

ANIMATION AS AN EDUCATIONAL TOOL TO LEARN ENGLISH VOCABULARY IN A CATALAN PRIMARY SCHOOL

FINAL DEGREE PROJECT

BOUSHAH AZZAROUALI, Asmae

Tutor: Àngel Raluy

Primary School Teaching Degree

Minor in English

Facultat d'Educació, Traducció i Ciències Humanes – Universitat Central de Catalunya

(UVic_UCC)

Vic, 17th May 2019

Acknowledgments

I would like to express my special gratitude to those people who have contributed to my case study, those who have helped me during this process, and have made this research possible. Thus, I want to thank my university mentor, Àngel Raluy, who has helped me, guided me and encouraged me while working with this project.

Moreover, I am really grateful to Escola Vic Centre, the school where they allowed me to carry out this research. That is why I want to give my special thanks to Puri Gutiérrez Rodríguez, the teacher who helped me through this project; Sandra Gutierrez Vilamala, the school coordinator, who helped with the organization of the sessions. Finally, I would like to thank all the learners who have participated in my research. Their contribution was priceless.

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1. Abstract

Nowadays, new educational tools and approaches are being implemented in schools, in order to teach English. That is why, this study attempts to explore the impact of animation in EFL teaching. This research was conducted in a Catalan primary school, named Escola Vic Centre.

Therefore, it aims to find out how effective is to use audio visuals to acquire vocabulary, with second grade students. Also, how this educational tool affects their willingness to learn. In order to elicit the information, qualitative and quantitative methods were used (pre-test and post-test, a focus group and interviews).

It was proved that animation has an impact on learner's motivation. In addition, using audio visual has helped students acquire more vocabulary than with a traditional method, as learners found it more amusing and interesting. Due to these findings, animation should be used as an educational tool to learn vocabulary, because of its effectiveness and motivational features.

Keywords: animation, learners, vocabulary, acquisition, educational methods/tools.

Resum

Avui dia, s'implementen noves eines i mètodes educatius a les escoles, per tal d'aprendre la llengua anglesa. Per aquest motiu, aquest estudi investiga l'efectivitat que té l'ús de l'animació a l'aula. L'estudi s'ha portat a terme en una escola catalana, anomenada Escola Vic Centre.

Per la qual cosa, els objectius són trobar respostes sobre l'efectivitat que té l'animació per aprendre vocabulari, amb nens i nens de segon de primària. Així com, l'efecte que té sobre l'alumnat per aprendre. Per tal d'obtenir les dades necessàries, s'han usat mètodes quantitatius i qualitius (test inicial i test final, com també grups de reflexió i una entrevista).

Es va demostrar que l'animació té un impacte sobre la motivació dels estudiants. A més, l'ús de l'animació va ajudar als estudiants a adquirir més vocabulari que usant el mètode tradicional, ja que ho van trobar més divertit i interessant. A causa d'aquests resultats, s'hauria d'implementar l'animació a les aules com a eina educativa per aprendre vocabulari, gràcies a la seva utilitat i a les seves propietats motivadores.

Paraules clau: animació, estudiants, vocabulari, adquisició, mètodes/eines educatives.

2. Introduction

This case study aims to examine how effective it is to use animation as an educational tool to learn vocabulary in English as a foreign language. Despite the number of years of English instruction that our Catalan learners have, their proficiency seems to be still limited. There are many reasons for that lack of language competence, but new teaching methods may help bridge the gap. The role of technology should not be overlooked.

Nowadays, learners are more immersed in technology, and they are more exposed to visual input. This is why we should tackle on that.

As stated before, this study attempts to find out more about the role of animation as an innovative way that could be more attractive to young children to boost their motivation and to enhance their learning development. Additionally, this research tries to help and guide teachers, as well as future teachers, to know how using animation in class to learn vocabulary may be used as a tool to acquire vocabulary.

Regarding the reasons why I decided to go on with this study, after seeing in my environment children who really acquired a lot of vocabulary in a foreign language, by just watching animation and watching different programs in the television or in YouTube. I wanted to check whether students tend to acquire more vocabulary (in a significant and funny way), by just watching visual aids. Initially, I was discouraged to see that there is not a lot of research on animation to learn vocabulary. However, this fact supported the idea that it has been overlooked as a teaching tool and it motivated me to go further.

The findings that we collected appear to indicate that animation is a really useful educational tool, if we want to teach vocabulary to learners. Learners learned more vocabulary through the process in which we worked with visual aids, rather than with the traditional methods (with worksheets). The reason, as will be explained later, might be because of the interactivity, the motivation and the activeness of learners with the animation implementation.

3. Theoretical framework

An introduction about vocabulary acquisition is going to be presented hereafter, as well as the animation as an educational tool. Moreover, animation to learn vocabulary is going to be featured, too.

3.1. Introduction to vocabulary acquisition

Nowadays, English has become a lingua franca, and therefore it is taught in the majority of primary schools. Teaching English to young learners implies many challenges for the educator, and one of them could be vocabulary acquisition. Vocabulary is an important part of language to learners because without it, communication may not occur. Indeed, vocabulary knowledge is a vital instrument for second language learners to achieve communicative competence in any language. (Alqahtani, 2015).

However, vocabulary is been said to be a challenge for learners, and particularly for young children. Oxford (1990) refers to the lack of rules and its open-endedness as some of the causes of difficulty. López (1995) also mentions the complexity of vocabulary learning:

Learning vocabulary is a rather more complex process than it might at first sight appear. It does not mean acquiring the same amount of knowledge for every word in a language. After all, we must take into account that even native speakers of a language can understand many more words than they actually use. (p. 36)

That is why it is important to make a distinction between the words that speakers just need to recognize, these are known as receptive or passive vocabulary; and the ones that learners need to use and understand, which are labeled as productive or active vocabulary. In fact, Kamil and Hiebert (2005) complements this conception by saying that receptive vocabulary is usually more extensive than the productive one.

Interestingly, Cameron (2001) uses the following metaphor:

Learning words is not like ticking off items on a shopping list when they have been bought. It is more like the continual process of trying to keep a house clean; the more like the continual process of trying to keep a house clean; the cleaning (or learning) can be done one day, but needs doing again the next. (p.84)

That means that acquiring vocabulary is a process that goes throughout our lives, since humans are in a continuous process of learning. Indeed, this fact that Cameron (2001) points out is related to López's idea (1995). In the sense that we can select the words that we need to use and integrate them as a productive vocabulary, whereas those not so frequently useful become passive vocabulary.

As previously said, it is not an easy task to learn new vocabulary, especially if the vocabulary is not integrated in a meaningful context. That is why teachers should contemplate and bear in mind that vocabulary should be taught meaningfully and, in a way, where students connect their previous knowledge to the new ones. In relation to this, Gee¹ (2012) also talks about the importance of having into account student's prior knowledge, in order to engage students in the learning process.

López (1995) states that there are some things that teachers do wrong when teaching vocabulary to students, examples could be: making a list of vocabulary to memorize it, as learners just memorize the words in a decontextualized manner; using the short memory term², so they are likely to forget about it, sooner or later. Another wrong way might be translating the words into the mother tongue, because then learners do not make the effort to work and understand the meaning of it. In accordance with these ideas, Cameron (2001) specially highlights that students need to have a context, and a possible way to set this context is by linking the child's prior knowledge with the new one.

López (1995) mentions different ways of grouping words in order to present them to students: in groups of synonyms and antonyms, similar in meaning, related to the same topic, words that cause particular difficulties, the ones that phonologically are similar, or the ones that cause difficulties in their pronunciation, etc.

However, the important question is that the words have to be presented significantly and in context, so that students can acquire their knowledge meaningfully. In order to present the vocabulary to students, there are a number of efficient ways like through songs, drama, visual aids...

Our research will be focused on the acquisition of vocabulary through animation, because it is a resource that the overwhelming majority of children have access to, and young learners tend to enjoy watching it.

3.2. Animation as an educational tool

According to Baglama, Yucesoy; and Yikimis (2018) animation is "a technical process that, in general, produces motion illusion in the viewer by sequencing the still images produced in the analogue or digital environment in sequence" (p.671). These researchers also highlight the importance of animation in teaching because they help

¹ Gee, J. (2012, January 20). Importance of prior knowledge to learning. [Blog entry]. Retrieved from <https://news.illinoisstate.edu/2012/01/importance-of-prior-knowledge-to-learning/>

² It is the capacity of holding information in mind for a short period of time, usually because the learning has not been meaningful.

understand abstract concepts. Also, it may play a pivotal role in making learning permanent. Finally, they emphasize the importance of animation to visualize knowledge.

3.2.1. Benefits and challenges of using animation in the EFL classroom

Animation can be a powerful educational tool for learning a foreign language; in this case, English. The reason to use animation as an educational tool is because of the vast amount of advantages that bring to students. Indeed, as Mekheim quotes Vélez “from 1970 to the present time, video is widely available as a teaching resource.” (Mekheim, 2011, quoted by Vélez, 2013).

In fact, there are many benefits to learn through the use of visual aids. One of the reasons is because it helps learners to enhance the comprehension of the input they receive, in part thanks to the images that compose the animation. Moreover, the use of video allows learners to be in a contextualized environment which is beneficial also for comprehension. (Vélez, 2013). Additionally, it is a tool to practice also their listening skills, and listen to real native speakers and to many different dialects, voices... rather than listening just to the teacher. (Mekheimer, 2011) This listening input will help them develop a better comprehension.

In the same vein, Çakir (2006) also agrees with that concept of using audio-visuals:

That is to say, all audio-visual materials have positive contributions to language learning as long as they are used at the right time, in the right place. In language learning and teaching process, learner use his eyes as well as his ears; but his eyes are basic in learning. (p.67)

Thus, it can help the learner as it is a stimulating way of teaching. Children are interested and enjoy watching videos, so as we said before, that will enhance their comprehension skills. Bahrani (2014) shows his agreement with the previously mentioned authors, and he adds the following idea: “(...) cartoons are also considered as excellent teaching tools because they not only add humor to a topic but also illustrate the idea in a memorable way.” (p. 554)

Another important aspect to mention is the fact that animation can also help students to predict information and make their own hypothesis about what they think it will happen, or also make a hypothesis about a specific sentence, word, idiom that could appear in the video. That way, the student can be actively present in his/her own process of learning. Çakir (2006) reaffirms the idea by saying:

(...) the learner can concentrate on the language in detail and interpret what has been said, repeat it, predict the reply and so on. The learner can also concentrate in detail on visual clues to meaning such as facial expression, dress, gesture, posture and on details of the environment. Even without hearing the language spoken clues to meaning can be picked up from the vision alone. (p.68)

As Canning (2000) declares: "Videos can help manipulate language and at the same time be open to a variety of interpretations³." This means that students are more active in their learning process because they have to build the meaning by themselves. The fact that they have to organize their thoughts in order to build the meaning, implies that they are more likely to acquire new vocabulary significantly. Indeed, this process that the learner makes tends to store the information in the long-term memory⁴.

We see that both authors, Canning (2000) and Jurkovič (2015) claim that the use of video can affect positively in the motivation of the learner, since it helps create a relaxed atmosphere where students can feel more amused. Moreover, it is funnier and is something closer for them. However, as Jurkovič (2015) argues: "Whether video will have a motivating effect or not will also depend on the language level of students. Those at lower levels of pre-existing language ability might actually find video intimidating and thus not motivating." (p.7)

That means that even if the use of animation can be a good and a motivating tool in the learning process, it is essential to choose the correct and the adequate video. A video that has difficult vocabulary and a too high pace might be frustrating for learners, because they would notice that they do not understand the story.

Therefore, teachers should make a good selection regarding not only the topic but also the grade of language difficulty that appears in the video. More than anything, because choosing the wrong source could also be demotivating for students.

In conclusion, if teachers choose an adequate video regarding their proficiency level, it can be a great source of scaffolding. In order to scaffold them, Vélez (2013) suggests that it is important to carry out activities related to the video. In other words, the video should not be presented in isolation. Before watching the animated video, teachers

³ Canning, C. (2000). Practical Aspects of Using Video in the Foreign Language Classroom. *The Internet TESL Journal*, Vol. VI, No. 11. Retrieved from <http://iteslj.org/Articles/Canning-Video.html>

⁴ It is the capacity which allows the individual to hold information in the mind, normally this information lasts for a very long time.

should do activities to put students in context, and make hypothesis about what they are going to learn. These activities are known as pre-listening activities. After that, it is important to do also while- listening activities, that is while they are watching the video. Finally, the post- listening activities should be carried out, in order to evaluate the learner's comprehension of the video that has been watched.

As for the challenges that implies using audio-visual in the classroom, the main one is that the teacher should be careful when using the kind of videos that wants to implement in class, as we already aid before. If the teacher uses a very childish video or a very complicated video to understand, it may get boring for the students. That is why the audio-visuals should be selected having in mind the characteristics of the students. Moreover, there are interesting videos that can have a bad quality image or sound. Subsequently, careful choices must be made before implementing animation videos in the classroom.

Çakir (2006) also mentions the fear that teachers may have with the use of technology, because it might be tempting to use the textbook or existing worksheets as classroom materials. Therefore, leaving the comfort zone may be scaring for teachers.

Ramirez (2011) adds one more idea; there is one mistake that teachers make: "Most teachers seem to use the video as a reward or to control students' behavior." (p.22) Hence, that ends up being one more challenge because of this wrong use of animation: animation should have an educational aim. Therefore, pre-activities, while-activities, and post-activities should be carried out, in order to make a satisfied learning process through audio-visuals.

3.2.2. The use of animation in the classroom: the teacher's role

Using animation does not mean that the role of the teacher is taken for granted, quite on the contrary, the teacher plays a very important role. Çakir (2006) states:

It is certain that the teacher is as effective as the video film in teaching through video, because he is the only person who enables the learners to comprehend what they watch and hear by using some of the communicative techniques. The teacher can be a controller, an assessor on organiser, a prompter and a participant as well. (p.68-69)

Therefore, as we can see Çakir (2006) claims that one of the roles of the teacher is a controller, because it is in his hands to decide the important contents that are more relevant to teach. As for the assessor, it is a bit obvious, the teacher needs to assess students in order to know how they are progressing. Regarding the role of the organiser,

the teacher needs to follow the best learning process and should give the important and relevant information that leads the student to succeed in his or her learning process.

Çakir (2006) also affirms that teachers should be also prompters to encourage and foster students when he or she identifies that students are not following well the video. Thus, the role of the teacher has to be active because indeed as the students, the teacher is a participant more, in the classroom (but with different roles).

In terms of strategies for implementing audio-visuals in the classroom, both authors; Bahrani (2011) and Çakir (2006) claim that teachers should have on account some resources and strategies if animation videos are intended to be used in the classroom.

Bahrani (2011) talks more about tips. He states that cartoons must be included in the class, and those have to be selected accurately, should include a range variety and need to be interesting for children. Also, it is important to tell students to watch some segments at home before watching the whole video in class, so students can be familiarized with it. Furthermore, when watching it in the class, their opinion is very important. That is why teachers can ask them to share their opinions about the video.

Çakir (2006), mentions 8 techniques for video implication:

- **Active viewing:** where students should be active while watching the video. That can be possible by answering questions asked by the teacher, orally.
- **Freeze framing and prediction:** it is as easy as pausing the video and let students make speculations about what will happen. In fact, previously in the part of why we should use animation, we talked about letting students make their own prediction. So, this technique relates to this idea.
- **Silent viewing** where the video is played without sound, so students should guess what happens without hearing the audio played.
- **The sound on and vision off activity**, where students just have to listen to the audio without looking at the picture, in order to focus more on the listening. This way, students can imagine and create their own animation story in their mind.
- **Repetition and role-play**, and **reproduction activity:** They differ in that repetition and role-play are about repeating some parts of the video and then, acting out some parts of the video clip. On the other hand, the reproduction activity is more about telling what happened in some scenes, either in writing or orally.
- **The dubbing activity**, in which students need to fill the gaps of a dialogue.

- **Follow-up activity:** as the name says, a follow-up activity might be used to enhance the comprehension of the video seen.

3.3. Animation to learn vocabulary

It is important to mention that learning vocabulary may be done through different skills such as reading, listening, writing and speaking. Kayaoğlu, DağAkbaş, and Öztürk (2011) link teaching vocabulary to the four skills. Therefore, students can have the opportunity to learn in different ways according to their strengths. Nevertheless, closer attention will be paid to listening since the main purpose of this study is to explore the use of animation for learning vocabulary.

Kayaoğlu, DağAkbaş, and Öztürk (2011) also declare that acquiring a large amount of vocabulary could not be an easy job. That is why teachers should appeal to new and innovative methodologies, materials and technologies. Hence, animation as a useful tool to learn vocabulary, may be an interesting tool to implement. As they state: “With the help of innovative methods and materials that multimedia provides, language learning environments can be more colorful, motivating and at the same time more supportive for students in the learning process.” (p.24)

These three authors emphasize the role of multimedia, as a visual instrument to reinforce acquisition by linking the words they hear with visuals. Actually, Kayaoğlu, DağAkbaş, and Öztürk. (2011) state that: “Learning with animation is theoretically based on dual-coding theory⁵.” (p.26) which insists on the intrinsic relationship between learning vocabulary thanks to visual aids.

However, as Bahrani (2011) stated before it is very important to choose an adequate video clip. Kayaoğlu, DağAkbaş, and Öztürk. (2011) also add that teachers should know how and when they should use it. Otherwise, if they make an abusive use of it, it could become monotonous for learners.

Some studies explore the importance of animation in vocabulary learning. Kayaoğlu, DağAkbaş, and Öztürk. (2011) show a very positive attitude and a will to learn when animation was presented to learners corroborating. Jones (2003) for example, proved

⁵ It is a theory suggested by Allan Paivio, which says that out of the two cognitive subsystems that we have, one is specialized by processing non-verbal input, and the other one is in charge of the language.

that learners would acquire better vocabulary when they had access to it through animation: “Students with visual and verbal annotations performed significantly better than those who received verbal annotations alone.” (p.47)

Thus, he demonstrates that learners who had the support of visuals, had a better performance than those who just received verbal input. The reason might be because visuals provide an extra information to them, so they comprehend better. And consequently, it helps them acquire more significantly the concepts that wanted to be learnt.

As a matter of fact, learners think that visuals possess more information than a simple word can. For example, if an isolated word is presented to them, they will have more difficulties in understanding it, than if an image that represents this word, is shown to them. In fact, the adage of “*A picture is worth a thousand words*” also complements this idea stated above.

Moreover, visual aids help students to remember better the vocabulary, and consequently this vocabulary learnt through animation might last longer in their memory. In addition, Bal-Gazegin (2014) agrees with the previous authors, because he demonstrates that students were able to understand better and to acquire easily the vocabulary when they were being exposed to audio visuals. Learners did not have difficulties following the video clip that the teacher had presented to them.

That is why Bal-Gazegin (2014) believes that this could be a really useful tool when learning vocabulary.

Furthermore, Jones (2003) mentions the usefulness of presenting keywords to students. In fact, it could be linked to Vélez’s (2013) idea of using different steps of activities to reach the lesson’s aim that was stated by the teacher. As a pre-activity, teachers could present keywords to learners, so they can be familiarized with them. And later, when they watch the animation, they can be more likely to understand all the vocabulary. Moreover, as we said before it helps to link the word with an image, and this lasts longer in the memory. Hence, being able to make this connection it can lead to a better acquisition of the vocabulary.

In conclusion, and taking into account all the authors’ statements that we have been seeing, animation might be a good educational tool to learn a second language, specially vocabulary. Therefore, it could be interesting to implement it in schools, as an additional and innovative method of teaching. This way, learners could become more aware of the

words that they need to know. Moreover, they could comprehend better the input that the teacher wants to convey.

4. Methodology

Down below, research questions will be presented. As well as the context and participants who took part of this case study. Moreover, we will present the procedure that was carried on and the instruments of data collection.

4.1. Research questions

This study case aims to answer the following questions:

- Is there a difference for students between learning through animation, and traditional methods?
- When it comes to learn through animation, is the student's attitude more favorable?

4.2. Context and participants

The study was carried in a Catalan school named Escola Vic Centre; it is a brand-new public school situated in the centre of Vic city, and has just one line for each grade. Therefore, it is composed of Nursery school, and Primary school.

It has also been named as a high complexity school. Moreover, the school has numerous students that come from different cultures. Hence, the classrooms are bestowed with a rich diversity of students.

The participants for this study were Year 2 children. Therefore, they are between 7-8 years old. The classroom was composed of 25 students. Nevertheless, as we will below in the results and data collection section, only 19 students were included in the study since some of them were absent when the activities were implemented. It is important to highlight the fact that among the participants there are four people who have English as their mother tongue.

4.3. Procedure

In order to know if animation is a good tool to learn vocabulary, a comparison was established between a more traditional approach (with worksheets⁶) and animation (with different dynamic activities).

⁶ See Appendix I

To carry out this case study, food and clothes were chosen as topics, and 14 vocabulary items were selected. The reason of the topics selected is that both of them are vocabulary close to children, and they had been presented to learners the previous year.

With both methods we followed the same procedures as Ramirez (2011) stated; pre-activities, while-activities, and post-activities have been carried out, in order to make a satisfied learning process. Therefore, there is no big difference in terms of the process of implementing both methods.

Furthermore, we were provided with 5 sessions to carry out this research. Hence, the idea was to split the group into two. One group used animation (food vocabulary) meanwhile the other one went with another teacher to learn with the traditional method (clothes vocabulary). We decided to divide the group into two because as the school ideology states, working with small groups helps the learning process of the child, as well as the classroom management.

However, we made sure that every learner had the opportunity to be in contact with both methods. That is why, later the group that used animation was asked to work with the traditional method, and vice-versa.

4.4. Instruments of data collection

In order to elicit data from this research, pre-test and post-test were implemented. Therefore, we can see that in this particular instrument of collecting data, we used a quantitative method. We made one test about food and another one about clothes, so we could elicit the data and see how children acquire better vocabulary, with audio-visual method or with the traditional method.

The structure of the test ⁷ is the following: it consists of three activities that are shared by both approaches (traditional and animation). The first one is a matching activity, where the participants had to match the word with its correct image. After that, they had to watch three particular images and write its correct name. It is important to mention that in this activity, even if the child did not write the word with the correct orthography, as long as the pronunciation was alright, it was counted as correct.

The last activity, the teacher pronounces five words, and learners had to mark the correct answer as they have two options each to choose. We tried to make sure that different

⁷ See Annex III and IV

skills appear in the test. Hence, they could put into practice skills like reading, writing and listening.

The reason why we chose pre-test and post-test as a data collection technique is because pre-test allows us to know the previous knowledge that the learner has. Therefore, we could know from where he/she begins. That way, it will be useful after it, when the post-test is performed. In this way, the information that we can elicit is for sure useful and truthful.

Furthermore, we also used two qualitative methods to collect data. One of them is a focus group⁸, where we selected a total of ten students and in groups of five, we asked them what they thought about the methodologies that have been learning through. The speech was made in Catalan, in order for the young learners to answer comfortably.

So, more specifically we asked learners which method they enjoyed the best, and why. We used this instrument to elicit information because, even if the test helps us collect an empirical data, if we have the personal view of the learners, this data could be complemented and might make more sense when we analyze it later.

It is important to say that the students were selected in a way that we could have learners with different characteristics, the ones who have more difficulties with English, those who are good at it, learners who have English as their mother tongue, learners who find this subject interesting, and the ones who find it boring.

Finally, the other qualitative method is an interview⁹ to the teacher who was responsible for the class. The structure that we used is a standardized open-ended interview the most structured one that follows a guide that has been prepared beforehand. Therefore, the questions were already prepared. Moreover, the questions that were asked are open questions.

By doing an interview to the teacher, we could complement all the information that we have been able to elicit until now, having the point of view of the teacher is important, because as the teacher has more experience in the field of education, getting to know what are their thought, and together with the learners ideas, we might be able to reach a better conclusion.

⁸ See Annex V

⁹ See Annex VI

5. Results and analysis of the data

In this section, a data chart about the information elicited will be presented. As well as three graphs about the results of the initial test, the final test and the learners who answered all the questions correctly.

5.1. Data chart

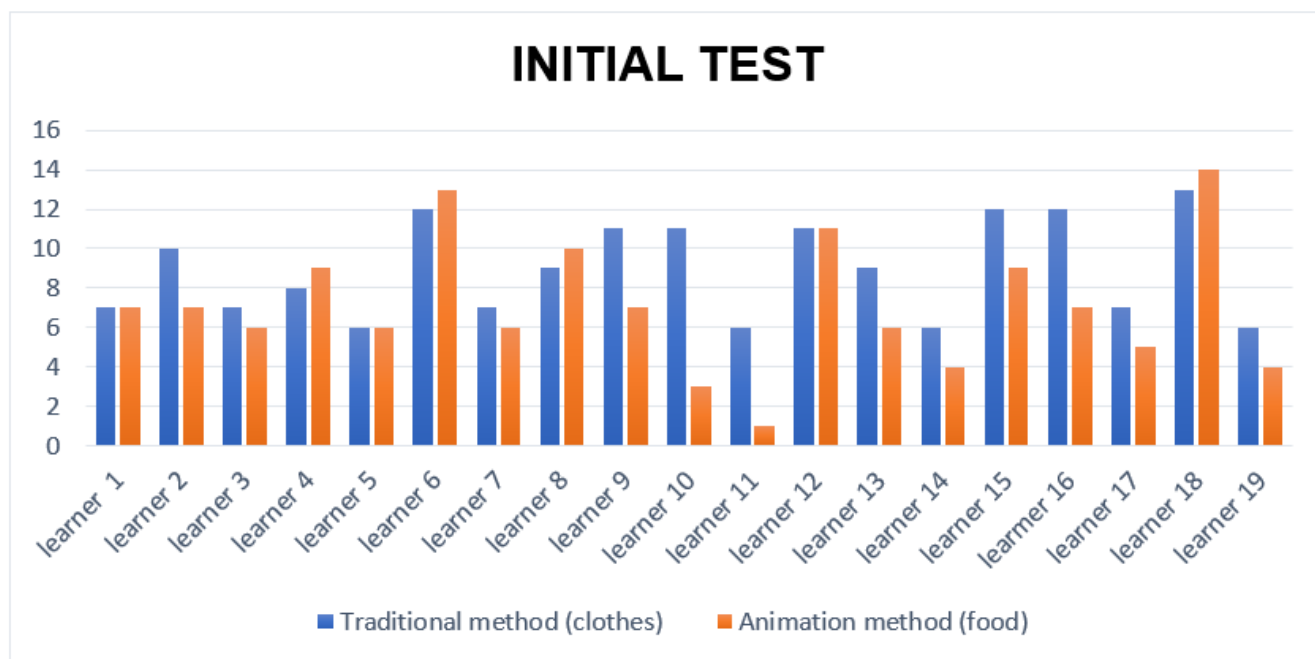
As we explained in the methodology section, the tests were divided into three different activities, consequently learners could implement three different skills. However, the number of total questions were 14. In fact, these 14 questions are linked to the 14 words of vocabulary that they were supposed to acquire.

Thus, the maximum score that a learner could obtain doing the tests were 14 points. As presented in the chart below, there are the results of the initial and the final test of both methods, the traditional one, and the animation method.

Participants	Initial test		Final test	
	Traditional method (food)	Traditional method (clothes)	Traditional method (food)	Traditional method (clothes)
	Total of correct answers	Total of correct answers	Total of correct answers	Total of correct answers
Learner 01	7/14	7/14	14/14	9/14
Learner 02	7/14	10/14	14/14	12/14
Learner 03	6/14	7/14	9/14	11/14
Learner 04	9/14	8/14	14/14	14/14
Learner 05	6/14	6/14	13/14	8/14
Learner 06	13/14	12/14	14/14	13/14
Learner 07	6/14	7/14	14/14	9/14
Learner 08	10/14	9/14	14/14	10/14
Learner 09	7/14	11/14	14/14	8/14
Learner 10	3/14	11/14	13/14	12/14
Learner 11	1/14	6/14	10/14	12/14
Learner 12	11/14	11/14	14/14	14/14
Learner 13	6/14	9/14	10/14	10/14
Learner 14	4/14	6/14	10/14	8/14
Learner 15	9/14	12/14	13/14	7/14
Learner 16	7/14	12/14	14/14	8/14
Learner 17	5/14	7/14	13/14	6/14
Learner 18	14/14	13/14	14/14	14/14
Learner 19	4/14	6/14	8/14	7/14

The findings obtained will be presented in more detail in the graphs below.

5.2. Graph 1: Initial Test

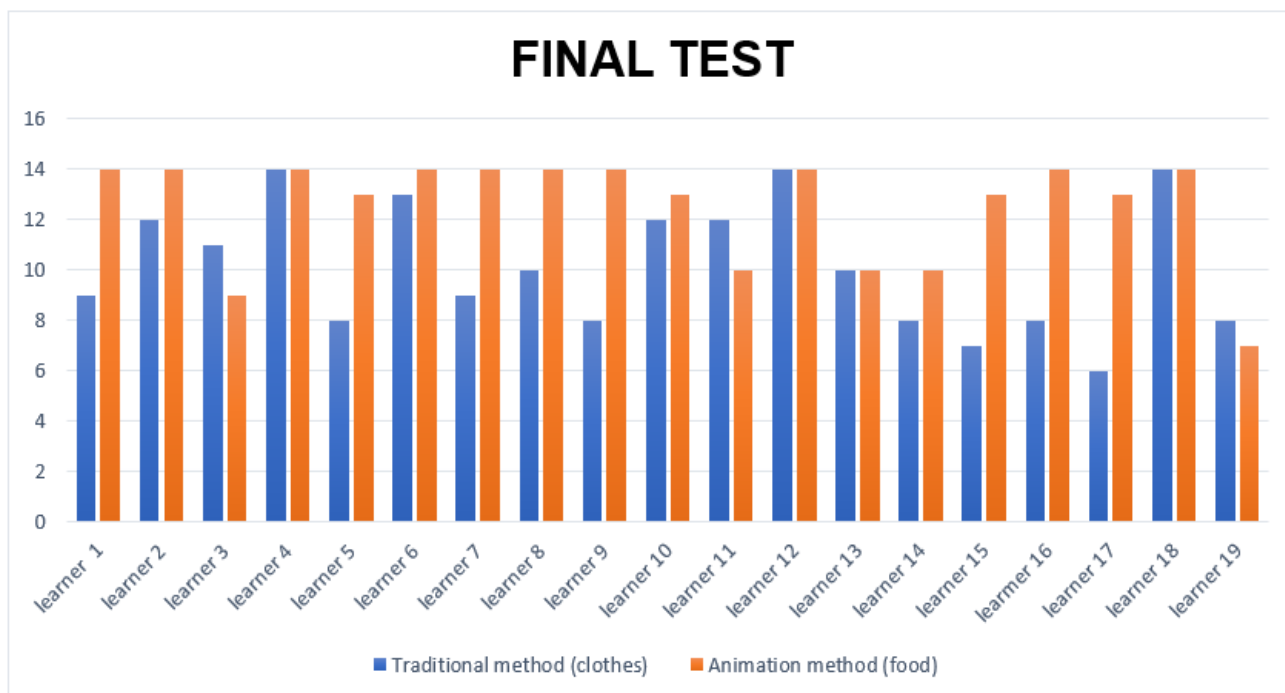


It is interesting to observe that the vast majority of learners had already the same previous knowledge more or less, about food and clothes. The exceptions were learners 10 and 11, who had more knowledge about food vocabulary than clothes vocabulary. It proves us that the topics were chosen correctly, because most of them knew already some of the words. The implication is that both topics chosen were on fairly equal terms as for topic knowledge and that may make comparison between methodologies more reliable.

As we mentioned in the section where we talked about vocabulary acquisition, Gee's (2012) idea should be reminded, in which he highlighted the importance of the learner's previous knowledge to determine the teaching activities that could engage in the learning process. We should highlight that learners who have English as their first language, presented very good results in their pre-test. Examples could be learners 6, 12 and 18, who answered almost all the questions correctly, in both topics.

If we had to perform an average of the correct answers about the food vocabulary, the result would be 7 correct answers. It means that, in general, students had some knowledge about half of the questions. As for the clothes vocabulary, the average would be 8 correct answers, which means that the difference is hardly noticeable. This fact verifies the previous idea that children had almost the same previous knowledge about both topics.

5.3. Graph 2: Final test

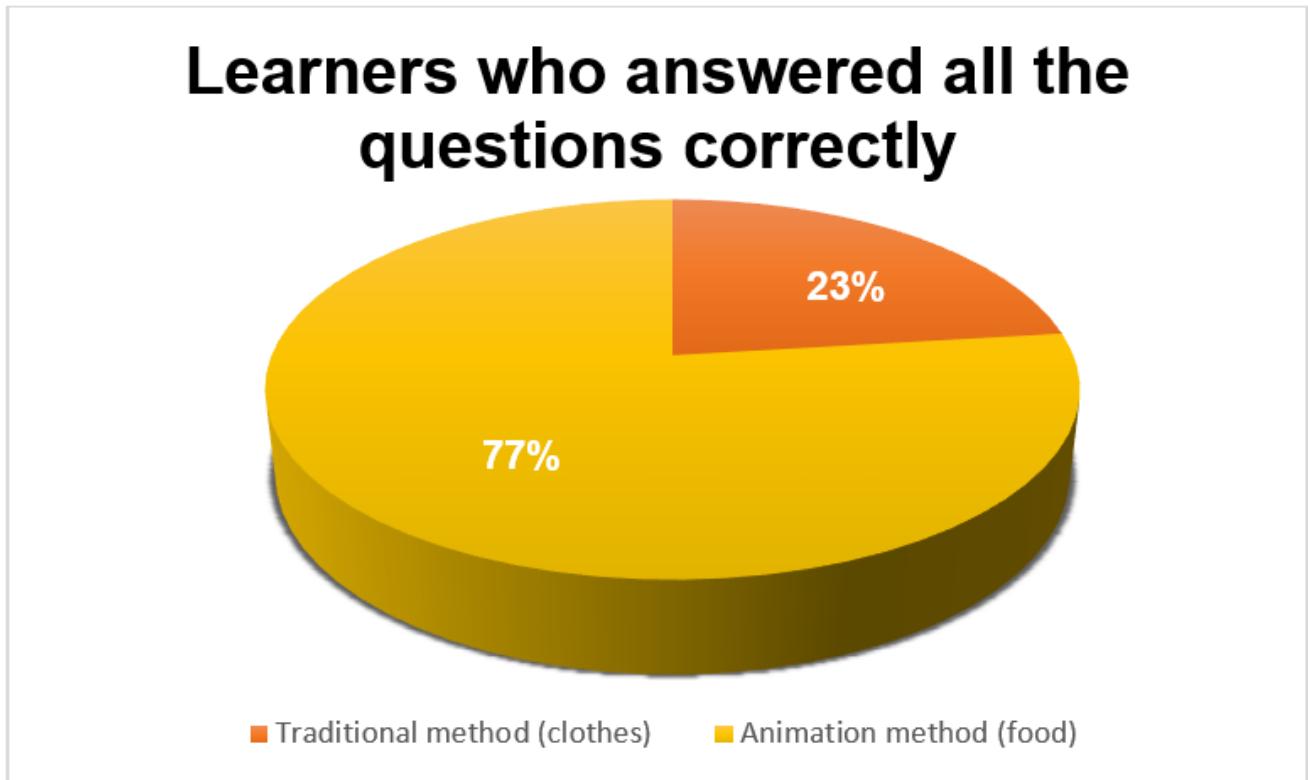


As shown in this second graph, learners have acquired more vocabulary with the animation method. The difference is quite big. If a comparison between both methods is made, we can see that while the number of correct answers with the animation method is considerably high, the number of correct answers with the traditional method is rather lower.

Nevertheless, there are exactly three learners (learners 3, 11 and 19) who had better achievement with the traditional method. Even though, there is no big difference between the two methods. It is also important to emphasize that the ones that have answered all the questions correctly with both methods (learners 4, 12 and 18), are English native speakers. As for learner 13, we can see that he/she had the same results with both methods.

It is surprising to see that with the animation method, learners had not less than 8 correct answers (more than a half of the total questions). However, with the traditional method the lowest number of correct answers is six (less than a half of the correct answers). Therefore, we can notice that the difference between the two methods is remarkable.

5.4. Graph 3: Learners who answered all the questions correctly (final test)



This third graph is also interesting because it shows the number of learners who correctly answered all the questions in the final test. Thus, in this graph we can see the comparison between both methods, and the difference is huge. Just 4 learners answered all the 14 questions correctly in the traditional method, whereas the number of learners who answered everything correctly is 10 with animation. Hence, in terms of percentages we can see that, with the animation method, 77% of learners answered all the questions correctly, and the traditional method has a percentage of 23%.

6. Discussion

Regarding the pre-test we could see that learners had almost the same knowledge as for the topics presented. The reason for that might be that they had already learned about the chosen topics. The initial tests have been useful to know the learner's prior knowledge. In relation with this, we have been able to notice that native students were already good at the challenge that were faced with. Thus, the animation method was meant to increase native-like students' motivation to continue learning the language. However, it was not the case with the traditional method, as learners had to just do the worksheets that were presented to them (with pre-activities, while-activities and post-activities) it was not regarded as "much fun". In fact, the focus group ¹⁰ that was conducted with some learners, one of them; (learner 17) affirmed that *"doncs a mi les fitxes no m'han agradat, era com una mica avorrit. Però el vídeo del drac si que era divertit i m'ha agradat molt! I m'ho he passat més bé perquè podíem dibuixar els aliments i després quan miràvem la pel·lícula m'ha agradat que endevinàvem aviam que menjaria."*

As for the final test, we already saw that learners acquired more vocabulary with the animation method than the traditional method. The reasons of this huge difference might be, as Canning (2000) and Jurkovič (2015) suggested, that using visual aids as an educational tool helps to increase the learner's motivation. In addition, using animation leads to make the class more interactive. Hence, learners are more active and their learning process is more significant for them.

Actually, the English teacher was interviewed, and she said: *"I think animation for kids are more visual and motivate, we have a new generation that they learn quickly with interactive tools than a traditional method"*. Indeed, this generation of children seem to learn better with interactive and modern approaches and tools, rather than with traditional methods.

Focussing on individual student's results, learner 17 says that he did not like the idea of doing worksheets. Actually, we can see their results go in line with what he stated. Learner 17 had 13 correct answers with the animation method, while with the traditional method, he just got 6 correct answers.

¹⁰ See Appendix V

Moreover, regarding the native English speakers that we mentioned before, when we asked learner 04 why he liked working with visual aids more than with worksheets, he said: *doncs perquè jo com que ja sabia casi tot el menjar (parlen l'anglès a casa), doncs era més divertit perquè podia veure el vídeo, i també m'ha agradat que feies pausa i endevinàvem què menjaria.*

Thus, here we can notice another advantage of using animation, especially if it is implemented in a school where they have lots of students from different cultural backgrounds, that have English as their mother tongue. Learner 04 confirms the idea that even if he already knew the vocabulary, at least it was more motivating for him to go through this learning process using animation. In fact, we can relate here Canning's (2000) idea of using hypothesis, this author was sure that it can lead to an open variety of interpretations. Indeed, this is usually attractive for learners because the fact of reaffirming their initial idea makes the learning more interesting for them. Learner 17 also said: *"(...) després quan miràvem la pel·lícula m'ha agradat que endevinàvem aviam què menjaria."*

In addition, Çakir (2006) mentioned the fact of making predictions and being active while watching the audio visual in his 8 techniques for video implication.

On the other hand, we cannot forget about the minority (3 learners) that were more comfortable and had better results with the traditional method. This fact seems to indicate that we should not generalize the positive impact of animation. In other words, it has been proved that visual aids are really helpful in terms of vocabulary acquisition. However, every individual has its own personality, and they work differently. Actually, this interpretation could be linked to Gardner's¹¹ theory of Multiple intelligences.

He states that while some people can be very good at one skill, other people can be good at other different skills. In this sense, we have learner 03 that told us: *"a mi m'han agradat les dos coses però m'ha agradat molt més les fitxes de la roba."* She was asked why, and she answered: *"perquè a mi m'agrada molt escriure i les fitxes per mi són més divertides."* In addition, learner 11 also told us that it was funnier to do the worksheets because it was just "funnier" for her.

¹¹ Cherry, K. (2019). *Gardner's Theory of "Multiple Intelligences"*. Retrieved from:



Image 1. The multiple intelligences of Gardner

Furthermore, some learners were more aware of their own learning with the animation method. It is quite surprising because when children are that young, they are not conscious of their own progress. However, some of them mentioned it while the focus group was being carried out. For instance, learner 10 that stated: *“i m’ha agradat més el “Hungry dragon” perquè m’ha agradat que he après més anglès amb els aliments”*. Learner 05 immediately agrees with this learner. Therefore, as Bahrani (2014), Çakir (2006) and other authors mentioned above, using animation as an educational tool might have excellent outcomes. Additionally, the teacher also stated that: *“Currently I use this method for acquiring structures and vocabulary”*.

Thus, the findings go in line with what the researchers say because we could see that by comparing two methods, the one that uses visual aids was more successful, because learners could acquire more vocabulary than with the traditional method. We can explain that by just looking at their results summarized in the graphs above (section 5, results and data collection).

Turning our attention to our research questions. The first one was meant to explore the difference in learning through animation and traditional methods. The results have shown that the animation method seems to help most students acquire more vocabulary, than the traditional method. Indeed, 77% of learners were able to answer all the questions correctly. However, if we have to talk about the traditional method, the learners who had been able to answer everything correctly, were just a 23%. Evidence seems to point out at the fact that animation is an educational tool that might be very successful if teachers start to implement it in class in a thoughtful way.

As for the second research question related to the learner's attitude towards animation, their attitude seems to be more favorable, they are more likely to learn, because they have more motivation. Moreover, as they find it funnier, they are willing to learn more.

7. Conclusion: Limitations and reflections

Learning vocabulary is a complex process, as López (1995) stated. That is why teachers should find innovative methods to facilitate its acquisition by learners. Therefore, animation could be a useful educational tool when it comes to acquire vocabulary. As the words are presented in a context, and not in isolation, learners may find learning more meaningful. Furthermore, it helps students to understand abstract concepts that could be more difficult to grasp without visual aids. Therefore, as Vélez (2013) claimed it helps learners to enhance their comprehension. In addition, it tends to be acquired because of the retention of visual in their memory.

Additionally, young learners tend to find more attractive learning with animation as it is something close to them (they watch animation at home and it is part of their leisure). Consequently, they may feel more motivated and that is why they could be more willing to learn. We already saw that Canning (2000) and Jurkovič (2015) state that motivation is a key aspect to justify the use of animation in EFL teaching. However, it is important to choose the appropriate videos for learners, and plan and scaffold the teaching tasks accordingly.

Furthermore, animation allows listening to different accents, as Mekheimer (2011) mentioned. In real life children will be exposed to a variety of different accents of English, and the best way to start implementing it could be through audio-visual aids. The teacher that was interviewed also said that the fact that animation might be a good educational tool not only for acquiring new vocabulary, but also to expose pupils to different language varieties.

The results from the case study research seem to indicate that most students believe that they learn better with the animation method rather than with the traditional method based on worksheets. In fact, learners acquired more vocabulary through using visual aids, and they were willing to choose animation versus the traditional worksheet method. However, not all learners are the same and even if the vast majority of them performed better with the animation approach, there is a minority that seemed to prefer and learn more using more traditional methods. Consequently, teachers should bear this in mind,

and have into account that we cannot generalize this method for everyone, because of the multiple intelligences that students may possess.

It is important to mention that even if animation was proved to be a good educational tool, we should know how to use it. As Vélez (2013) argued, pre-activities should be included to contextualized animation, while-activities and post-activities should also be part of our lesson plan to guarantee learning while and after animation.

In terms of limitations, it is fundamental to bear in mind that the time was a very hard limitation, since we had just five sessions to implement both methods and that fact may have hindered the effectiveness of my research.

Another limitation of this research is the fact that the pedagogical experience was carried out in just one specific school. Therefore, the results might not be transferable to other schools, because the context and the environment would be different. That is the reason why I think that if we had to make again the same project, it should be implemented in some pilot schools at the same time.

To end up these reflections we would like to express that even if some changes would be needed to enhance the effectiveness of the use of animation in the EFL classroom, both the teacher and the students seemed to enjoy visual documents as a tool for learning English. Personally, I have learned that methods are instruments in the hands of teachers, who need to know how and when to apply them. Believing in an approach is the first step, but being aware of each student needs is vital to be able to teach effectively.

8. References

The references that have been used during this project are going to be presented down below.

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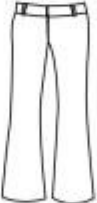


9. Appendices

Appendices are presented hereafter, such as the worksheets used to carry out the practical part, the tests to collect the data, the focus group made with learners, and the English teacher's interview.

9.1. Appendix I: Worksheets (traditional method)

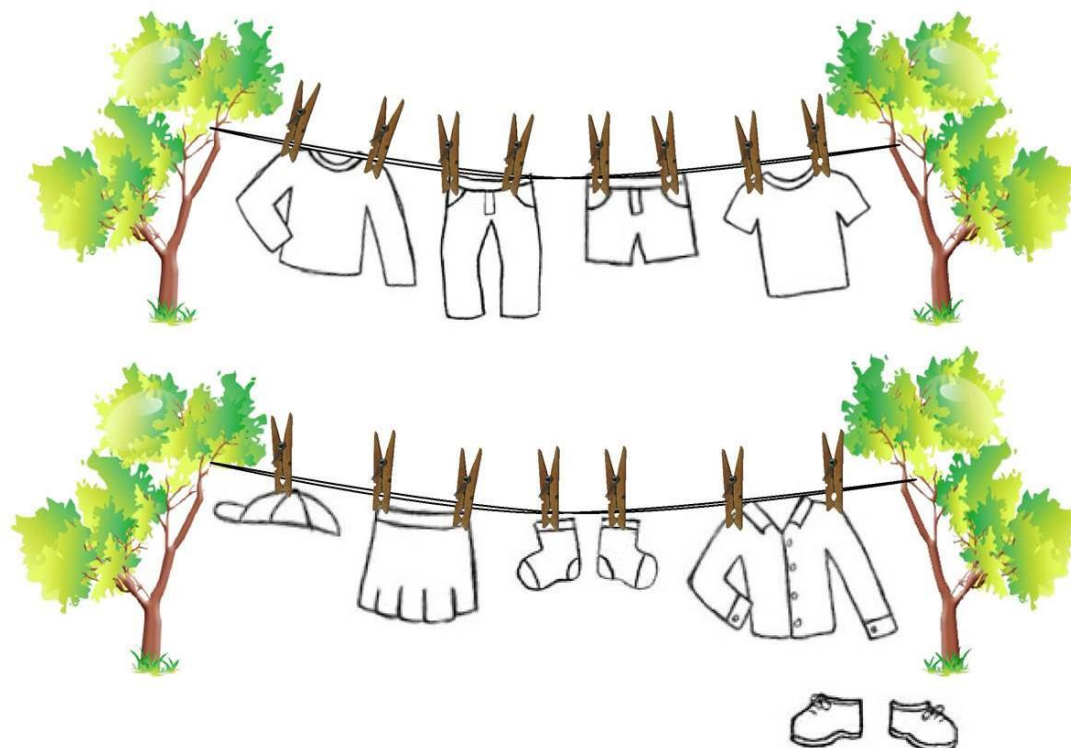
Clothes - Fill in the missing vowels

Fill in the missing vowels for each of the following words:

 j_ck_t	 sk_rt
 tr__n_rs	 sl_pp_rs
 sh_rt	 sc_rf
 sh_rts	 tr__s_rs
 t - sh_rt	 bl__s_

Clothing line

Follow the instructions below.



Colour the t-shirt blue.	Colour the socks green.
Colour the skirt pink.	Colour the trousers yellow.
Colour the jumper red.	Colour the shirt purple.
Colour the shoes orange.	Colour the hat black.
Colour the shorts white.	

Name:

10

Read and match.



blouse



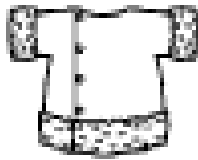
cap



coat



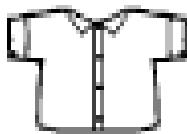
dress



shirt



shoes



skirt



socks

sweater

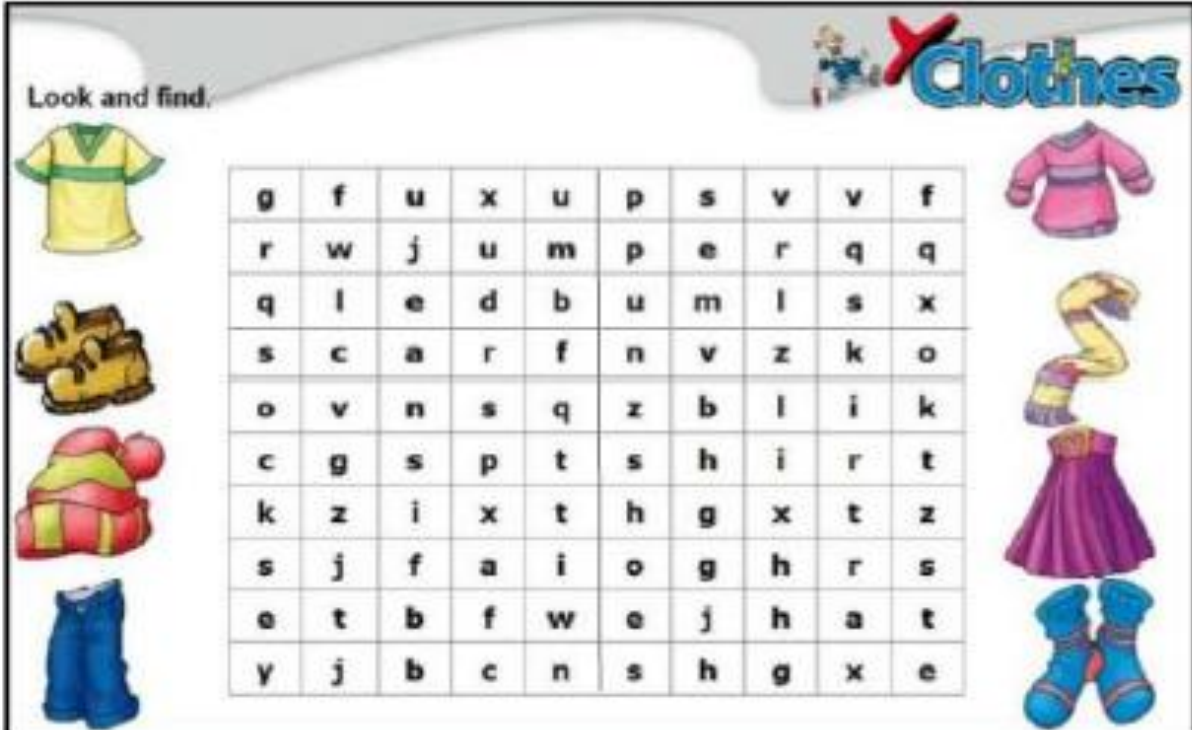


trousers



ALPHABET SOUP CLOTHING

Look and find.



g	f	u	x	u	p	s	v	v	f
r	w	j	u	m	p	e	r	q	q
q	l	e	d	b	u	m	l	s	x
s	c	a	r	f	n	v	z	k	o
o	v	n	s	q	z	b	l	i	k
c	g	s	p	t	s	h	i	r	t
k	z	i	x	t	h	g	x	t	z
s	j	f	a	i	o	g	h	r	s
e	t	b	f	w	e	j	h	a	t
y	j	b	c	n	s	h	g	x	e











clothes

shirt
 scarf
 hat
 socks
 shoes
 jumper
 skirt
 jeans

9.2. Appendix II: Worksheets' samples (traditional method)

Clothes - Fill in the missing vowels

Fill in the missing vowels for each of the following words:

 j <u>a</u> ck <u>e</u> t	 sk <u>i</u> rt
 tr <u>a</u> ns <u>e</u> rs	 sl <u>i</u> pp <u>e</u> rs
 sh <u>i</u> rt	 sc <u>a</u> rf
 sh <u>o</u> rts	 tr <u>o</u> us <u>e</u> rs
 t-sh <u>i</u> rt	 bl <u>o</u> s <u>e</u>

Clothing line

Follow the instructions below.

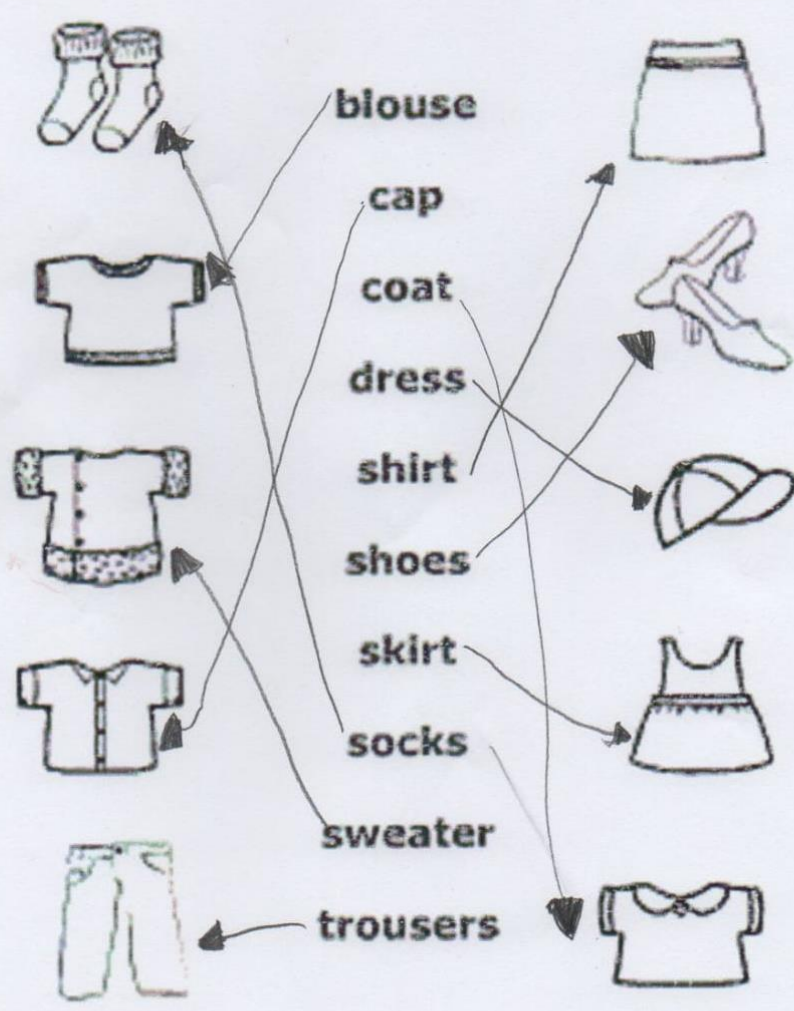


Colour the t-shirt blue.	Colour the socks green.
Colour the skirt pink.	Colour the trousers yellow.
Colour the jumper red.	Colour the shirt purple.
Colour the shoes orange.	Colour the hat black.
Colour the shorts white.	

Read and match.

Name:

10



ALPHABET SOUP CLOTHING

Look and find.

g	f	u	x	u	p	s	v	v	f
r	w	j	u	m	p	e	r	q	q
q	l	e	d	b	u	m	l	s	x
s	c	a	r	f	n	v	z	k	o
o	v	n	s	q	z	b	l	i	k
c	g	s	p	t	s	h	i	r	t
k	z	i	x	t	h	g	x	t	z
s	j	f	a	i	o	g	h	r	s
t	b	f	w	e	j	h	a	t	
y	j	b	c	n	s	h	g	x	e

- shirt
- scarf
- hat
- socks
- shoes
- jumper
- skirt
- jeans

9.3. Appendix III: Traditional method test (clothes vocabulary)

1. MATCH THE WORD WITH THE CORRECT IMAGE

SHOES

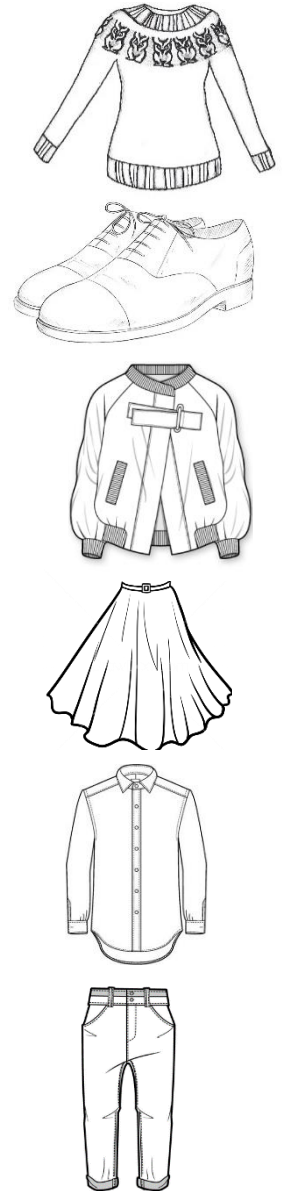
PANTS/TROUSERS

SKIRT

JACKET

SWEATER

SHIRT





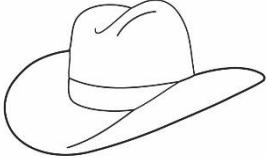

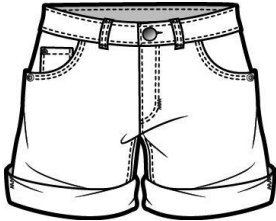
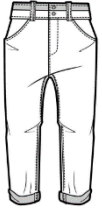
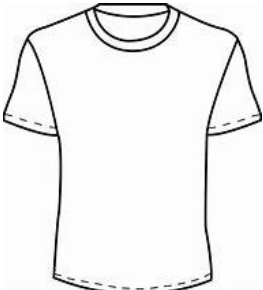



2. LOOK AT THE PICTURE AND WRITE ITS NAME

1 _____

2 _____

3. LISTEN AND MARK THE CORRECT FOOD

1	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	
2	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	
3	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	
4	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	
5	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	

9.3.1. Pre-test sample

INITIAL TEST - CLOTHES

1. MATCH THE WORD WITH THE CORRECT IMAGE

SHOES

PANTS/TROUSERS

SKIRT

JACKET

SWEATER

SHIRT






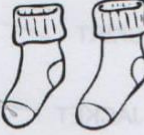






2. LOOK AT THE PICTURE AND WRITE ITS NAME

1 BUS

2 CAP

3 RES

3. LISTEN AND MARK THE CORRECT CLOTHES

1	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	
2	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
3	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	
4	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
5	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	

9.3.2. Post-test sample

FINAL TEST - CLOTHES

1. MATCH THE WORD WITH THE CORRECT IMAGE

SHOES

PANTS/TROUSERS

SKIRT

JACKET

SWEATER

SHIRT

2. LOOK AT THE PICTURE AND WRITE ITS NAME

1 BLOUSES

2 SKIRT

3 DRAS

3. LISTEN AND MARK THE CORRECT CLOTHES



1



2



3



4



5



1. Sweater
2. Shoes
3. Hat
4. Shorts
5. T-shirt

9.4. Appendix IV: Animation method test (food vocabulary)

1. MATCH THE WORD WITH THE CORRECT IMAGE

CHICKEN

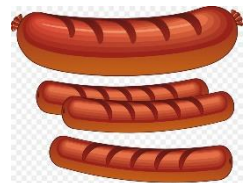
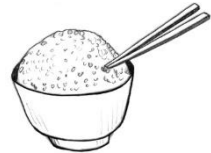
RICE

NOODLES

SAUSAGES

MEAT

PUDDING



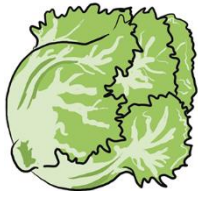


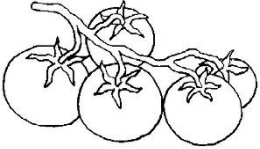
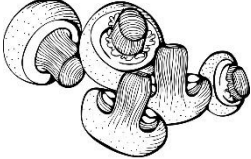

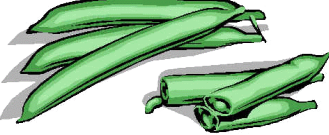
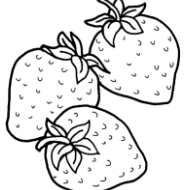
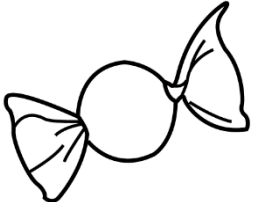

2. LOOK AT THE PICTURE AND WRITE ITS NAME

4 _____

5 _____

6 _____

3. LISTEN AND MARK THE CORRECT FOOD

1	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	
				
2	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	
3	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	
4	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	
5	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	

9.4.1. Pre-test sample

INITIAL TEST - FOOD

1. MATCH THE WORD WITH THE CORRECT IMAGE

CHICKEN

RICE

NOODLES

SAUSAGES

MEAT

PUDDING

The images on the right are: a piece of meat, a whole chicken on a plate, a bowl of rice with chopsticks, a plate of noodles, a bowl of pudding, and three sausages.

2. LOOK AT THE PICTURE AND WRITE ITS NAME

1 FISH

2 egg

3 MANGO

3. LISTEN AND MARK THE CORRECT FOOD

1



2



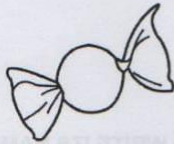
3



4



5



9.4.2. Post-test sample

FINAL TEST - FOOD

1. MATCH THE WORD WITH THE CORRECT IMAGE

CHICKEN

RICE

NOODLES

SAUSAGES

MEAT

PUDDING












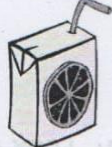
2. LOOK AT THE PICTURE AND WRITE ITS NAME

1 FIX

2 KEIC

3 MAGO

3. LISTEN AND MARK THE CORRECT FOOD

1	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	
2	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	
3	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	
4	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	
5	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	

1. Fix

2. Rice

3. Mango

9.5. Appendix V: Focus group

9.5.1. Focus group 1

Entrevistadora: Molt bé nens i nenes ara faré alguna pregunta i us gravaré perquè quedí registrat, ja que ho necessitaré pel meu treball. Abans de començar teniu alguna pregunta?

Tots: No!

Entrevistadora: D'acord, la meua pregunta doncs és si us ha agradat més treballar amb el vídeo del "*Hungry dragon*" i aprendre vocabulari sobre menjar, o fent les fitxes sobre el tema de la roba?

(comencen a xerrar els cinc a la vegada)

Entrevistadora: Un moment, fem una cosa; començarem per aquí i així, tots direm la nostra opinió.

Estudiant 07: A mi m'ha agradat veure el vídeo del drac que tenia tanta gana i que volia menjar-se el nen i que ha explotat al final perquè s'ha menjat tot el menjar que havia. Ai! el menjar que li donava el nen.

Entrevistadora: Per tant em dius que t'ho has passat més bé aprenent amb el vídeo del drac?

Si! Osigui... les fitxes també m'ha agradat però m'ha agradat molt més el vídeo.

Estudiant 04: doncs a mi també! M'ha agradat molt veure el vídeo, és d'un drac que es desperta cada 100 anys i té molta gana. I al principi es volia menjar el nen! Però bueno després li donava menjar com carn, verdura...

Entrevistadora: recordes algun *food* en anglès?

Estudiant 04: Si! *Tomatoes, sausages*...

Entrevistadora: molt bé!! Continua em deies que a tu també t'ha agradat més treballar amb *food*, i per què?

Estudiant 04: doncs perquè jo com que ja sabia casi tot el menjar (parlen l'anglès a casa), doncs era més divertit perquè podia veure el vídeo, i també m'ha agradat que feies pausa i endevinàvem què menjaria.

Estudiant 03: a mi m'han agradat les dos coses però m'ha agradat molt més les fitxes de la roba.

Entrevistadora: i ens pots dir el per què?

Estudiant 03: perquè a mi m'agrada molt escriure i les fitxes per mi són més divertides.

Entrevistadora: Ah molt bé, veieu que no tothom ens agraden les mateixes coses. Però, creus que has après igualment amb el vídeo?

Estudiant 03: Si.

Entrevistadora: D'acord, i tu?

Estudiant 17: doncs a mi les fitxes no m'han agradat, era com una mica avorrit. Però el vídeo del drac si que era divertit i m'ha agradat molt! I m'ho he passat més bé perquè podíem dibuixar els aliments i després quan miràvem la pel·lícula m'ha agradat que endevinàvem aviam què menjaria.

Entrevistadora: Creieu que amb el vídeo del "*Hungry dragon*", heu après?

Tots: Si!

Estudiant 17: hem après molts menjars.

9.5.2. Focus group 2

Entrevistadora: Molt bé nens i nenes us faré alguna pregunta i ho gravaré perquè quedi registrat, perquè ho necessitaré pel meu treball. Com us ho heu passat millor, treballant amb els aliments amb el vídeo del drac, o fent les fites de la roba?

Estudiant 11: fent fitxes amb la roba

Entrevistadora: I ens pots dir per què?

Estudiant 11: perquè jo m'agrada més fer fitxes...

Entrevistadora: Però creus que has après també amb el vídeo?

Estudiant 11: si, amb els dos.

Entrevistadora: Si haguessis de triar un d'ells per tant, quin seria?

Estudiant 11: ah... fitxes.

Entrevistadora: D'acord, el següent... què ens dius tu?

Estudiant 15: aaah.. el vídeo del drac!

Entrevistadora: què ens vols dir amb això, t'ha agradat més treballar amb el vídeo del "Hungry dragon"?

Estudiant 15: si! Era més divertit, porque el drac se menjava tot i m'ha agradat veure les verdures i fruites com anaven a baix i a dalt.

Entrevistadora: Molt bé, i creus que has après?

Estudiant 15: si!

Entrevistadora: I tu, com t'ho has passat més bé?

Estudiant 05: amb el vídeo!

Entrevistadora: ens pots explicar una mica per què?

Estudiant 05: veure el vídeo del drac em dona molta gràcia porque se volia menjar tot el menjar.

Entrevistadora: i creus que has après?

Estudiant 05: si

Entrevistadora: em pots dir un exemple?

Estudiant 05: he après com se diu flam en anglès.

Entrevistadora: com es diu?

(els altres estudiants comencen a murmurar)

Estudiant 05: Pudin!

Estudiant 10: em tocaa!

Entrevistadora: Uy, em sembla que ella ens vol dir alguna cosa, digues...

Estudiant 10: pues també m'ha gustat el vídeo perquè he après que no s'ha de menjar molt perquè sinó esplotes.

Entrevistadora: exacte, potser no explotem com el drac, però ens podria fer molt mal de panxa.

Estudiant 10: i i m'ha agradat més el "Hungry dragon" perquè m'ha agradat que he après més anglès amb els aliments

Entrevistadora: vols dir que amb el "Hungry dragon" creus que has après més?

Estudiant 10: si

Estudiant 5: Jo també!

Estudiant 15: i perquè el dragon després de despertar-se de 100 anys, volia menjar el nen i el nen li donava diferents menjars.

Entrevistadora: què li donava?

Tots a la vegada: sweet! Sausages, chicken!

Entrevistadora: Molt bé nens i nenes, algú vol dir alguna cosa més?

Tots: mm... crec que no...

9.6. Appendix VI: English teacher's interview

INTERVIEW TO THE ENGLISH TEACHER IN CHARGE OF THE CLASS

Hi, I am going to ask you some questions about the animation method that has been carried on, in order to make this case study.

- 1. What were your first thoughts about implementing animation in class, in order to learn vocabulary? Did you think that would be useful? Why?**

I think animation for kids are more visual and motivate, we have a new generation that they learn quickly with interactive tools than a traditional method. Even though I use games and song for that kind of things and pupils enjoy, anyway.

- 2. After using animation and looking at the results, did your initial thoughts change about this educational tool? How?**

Well, after the results it seems that it is more effective than a traditional method.

- 3. Do you think that visual aids help acquire vocabulary in a better way, than a traditional method would? Why?**

At the first sight it seems better because as I say before it is more motivated and visual for them.

- 4. Could you think about some advantage and/or disadvantage about using animation to learn vocabulary?**

There are advantages because you can use different accents and is a way that kids can take profit about using animation.

- 5. As a teacher, would you apply this method again with your students? Why?**

Yes, currently I use this method for acquiring structures and vocabulary.