CASE STUDY: ANALYSIS OF THE WAY TWO SCHOOLS INTRODUCE ENGLISH IN EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

Final Degree Project

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Abstract

Recently, an increasing number of schools in Catalonia have bet on introducing English as a foreign language in Early Childhood education. Needless to say, students at this stage are still learning their mother language. Thus, it is important that teachers have specific formation in this field so as to introduce it properly, taking into account the language development processes and stages that children are going through, and act in accordance to this formation. This project is aimed to discover how two different schools - and thus, two different English teachers – both in very similar socioeconomic and sociolinguistic contexts introduce English in Early Childhood education and analyse whether teachers' formation and believes are coherent with their performance in class. To do so, we have observed 8 English sessions in a 4 years-old class - throughout a common observation grid - and have carried out an interview to each teacher. From the results obtained with the observations and the interviews, some conclusions have been drawn: there is coherence between teachers' formation and their performance in class and between what they say they do and what they really do. Also school reality is not far from what is being taught in university.

Key words: teacher cognition, English learning, teaching English, Early Childhood Education

Resum

Recentment, a Catalunya, un gran nombre d'escoles han apostat per introduir l'anglès com a llengua estrangera durant el segon cicle d'Educació Infantil. Tenint en compte que durant aquesta etapa els estudiants encara estan adquirint la seva primera llengua, és important que els i les mestres d'anglès d'educació infantil tinguin una formació específica sobre com introduir l'anglès en aquestes edats (3-6 anys). L'objectiu d'aquest treball és descobrir com dues escoles diferents - i, per tant, dues mestres d'anglès d'educació infantil diferents - , amb contextos socioeconòmics i socioculturals similars, introdueixen l'anglès a l'etapa d'educació infantil i analitzar si la formació de la mestra i les seves creences són coherents amb la seva actuació a l'aula. Per fer-ho, hem optat per fer 8 observacions (4 a cada escola) en una classe de P4 - amb una graella d'observació comuna - i una entrevista a cada mestra. Dels resultats obtinguts, n'hem extret algunes conclusions: hi ha coherència entre la formació de les mestres i la seva actuació a l'aula així com el que diuen o creuen que fan i el que realment fan a l'aula. També trobem que la realitat de les escoles no està tan lluny del que s'ensenya a la universitat com pensàvem.

Paraules clau: cognició del docent, aprenentatge de l'anglès, ensenyament de l'anglès, Educació Infantil

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1. Introduction

In recent years, in a world in command of globalization, English has become a shared language used to establish relationships among the citizens of the world. In this context, schools have noticed the importance of teaching English since the first moment children enter school so as to widen their opportunities for the future. Families have also been putting a strong pressure on schools for what refers to English language, and thus, schools have had to define themselves towards language teaching. In this context, many teachers have needed to specialize in English teaching and start to do formation courses so as to be able to teach this language. However, sometimes, coherence between what these teachers believe, her formation and what they do in the class is not perceived.

The main objective of this project is to describe how two different schools with similar socioeconomic and sociocultural contexts teach English in Early Childhood education, and see if there is coherence between the teachers' formation, beliefs and performance. The schools that are analysed in this study are Escola Vedruna-Tona and Acadèmia Igualada, both of them private schools in Catalunya.

We chose this topic because we thought doing such study could be useful for our future, both to take ideas and to have a critical view. Moreover, carrying out this research, we wanted to know the criteria the teachers follow for choosing the methodologies they use and be able, someday, to have one criteria ourselves.

This project has been developed throughout approximately 9 months. It started on September 2016 when the topic was chosen and a first proposal was presented. After that, we started gathering data related to our topic and we examined what the relevant literature said about it so that we could have a theoretical framework in which we could base on to do our research. At the same time, we designed some observation guidelines and interviews, to later on, be able to analyse. In order to do the analysis, we created two comparison tables so as to get easier to results and the conclusions, which were written in the end.

We will start this paper presenting a theoretical framework were the main aspects of second language learning are defined. As this project deals with the methodologies that teachers use in their English classes, we have also included in this part a section where we explain different language teaching methodologies suggested by several authors. After the theoretical framework, the methodology followed to do this study is commented and deeply

described. The second part of this project, the study, includes the methodology we have followed to carry out this project and four analysis we have done: two analysis about what both teachers had said and what we had observed; an analysis between the two interviews to the teachers; and an analysis between the observations done to all the sessions of the teachers. Thirdly, in the conclusions, we present again our objectives and hypothesis and we discuss them relating them to the theoretical framework. Finally, in the conclusions we also consider further research.

2. Theoretical framework: English language in Infant Education in Catalonia

2.1 Legal framework

Having in mind that the main aim of Early Childhood education is contributing to children's social, affective, motor, emotional, cognitive and physical development, English can be introduced in this stage if done properly. Nowadays, English teaching in Infant Education is becoming an important need in our educative community: there is a general commitment to plurilingualism and a development of English language as a language-phenomenon worldwide. As the Common European Framework (2001: 168) states "plurilingual and pluricultural competence refer to the ability to use languages for the purposes of communication and to take part in intercultural interaction where a person, viewed as a social agent has proficiency of varying degrees, in several languages and experience of several cultures".

Despite the fact that English teaching is not compulsory in Early Childhood education in Catalonia being, in fact, and as stated in the Decree 181/2008 of the 9 of September, it is the institution's decision whether to teach English in Early Childhood Education or not: depending on the school's context, several schools bet on introducing it in early ages. If the sociolinguistic context of the school allows it, the school can decide, especially in the last school year of the cycle, if they want to do a first approximation to the oral use of a foreign language, which in our country is usually English. Thus, as Flores and Corcoll (2008) state, the strong social demand and the deployment of new laws have made it necessary to have primary teachers specializing in foreign languages, graduates or even natives without pedagogical training to give an hour a week of English in Infant Education. However, the unfolding documents of the Infant Education Curriculum (2009) establish that in order to teach English in Infant Education it is essential to know this school stage so as to make the language be integrated in the reality and contents of the class and, at the same time, provide children with plenty of opportunities to be in contact with it so the language appears naturally in the context (it is contextualized) and it becomes meaningful for them. Thus, teachers must ensure a rich and friendly environment in the class with diverse and multifunctional spaces and activities, such as games, that will lead to a better acquisition of the language, taking always into account the other 2 essential areas to work on and develop: discovery of oneself and others, and discovery of the context.

Case Study: Analysis of the way two schools introduce English in Early Childhood Education

The unfolding documents of the Infant Education Curriculum (2009) also state that if a school wants to introduce children into a foreign language in the second cycle of Infant Education (3-6 years old), they need to have in mind that initiating someone into a language means using the language to interrelate and to discover, to express feelings and experiences. Likewise, they also claim that a foreign language does not mean repeating and restricting by means of attractive resources, but sweetly put the children and the L2 in contact. What they suggest is that children need to realize that a foreign language is used as the first language, to communicate and to express oneself, having the same use as the languages spoken at home. Having in mind that a language is first understood and then produced, teachers must enhance and give continuity to the inner interest that children have for learning a new language, understanding more things in it and, finally, expressing using its different codes. Thus, a language needs to be introduced naturally in everyday situations so that children will be later competent in using it in real and common situations. The document also highlights the importance of oral language, both in students' L1 and L2, for learning and communicating. It is for this reason that classroom tasks, as the Common European Framework (2001) underpins, need to be mainly communicative, so students have to negotiate, comprehend and express meaning to communicate, both if the tasks reflect a real-life use or if they are merely pedagogic. Furthermore, the Common European Framework (2001) establishes a distinction between what the main focus of these two sort of tasks is: whereas in the first one, the focus is basically on the meaning of the message produced, the language learning tasks are intended to work both in the meaning and in how the meanings are comprehended, expressed and negotiated. Thus, at any stage in which English language is taught, the attention must fall on the meaning and the form, talking also into account the fluency and the accuracy when developing the task. Through this, both task performance and language learning will be enabled.

The Common European Framework (2001) adds to the statements above that context conditions, such as noise, or the pressure one can be submitted into when listening or speaking the English language. This conditions may affect on one's capacities to understand and communicate. Moreover, all the language that one can understand and produce is strongly related to their closest context, both external and mental. For this reason, every new item introduced in the new language needs to come up from a real situation in the class, from a real and significant context. Related to this, the child does not learn and acquire the new ideas isolated from what they already know but they turn up to be competent in two or more ways of communicating and acting, become plurilingual and develop a multiculturality, which will lead to a more rich and complex personality allowing, later on, to empower the capacity to learn new languages.

Case Study: Analysis of the way two schools introduce English in Early Childhood Education

To what the Llei d'Ensenyament de Catalunya (2009) regards, it emphasizes that schools must include, at least, the learning of one foreign language, so that students acquire competences to listen, read, talk and write in this language. However, it can be introduced both in Infant Education or in Primary Education depending on the school's decision. The law also points out the fact that the Linguistic Project, following the prescriptions of Departament d'Ensenyament de Catalunya, has to establish which the foreign language taught in the center is and how it is taught. On his behalf, Departament d'Ensenyament de Catalunya (2009) also makes reference to the Linguistic Project: it is a document which gathers all the aspects relating to the use of the languages in the center. In this document, schools have to define their treatment to the Catalan language and, if necessary, of the Aranes language as a vehicular and learning language. They also need to establish in this document the learning process of Spanish, the different options they have towards the foreign languages and the general criteria for the adaptation of the languages in the sociolinguistic reality of the school. Finally, the educative continuity and the coherence to what refers the linguistic uses, in the school services and the activities organized by associations of families, also need to be part of this institutional document. This Linguistic Project needs to be developed both by state schools and private schools maintained by public funds, and it needs to be part of the Educative Project of the Center.

Regarding the foreign language teachers, as the Common European Framework (2001) states, the person that introduces children into a new language must have a deep knowledge of the different fields and aspects of the language and decide what the most suitable aspects to teach are according to the age of the students. Though an interesting thing is focusing on children's interests, the educator must manage it to go one step further so they acquire the competences needed to go on with communication in their near future so they are competent, efficient and effective. Moreover, the teacher must know how their students learn to adapt the way of introducing the language, which is, the educator must decide which the competences, tasks, activities and strategies are to introduce a new language (Common European framework, 2001). Another thing that the educator must take into account is the difficulties children may face when learning a new language. Such difficulties are, for example, the pronunciation of certain sounds (some sounds of the L2 may not exist on the L1) and the translation-meaning of some words, which is, there might be a word in the L2 which has no translation, no exact word, in the L1. Furthermore, it is important to establish a distinction between plurilinguism and pluriculturalism. As claimed by the European Common framework (2001), whereas plurilinguism means the mastering of a dominant language of a community, pluriculturalism entails a good knowledge of a

community. However, pluriglinguism does not imply pluriculturalism and the other way around. Developing the pluricultural and plurilingual competence presents a transitory profile and changing configuration, although it does not mean instability or imbalance, but it rather helps in fostering the awareness of one's identity (Common European Framework, 2001).

2.2 Integrated treatment of languages

In a society in constant change, in which migrations from Africa and Asia have grown in the last years in Europe, there is a new social need in the educational area. Education must enhance students to be competent and communicate in different languages when they leave school. For this reason, there is an increasing demand from society that schools widen the range of languages offered during the school years (Ferrer, Rodríguez, 2010). Despite the fact that schools are currently hosting a great amount of students coming from different countries and, thus, with different cultures and mother tongues - which is, the class groups are linguistically heterogeneous - there is a lack of formation and strategies for teachers so they are able take advantage of this situation. That is why Guasch (2010) underpins that the students' linguistic formation, both in their L1 and L2, needs to be planned in a way that it implies all the school areas. To do so, two things need to be taken into account: how the language is used in the curricular areas and ensuring a coordinated planification of the treatment of languages in the different linguistic areas. Ferrer and Rodriguez (2010) add that a language is only learnt when used and shared, interacting in a shared context with the more capable ones.

As Hawkins (1999) stated, one's experience in the learning of the own mother tongue will directly influence the successful learning of a second language. Eddy Roulet, quoted by Guasch et al. in the book "El tractament integrat de les llengues" (2010: 15), claims that the main problem that students face in the schools - to what learning a second language regards - is that there is a discordance in the way of teaching students' first language and how their second language is taught. Certainly, one learns their mother language by listening to it when something meaningful is being said. They first understand, then produce. A language is not learnt as words or sentences but as a whole with a meaning. Indeed, a language is usually learnt to communicate and, thus, the focus when teaching a language should rely on knowing how to use it, which is, the procedural knowledge of the language (Guasch, 2010).

In relation with the fact that how a mother language is learnt differs a lot from how a foreign language is learnt, Hawkins (1999) points out that, in schools, students need a scaffolding, a

kind of bridge so they can relate their mother tongue with their foreign language; actually, not also the two languages on themselves but how things learnt in the mother tongue and the process that has lead to acquire this things can be transferred to the acquisition of a second or foreign language. Hawkins (1999) defends this by saying that in our mind, knowledge is not divided. Thus, whenever teaching a language in the school, it cannot be isolated from how the other languages are taught nor what is being learnt should have no relation with the rest of contents.

Thus, James and Harris (2010) defend the idea of fostering a cross-curricular linguistic education so as to develop the metalinguistic awareness in students, which is, approaching languages similarly in the different areas and establishing "matèries pont" so as to globally understand how a language works (on its overall). Also, it means using the strategies used to learn one's L1 to learn their L2. It is teachers' task to teach students how to learn, to provide them with these strategies to learn or making students aware of them, and help children adapting and using these strategies in different learning situations. They should also help students being conscious of the similarities shared among the two languages observed (James, Harris, 2010).

So as to approach a foreign language in a global way, some schools have bet on developing curricular subjects using the foreign language as a mean of communication, as a tool of building and sharing knowledge. This differs from the approach that many schools have followed for several years - and still do - of understanding a language as an object of study, as a code that needs to be known and analysed. In fact, the first approach mentioned - using the language as a communication tool - is meant to develop the communicative competence of the learners. James and Harris (2010) states that so as to develop this competence in students, teachers should offer activities in which students play a main and active role, letting them express themselves using different languages in different situations. In Early Childhood education a foreign language should play the same role, and it is important to make students aware of the fact that any language is used to communicate with others. Needless to say, before learning and acquiring a new language, students must know that those other languages exist. For this reason, Schmidt (1990), inside Buriro and Kakepoto (2013), define 3 different senses of consciousness: awareness, intention and knowledge, described as *Perception, Noticing and Understanding.* In the same way, Lemus (2010) claims that there is no acquisition without the minimum grade of consciousness, which is perception. Thus, this may be an aim to introduce English in early ages.

2.3 What is said by the research and what is being done in other countries

There is large debate to get to an agreement on what age English as a foreign language should be introduced. In Catalunya, the amount of public schools that bet on introducing it in Early Childhood education are 1379 (information from Departament d'Ensenyament de Catalunya). In the past, people used to think that introducing more than one language at the same time was rather counter-productive. However, with the passage of time, people have started to realize and to think about the benefits of being a bilingual person and knowing how to decipher language. Though, not everyone has the same opinion. Nowadays, whereas some opinions defend the idea of not being necessary to learn a second language until a first language is fully acquired, some studies "advise to start teaching English as soon as possible since this learning cooperates in a full consolidation and acquisition of the first language" (Piquer, 2006: 7). Siguan (1998) who also defends this idea, also claims that although it is easier for a young child to acquire linguistic expressions, and specially to acquire phonetics, it does not imply that it is impossible to learn a foreign language with a great competence when being an adult.

On his behalf, Cummins (1998), who talks about the additive bilingualism enrichment principal, sets forth that both intellectual and linguistic progress can be affected positively by early bilingualism. Moreover, he also claims that children who have been immersed in more than one language, have more practice in analysing meanings than monolingual children have (since they have had to distinguish between two languages), and that this is a great opportunity for educators to enhance children's ability to compare and contrast aspects of the two languages. As a conclusion, what Cummins (1998: 36) claims is that "the development of additive bilingual and biliteracy skills entails no negative consequences for children's academic, linguistic, or intellectual development." On the contrary, he underpins that, although not conclusive, the evidence points that bilingual children seem to have intellectual benefits. This is the reason why he also states that "language and discourse should become a focus of study within the immersion curriculum", since contrasting aspects of two languages and focusing on structural, sociolinguistic, and sociopolitical aspects of language is the way to enhance awareness of language.

Cummins (1998) also talks about the linguistic interdependence principle. This principle defends that although the surface aspects of different languages such as fluency,

pronunciation, rhythm, and so on are clearly separate, there is an underlying cognitive/academic proficiency that is common in all languages. "This *common underlying proficiency* makes possible the transfer of cognitive/academic or literacy-related skills across languages" (Cummins, 1998: 37). And this is not only beneficiary for the transferring of knowledge from the L1 to the L2, but also the from of the L2 to the L1. Thus, if children have problems with certain skills in their L2, it has sense to enhance and promote the development of this skill in their L1 (for them it should be easier) so that they can transfer their knowledge from one language to the other.

All in all, as a conclusion, not all the researchers in this field have the same criteria and different points of view are defended. What is totally true, according to the United States National Institute of Health and as quoted by Early Advantage (2008: 1) in Early language learning research, is that there is a period of time - called "critical period" - "during an organism's development in which the brain is optimally capable of acquiring a specific ability, provided that appropriate environmental stimuli are present." They go on to state that "Humans as well as some animals are known to have a critical period during which language is acquired". So it is essential that teachers provide children the proper communicative and learning contexts so as to acquire and develop both their first language and a second language.

2.4 Different methodologies to introduce English in Infant Education

Regarding to the second language acquisition, the contexts in which this learning takes place, which can appear naturally dealing with everyday routines and everyday situations (Piquer, 2006), must foster mainly the development of both oral (speaking) and aural (listening) skills which are the ones that are more interesting to be developed in early years as authors such as Gouin, James or Krashen defend.

Following this principle, young learners spend a lot of time listening to everything what is being said in the class session. Even though they will not understand every single word of the message, they do understand some points or keywords. This is reached thanks to the teacher using a systematic routine (real routine) to deal with words and expressions several times - not only once - focusing on them within a natural and real context, in which these words and expressions come naturally. Children will initially show comprehension to the message through a physical action, which will eventually evolve to a verbal response when

students feel ready and confident enough to produce oral language, thus, to speak. James J. Asher (1977) talked about this readiness in his method Total Physical Response. The Total Physical Response method consists of the teacher giving oral instructions in the target language and children doing them, thus showing comprehension, without speaking (no verbal response), so the silent period of students is respected and they themselves will be the ones who will decide when they feel ready to speak. Activities that require a Total Physical Response make children be more actively involved and engaged in the activity as they are asked to do something apart from listening. During this activities, it is important that teachers speak with accuracy and fluency as they become a model of language for students.

Moreover, when being exposed to oral foreign language at an early age, young children get used and familiar to a characteristic language pattern, intonation, rhythm, stress and sound awareness which will help later on to a better acquisition of the language in terms of pronunciation (native-like pronunciation), grammar and semantics, which would be understood as linguistic proficiency (Early Advantage, 2008: 1). Activities such as songs, rhymes and tongue twisters are a great way to work on sound discrimination and pronunciation. As Early Advantage (2008: 3) state, "if older learners are unable to really hear foreign language phonemes, then they are less likely to be able to produce those same sounds". Needless to say, in Early Childhood education we are not looking for linguistic proficiency but for children to get used and understand messages said orally in the target language. As Pinter (2006: 46) argued in her book *Teaching young language learners*, students use their top-down processing (schematic and word knowledge) to fill in the gaps in their understanding, to make guesses on the meaning. However, it is not too developed in young children, as they have few schematic knowledge, though eventually it will increase.

As a matter of fact, there is nothing more important than immersing children in real language contexts and isolated situations with plenty of repetition in which they can succeed in learning and remembering several structures. For instance, by using resources as storybooks, in which there is a clear context and a pattern or a sentence structure that keeps repeating all along the book (repeating models), we can get children to start speaking as they know how to organize a sentence and they feel confident to participate because they know what to say (they can anticipate) and how to say it. The structures that appear in the storybook, as they are contextualized, become meaningful patterns for students. This, indeed, shows how the first language is acquired: with immersion but also with systematic activities to learn the rules of the language. As quoted in the book *Approaches and methods for teaching English* written by Richards and Rodgers (2014), this idea was first proposed by Gouin who started to talk about it at the end of the 19th Century. In his method, called Direct

Method, he proposes to teach a foreign language in the same way the first language is taught: in a natural way. It is based on giving class instructions (orally) in the target language, using English all the time. Even though, initially, students will not understand everything, eventually they will. Demonstration and association of concepts play an important role when teaching and learning new vocabulary. Gouin also recommends to speak about things that are familiar to students so they can use their top-down processing; in that way, everyday vocabulary and everyday sentences appear naturally.

In the same way, and as explained by Krashen (1983), the Natural Approach, developed in 1982, also suggests to teach a foreign language in the same order the mother tongue is learnt, thus listening and speaking skills are the ones that need to be developed first to acquire a language. Which is, in our mother tongue we first understand a message that is being orally told to us, then we are able to produce oral messages and, eventually, we will learn how to write and read. Krashen (1983) also claims that if one wants to acquire a language, we need to be exposed sufficiently to it so we get used to it and the input ones receives needs to be comprehensible enough for the learner so they can understand the message, thus it has to be adapted to the learners level (using a lot of mime) and the content that is being told needs to be gradually stepped and introduced in the natural order. In fact, this method is the one in which immersion is based since communication is thought as the primary function of language: meaning is paramount.

However, Flores and Corcoll (2008) agree in that there are many schools that adapt the didactic sequences used for Primary education in Early Childhood education, which leads to few guarantees to provide a good language model as they reduce English to three or four semantic fields presented in a entertaining way, such as games, songs and tales. "This has not allowed to perceive English as a useful and natural, but as a different language which is useful to play and sing" (Flores and Corcoll, 2008: 2). Although this valuation can have a positive side from a motivational point of view, sometimes it ends up being tiring and this poor approach to English results in making children not like being introduced to a foreign language. It is in this moment when feelings like frustration and dislike start to appear. It is for this reason that we have to be careful with such approaches because it is the good quality of the first contact with the language the one that will guarantee students a progressive approach to impact positively on their future learning (Piquer, 2006).

2.5 Teacher cognition

Teacher cognition refers to what teachers think, belief and know and its relationship to their performance in the classroom, in other words it is, as stated by Borg (2003), an unobservable cognitive dimension of teaching. In the field of second language learning, it implies talking about how the teachers were taught the language they are teaching, what formation they have received to teach this language, what their beliefs towards this language are, and finally their classroom practice. As Borg (2003: 86) claims, "teachers learn a lot about teaching through their vast experience as learners", however, on the other hand, in terms of the impact of teacher education on teacher cognition, an influential review by Kagan (1992) quoted by Borg (2003), often referred to in language teaching studies, suggested that the relationship is not significant. Nevertheless, critics of her synthesis by Dunkin (1995; 1996) also quoted by Borg (2003), have raised serious doubts about her conclusions. Finally, concerning teacher's performance, Borg (2003) also states that teachers' cognitions emerge consistently as a powerful influence on their practices, though, these do not ultimately always reflect teachers' stated beliefs, personal theories, and pedagogical principles.

As for the level of language that teachers need to have, Llei d'Ensenyament de Catalunya (2009) defends that all teachers need to master two official languages and it is Departament d'Ensenyament de Catalunya's task to take the necessary measures to update the teachers' linguistic competence and foster the creation and the use of didactic tools to make easier the learning of all languages. Nevertheless, it does not make special reference to the level that English teachers or foreign language teachers need to have.

3. Methodology

3.1 Objectives and hypothesis

Our research was aimed to work on one general objective: describing how 2 different schools with similar socioeconomic and sociocultural contexts teach English in Early Childhood education. Having that in mind, more specifically, we wanted to describe how two teachers teach English in Early Childhood Education in schools with very similar contexts (both of them private schools with demanding contexts). In order to do that, we wanted to know the teachers' formation, believes and performance so as to see if there was coherence between all these factors. Thus, in relation to the teachers' formation and believes, more specifically, we wanted to know the teachers' background and everything they thought about the English teaching-learning process. As far as the teachers' performance is concerned, our specific objectives were to see how the teachers develop their class sessions (knowing the difficulties they face, the materials they use and to what extend they give support to the teachers' way of working and how they are used, the teachers' role, the planning and the didactic sequences). Apart from that, two objectives that we also had were to know the relationship between English teaching and the other languages in the schools (the school linguistic approach) and also knowing how English is taught in all the stages of the schools in order to see if there is continuity or not.

In order to achieve all these objectives, we used different instruments: the direct observation, interviews to the English teachers and the schools' documents. All these instruments let us analyse how is English taught in two different private schools and establish conclusions.

Here there is a table in which our objectives and the main instruments are summarized:

Objectives	Instruments
Describing how two teachers teach English in Early Childhood Education in schools with very similar contexts. - Knowing the teachers' formation - Knowing the teachers' beliefs - Knowing the teachers' performance	Interview Observation Interview Interview and observation Observation
Seeing how the teachers develop their class sessions - Difficulties - Materials (to what extend materials	 Interview and observation Interview and observation

give support to the teachers' way of working and how they are used) - Teachers' role - Planning and didactic sequences	Observation Interview
Knowing the teachers' background	Interview
Knowing the relationship between how English is taught and how other languages are taught	Interview School documents
Knowing how English is taught in Primary education - is there continuity?	Interview School documents

Table 1: Objectives

For our project, we had two main research questions. First of all we wondered to what extend would the teachers formation and devotion for teaching English contribute to their good performance, all in all we wondered if teachers' performance would reflect their beliefs, their formation and their background. For this reason, we wanted to see if teachers only limited themselves to improvise and keep doing always the same things without having clear and specific objectives of what they were doing or if instead, they followed their beliefs and put into practice their formation. Another aspect we wanted to discover was to up to what point would there be relationship between the University formation and the school practice. Thus, we wanted to prove if teachers really took into account their formation when they designed their sessions or if on the contrary, they did not use new methodologies or strategies to teach a foreign language, so teaching in the same way they learnt.

In this table we summarize our research questions:

Research questions	
1. To what extend will there be coherence between the teachers' beliefs and formation and their performance in the class?	2. Up to what point will there be relation between the school practice and the university formation of the teachers?

Table 2: Research questions

3.2 Methodological design

Our research work consists of 2 case studies of 2 private schools in which 2 different ways of introducing English in Early Childhood education are slightly analysed and deeply described. The description is based on empirical research of the reality we want to study, which is, it is done by direct observation of 8 different class sessions in two Y4 English classes, 4 of them in La Vedruna de Tona and the 4 left in Acadèmia Igualada. Thus, the educative paradigm in which we have developed our research is the interpretative one as we are trying to understand the reality of a context taking into account the opinions, points of view and the meanings that people who work on that context have.

Apart from the direct observation in the context, for which we have designed an observation guideline so we focus on the same things to observe, we have created an interview, the same for both teachers that participate in the case study, that has been recorded. The main aim of the interview is to see whether there is coherence between the teachers' believes, their way of acting and the formation they have received, and some of the questions of the interview are *what importance they (teachers) and the whole educative community give to English, what formation they (teachers) have received to teach English* or *how they plan the class sessions.* We decided to record and transcribe the interviews so that we could afterwards deeply examine and analyse everything the teachers had expressed. In this way, we could better establish comparisons between one teacher and the other one's words and get to some conclusions taking into account what they told us and what we could observe.

Finally, the institutional documents of each school have helped us to have a more clear idea of how other languages are taught and dealt with in each school so as to see if there is a relationship in the way of teaching them and teaching English.

3.3 Participants

The participants in our research are two private schools: Acadèmia Igualada school, located in Igualada (Anoia) and Escola Vedruna Tona, from Tona (Osona), and their Early Childhood education English teachers. There are several reasons why we have chosen these two schools. First of all, our initial idea was to carry out the research in the two schools where we were doing our placement: La Sínia from Vic and Escola Vedruna de Tona, but we realized that it would be really difficult to get to any conclusion because the socioeconomic and

sociocultural contexts of these two schools are really different. Moreover, in La Sínia, English is not introduced until the first cycle of Primary Education and thus, it would have been difficult to establish conclusions if we had analysed how English is taught in two different stages. Then we realized that one of us studied in a school with similar context conditions than Escola Vedruna, so we decided to work with this school because we could have easy access to it and know quite well the school. On the other hand, thus, we have chosen Escola Vedruna Tona because it is also the school where one of us went as a child and also because it is where she does the placement this school year. All in all, we have chosen these two schools because they are both private schools with a very similar socioeconomic and sociocultural context in which families have a strong demand for English teaching in the school, and because we both have easy access to them.

The school participants of the research are the Early Childhood English teacher of Acadèmia Igualada and Escola Vedruna-Tona and two 4 years-old classes of the schools with 27 students in Acadèmia Igualada and 25 students in Escola Vedruna. We chose to do the observations in Y4 classes because it was the middle stage in Early Childhood Education and if we both observed the same courses we would better be able to, later on, establish conclusions. Moreover, as the Academia Igualada's observations were done on purpose - we visited the school expressly to carry out the observations - the time that fit us best to do so was the time that Y4 students had English class.

3.3.1 Educative Project of the schools

As said in its Educative pProject, Escola Vedruna Tona is a private school set up in 1874 in Tona, a town of around 8000 inhabitants. The school is placed in Carrer Germana Victòria 21, in the middle of the town. It belongs to a broad net of schools called Vedruna from all over the world (36 Vedruna schools in Catalonia) which started their path together in 1826, when in Catalonia, women schools were starting to arise. Although all Vedruna schools are different, they are very united for a same history and a shared educative project. Besides, Vedruna schools are religious schools inheriting of an educative initiative inspired by a very important educator: Joaquima de Vedruna i Mas, by means of the foundation "Germanes Carmelites de la Caritat".

On the other hand, Acadèmia Igualada is a direct-grant school set on 1939, right after the Spanish Civil War ended up, when Igualada's council asked to the school's funder to create a Secondary education school. It is located in the upper part of Igualada (Carrer Sant Josep, 110), a town of around 39.000 citizens. It offers education from Nursery to Vocational

formation. One of the main distinctive features of the school is its commitment to develop on the students the capacity of being citizens of the world. Thus, there is a strong and close relationship among students and teachers, with a great tutorial job from teachers to enhance students' whole person development. The school also wants to promote in students a curious attitude and criticism towards society and the world. As the school's educative project states, Acadèmia Igualada has been for so long interested in the teaching-learning processes of a foreign language. Moreover, the school bets on fostering the scientific curiosity and the humanistic formation. In Early Childhood education, school's main aim is to ensure children's global development in an affective environment, full of stimulus and thus, help them developing their capacities, autonomy and self-steem.

3.3.2 Linguistic Project of the schools

Regarding the Linguistic Project of Escola Vedruna-Tona, the vast majority of the students in the school are Catalan speakers, although it is detected an increment of the number of newcomer families having Spanish as a first language. However, the number of families coming from other countries is not significant. The environment of the centre is speaking Catalan and they found the presence of Catalan language in all the areas: social, cultural, sportive, leisure… In this context, the vehicular language is Catalan, which is also spread to all the fields of the school life. The second language taught in the school is Spanish which in Infant Education has the dedication of one hour per week. The foreign language to which children is introduced is English and children do two hours per week, one in which they play games, sing songs and listen to storybooks and another in which they carry out routines in English. As stated in the Linguistic Project, the school wants children to get familiarized with English language, and it is its main objective. In the Linguistic Project there are few details given on how English is introduced and dealt with. In infant Education it is worked through storybooks, games and songs, and in the first cycle of Primary Education, it keeps being worked orally. However, after the second cycle of Primary Education, they start introducing written English and they keep doing it until the last course of Secondary Education, increasing the contents and the levels each year.

To what Acadèmia Igualada's Linguistic Project regards, it claims that Catalan is the communication and teaching-learning language of the school. However, it points out that most of the students have Spanish as their mother tongue, although there are many families that speak both Catalan and Spanish at home. All of them, though, understand and speak Catalan perfectly. Thus, a huge amount of students communicate to one another in Spanish when they are outside the classrooms. Despite this fact, as stated before, Catalan is used to

teach and learn most of the subjects - except for English and Spanish - and to communicate, and the school teachers and stuff always look for opportunities to make students use it. Referring to the English language, it is introduced orally in M1 (1 years-old children), with a lot of images and visual support (just like in M2). In Infant Toddler education it is used the Artigal Method. In Primary education they do, apart from the English subject itself, Arts&Crafts and Sciences in English (CLIL methodology); with this, they try students to apply what they have learnt in the English lessons to other curricular areas and different situations not linked to the English language subject itself. Lately, the school has introduced German as a mandatory subject for High School students. Nevertheless, the Linguistic Project of Acadèmia Igualada does not talk much about how English is introduced in Infant Education, thus it is the teacher's decision whether to do it in one way or in another.

3.4 Main instruments of the research

In order to gather all the information needed to carry out the research, the instruments that have been used are mainly two: the direct observation and the interviews to the English teachers. We have used direct observation because we thought it was the best way to see the teachers' performance and to know which kind of activities they carried out during their sessions. Thus, with the observation, we wanted to have a real contact with the English classes carried out by the teacher and be able to triangulate all to information we had gathered: the interviews, the school documents, and the direct observation. In order to take down everything that happened in the class, we did an observation guideline, the same for each school, to fill in during the sessions, which was the following[1]:

What is the way of introducing English?	
How does the teacher start the sessions?	
How does the teacher end the sessions?	
How does the teacher address to the children?	
What kind of materials and resources are used to develop the sessions?	

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[1] See the notes taken in the observation guidelines in Appendix number 1

What spaces are used?	
How is the space organized?	
How are the children displayed?	
Which are the most worked skills?	
How is the interaction between children?	
How does the teacher motivate the children?	
How does the teacher grab children's attention?	

Table 3: Observation grid

The table below summarizes what we could observe in each class session, and the analysis carried out of the observations is stated in the section 4 of the document (Data analysis):

	Escola Vedruna-Tona	**Acadèmia Igualada**
Session 1	16th of February (15:00h-16:00h) – They do the initial routine and the teacher introduces children the book of "Handa's surprise".	8th of February (12:00h-12:55h) – They do the "Hello" routine and say how they feel, they deal with the animals and represent one, song about animals to move, talk about the weather.
Session 2	23rd of February (15:00h-16:00h) – They do the initial routine and they play a memory game with the cards of the animals and the fruits appearing in the book "Handa's surprise". They have to match the animals and the fruits separately.	22nd of March (12:00h-12:55h) – They do the "Hello" routine and say how they feel, deal with things they like and they do not like (related with the topics they had dealt before: animals, food, colours…), deal with the colours, talk about the weather.
Session 3	2nd of March (15:00h-16:00h) – They do the initial routine and they play a memory game with the cards of the animals and the	29th of March (12:00h-12:55h) – They practice a show, a theatre act.

	fruits appearing in the book "Handa's surprise". They have to match the animals with the fruits they take in the book.	
Session 4	9th of March (15:00h-16:00h) – They play the "telephone game" with the fruits that appear in the book "Handa's surprise", they watch the story of the book in the screen and finally listen to some rocket songs.	5th of April (12:00h-12:55h) – They do the "Hello" routine and say how they feel, deal with the body parts, song about the body parts, introduce new vocabulary about the spring and song about the spring, talk about the weather.

Table 4: School sessions

It is important to point out that observations were done differently in each school. In the case of Escola Vedruna-Tona, the teacher was being observed without her knowing it, and all the notes were taken down after the session, since one of us was there acting as an internship teacher. Besides, since the teacher did not know she was being observed, no results were commented with the teacher after the sessions. However, in the case of Acadèmia Igualada we had to arrange some days with the teacher. Thus, she knew she was being observed. This may have conditioned teacher's performance. Moreover, the teacher told children in advance that there would be a girl observing them during 4 sessions. Despite the fact that they had never seen the observer before, they acted as if she was not there. Actually, children only reminded of the presence of the observer and looked at her when the teacher addressed her.

It would have been good if we could have observed both of us the class sessions, but it was quite complicated to find a day that fits us all, so we finally did 4 observations each, all of them in the same school and the same class.

Once we had done the observations and were analysing them, we decided to remove the first item of our observation guideline (What is the way of introducing English?), since we thought it was quite ambiguous and we had not answered the same during the observations. Moreover, we saw that it could be answered with other items we had in the same guideline, and thus, we decided it could be eliminated. On the other hand, we added an item that we called "sequence" since we noticed that the sequence of activities developed by the teacher was not reflected in any of the items we already had in the observation guideline.

On the other hand, we chose to use interviews to the teachers to know about their believes and their formation and background. With interviews, we could know everything we wanted related to the background and the formation of the teachers but also about their opinion and what they think about their performance, so about what they are doing during their class sessions. The interview we designed is the following one[2]:

1 Questions about beliefs

- a) What importance do you give to English in our society? And more specifically in Early Childhood Education?
- b) Do you share with the school your point of view about teaching English in Early Childhood Education?
- c) Do you think English is given the enough importance? Are there enough hours dedicated to its learning?
- d) What importance do you think families give to the English learning?
- e) How do you think English should be introduced in early years? How do you think children learn?
- f) Do you think the expectatives you have about the children influence the way you plan the sessions?

2 Questions about formation and background

- a) How were you taught English when you were a student?
- b) How did you get to teach English in Infant Education? Did you choose it?
- c) How long have you been teaching English?
- d) Do you think the way you learnt English has influenced you to decide to teach this language?
- e) What formation have you received to teach English in Early Childhood Education?
- f) Do you keep doing formation courses to widen your knowledge about English teaching? If you do, what are these courses?
- g) Do you belong to the APAC (Associació de Professors d'Anglès de Catalunya)?

3 Questions about performance and class development

- a) What methodology do you follow? Why did you choose to teach English this way?

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[2] See transcriptions of the interviews in the Appendix number 2

- b) Can you teach English as you want and belief or your performance is limited by the school way of understanding English?
- c) How many hours a week do you deal with English?
- d) How do plan your sessions?
- e) How do you choose the contents?
- f) What materials do you use?
- g) How do you choose the materials you use?
- h) What spaces do you use?
- i) How do you choose the spaces you use?
- j) What skills do you work most?
- k) What do you do to motivate children and grab their attention?
- l) Do you follow any structure to carry out the sessions?
- m) Which difficulties do you face when planning and carrying out your sessions?
- n) Is there communication between you and the English teacher in Primary? Is there continuity between how English is taught in Early Childhood Education and in Primary Education in the school?

Finally, another instrument we used are the school documents (Educative Project of the Centre and Linguistic Project), which were useful for us to see how the other languages are taught in the schools and also to check if there is coherence between how English is taught in Early Childhood Education and how it is taught in Primary Education.

3.5 The process

To start gathering all the information we needed to carry out our research, we decided that each of us was going to do four observations in a 4 years old class, as well as an interview to the Early Childhood education English teacher to contrast the information. Later on, we would share all the information we would have gathered and comment it in order to make a deep analysis to later on, be able to establish conclusions.

Once we had gathered all the data, we started its analysis. In order to do that, we also had to take several decisions. First of all, we decided that each one of us was going to transcribe the interview to the teachers - that lasted between 20 and 30 minutes each - so when it came to analyse them and get to some conclusions it would be easier as all the information would be gathered and organized. We also wrote down everything we had observed in the class sessions, what is to say, we filled in one observation guideline for each session. When

we were transcribing the interviews we realized that there were several questions that had not be answered and we decided to ask them to the teachers via WhatsApp voice notes and we included them into the transcription.

After doing that, both of us, together, started to do a deep and cautious analysis of everything we had observed and had been told by the teachers. We started by comparing the two interviews to the teachers together: we created a table so as to compare each answer of each question of both teachers[3]. In this table there was a column in which we did our observations - common points, differences and important information or notes to take into account - to later on, be able to write down all the analysis. Once we had done that, we started doing a table for the observations. Just like in the case of the interviews, we established a comparison between each item of the observation guideline, contrasting what one teacher did and what the other did[4]. We also had a column in this table to take down the observations. When we were doing this tables we realized that, although not having some things written down, we were conscious of them due to the observations and the extra knowledge we had about the schools and thus, we decided to integrate the information into the tables of our analysis, since we considered they were details important to remark. Once we had done these tables, we wrote down the analysis. To do the analysis between the observations done to each teacher and her interview, we decided not do any table since it was too difficult to establish a direct relationship between the items of the observation and the questions of the interview. Thus, to do that, we focused on the questions of the interview and we checked if what the teachers said was what they really did in class (what we had seen during the four observations in each class). In this case, we did not do the analysis together. Instead, each one of us did the one of the teacher she had been observing and interviewing, since we were more familiar to it. Finally, to know if there was coherence between what the teachers had said in the last question of the interview ("Is there communication between you and the English teacher in Primary? Is there continuity between how English is taught in Early Childhood Education and in Primary Education in the school?") and what they really did in the school, we checked the school documents and wrote it up in the analysis.

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[3] See Appendix number 3
[4] See Appendix number 4

4. Data analysis

4.1 Analysis and comparison between the interviews to the teachers

Comparing the two interviews we did to the teachers, we can say that in general, both of them agree on everything we talked about. If we deeply analyse the interviews we did to them, we realize that they share many points of view and that both of them face English teaching in a similar way. In fact, and for what we have seen, both the teacher from Escola Vedruna-Tona and the teacher from Acadèmia Igualada are passionate teachers who love the job they do.

4.1.1 Beliefs

If we examine what they said in the interviews, and more specifically what concerns to the beliefs they have towards English teaching, we realize that they have similar points of view towards English teaching.

To what refers to the importance given to English, both teachers agree on that English is given a lot of importance in our society (T1 turn 4 and T2 turn 1). This is the reason why they believe it needs to be introduced early: "els nens són esponges, és molt important aquest aprenentatge a les etapes primarenques" (teacher 2 turn 1). However, whereas teacher 1 thinks that it is important to introduce English early so as children get familiar with the language and regard it as a communication tool as their first language, teacher 2 gives more importance to the fact that young children absorb a new language easily. Nevertheless, both teachers agree on the fact that English in early years should be introduced orally: students need to receive a lot of input so as to get used to it and being able, later on, to produce it (T1 turn 18 and T2 turn 19).

Referring to the way the teachers think English should be introduced, teacher 2 gives importance to the fact of doing things visual and sticking to children's interests so as to grab their attention: "molt oral, amb estímuls, intentant agafar-te a allò que els crida l'atenció. O sigui, tot molt visual, auditiu, llampant, de colors per anar mantenint l'atenció, agafant-te als temes que a ells els interessen" (turn 19). On her behalf, teacher 1 does not say anything about it but about the fact of playing games and living the language every day: "l'anglès a Infantil s'hauria d'introduir de la manera com més lúdica i natural possible. Jo sóc partidària que a Infantil, els nens han de jugar molt, i sobretot jugant integren molts estuctrures

gramaticals, molt vocabulari, per tant el joc és imprescindible i és important cada dia" (turn 18). However, teacher 2 also believes in the game as a resource to teach and learn English but does not introduce it in the regular class sessions but during lunch time twice a week (turn 44). Thus, while one of them manifests working through the multiple intelligences using as resources storybooks, songs and games, the other explains that her methodology is based, mainly, on the use of drama techniques (T1 turn 46 and 48 and T2 turn 37).

As for the schools, both teachers share the same point of view with the school where they are teaching. They have the support of the school community to carry out the projects they have in mind and in this sense, they feel supported by their schools (T1 turn 6 and T2 turn 13). So, both schools give a lot of importance to the English learning (T1 turn 8 and T2 turn 3) and give support to the teachers to carry out the activities they plan or have in mind (T1 turn 50 and T2 turn 13). However, one aspect on which both teachers agree is that they would like English to be worked more hours a week (T1 turn 12 and T2 turn 46).

Moreover, both schools, Escola Vedruna-Tona and Acadèmia Igualada, bet on doing CLIL sessions in which English is not the objective but the mean to teach a content (T1 turn 12 and T2 turn 46). They also share the fact that they have a language assistant (T1 turn 12 and T2 turn 17). However, in Escola Vedruna-Tona this language assistant in only for Secondary students, whereas in Acadèmia Igualada there is a language assistant for each school cycle (Early Childhood education, Primary education and Secondary education).

As far as families are concerned, both teachers highlight the fact that in their schools there are families that give a lot of importance to English and are involved in everything related to it and there are some others, instead, that do not regard English as a key priority. In this sense, they agree in that there are many families who put pressure on the school to what regards the English learning and others that do not give such importance to this subject: "Hi ha famílies que n'hi donen molta i n'hi ha que no tanta" (T1 turn 14) / "Cada dia hi ha més famílies involucrades i a casa fan alguna coseta, però tot i així encara hi ha moltes famílies que no" (T2 turn 21).

Regarding the expectations teachers have towards children, both teachers adapt the contents of the sessions to the children they have and increase the difficulty or the number of items to work on if they feel the children respond positively or, on the contrary, they lower the contents or the difficulty if they feel the challenge is too high for the children (T1 turn 16 and T2 turn 39). It is important to highlight the fact that teacher 2 mentions that she tries to

have, a part from group expectations and objectives, individual objectives for each child (turn 21 and 42).

Finally, the skills that both teachers think that should be more worked are the listening and the speaking. In this sense, both teachers agree on the importance of working oral and aural skills in early years to introduce English and refuse working on writing and reading abilities during this cycle: "Intento potenciar sobretot parlar, escoltar i molt vocabulari. No té cap sentit que jo introdueixi l'escrit en anglès" (T1 turn 62 and 64) / "Listening i speaking, res de writing. Tot molt oral" (T2 turn 48).

4.1.2 Formation and background

Both teachers, teacher 1 and teacher 2, have also many things in common to what refers to their background and formation.

Both teacher 1 and teacher 2 learned English in a not meaningful way. Even tough teacher 2 does not specify the way she learnt English as a child, it can be interpreted that she learnt it in a traditional way (like teacher 1) because she refuses teaching it as she learnt it: "l'he après d'una manera molt diferent a com l'ensenyo. D'això sí que vull deixar-ne constància: l'he après d'una manera súper diferent al que jo intento transmetre" (turn 27). In this way, both teachers bet on teaching English in a way different from how they learnt it: in a more participative, meaningful and dynamic way. All in all, in a more experiential and motivating way. Thus, it is interesting to point out that both teachers remark a lot that they do not teach nor want to teach as they were taught (T1 turn 26 and 36 and T2 turn 37). It is for this reason, also, that in both cases, the way they learnt English has influenced their decision to teach English, maybe not in a specific way but to have clear that they do not want to teach as they were taught.

Referring to their decision to teach English, in both cases, someone told the teachers that they were suitable and good at teaching, both for the relation with the children and for the English matter (T1 turn 32 and 34 and T2 turn 15 and 29). Besides, they both had considered becoming teachers. It was, somehow, their vocation. It is also interesting to point out that both teachers studied in Universitat de Vic and chose the minor/itinerary of English (T1 turn 30 and T2 via Whatsapp).

However, not both of them have been teaching English for the same time. Whereas teacher 1 has been teaching English for 3 years, teacher 2 has been doing it for 9 years (T1 turn 2 and T2 turn 52). Both of them, though, have always taught English in the same school (T1 turn 2 and T2 turn 54).

As far as her additional formation is concerned, both of them travelled abroad to learn English. However, teacher 1 did it before starting the degree since she was not motivated with the English language: "el que sí que em va motivar va ser marxar a l'estranger" (turn 28). On the other hand, teacher 2 went to an English speaking country to improve and perfect her English as well as to get formation once she was already a teacher: "vaig marxar afora per perfeccionar" (turn 9). Moreover, both keep on doing formation courses and English courses to keep it alive (T1 turn 38 and 40 and T2 turn 9).

Finally, to what refers to the APAC association, whereas teacher 1 belongs to it and is a subscriber of the magazine, teacher 2 does not belong to it neither know what it is (T1 turn 42 and T2 turn 33).

4.1.3 Performance

As far as the teachers' performance is concerned, although the teachers share many of their beliefs and formation, there is a basic difference that can be deduced from their interviews, which is about the methodologies they use. However, in all their sessions both teachers follow a structure carrying out several routines (T1 turn 68 and T2 turn 35) and both of them give strong emphasis on the listening and the speaking skills (T1 turn 62 and 64 and T2 turn 48).

Teacher 1 remarks that she works the multiple intelligences through songs and storybooks: "intento treballar a través de les intel·ligències múltiples, però sobretot a P3 treballo molt a partir de cançons i ja és a P4 i a P5 quan introdueixo més aviat contes i a partir dels contes ja busco cançons, busco altres tipus de material" (turn 48). Teacher 2, on her behalf, focuses more on corporal and verbal interaction with children: "totes les dinàmiques que vaig aprendre a Estats Units són les dinàmiques que actualment estic implantant a l'aula" (turn 11). However, both teachers discuss with the school coordinators about what or how to teach, but they focus on different things (T1 turn 46 and T2 turn 11). In this sense, we can say that they use different methodologies to teach English.

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Furthermore, the 2 schools where the teachers teach English differ from the amount of hours dedicated to English teaching in Infant Education as well as the way they do it (T1 turn 52 and T2 turn 44). In Escola Vedruna – Tona they do 2 hours of English per week, which involve one hour dedicated exclusively to English and another hour called "Multilingüe" that consists of carrying out daily routines in English. However, in Year 4 and Year 5 this hour of "Multilingüe" sometimes becomes an ordinary English class (turn 52). To what Acadèmia Igualada refers, each class group has 3 hours per week of English and those students who have lunch at the school have the opportunity to do 2 more hours of English while playing games (turn 44). Although doing a different amount of hours per week and using different methodologies both teacher 1 and 2 have the school's support to carry out the activities they plan or have in mind. Thus, they have freedom to develop the lessons as they believe (T1 turn 50 and T2 turn 13).

Regarding the planning, both teachers have a planning of the sessions beforehand and as the curse goes on, depending on how classes are developing, they adjust the objectives and the planning to the students' pace of work (T1 turn 54 and T2 turn 21 and 39). Thus, they do not have a static planning but they can mould it whenever they need it. However, teacher 1 uses the contents of the curriculum for each stage and plans, finds resources and materials to carry out activities to work on these contents: "a la programació anual de cada cicle ja hi ha establerts els continguts i en funció d'allò que pertoca a cada curs jo busco contes, busco recursos, busco materials que em permetin treballar aquells continguts" (turn 56). Instead, teacher 2 meets with the language team of the school to set the contents that need to be worked and achieved along Early Childhood education and she distributes them within the different years, always adjusting to the characteristics of the group: "amb el departament vam decidir la base que havien de tenir per arribar a Primària, i llavors jo ho vaig estructurar en els diferents cursos" (turn 39). In this sense, they have a different way of planning the sessions.

As for the materials, although we see that many of the materials that the teachers use coincide (T1 via Whatsapp and T2 turn 35 and 37), through the observations we realised that they are used in different ways, for different purposes. Although it is not mentioned in the interviews, for what we could see it is important to highlight the fact that in Y4 both teachers use songs but they use them as a complement of the classes (to start and end the session, to complement it, to break with the dynamics…). Instead, regarding the storybooks, while teacher 1 uses them as a base from which she works all the sessions, teacher 2 uses them as a complement. All in all, whereas one of the teacher uses storybooks to develop all the contents, the other teacher uses them to reinforce something that she is working with the

children. In fact, neither the songs nor the storybooks are the base in which teacher 2 develops her session, instead, she works a lot with flashcards, drama techniques and arts&crafts to develop the sessions. However, although not using the materials in the same, way, both teachers they use according to the objectives they have and want to develop (T1 turn 57 and 58 and T2 turn 40).

Referring to the space, in both cases, the classroom is the main space where English classes are developed. However, sometimes teachers use other school spaces (depending on the activity they want to carry out) in order to be able to use wider and bigger spaces. Besides, both teachers choose the space according to the activity they need to carry out. All in all, even though the class is the most used space, they use other school spaces as far as they are free (T1 turn 60 and T2 turn 40).

Both teachers use several strategies in order to motivate the children, and both of them do it by introducing the contents through what children like, their interests (T1 turn 66 and T2 turn 19). However, while teacher 1 uses some structures to grab children's attention and motivate them: "intento buscar temes que els interessin, i per captar la seva atenció doncs estructures tipus *let me see, who will be* i això doncs els crida l'atenció i per un moment els tens a tots atents" (turn 66), teacher 2 focuses more on the fact that each child participates in the way they feel more comfortable: "sempre els deixo que experimentin i que trobin el que realment els fa sentir més còmodes" (turn 35).

Teachers face different difficulties while carrying out their sessions. However, they do not value these difficulties in the same way. Whereas teacher 1 gives more importance to the difficulty of having too many children in the class in the afternoon sessions in which they are too tired or distracted (via Whatsapp), teacher 2 focuses more on the difficulty of adjusting herself and the classes to the different needs or language abilities of students (turn 50 and via Whatsapp).

Finally, we can say that in both cases there is communication between Early Childhood education and Primary Education and there are commissions or departments the deal with English teaching matters and plan things together (T1 turn 70 and T2 turn 11, 13, 25 and 39). Thanks to the communication within the language departments of the school, they try to keep continuity between these two cycles. However, both teachers admit that, even though they try to follow the same line and keep doing some class dynamics and routines, some things are different, basically because in Primary education they follow a book and writing and reading are introduced (T1 turn 70 and T2 turn 25).

To sum up, although using different methodologies to teach English in Early Childhood Education, both teachers share many aspects related to their beliefs, their formation and their performance in the school. So, they both bet on introducing English early and do it orally, even though using different ways to get children involved in their classes and be interested in this language learning.

4.2 Analysis and comparison between the observations

After observing the schools Escola Vedruna - Tona and Acadèmia Igualada during 4 sessions we realized that they have many common points, but they also differ in some aspects.

About the observation in Escola Vedruna-Tona, we can say that all the observations in have been done in the same class group (P4), a group of 26 students. They have been carried out during four consecutive weeks of February and March from 15.00pm to 16.00 pm (they were all of the same didactic unit). Children were sitting in a circle on the carpet, and the observer stayed with them sitting in the circle, in front of the teacher. In some cases, the observer took part of the class sessions since she was there as an internship student. She took all the notes after the sessions, as neither the teacher nor the students knew she was observing them. In the class, there were always only the English teacher and me.

Concerning the teacher, we can say that she is a teacher devoted for her job who always addresses children in a kind way and who loves what she does: teaching English. She always tries to make herself understood and struggles to make children love the English class. She proposes dynamic activities and always tries to keep the attention of all the children during the whole class. When she needs to make someone notice that he or she is doing something unappropriated, she usually speaks in Catalan. This might be because she needs to make it really clear. However, in exception for when she needs to scold someone, she speaks in English all the time, even with the teachers that come in for a moment in the class.

In order to make herself understood, the teacher gesticulates a lot and repeats an idea as many times as children need it. She speaks fluent English and constructs all the sentences correctly. She uses a lot of songs and several strategies to grab children's attention, so if

children get distracted at some point of the class, the teacher has the strategies needed to make them be back interested in what they are doing. Indeed, students seem to understand almost everything the teacher says, and if the teacher notices they do not understand, she tries to say the same in a different way, using a lot of gesticulation. However, children do not produce a lot, since they are still in the silent period (although they get to learn some words and remember them during the different sessions: fruits, animals...). Children's attitude in the classroom is really active, they always want to participate and are implicated with what they are doing (games, singing, listening to a story....). There is a lot of comprehension and children interact with one another, with the teacher and with the observer. In some cases, some children ask the observer for something if he or she has not understood what the teacher has told he or she to do.

Regarding the observations done in Acadèmia Igualada, they have all been done in the same class group (P4) at the same class time in 4 different weeks (Wednesday 8th of February, Wednesday 22nd of March, Wednesday 29th of March and Wednesday 5th of April, from 12:00pm to 12:50pm). The observer was placed in a corner and barely took part of the class sessions. From time to time, the teacher addressed her asking the same question that they were dealing with (i.e. Ivette, what is your favourite colour?). Children looked at the observer only when she entered the class, but after a while they did not remember she was there.

In the class there were always the English teacher and a speaking assistant from England, who accompanies the English teacher in all the class sessions she carries out, helps her developing the session and corrects her when needed. The conversation assistant also interacts with students so they are able to listen to real English (pronunciation, intonation, sonority, stress…).

As far as we could see, the teacher in Acadèmia Igualada school shows love for her job. She always addresses children in a sweet and lovely way. She makes children being aware when they are doing a thing that she does not like by telling them that she does not like that. She is always very close to students and fosters eye and body contact among her and students and among students. She hugs and kisses them a lot to show them she is happy and she love them. Moreover, she knows the group pretty well and realizes when they are tired and need movement, when somebody is not OK, if she can ask for more from a child...

As she speaks all the time in English, she uses a lot of gestures, vocalizes a lot and intonates a lot so children get the message. She speaks fluent English and addresses to students constructing sentences correctly, not missing elements to make the sentence "simpler" (there is all the time subject, verb and complements). In fact, students show a lot of

comprehension towards what the teacher is saying or what they are required to do. However, she knows that children will not be able to produce or repeat such long and complex sentences and when she carries on a certain activity where students have to produce something in English, she focuses on words (names of animals, food, sports…) and simple sentence and question structures (I like, I don't like, Today I feel…, Can I go…), and so on). Thus, these simple structure sentences are those the children are able to produce. Besides, some children have gotten the basic sentence structure and words and try to do their own productions (i.e. I ball blue - meaning I have a blue ball). As a result of their comprehension and ability to produce some messages in English, students' attitude in the class is very active: they are quite quiet and relaxed and pay attention to what the teacher and the assistant do and say. Most of them follow perfectly what the teacher say, understand her and interact with her and with the other peers (activity related interaction).

On the one hand, something that surprised us a lot in Acadèmia Igualada was the great amount of words and information that students understand and the simple sentence structures that they are able to produce, as well as the fact that students were almost all the time quiet, still, following teacher's instructions, paying attention. On the other hand, a thing that surprised us in the observations in Escola Vedruna-Tona was that children always looked forward to the English class, it was something that they liked a lot. When the observer met children in the corridor, they asked her when she would come to their class to do English. This children's willingness to do English and everything that students know may be because of the way the teacher teaches: for the way she speaks, the intonation she uses or the gestures she does, she grabs children's attention and makes them being willing to participate and interact.

All in all, we found it very interesting and worthwhile to observe 4 class sessions in each school, as we could see how children progressed and got to learn new vocabulary and structures in English. This shows that learning a foreign language (comprehend and slightly produce) at an early age may be possible if done correctly.

4.2.1 How the class sessions start

For what the way of starting the class session is concerns, we find that both teachers have established a routine to do so. However, these routines are different even though there are questions and songs in both cases. Whereas in Escola Vedruna - Tona the routine consists of singing a "hello song", which is the focus of the class and it is performed with puppets;

children are expected to learn it - and counting how many people there are in the class and how many are at home, in Acadèmia Igualada the teacher speaks in English as children come back from the playground and sit in a circle to say "hello" and ask "how are you?" and so, start focusing in the grammar structure and vocabulary and go further with it as the curse goes by. In the last 3 observations, there was a song playing when the children came from the playground, but the song was not a focus at all of the English class, it was just to create a calmed atmosphere.

Teacher 1	Teacher 2
"Hello" routine	
"Hello" routine through a song	"Hello, how are you?" routine (peer interaction, teacher-students interaction, no songs)
Counting students	Background music

Table 5: Initial routines

4.2.2 How the class sessions end

There is also a routine in both schools to end the session but again, the routine is different even though songs are there too. Teacher 1 (Escola Vedruna) uses a "Goodbye song" that children know and perform to finish the class session and, in case there is some time left when the session is done, she allows children doing other things/activities not related to English. Teacher 2 (Acadèmia Igualada), however, starts the goodbye routine by allowing children to go to the toilet, drink some water or blow their noses: children ask the teacher for it. Thus, they are still working on grammar structures and vocabulary. When they finish doing this, children sit on the floor with all their belongings (jacket, sometimes their bag) while the same song that was playing in the beginning of the lesson is playing - again, to create a calmed and relaxed atmosphere -, close their eyes, relax, and as the song is finishing, the teacher touch them to open their eyes. It is necessary to highlight the importance of routines in Early Childhood education and, concretely, when they are doing a foreign language class: in the session 3 in Acadèmia Igualada, that there was no goodbye routine, children seemed a little bit lost like expecting the English class, and they were more moved and excited when they had to get ready to go home.

Teacher 1	Teacher 2
"Goodbye" song	"Can I go to the toilet/drink some water/blow my nose?"
Playing and games	Background music, relax and get ready to go home

Table 6: Final routines

4.2.3 Teachers' way of addressing students

Regarding the way teachers address their students, we can say that in both cases they address them in English. Teacher 1, though, sometimes addresses them in Catalan, mainly when there is no way that children can understand her. Teacher 2 only addressed students in Catalan in session 3, when students were practicing the show, because the vocabulary and structures were not the usual ones used in the regular class sessions. Moreover, both teachers complement their oral language with a lot of non-verbal language (gestures, face expressions) and a great intonation and pronunciation to make themselves understood. Thus, we can say that both teachers bet on developing the oral and aural skills above all, which are listening and speaking. They do it through basing the class sessions on the principle of constantly interact and communicate with the students, making them participate, making them have an active role and being involved in what they are doing. Acting this way, encouraging children to participate, teachers get to motivate their students because they feel important and taken into account. As sometimes it may be difficult to keep the attention in the activities for a long time, both teachers have opted for using intonation, gestures, facial expressions and corporal communication to grab children's attention. Teacher 1 puts more emphasis on the body language and teacher 2 uses more the verbal stress, pitch and intonation.

Teacher 1	Teacher 2
Listening and speaking skills	
Nearly always in English	All the time in English
Intonation, gestures, facial expressions and corporal language	
Non-verbal language, body language	Stress, pitch, intonation
Motivation: making students participate, interaction, active role and implication from	

students

Table 7: Teachers' way of addressing students

4.2.4 Peer interaction

If teacher-students interaction in a regular class is basically in English (Vedruna and Acadèmia) and sometimes in Catalan (Vedruna), the peer interaction is quite similar in both schools. Children talk to their classmates in Catalan when communication is spontaneous; instead, when the interaction is part of the activity, they address each other - or, at least, they try to - in English using only words, simple sentences or more complex sentences and questions, all of them being already dealt previously. For example, in Acadèmia Igualada, a student asked another one "What is your favorite animal?" to which the other one answered, "My favorite animal is frog".

Teacher 1	Teacher 2
In Catalan, except for when the interaction is part of the activity	

Table 8: Peer interaction

4.2.5 Materials and resources

Referring to the materials and resources used to carry out the class sessions, both teachers coincide on the fact of using songs; teacher 1 uses them more than teacher 2. Moreover, the purpose of using songs is sometimes different. In the case of Escola Vedruna - Tona they use them to introduce some routines (Hello and Goodbye routines) and as a class activity to work on something they have dealt with. On the other hand, in Acadèmia Igualada, songs are background music at the beginning and at the end of the class session and the ones used in the middle of the session are related with an aspect they have dealt with too and there is always one used to break with the pace of the class and make children move, relief and, thus, help them being concentrated again for the next activity. We need to take into account that the use given to the materials is quite different in the 2 schools: whereas teacher 1 uses the storybooks to teach and develop all the contents (apart from using the blackboard and the digital blackboard to complement them), teacher 2 usually introduces all the contents orally as if it was a normal conversation with students (and sometimes she uses

flashcards to introduce new vocabulary) and uses the materials and resources (books, songs, blackboard and digital blackboard) to reinforce and complement what she is working and trying to teach, to exemplify it and make it more clear.

Teacher 1	Teacher 2
Songs	
Storybooks, stiuffed animals, cards, digital blackboard	Class objects, blackboard, people, costumes, masks, objects, furniture, flashcards

Table 9: Materials

4.2.6 Space and children distribution

To what the distribution of the space refers, in both cases the main space used to develop the class sessions is the regular classroom. Although there are tables and chairs spread around the class, both teacher 1 and 2 organize them in a way that there is a big and wide space left in the middle of the classroom so the class session can be carried out there and children can sit on the floor. Actually, during the English lessons, students are most of the time sitting on the floor in a circle - and randomly at some points of the sessions such as at the end or when reading a book - , except for in those activities in which they are moving and, in Escola Vedruna, when they use the digital blackboard that they sit on chairs.

Teacher 1	Teacher 2
Regular classroom	
Playground	Psychomotricity classroom
Tables apart, wide space in the middle of the regular classroom	
Children sitting on the floor	
They sit on a carpet, in a circle, in two	They sit directly on the floor, in a circle or

raws or randomly	randomly

Table 10: Space

4.2.7 Other regarding aspects

Finally, we find it important to point out the fact that, even though both teachers show love and respect towards their students, it is more visible in teacher 2: she looks for eye and body contact constantly and she kisses and hugs her students regularly all along the class sessions (when they do something great, when they address her…) and also when they are not in class. Teacher 1 also does it but not as often as teacher 2.

4.3 Analysis and comparison between the interview and the observation in Escola Vedruna-Tona

Comparing what the teacher in Escola Vedruna-Tona told us in her interview and what she really does in her class sessions, we see that there is quite coherence. In this sense, we can say that teacher 1's performance has a lot to do with her formation and believes.

Teacher 1 is a teacher who wants children to start living and feeling the language so that they can see it as a language like their first one (turn 4 of the interview). In her classes, she makes children start living English by using songs, storybooks and games, in this way, children start being immersed with the language, establish a first contact with it and receive a lot of input. Thus, we can say that teacher 1 adjusts her sessions to what she thinks she has to do, that is to make children live the language. Besides, Teacher 1, as we can see in turn 18 of the interview, thinks English should be introduced in the most playful way, since it is playing when children acquire plenty of grammatical structures: "jo penso que l'anglès a Infantil s'hauria d'introduir de la manera com més lúdica i natural possible. Jo sóc partidària que, a Infantil, els nens han de jugar molt, i sobretot jugant intgren moltes estructures gramaticals, molt vocabulari, per tant el joc és imprescindible i és molt important cada dia". In our observations, this is something that we could clearly see, since main of the sessions we observed were dedicated to playing and having fun with the language, mainly with memory games, always talking in English and using it in a natural way.

Case Study: Analysis of the way two schools introduce English in Early Childhood Education

As showed in the interview (turn 28, 30, 36, 38 and 40), teacher 1 is a teacher who keeps doing formation all time, and this is something that is reflected in the way she plans her sessions, all in all, in her performance. Since teacher 1 studied in Universitat de Vic and finished her degree three years ago, she uses a lot of materials and resources taken from the formation she had received there, for example, the storybook she worked with the children during the sessions we observed: "Handa's Surprise". This is something that she told us and that we could perceive as we are also studying in this University and some of the resources she uses are the same we have been shown in the University. This clearly shows that teacher 1 prepares her classes and that she uses the resources she has been learning during her formation, indeed, that she uses a criteria to choose them and that she has everything planned, she does not limit herself to improvising.

As far as the hours dedicated to English are concerned, these are two: one of what they call "multilingüe" and another of English in the strict sense. As the teacher sincerely told us in the interview (turn 52), this hour of "multilingüe" sometimes becomes a regular English class, when they do not carry out routines in English but they play, sing or explain a storybook. However, in turn 12 of the interview, the teacher manifests she would like to be able to do more hours per week of English, since she thinks that 2 hours is too little. In fact, and as we could see in our observations, teacher 1 takes profit of every single minute of the English class; she has everything planned and she tries to motivate children using several strategies. In this way she has children concentrated in what they are doing so that they can take a lot of profit of every session they do. However, in turn 52 of the interview she also claims that: "el que jo intentaria fer, tot i que ja ho he anat demanant però a vegades no és possible a l'hora de quadrar horaris, és fer sessions més curtes més sovint". Thus, she would like to have four sessions of half an hour with each group, since she thinks it would be more profitable.

As far as the teacher's expectations are concerned, we could see that teacher 1 adjusted her performance to the way children responded. She told us that she prepared each session depending on how the previous session had gone, and thus, he adjusted the memory games she did about Handa's surprise to how children had acted during the previous sessions. In this sense, she also adjusted the vocabulary of the book (she made easier some difficult fruits that appeared in the book) to adapt to the needs of the children she had in the class. This is something that she also explained us in the interview, in turn 16: "nosaltres creem unes expectatives que normalment solen ser altes i partim d'aquí, i intentem de totes les maneres possibles doncs que hi arribin però si tu veus que els nens no hi arriben, doncs intents baixar una mica perquè no es frustrin sobretot".

In the interview (turn 26 and 36), the teacher remarks a lot the fact that she does not want to teach English as she were taught as a child. She considers that learning English in a traditional way, repeating and focusing only on vocabulary and grammar is not the way to learn a language, but a disheartening way to do it: "la manera amb la qual jo vaig aprendre anglès és la manera com tenia claríssim que no volia ensenyar, i suposo que per això vaig voler iniciar-me en aquesta feina, potser per intentar canviar una mica les coses". In her performance, we could see that at no time does she teach in this way, on the contrary, she does activities with a lot of interaction among children and in which children enjoy what they are doing.

In the turns 46 and 48 of the interview, the teacher explains us the methodology she uses to carry out her classes. She argues that the school, a few years ago, decided to work through the multiple intelligences and that it is something that fits very well on her way of working. As said before, she uses songs, storybooks and games to make children experience the language and this is exactly what we could see in the observation we did in the school. It is through these resources that the teacher introduces English in Early Childhood Education.

To what refers to the APAC association, in the turns 42 and 44 of the interview, the teacher explained us that she belongs to it and that sometimes, she takes resources from its website and uses them in the class when she thinks they are appropriate for the children in front of her. However, with the observation we did, we could not see that, since it is not always that she uses resources from this association.

In the interview, teacher 1 also explained us that she has no limits set by the school (turn 50), what is to say, she has freedom to develop the sessions as she wants and needs. This is something that we could also observe, since she was the one who chose the storybook of the didactic sequence we observed for her own purposes and the one who decided how much it had to last.

Referring to the strategies teacher 1 uses to motivate children these are several. In the interview (turn 66) she told us that she tries to use matters that motivate children, and structures to call their attention: "per motivar-los intento buscar temes que els interessin, i per captar la seva atenció doncs estructures tipus *let me see who will be,* i això doncs els crida l'atenció i per un moment els tens a tots atents". However, in the observation, for what we could observe, we saw that she also uses a lot of gesticulation and makes them participate a lot, two key strategies to keep children's motivation alive. All in all, teacher 1 makes children be involved in all activities.

Finally, one thing that we could not observe is if there is coherence between Infant Education and Primary for what concerns to English. However, the teacher told us (turn 70) that they do periodic meetings so as to plan things jointly and checking the Linguistic Project of the school we have proved that they ensure a continuity between the two stages, not only for what refers to English but also for the other languages.

4.4 Analysis and comparison of the interview and the observation in Acadèmia Igualada

Comparing and analysing what we could see in the observations in the school Acadèmia Igualada and the interview done to the English teacher (teacher 2) in this school, we can say there is coherence with what she says and what we could see. Thus, teacher's 2 performance has a lot to do with her formation and believes.

To what teacher's 2 formation regards, in the interview (turn 11) she says that she has done theatre curses and formations so as to teach English using theatre and, thus, what she has learnt in this formations is the methodology and the strategies that she uses in the class. Moreover, she adds that, when doing a show, other things such as pronunciation and body language are also important apart from the English language itself. We could prove this in the 3rd session we saw, in which we could see how students were preparing a show. She pointed out that the performance was thought to be acted out in the end of Early Childhood education and thus, the verbal aspect would improve a lot in one year onwards. Instead, she argues that, in this stage, the thing that needs to be worked more deeply is the disinhibition what is to say, help children express themselves with their bodies without fear or shame in front of their classmates, feeling comfortable. However, teacher 2 also states that there is no better way to work on pronunciation than when having the need to say the words in a meaningful and contextualized situation (as a show can be). Thus, in that class session, teacher 2 put emphasis on children's intonation, gestures and pronunciation. Actually, she pronounced some words more slowly so students could get how they had to be said. For this aspect, the teacher relied a lot on the speaking assistant - because she is an English native speaker - so no one better than her could help them on this aspect. The speaking assistant helped children saying some basic words that were mispronounced (i.e. saying /zenkyu/ instead of /senkyu/ or /tankyu/) and, only in some cases, corrected other specific words.

In fact, teacher does also take advantage of the fact of having a speaking assistant in the class. As she claims in turn 9, she always wants to improve her spoken English and keep it alive because in an Early Childhood education class there is no one that can correct her and she needs to be a good model of language for them. That is why teacher 2 resorts to the native speaker to sort out some doubts about pronunciation that she has and makes her (speaking assistant) correct her (teacher 2) when she is wrong. When the speaking assistant does so, the teacher thanks her and smiles at her with an accomplice stare. Besides, as teacher 2 believes that children need to have a good model of English to learn it, she sometimes made the language assistant carry out a part of the class session or say some things (i.e. counting up to 30) so children listened to someone native and, at the same time, she could renew some pronunciation aspects.

In the same turn (9), she says that she studied in UVic and that she keeps doing formations as long as she can. We could feel it because there is innovation in the class dynamics she applies and believes that English should be taught and learnt feeling it, making it meaningful for students, orally, making children develop their oral and aural skills… which is what our university teachers tell us nowadays and what teacher 2 says and does. In the turn 48, she states that English in Infant education needs to work, basically, the listening and speaking skills; and that is how she does it, looking all the time for children's participation and fostering interaction with them and among them. This reaffirms what she says in turn 27, which is that the methodology that she uses now differs a lot from the one she was taught with, as the current one is more participative, meaningful and dynamic.

Furthermore, in turn 19, she adds that, a part from orally, English needs to be introduced "a través d'estímuls, intentant agafar-te a allò que els crida l'atenció. O sigui, tot molt visual, auditiu, llampant, de colors, per anar mantenint l'atenció, agafant-te als temes que a ells els interessen". Actually, that is exactly how she does it: she uses a lot of materials to exemplify and complement what she is saying. These materials are usually very familiar and common for them (class objects, students' personal objects…), so what is being taught becomes more meaningful for children. To complement what she is teaching and make herself understood, teacher 2 also makes a lot of use of her hands and facial expressions.

Going on with the materials and resources she uses, in turn 35 she says that, as said before, she wants everyone to take part in the class session and enjoy it, she wants and tries to provide different materials and kind of activities so everyone can find those that fit better with their learning style. We could see this all along the 4 class sessions that we observed. Within the very same session, different dynamics were carried out (staying still, moving, looking for

objects, theatre…) and different materials and resources were used (songs, class objects, flashcards…).

Following with the class session development, also in the turn 35, she asserts that she follows a very clear routing in each session, and so we could observe: there is always a routine to begin and to end up the class session, and during the development of the class session 3, 4 or 5 different activities are carried out - there is always one that includes movement and leisure -, which change every 5-10 minutes. In the very same turn, teacher 2 justifies why she decided to stablish routines: she wanted children to acquire certain basic structures and vocabulary and, as they grow up, these basic structures would become more complex and the vocabulary would increase. Actually, thanks to the fact that we observed a class session in the beginning of February and the 3 left were observed in the end of March, we could confirm it: at the end of March, the vocabulary - and even some grammar structures - had increased and become more complex, mainly for what the weather and the mood regards. In fact, regarding to what it has just been said, in turn 9 teacher states that she prefers to teach "lo just i que s'ho aprenguin bé", which confirms why structures, contents and vocabulary evolved - rather than changed - from the very first session we saw to the last one.

In this point, it is important to highlight what teacher 2 says in the turn 21 of the interview which is that she knows the children she has in the class and, thus, knows what she can ask from each one. The teacher does not demand or expect the same from everyone at the same time. The complexity and difficulty of the contents, structures and vocabulary increases at each student's pace. To exemplify it, we can focus on the "Hello, how are you?" routine used to start the class session. In this routine, there were some students that said "I am fine, thank you" and some others were able to say how they were feeling (a little bit sleepy, tired, hungry, happy…) on their own or with the teachers help. Sometimes, the teacher asked questions to some students so they could elaborate longer or more complex answers, which is, going one step further. Depending on the person she was addressing to, she both expected a yes/no/single word answer (i.e. "You are fine but…a little bit tired? A little bit sleepy? Happy? Sad?" to which the child answered, "Yes, sleepy") or encouraged children to repeat and continue a sentence (i.e. "I am fine, thank you, but a little bit…" and the teacher did gestures to make the child repeat and continue "but a little bit…").

Besides, in the turn 39, teacher asserts that there are some grammatical structures that children already know, such as "Can I go to the toilet?", "Can I go to blow my nose?", "What is the weather like? It is…", "My name is…". These structures appear always (except for "My name is…") at some point of the class session and, even though all students can understand

them, not all of them are able to produce them yet. Fortunately, the teacher does not push or punish those students that are not able to do so because, as she says in turn 21, "cada nen té unes característiques i és un individu únic, i té un ritme d'evolució totalment diferent al del veí que té al costat, i sé què li puc exigir a cadascú". Thus, we can say she is coherent with what we could observe. As said before, the teacher sometimes encouraged some children to build up longer explanations or asked them questions that would make them go one step forward from the contents strictly worked in class because she knew they would be able to answer them on their own or with her help. On the other hand, she congratulates those students that, even compared with their classmates have done poor productions, she knows that they have done a great effort. Indeed, the teacher takes into account and values it when children make an effort and overcome themselves rather than focusing only on the final result. This teacher's performance is coherent too with what she says in turn 42 "si no han fet mai anglès, si anaven a una llar que no han fet anglès o han estat a casa i no s'ha fet anglès, jo a aquests nens, tot i haver-hi una programació, no els puc exigir el mateix que els que porten amb mi des de la llar d'infants." The fact of children being in different points of the learning process to what English learning concerns makes the teacher face what she sees as the main difficulty when she is in the class: "El grup no és homogeni, i com a bona mestra, com a bona pràctica docent, sóc jo qui m'he d'adaptar a l'aprenentatge d'ells, no ells a mi." (turn 50). This statement confirms that the teacher has individual expectations for each child and wants to ensure that everyone receives what they need. During the class sessions we could see that she addresses differently - always in a sweet and caring way - to her students asking them and expecting different things from them so as to make sure that everybody can participate and reach what has been stablished (general and individual objectives).

Finally, referring to her personal feelings and thoughts towards her job, she states in turn 29 of the interview that she loves her job and that she would not change it for anything in the world; she is super happy being a teacher. With the observations we could feel it: for the way she addresses to students we could feel that she loves them, she respects them and she constantly tries that there is eye and corporal contact, she hugs and kisses them more than once during the class session. Furthermore, she seems comfortable and happy working in this school and following this methodology. Actually, in the turn 13, she says that "Sempre m'han recolzat, sempre m'han dit que endavant, que ho provés.". Now, she has just started to carry on experiments in English, and the director of the school has encouraged her to do so. In fact, in the turn 29, the teacher shows herself very pleased with the director, who once was her English teacher and helped them choosing this job, and she confesses that she could not be in a better place to develop her career. Seeing her doing classes, we could

appreciate her illusion, enthusiasm and passion that she has for her job and for keep on learning and improving to become a better teacher.

5. Conclusions

In this section, the main conclusions reached in our research will be exposed. The main aim of this project was describing how 2 different schools with similar socioeconomic and sociocultural contexts teach English in Early Childhood education, taking into account and focusing on teachers' formation, believes and performance. Other objectives of the research were:

Research questions	
1. To what extend will there be coherence between the teachers' beliefs and formation and their performance in the class?	2. Up to what point will there be relation between the school practice and the university formation of the teachers?
Objectives	
2. Seeing how the teachers develop their class sessions - Difficulties - Materials (to what extend materials give support to the teachers' way of working and how they are used) - Teachers' role - Planning and didactic sequences	
3. Knowing the teachers' background	
4. Knowing the relationship between how English is taught and how other languages are taught	
5. Knowing how English is taught in Primary education - is there continuity?	

The first conclusion that can be drawn from the gathered data is that there is quite coherence between what teachers told us in the interviews, their formation and the way they perform. In this sense, our initial research question "To what extend will there be coherence between the teachers' beliefs and formation and their performance in the class?" has been answered. The interview that we have created to do to the teachers has helped us to know more deeply the teachers' background and formation, their believes about the English teaching-learning process and the way they plan and develop the class sessions. Moreover, thanks to the 4 observations that we have carried out in each school, we have been able to observe with our own eyes how they are develop (structure, materials, contents, spaces, difficulties that the teachers face…) and the teachers' performance. With this, we have been able to achieve the second and the third objectives.

Case Study: Analysis of the way two schools introduce English in Early Childhood Education

Once the observations and the interviews were done, we compared Acàdemia Igualada's observations with the interview to the English teacher in this school (just like we did in the case of Escola Vedruna-Tona). By doing this, we could prove the coherence between the teachers do, what they have learnt and what they think they should do. Thus, we have not felt any discordance with anything teachers do in their class and what they had told us. Nevertheless, it is important to highlight the fact that, since the teacher in Escola Vedruna-Tona did not know that she was being observed, the coherence between what she said she does and what she really does is more real and trustable. In the case of Acàdemia Igualada we can also prove this coherence but we have to take into account that the teacher knew that she was being observed.

Secondly, as far as the teachers' formation and performance are concerned, we can claim that there is a strong coherence among them since it is obvious that they use in their class sessions what they have learnt in university as well as in later formation courses. Thus, we have seen that some resources that they used are directly taken from the resources that had been shown to them in the university (such as the book "Handa's surprise"). In this way, we have seen that the reality of the schools is not as far from what is currently being taught in university as we had thought. However, it has to be remarked that both teachers have been formatted in the same institution (Universitat de Vic) and that both of them have freedom to develop the class sessions as they feel. This aspect and the fact that they both have been teaching - relatively - for a little time, makes it easier to perceive this relationship and not so-long distance between university and school. Thus, our second research question "Up to what point will there be relation between the school practice and the university formation of the teachers?" has also been answered.

Besides, the continuous formation that the teachers told us that they keep on doing is reflected on the way they develop the class sessions. In fact, as they told us, they do not want to teach English as they were taught (in a traditional way) but in a more participative and meaningful way. This change of mindset is due to their willingness to improve, learn new things, wide their knowledge and update themselves to what how to teach concerns. With this, they want to escape from the statement that Borg (2003) discusses: "teachers learn a lot about teaching through their vast experience as learners". Thanks to their continuous formation, thus, teachers can choose the way they think is best to teach English and the schools allow them to do so. In this sense, while there is discrepancy in the research in whether English should be introduced at an early age or not (there are some authors who defend not to introduce it until L1 is fully acquired, meanwhile there are some other authors who underpin to do it early if done properly), the schools analysed are schools who bet on

introducing it from the very beginning, in Early Childhood Education, because they trust on the resources, formation and strategies of the teachers.

As far as the introduction of English in early stages is concerned, it has been seen that both schools bet on introducing it orally and work on the development of listening and speaking skills. This is possible because, as stated in the theoretical framework, the sociolinguistic context of the school allows it (Decree 181/2008 of the 9 of September). Furthermore, the social demand of both schools' contexts for English teaching has lead them to have English specialists as well as native language assistants. This coincides with what Flores and Corcoll (2008) suggest. However, even though both teachers claim that there is quite continuity on how English is taught in Infant education and how it is done in Primary education, we have not been able to see it with our own eyes. If we trust the school documents, there is continuity in the way of approaching the language.

The development of the skills mentioned above is done, in both schools, through games, songs and activities that imply the whole person and that foster the interpersonal relationships. As claimed by Flores and Corcoll (2008) in the theoretical framework, teachers must ensure a rich and friendly environment in the class with diverse and multifunctional spaces and activities, such as games, that will lead to a better acquisition of the language, taking always into account the other 2 essential areas to work on and develop: discovery of oneself and others, and discovery of the context. This natural way of working is something that has been seen in the studied schools and that is also suggested in the unfolding documents of the Infant Education Curriculum, which say that the language should be integrated in the reality of the class and, thus, appear naturally in the context. Likewise, the Common European Framework defends that the new language needs to come up from a real situation in the class, from a real and significant context. It has been seen in the schools that they both bet on working on English not only in the English class lesson itself but also through daily routines (having breakfast, getting dressed…). In this way, the language appears contextualized and it is meaningful for students.

All in all, thanks to the analysis of the data gathered with the observations, interviews and the school documents, we have been able to reach the research objectives we had set in the beginning. It is interesting to point out, though, that most of the actions seen in the observations are not reflected in the schools' linguistic projects, which are quite general and simple to what how to teaching English in Infant Education refers. In this sense, reality goes one step forward – probably thanks to the teachers' believes and formation – than the theoretical part (school documents), which we consider as something positive. Thus, we

have been able to accomplish our main objective, which was describing how 2 different schools with similar socioeconomic and sociocultural contexts teach English in Early Childhood education, likewise proving that there is a coherent triangle between the teachers' formation, believes and performance. As it can be seen in the theoretical framework, Borg (2003) already talked about the importance of the existence of this triangle that he describes as an unobservable cognitive dimension of teaching. Besides, thanks to this research project, we have been able to disprove some topical ideas such as what is learnt in the university cannot be carried out in a school.

6. Discussion, limitations and future lines of research

Along the process, there have been some weaknesses. The most remarkable one comes up to be the fact that the interviews and the observations in each school have been done only by one researcher and not by both of them. It would have been interesting that both of the researchers were in all the observations and in the two interviews because, this way, it would have been easier to analyse the data and establish conclusions. Likewise, the findings would have probably been more objective and would describe some things that the researchers have not realized on their own. Besides, we believe that if we had been able to observe more class sessions we would have seen many different items that we have not been able to appreciate in only 4 sessions. For example, we have only seen some of the materials that the teachers told us that they use. Probably, some of the answers of the observations, their analysis and the conclusions would be slightly different if more sessions had been observed.

On the contrary, one strength of the research is that the analysed schools have very similar socioeconomic and sociocultural contexts. Thus, the conclusions reached can be quite reliable as both school contexts are not far from each other.

Considering that this study has been done in two different schools in Catalunya, the results and the conclusions cannot be generalized or extrapolated to any other context. For this reason, a line of further research could be developing a similar case study - focusing on the same or similar items that this study has focused on - in schools from different countries, preferably with a school from Catalunya and one from another country with English as a foreign language. The current case study has not dealt with the reality of other countries for the lack resources and the magnitude of the research.

Personally, this project has been useful for us in many aspects. First of all, as researchers, we have learned how to obtain information, gather it, analyse it and get to some conclusions. Since it was the first time we did such a project, we have realised that if we put our effort on it, we are able to achieve the established goals. As future teachers, we have been able to see two different modern ways of teaching English and see how we would like to work when we are in schools (resources, strategies, way of addressing children, and so on). Finally, we have seen that it is possible that children learn and understand English in Early Childhood Education, which was a motivation for us to become English teachers in near future.

In our research we would like to have dealt with what the research in other countries says, taking also into account the distances between the languages. However, this has not been possible and could also be another line for further research. Another possible future research that we find interesting and we would like to carry out is to see how the change of stage from Early Childhood Education to Primary Education is done in each school to what English teaching concerns.

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