everything went well fortunately and I was hired. My life began to be part of those graduated students who work in a private school.

The first group that I was in charge of was 7 elementary students of fourth grade. Their ages were from nine to ten years old. At the beginning teaching these students was not complicated as I thought and I started applying the knowledge that I acquired during the major. Most of what I did in that year was reproducing many of the classroom strategies and techniques I learned during *Practica Docente I* and *II*. I was really happy and motivated due to the fact that I had time to plan my classes and to create material for the children.

About the classroom I can say that we were really comfortable. The classroom was big enough, so we had space to organize our books and exhibit our materials done during the classes and that the students designed at home. I consider that the classroom environment was part of the motivation the students were receiving during my instruction. Feeling comfortable allows students not to be stressed and focus more on knowledge and encourages creativity on their part.

This institution has texts (books) for the lessons; they are part of the materials that students are required to take with them every class. The different classes, Spelling, Grammar, Science and Reading, are classes that are developed by a class plan which is originally designed with the institutional requirements and the books' guide. All students need to have a notebook in order to have class' notes and to draw pictures to help them master the vocabulary they learn. I noted that having these resources available allow children to have a notion of what self-assessment is.

By working with fourth-graders I learned that students can achieve many things by themselves through hard work. I appreciated that these students try to participate the

most whenever they could; even if they are wrong they are always willing to keep trying. In contrast with second or first-graders that are usually more receptive in the input given, fourth-graders are more active and confident to participate in class. I can conclude that I had a fortunate start with these students during my first year; however there were many things that I still needed to face. In order to describe them I consider that it is important to describe the subjects that I have to teach in CEPI.

#### **4.2 Analysis by subject**

It is important for a teacher to master the subject to work with. I will also provide a description of every subject and the set of challenges that I faced when teaching them. I consider important to mention that in order to be excellent teachers there is a need to face and deal with many challenges. In my opinion there is not a classroom without challenges; there is not an excellent professor without previous experience, what is more, we teachers learn from our daily rapport with students.

There were many challenges working as an English teacher with the Content Based approach in CEPI. At the moment I started to work with the approach, I realized that it was difficult to develop and use at first. The main reason I consider this is that I had known and used different methods in the University of Quintana Roo, but I had never worked with a particular one; I mean, we studied the methods briefly to know what they were about but there was not an exclusive in-depth learning of class design with specific methods.

I am aware that the Content Based Approach is used in the English Major. The English major classes are provided with the Content Based approach. Apart from this, there is a subject called English Language Teaching Methodology in which students know and learn about teaching methods and how they work. Nevertheless, you don't consider this relevant until the very moment when you have to deal with it in a real environment and this is what I had to deal with at the beginning of my practice.

I faced challenges in each subject provided to the kids in the different subjects such as Spelling, Reading, Science, and Vocabulary, but at the same time I was learning and improving my English classes with this Content Based Approach. It was a self

assessment basis that I was using. These are the subjects I worked with during these years and the challenges encountered during my practice.

## **4.2.I. Spelling**

### *4.2.1.1 Description*

Spelling is not just a subject where students have to spell words. This is taught with a book where students learn about listening, reading, vocabulary and grammar. With this students learn a little about many topics. It is a subject that includes many different topics about several subjects. It is possible to find topics about nature, mathematics, science, culture and others. In this subject they practice conversations, do exercises, play games, read, listen, and participate in class applying the contents taught. This book is used with a workbook so students do many exercises and answer questions in order to practice. Spelling is the closest they have to a Language Course. Its name is given due to the fact that the acquisition of vocabulary is the expected outcome. In my opinion the name of the subject doesn't really reflect the true nature of the class. It must be called Vocabulary

### *4.2.1.2 Challenges*

1. Spelling was not only about spelling words. In the spelling subject the first challenge was understood that there was not only a spelling corpus and learning topic-related words; there was a general book in which students do and learn about listening, reading, vocabulary and spelling activities and it is separated by units. Then this book is used with a workbook and with a notebook which requires a Teacher-student cooperative work.
2. The use of the material was complicated because the school does not provide all the flash cards, posters, images and so on for each unit. Teachers need to buy or find the material to complement the classes.
3. Classroom management, giving explanations, providing examples, giving advice, introducing topics and so on had to be done in the foreign language. The subject should be taught in the English language.

4. The workbook usage was neither well received nor nice for the students. I had to motivate students and spend much time to encourage them to do workbook activities.
5. Controlling the group was sometimes hard because spelling was the last subject that students took in English and when I ordered them to open their spelling books everything turned into a mess; some of the students got angry and did not want to work and agitated the class. I did previous activities in order to encourage them to participate in class.
6. Some parents did not help teachers to motivate and encourage kids to learn English. In spelling such as in all the subjects (Reading, Science, and Vocabulary) homework was written in English, but parents wanted this to be in Spanish, because they did not understand the instructions. I had to provide the homework instructions in English and in Spanish because parents did not want to take a dictionary and look for the meaning of some words.
7. Some parents mentioned that English classes were not important; the important and relevant were the subjects which are taught in Spanish and the sport classes that will be reflected in the SEP's school report at the end of the school year. I had to talk with the English supervisor about it and she had to talk with the parents to make them conscious of the importance of my job with their children.

#### **4.2.2. Reading**

##### *4.2.2.1 Description*

Reading is a subject based in readings and reading comprehension according to levels it is taught to. Each grade has a reading book where students learn and practice reading according their level and age. As an example, students from the first grade take reading class by reading, painting, drawing, underlining ideas and words, identifying new words and copying them for reinforcement. Students from second to sixth grade start translating sentences. Teacher clarifies the meaning of some new words to learn and students start to translate small sentences so they can use them in different contexts. In addition students have a reading notebook in which they do

many activities, and exercises and translation. The main competence to be achieved is that students grasp the meaning of the texts they read, not the grammar.

I consider that the use of translation as a reinforcement tool is a good idea; however, it could turn to be quite challenging for some of the children due to the fact they are still building their own linguistic corpus.

#### *4.2.2.2 Challenges*

1. First grade students did not know how to read in their mother tongue. These students are from 5 to 6 years old and then some of them are still learning to read, but many were not able to do it. At the beginning of the school year reading was only comprehension of main ideas, listening and painting.
2. Students did not like reading books because there were many words. I as the teacher had to encourage students to participate and do the book activities & notebooks in class.
3. Classroom management was harder than in the other subjects. English classes (reading, science, vocabulary and spelling) started from 11 to 2 pm and students were tired and bored, and then I had to use new and dynamic strategies, and had to bring fun activities for every class we had.
4. The use of the new vocabulary in the reading class was also a challenge. Even when the students had a vocabulary subject they must have written reading vocabulary (which is the vocabulary found in the readings) in their reading notebooks. This is a complex task and forces their minds to learn but maybe due to the number of words given many of this 'new' vocabulary could be easily forgotten.
5. Students must write the date in each page of their English reading notebook and book. If students have not written the date, the teacher has to tell them to write it because it is an institutional requirement. I encourage them to copy date; my slogan is "no date, no grade".
6. Explaining to parents how the Reading class was going to be evaluated, because their kids were not able to read. Many parents were worried when the exams dates were close at the end of the bi-monthly period.

(Even when there was an explanation of the evaluations previously provided by the institution).

7. Reading was not the best subject in matters of productivity. Students did not like to read, and therefore they needed a lot of encouragement.

### **4.2.3 Science**

#### *4.2.3.1 Description*

In science students learn about nature. Nature is learned by experiments, exercises, activities, investigations and projects. Students use the book in every class; they love science because of the activities and projects. As I have noticed, this class is like the sum of the others; they need to know vocabulary, to read and use language in an application: the projects. Students have a science notebook where they take notes do activities and exercises, also investigations and questionnaires. Teachers encourage students to feel motivated to learn about nature so they learn values to preserve the environment. I consider that this is an awareness-raising class.

#### *4.2.3.2 Challenges*

1. Classroom Management. I had 30 students in the same classroom at the same time. I used my assistant to control class and give books back and collect books. The necessity of an assistant was a primary concern because my attention had to be divided into 30; with the assistant, I had to worry a little bit less.
2. The Science book had many experiments and there were not resources to do them. I could not ask the parents to bring some materials or give them something because that meant an extra expense from my own pocket. It was also forbidden and if a teacher asked for something there was an institutional sanction. I decided to buy part of the material and the other part was recycled materials I have been collecting through the years.
3. I could not moderate the tone of my voice. Sometimes when a teacher uses loud tones of voice to attract the children's attention and this can

be interpreted as an aggression because parents consider that the teacher must not talk loudly to their children.

4. Many of the activities needed to be developed indoors. Teachers do not have permission to go out to the playgrounds with their children. I tried to do them in the classroom to avoid any institutional or parent-related conflicts. Despite of the fact that some activities are conceived to be done outdoors many accidents may occur.

#### **4.2.4. Vocabulary**

##### 4.2.4.1 Description

Vocabulary is a reinforcement class where words used in Spelling, Reading and Science are used in diverse exercises. Its main goal is that students do not forget the meaning of these words and at the same time they can apply it in different contexts. The constant application of this vocabulary has a positive impact in the othersubjects.

##### 4.2.4.2 Challenges

1. There was not material for the Vocabulary subject. I had to create and design my own vocabulary material. This required a lot of time because material designs infers planning and elaboration apart from the lesson plan that I designed on a daily basis.
2. There was not a book. I had to base my classes using the Spelling and Reading notebook. I was aware that this class was a reinforcement resource for the other subjects but keeping a record of all the vocabulary was a little bit challenging.
3. The institution requirements demand that the English vocabulary notebook must be used and all the pages worn out. Teacher had to use all the pages of the vocabulary notebook, because parents got angry if the notebook is not finished/completed. As it is possible to notice the institutional regulations about the classes and their development are strict.

All of the challenges helped me to be more creative, organized, thrifty, controlled, patient, friendly, and improve my English classes, as well as learning how to be more familiar with the Content based approach. Above all the challenges and the hard work I have to say that the experience of teaching and learning to kids is totally

rewarding. I had to learn how to deal with CB classes on a self-assessment and trial-error context but I have to say that my practice improved by doing it by myself. I can conclude that it was a missing element that complements my professional background.

## **Chapter V: conclusions**

### **5.1 Analysis of ELT Training at Uqroo vs. Real Context**

I am inclined to believe that everybody needs help and effort to get what he/she wants for the future. Along the path we find some things and people that help and encourage us to continue learning. The University of Quintana Roo and its English Language major provided me with knowledge and love for teaching and learning which I use every day. The same ideal gives my experience a meaning.

I have learned many things through the years working as an English teacher; I have got experience which is the richest knowledge ever, and therefore I am glad that the University of Quintana Roo gave me tools to start well prepared in the labor field.

In my English major classes I learned knowledge that helped because without it, I wouldn't be here writing and describing my experience as a teacher. I will be always thankful with the University of Quintana Roo because of that.

One thing that the English Language major provided me was the change of experiencing what being a teacher was when I was a student. The subject of English Practice that I got, despite being carried out in the classroom in front of our classmates while the teacher checked and evaluated us, helped me a lot. The suggestions, advice and techniques to improve our classes given at the end of our microteaching classes were the basis of what I am doing myself during my practice, obviously, that was not like the real life; now that I am working with real students with real necessities (comma?) I have a broader panorama of what a real class is.

In addition to my preparation, another class that I find really useful was the one of Material Design. There I could design, create, and prepare materials for the English classes. It was a great advantage that allowed me to use every kind of papers, cartons, bags and recycle things or *realia* to create materials for my future classes, in



order to make them dynamic and helpful by making the contents, or topic of each English class more attractive for the students.

Finally the University of Quintana Roo and the English Language Major not only prepare students to be an English Teacher; it also prepares persons to be more sensitive, patient, creative, dynamic, brave and to have a positive attitude towards life. I am very grateful to my professors who have contributed in my development as a teacher; providing me with tools to deal with the real world, pointing at my mistakes, giving suggestions, advice and techniques to improve myself.

## **5.2. Learning Insight**

Through the years, I have earned a great experience but in particular I have learned that a teacher is not the person who knows everything; it is the person who encourages, motivates, advises and makes suggestions to students to be better. However, even when he is not recognized in public, inside of him he knows that he has done a good work. At the end he has a gratification that is not money, it is learning.

Teachers keep the happiest moments, the memories of the students, and appreciate the personality, self confidence and self satisfaction that students have given.

As a teacher I consider that I have gotten better at knowing more about children. They have also taught me to work with patience and creativity, to be more flexible if it is necessary. I really know how parents feel, what parents need and seek in a teacher, and I can understand parents because I am a mother myself who loves and wants the best of the education of her daughter. This is the reason why I give my best and teach every child as I want a professor teach my daughter. In addition I have understood that children will always be mischievous, intrepid, dynamic, inquisitive and funny; we will never change them, because it is their nature. I have taught many children and all of them have different personalities.

I remember the excitement and nervousness that I had the first day that I entered to the first grade classroom, it was only a few minutes because when I finished working that that day I was crying because children beat and killed me inside, but it didn't happen the second day, nor the third nor never again. And so I learned to organize

and prepare my class and my life, so I decided to control and take the power of my life as well as I did in every class I was in charge of. Now I can see children as they are, children are children and adults never will change it but it is the most rewarding thing to see them grow not only physically, but mentally and emotionally. I think that it is the deepest meanings of being a teacher.

About the whole experience I have to say that teaching in CEPI and trying to follow a Content Based approach gave me a lot of experience. Analyzing the way the curriculum is structured I think that they can improve certain things such as the name of the subjects, the permission to develop activities outdoors, improving the availability of materials to be used in the classes. These improvements would benefit the teachers and therefore have an impact on the students' results. About the Content Based approach I would say that it is not in a 'pure' state

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## Class program

### First grade

WEEK	SPELLING	VOCABULARY	READING	SCIENCE
22-26 AUGUST	UNIT 1 MY CLASSROOM: - HELLO/HI - WHATS YOU'RE NAME? - HOW OLD ARE YOU? (Lesson 1)	SCHOOL OBJECTS: BACK PACK, CHAIR, FLOOR, DESK, CD PLAYER, COMPUTER, TEACHER, BOARD, DVD, BOARD ERASER, MARKER PEN, MOUSE.	MONDAY (P.86)	UNIT 1 LIFE ON PLANET EARTH 4
29-2 SEPTEMBER	MY CLASSROOM: - HELLO/HI - WHATS YOU'RE NAME? - HOW OLD ARE YOU? - COMMANDS (lesson 2-3)	NUMBERS: ONE, TWO, THREE, FOUR, FIVE, SIX, SEVEN, EIGHT, NINE, TEN. PLANET: EARTH, AIR, ROCKS, SOIL, WATER, PEOPLE, ANIMAL, PLANT.	RAINBOW (P. 4)	LIFE ON PLANET EARTH PG. 8
5- 9 SEPTEMBER	MY CLASSROOM: - HELLO/HI - WHATS YOU'RE NAME? - HOW OLD ARE YOU? - COMMANDS (Lesson 4-5)	THE ALPHABET. - SUN, STAR, MOON, SATELLITE, AROUND.	SECRETS (P.7)	LIFE ON PLANET EARTH PG.12
12-15 SEPTEMBER	UNIT 2 PICTURES: - QUESTIONS WITH CAN, WHAT. (LESSON 1-2)	COLORS: YELLOW, PURPLE, ORANGE, RED, GREEN, PINK, BLUE. LIGHT, HEAT, DRIES, CLOTHES.	DANNY'S AMAZING BALL (P.10)	LIFE ON PLANET EARTH PG. 16
19-23	PICTURES:	SCHOOL SUPPLIES: PENCIL,	SOCCER ( P. 56)	UNIT 2

SEPTEMBER	- QUESTIONS WITH CAN, WHAT. (lesson 3-4)	RULER, BOOK, BACK PACK  COLORS: BLUE, BLACK, WHITE, BROWN, ORANGE REFLECTS, NIGHT, DAY.		LIVING AND NON LIVING THINGS 22
26-30 SEPTEMBER	PICTURES: - QUESTIONS WITH CAN, WHAT. (Lesson 5-6)	SHAPES: RECTANGLE, SQUARE, CIRCLE,	MR. TOMBALOO'S HAMMOCK (P. 80)	WHAT DO LIVING THINGS DO? 26
3-7 OCTOBER	SHAPE UP 1	SLEEPING BAG, LAKE, RIVER, OCEAN, CLOUD, GROUND, RAIN, SNOW, FORM, LIQUID, POND.	SHAPE UP	WHAT DO LIVING THINGS NEED? 30
10-14 OCTOBER	REVIEW	WATER, SOLID, MELT, ICE, IGLOO, GAS, VAPOR, TURNS INTO, CUP.	REVIEW	WHAT DO ANIMALS NEED? 34
17-21	EXAM	EXAM	EXAM	EXAM
WEEK	SPELLING	VOCABULARY	READING	SCIENCE
24-28 OCTOBER	UNIT 3 BIRTHDAYS - SIMPLE QUESTIONS (TO BE) - SHORT ANSWERS - PLURALS (Lesson 1-2)	TOYS: CAR, BALL, SKATEBOARD, GUITAR, BIKE, KITE, DOLL, ROBOT. SCIENCE: LIVING, NONLIVING, BREATHE, MOVE, EAT, GROW, REPRODUCE.	HOW TO HAVE A HAPPY BIRTHDAY (P. 44)	PLANTS PG. 44, 45,46,47
31-4 NOVEMBER	BIRTHDAYS - SIMPLE QUESTIONS (TO BE) - SHORT ANSWERS - PLURALS (Lesson 3-4)	MONTHS OF THE YEAR SCIENCE: LAND, UNDERWATER, EXERCISE, BODY, STRONG, LISTEN, MUSIC, WIGGLE, UP, DOWN, KICK, FEET.	TOYS, TOYS, TOYS! (P. 57)	PLANTS PG. 48,49,50,51

7-11 NOVEMBER	<b>BIRTHDAYS</b> - SIMPLE QUESTIONS (TO BE) - SHORT ANSWERS - PLURALS (Lesson 5,6)	MEAT, BORN, MOTHER, EGG, NEED, SUNLIGHT, FOOD, SHELTER, HOUSE.	NOW IT'S TIME TO SAY...(P.94)	FLOWERS AND SEEDS 52 TO 55
14-18 NOVEMBER	<b>UNIT 4</b> <b>MY HOME</b> - WHERE IS MY PENCILCASE? - IT'S IN YOUR BACK PACK. - WHERE IS CONNOR'S DAD/MOM? - HE'S/SHE'S IN THE BEDROOM. (Lesson 1-2)	ROOMS: BEDROOM, KITCHEN, GARDEN, GARAGE, YARD, DANNING ROOM,  BATHROOM, LIVINGROOM, HALLWAY.	THE CLEAN HOUSE AND THE DIRTY DOG (P. 40)	WHICH PARTS OF A PLANT DO WE NEED? 56 TO 59
21-25 OCTOBER	<b>UNIT 4</b> <b>MY HOME</b> - WHERE IS MY PENCILCASE? - IT'S IN YOUR BACK PACK. - WHERE IS CONNOR'S DAD/MOM? - HE'S/SHE'S IN THE BEDROOM.  - (Lesson 3,4)	SCIENCE: LAND, UNDERWATER, EXERCISE, BODY, STRONG, LISTEN, MUSIC, WIGGLE, UP, DOWN, KICK, FEET.	WHATS THE WEATHER LIKE TODAY? (P.78)	SOME ANIMALS LIVE IN WATER AND OTHERS IN LAND. 62 TO 64
28-2 DECEMBER	<b>MY HOME</b> - WHERE IS MY PENCILCASE? IT'S IN YOUR BACK PACK. - WHERE IS CONNOR'S DAD/MOM?	FAMILY: MOM, DAD, UNCLE, AUNT, GRANPA, GRANDMA, BROTHER, SISTER.	MOVING HOUSE (P.74)	ANIMALS WALK, FLY, AND SWIM 65 TO 67

	- HE'S/SHE'S IN THE BEDROOM. (Lesson 5-6)			
5-9 DECEMBER	REVIEW SHAPE UP!	REVIEW SHAPE UP!	REVIEW SHAPE UP!	SKIN, SCALES, FEATHERS, AND FUR 68 TO 70 DOLPHINS 71 TO 73
12-16 DECEMBER	EXAM	EXAM	EXAM	EXAM
2-6 JANUARY	UNIT 5 NATURE - THERE'S / THERE ARE - IDENTIFY TYPES OF WEATHERS. (Lesson 1-2-3)	NATURAL WORLD: VOLCANO, FOREST, ISLAND, BEACH, WATERFALL, RIVER, LAKE, MOUNTAIN, VALLEY. EVERYWHERE, GET, HOT, COLD, WET, DRY.	WATER, WATER EVERYWHERE! (P.92)	MY BASIC NEEDS PG 80
9-13 JANUARY	NATURE - THERE'S / THERE ARE - IDENTIFY TYPES OF WEATHERS. (Lesson 4-5-6)	WEATHER: SUNNY, RAINY, CLOUDY, WINDY, SNOWY, AND STORMY.	A DAY AT THE BEACH (P.50)	I KEEP MY BODY CLEAN 84

WEEK	SPELLING	VOCABULARY	READING	SCIENCE
16-20 JANUARY	UNIT 6 IN TOWN - WHERE'S THE MUSEUM? ITS NEXT TO/ACROSS FROM THE PARK. - THERE'S NO/THERE ARE NO... (Lesson 1-2-3)	PLACES IN TOWN: HOSPITAL, HOTEL, LIBRARY, MUSEUM, MALL, TRAIN STATION, PARK, AIRPORT, SWIMMING POOL, MOVIE THEATER.	BABANA TREATS (.16)	I EAT MY HEALTHY FOOD. 88



23-27 JANUARY	IN TOWN - WHERE'S THE MUSEUM? ITS NEXT TO/ACROOSS FROM THE PARK. - THERE'S NO/THERE ARE NO... (Lesson 4-5-6)	DIRECTIONS: NEXT TO, ACROSS FROM, OVER THERE, BACK HERE, GO STRAIGHT, TURN LEFT, AND TURN RIGHT.	MR. CROCODILE'S TOOTHBRUSH (P.18)	I EXERCISE MY BODY 92
30-3 FEBRUARY	REVIEW SHAPE UP!	HOMOPHONES: TWO/TOO, FOR/FOUR, KNOW/NO, YOUR/YOU'RE, WRITE/RIGHT	LITTLE MILLY-MOLLY (P.22)	OUR FIVE SENSES 98
6-10 FEBRUARY	UNIT 7 ANIMALS - DO YOU HAVE...? - YES, I DO/ NO, I DON'T. - I HAVE A SNAKE. - I DON'T HAVE A DOG. (Lesson 1-2-3)	PETS: PARROT, FISH, CAT, HAMSTER, DOG.	ANIMAL MAGIC! (P. 64)	EARS TO HEAR AND EYES TO SEE 102
13-17 FEBRUARY	ANIMALS - DO YOU HAVE...? - YES, I DO/ NO, I DON'T. - I HAVE A SNAKE. - I DON'T HAVE A DOG. (Lesson 4-5-6)	WILD ANIMALS: RABBIT, SNAKE, SPIDER, TIGER, LION, JAGUAR, CROCODILE, MONKEY, FROG ZOO ANIMALS: GIRAFFE, ZEBRA, HIPPO, ELEPHANT, DOLPHIN, BEAR.	WILD ANIMALS (P.64) CATS (P. 38)	REVIEW SCIENCE
20-24 FEBRUARY	EXAM	EXAM	EXAM	EXAM

WEEK	SPELLING	VOCABULARY	READING	SCIENCE
27-2 MARCH	UNIT 8 OUR FOOD - DO YOU LIKE...? - YES, I DO / NO , I DON'T - I LIKE ONIONS BUT I DON'T	FOOD: LEMONS, CHILIES, STRAWBERRIES, PEACH, PINEAPPLE, EGGPLANT, MANGOES, CHEESE, ONIONS, CARROTS, TOMATOES	THE FISH WITH FOUR EYES (P. 66)	A TONGUE FOR TASTE AND A NOSE FOR SMELL 106

	LIKE... (Lesson 1-2-3)			
5-9 MARCH	OUR FOOD - DO YOU LIKE...? - YES, I DO / NO , I DON'T - I LIKE ONIONS BUT I DON'T LIKE... (Lesson 4-5-6)	MEALS: BREAKFAST, LUNCH, DINNER.	STRAWBERRY MILKSHAKE (P. 48)	HANDS TO TOUCH 110
12-16 MARCH	REVIEW SHAPE UP!	REVIEW	WE COLLECT! (P.72)	REVIEW 5, 6
19-23 MARCH	UNIT 9 DRESSING UP. - POSSESSIVE PRONOUNS - PREPOSITIONS - WHERE IS THE DRESS? ITS UNDER THE BED. (Lesson 1-2-3)	CLOTHES: HAT, T-SHIRT, SWEAT PANTS, SHIRT, PANTS, BOOTS, SHOES, SOCKS, SNEAKERS, DRESS, SHORTS, JEANS.	CLOTHES IN MY CLOSET. (P.8)	BUGS LIVE IN MANY PLACES
26-30 MARCH	DRESSING UP. - POSSESSIVE PRONOUNS - PREPOSITIONS - WHERE IS THE DRESS? ITS UNDER THE BED. (Lesson 4-5-6)	PROFESSIONS: STUDENT, ARTIST, POLICE OFFICER, SOCCER PLAYER, ACTRESS, SINGER, COWBOY	WELCOME TO GREEN BRIDGE! (P.46)	WHAT DO INSECTS NEED TO LIVE?
16-20 APRIL	REVIEW	REVIEW	TIMMY THE TURTLE. (P. 88)	SPIDERS AND BUTTERFLIES 128
23-27 APRIL	EXAM	EXAM	EXAM	EXAM

WEEK	SPELLING	VOCABULARY	READING	SCIENCE
2-4 MAY	UNIT 10 OPPOSITES - SHE ISN'T OLD. SHE'S YOUNG. - THEY AREN'T ASLEEP. THEY'RE AWAKE. (Lesson 1-2-3)	SIMPLE ADJECTIVES: OLD, YOUNG, BORED, EXCITED, HAPPY, SAD, HOT, COLD, SOFT, HARD, LIGHT, DARK SHORT, TALL, GOOD, BAD,		ANTS 132
7-11 MAY	OPPOSITES - SHE ISN'T OLD. SHE'S YOUNG. - THEY AREN'T ASLEEP. THEY'RE AWAKE. (Lesson 4-5-6)	RHYMING WORDS: KITE- NIGHT, YOU- TWO, KNOW- GO, ME- THREE, GREAT- EIGHT, COLD-OLD.	KNOCK, KNOCK! (P.30)	HOW DO LIVING AND NON LIVING THINGS MOVE?
16-18 MAY	REVIEW SHAPE UP!	REVIEW	THE LITTLE YELLOW BUS (P.24)	WHAT CAN MAKE SOMETHING MOVE?
21-25 MAY	UNIT 11 HOBBIES - I LIKE../ I DON'T LIKE.. - DO YOU LIKE..? - WHAT DO YOU LIKE TO DO..? (Lesson1-2-3)	HOBBIES AND ACTIVITIES: PLAY CHESS, LISTEN TO MUSIC, PLAY THE GUITAR, DRESS UP, DANCE , DRAW, READ.	WHAT'S YOUR HPBBIE? (P.60)	MOVING FAST OR SLOW
28 - 1 JUNE	HOBBIES - I LIKE../ I DON'T LIKE.. - DO YOU LIKE..? - WHAT DO YOU LIKE TO DO..? (Lesson4-5-6)	HOBBIES AND ACTIVITIES: PLAY COMPUTER GAMES, PLAY BASEBALL, DO GYMNASTICS, PLAY TENNIS, MAKE MODELS, WATCH TV. LISTEN TO MUSIC.	THE BUSY BEE. (P.32)	THINGS CAN ROLL, SLIDE AND BOUNCE. 147
4-8 JUNE	UNIT 12 WHATS YOU'RE TALENT? - CAN YOU PLAY THE..? - YES, I CAN/ NO, I CAN'T. - CAN /CAN'T (Lesson 1-2-3)	MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS: BOUBLE BASS, FLUTE, TAMBOURINE, SAXOPHONE, RECORD, TRUMPET, VIOLIN,DRUMS, PIANO	REVIEW	REVIEW 7

11-15 JUNE	WHATS YOU'RE TALENT? - CAN YOU PLAY THE..? - YES, I CAN/ NO, I CAN'T. - CAN /CAN'T (Lesson 4-5-6)	PARTS OF THE BODY: ARM, HEAD, HAND, MOUTH, LEG, KNEE, FOOT.	REVIEW	REVIEW 8
18-22 JUNE	EXAM	EXAM	EXAM	EXAM

**Appendix 2**

**Lesson plan**

**First grade**

**CEPI**

**CENTRO PEDAGOGICO INFANTIL**

**LESSON PLAN - LEVEL FIRST**

**WEEK FROM 22 AUGUST TO THE 26 AUGUST 20 11**

<b>SUBJECT</b>	<b>CONTENT</b>	<b>MATERIALS</b>	<b>ACTIVITIES</b>	<b>ACHIEVEMENTS</b>
<b><u>SPELLING</u></b>	UNIT 1. (P. 4-5) MY CLASSROOM:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• THAKE SHAPE TEACHER'S BOOK</li></ul>	LISTEN TO OBTAIN INFORMATION	ST WIIL BE ABLE TO IDENTIFY PEOPLE
MONDAY TO FRIDAY	- HELLO/HI	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• COLORS</li></ul>	FOLLOW DIRECTIONS AND POINT OUT	TO INTRODUCE HIMSELF AND OTHERS
	- WHATS YOU'RE NAME?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• WHITE BOARD</li></ul>	READ IN CLASS	TO DESCRIBE SCHOOL ACTIVITIES
	- HOW OLD ARE YOU?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• MARKES</li></ul>	REPEAT AND WRITE QUESTIONS	TO DESCRIBE SCHOOL SUPPLIES
	(Lesson 1)		ANSWER QUESTIONS	
			WORK IN BINAS	

			DRAW AND PAINT	
<b><u>VOCABULARY</u></b>	SCHOOL OBJECTS.	FLASH CARDS, MARKES	LISTEN AND REPEAT	ST WILL IDENTIFY SCHOOL OBJECTS
MONDAY, WEDNESDAY AND FRIDAY	EXAMPLE: CRAYONS,	WHITEBOARD, CARDS	DRAW AND PAINT	ST WILL LEARN TO USE THE SCHOOL OBJECTS
	MARKER PEN, PENCIL,	AND POSTERS.	POINT OUT	ST WILL RECOGNIZE SCHOOL OBJECTS
	PENCILCASE		MATCH VOCABULAY	
	DESK, CD PLAYER, BOARD		UNDERLINE	
	DVD, BOARD ERASER, ,		PLAY A GAME (HANGMAN)	
	BACK PACK, MOUSE, PEN,		PLAY A SIMON SAYS	
	COLORS, BOOK AND DESK		LISTEN A SONG	
			CUT AND PASTE	
<b><u>READING</u></b>	READING: MONDAY (P. 86)	SELECTIONS BOOK	LISTEN TO OBTAIN INFORMATION AND FOR	ST WILL LEARN TO IDENTIFY DAYS OF THE

			ENJOYMENT	WEEK
FRIDAY AND TUESDAY		TEACHER'S BOOK	FOLLOW DIRECTIONS	ST WILL LEARN TO TALK ABOUT DAYS
		WHITE BOARD	RETELL STORIES	ST WILL LEARN TO NEW VOCABULARY
		CD-PLAYER	TALK ABOUT HIS FAVORITE DAY	ST WILL IDENTIFY AND DRAW THEIR FAVORITE DAY
		READING'S CD	LISTEN AND REPEAT DAYS OF THE WEEK	
		MARKES	DRAW AND PAINT	
<b><u>SCIENCE</u></b>	UNIT 1 (P.4)	SCIENCE BOOK	REPEAT THE NEW VOCABULARY	ST WILL UNDERSTAND THAT WE LIVE ON A PLANET
TUESDAY, WEDNESDAY AND FRIDAY	LIFE ON PLANET EARTH	MARKES	WRITE SENTENCES USING THE NEW VOCABULARY	UNDERSTAND THAT THERE ARE ROCKS, SOIL, AIR AND WATER
		WHITE BOARD	DRAW AND PAINT	LEARN ABOUT DAY
		POSTERS	CUT AND PASTE	LEARN ABOUT NIGHT
		REALIA MATERIALS	SELECT AND IDENTIFY THE	LEARN ABOUT PEOPLE,

		(ROCKS, WATER, SOIL AND LEAVES)	REALIA MATERIAL (ROCKS, WATER, SOIL, AND LEAVES)	ANIMALS AND PLANTS.
			POINT OUT	LEARN THAT SUN IS A STAR











