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How to Make the Most of the English Language Assistant in a Secondary School. The case of *IES Botànic Cavanilles*

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Abstract

With the view of English as a *lingua franca* and the increasing number of learners with difficulties interacting in the English language, authorities have introduced foreign language assistants (henceforth FLA) into the English language classroom. As it happened in *IES Botànic Cavanilles*, this new member of the teaching staff is usually a young native speaker who serves as a linguistic and cultural model for students. However, after having explored the FLA's role by means of an observation sheet and an analysis of the results obtained from a questionnaire addressed to teachers of the school, it was found out that the FLA pedagogical potential is under-exploited because of two main reasons: i) lack of pedagogical knowledge and ii) a poor organisation and coordination with the English teacher. In order to improve this situation, an intervention was planned: two meetings were arranged as well as the coordination of a Task-based language teaching approach between the teachers and the FLA. Accordingly, the FLA served as a linguistic model in the pre-task and assisted during the main task by using a co-teaching model called Alternative Teaching. After administering a second questionnaire to the four teachers involved in the study, it was found out that the FLA improved in activities design, particularly in aspects such as adaptation to students' level and the presence of a clear communicative outcome. However, co-teaching was not enhanced as few teachers used it in the classroom. Therefore, in order to approach students' diversity more appropriately, it is concluded that the FLA should not teach to more than ten groups, the use of co-teaching and coordination meetings is also advisable, especially to provide information about pedagogy and feedback so that FLAs' activities can improve, and they can make the most of their role.

Keywords: *foreign language learning, foreign language assistants, Task-based language teaching, co-teaching, secondary education*

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FLA   Foreign Language Assistants

TBLT   Task-Based Language Teaching

CLIL   Content and Language Integrated Learning

1. Introduction

In a globalised world, it is of paramount importance to build bridges between cultures and develop a series of competences that make possible a successful interaction with people from all around the world. As a result, English is considered a means to communicate with people from the other side of the globe and a way that opens pathways for fluid contact between members from different cultural groups (Llurda, 2020). In other words, English has become the current *lingua franca* par excellence. For that reason, there has been an increasing demand in families who desire their children to learn English as they view that learning a foreign language can highly benefit their education.

Moreover, students' cultural diversity is one of the most representative factors in the current educational institutions. Consequently, as Buckingham (2018) explains, that situation highlights the significance of developing a multilingual education. One of the main reasons is that learning foreign languages can make a difference since they are considered a means to understand other ways of living, propagating values such as intercultural tolerance (Caparrós-Cabezas, 2010). Buckingham (2019) also mentions that this multilingual education has the primary objective of developing intercultural competence. This competence refers to a combination of knowledge, skills, attitudes and behaviours which enables an individual to recognise, understand, interpret and accept other lifestyles. Additionally, by developing this competence, students can learn to mediate between their culture and another one in order to reach a greater understanding and identify and use different strategies to interact with others without being influenced by stereotypes (Buckingham, 2019).

However, in order to interact using the foreign language, pupils should have some knowledge regarding communicative competence as thanks to it, not only can individuals form correct sentences, but it also provides information about adequacy in diverse contexts. What is more, that competence can be divided into a series of elements. For example, the last

revision made by Celce-Murcia (2007) exposes that communicative competence is composed of six interrelated competences: sociocultural competence, discourse competence, linguistic competence, formulaic competence, interactional competence and strategic competence.

This classification is of paramount importance because if teachers aim at improving students' communicative competence, they should teach aspects related to those six competences. The problem is that foreign language teaching is so grammar-based that the syllabus is focused on the discourse, linguistic and formulaic competences while ignoring the sociocultural and interactional competences. Furthermore, it is worth mentioning that the European Commission (2001, p. 19) emphasises the importance of exposing "pupils as much as possible to the foreign language and to offer them frequent opportunities to use it in situations closely related to real life" in a language learning setting. Nevertheless, that situation does not occur since the use of textbooks seems the norm in secondary courses, and education is too test-centred.

For those reasons, many Spanish students have problems dealing with interaction when they use a foreign language (Martínez, 2006). In fact, students have been building up so many data concerning grammar that they do not know how to apply that information in a real conversation. In addition, the amount of authentic output provided in lessons is very poor since pupils just listen to the audio files from the textbook. To make matters worse, Castaño-Blanco (2012) points out that students are not given enough opportunities to practice their oral expression in the classroom. That is particularly evident in *Batxillerat*, where students prepare for the university entrance exam, which is mainly focused on reading and writing skills.

Due to the reasons mentioned above, the role of the foreign language assistants –hereinafter FLAs– is essential because they can provide students with authentic experiences and input. Moreover, thanks to their role, students can develop oral skills in a foreign

language, become global citizens and develop their communicative and intercultural competences (Buckingham, 2019). For example, concerning communicative competence, pupils can learn some aspects related to the sociocultural and interactional competences, which are forgotten by textbooks.

As a result, the aim of the present study is to analyse the role of an American FLA in a secondary school from *La Vall d'Uixó* and make a pedagogical proposal aimed at fostering the FLA's role in the secondary school. Consequently, this study proposes the use of meetings and a Task-Based Language Teaching methodology so that EFL teachers in the secondary school can make the most of the FLA's presence in the centre concerning not only speaking and interactive skills but also cultural and linguistic specific contents.

2. Theoretical background

As this Master's thesis deals with speaking activities with the collaboration of an American FLA, it is crucial to review some bibliography to know what the use of FLAs entails as well as the role that FLAs have in the Valencian education system. In addition, there would be a short review of Task-Based Language Teaching since it is the approach used in this study.

2.1. Foreign language assistants in the Valencian Community

According to Ley orgànica 2/2006, one of the primary purposes of the Spanish education system is developing students' communicative competence not just in the official languages but also in one or more foreign languages. Nevertheless, most Spanish foreign language teachers are responsible for teaching a language that is not their home language, and they do it in a context where there is no immersion. Furthermore, when students learn a foreign language, and their contact with the target culture is minimal, it could be said that the teacher becomes the cultural representative and students' role model (Grinager, 2018). In other words, that teacher is the only person with some knowledge as regards the target culture

with whom students interact. Another problem is the limited teachers' knowledge concerning sociocultural features, especially if they have not spent some time in a country where the target language is spoken. In fact, most of the time, teachers usually follow the textbook without referring to those features. For those reasons, the role of the FLA is key in foreign language learning, and due to that, authorities have designed different programs so that students can benefit from their linguistic and sociocultural knowledge.

In the case of the Valencian Community, Llei 4/2018, which regulates and fosters multilingualism in the Valencian education system, establishes a program where FLAs are introduced in some state schools so that students can have a native speaker as a linguistic model and cultural representative. Moreover, according to Decret 105/2020, the introduction of these individuals is expected to improve the quality of the current education system, and the development of multilingual people in a multicultural society, as well as to enhance students' and teachers' communicative competence in the foreign language.

For those reasons, a thorough description of FLAs appears in the following sections, paying particular attention to their profile, the roles they need to carry out, and the benefits they can bring into the foreign language classroom.

2.1.1. Foreign language assistants' profile

According to Servei d'Educació Plurilingüe (2020a), FLAs are either native or bilingual speakers with a very high level of English from Germany, Austria, Australia, Belgium, Bulgaria, Canada, the USA, Philippines, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, Malta, New Zealand, the Netherlands, Poland, the UK, Fiji, Sweden, Hong Kong, France, and Finland.

As for the FLAs' education, they have recently graduated or are still studying the last year of their degrees. Additionally, the official call does not specify if those degrees have to be related to humanities and pedagogy. However, it mentions that the first preferential factor

in order to choose the final candidates is having academic qualifications related to education, humanities and sciences. For those reasons, it could be implied that most FLAs do not have experience in foreign language teaching and pedagogy.

Due to the aforementioned reasons, FLAs cannot teach the language without the presence of an English teacher, particularly because they have the role of assisting teachers, and their activities should aim at improving students' oral skills. Moreover, they are assigned a mentor who will guide them and offer professional and personal assistance. Authorities have also designed some guides to help them understand their role, and both FLAs and mentors have to attend different sessions to get acquainted with the program.

In the case of mentors, they attend a briefing session in which they are informed about the board of directors' responsibilities, their role as mentors, the FLAs' profile and the activities they must carry out during their teaching experience. This session also emphasises that mentors are the FLAs' reference person, who should guarantee their integration in the classroom and guide them in foreign language teaching. In other words, teachers should share their knowledge regarding pedagogy, organisation and classroom management with FLAs so that they can have a more productive experience (Servei d'Educació Plurilingüe, 2020b).

On the other hand, FLAs attend a host day where they receive some guidance regarding the administrative procedures they need to perform before starting their teaching experience. They are also informed about the mentors' and FLAs' roles and the teachers' responsibilities. Finally, they are given some guides in case they want to have some suggestions related to the type of activities they can perform in the classroom. Consequently, they are not given any pedagogical information, which is a responsibility that, as it was stated above, falls on the FLA's mentor.

2.1.2. Foreign language assistants' roles and responsibilities

As stated by Nurdin, DeWitt and Sukhoverkhov (2020, p. 197), "FLAs are not just "promoters" of their mother tongue (...) but also are the representatives of a particular social (cultural) identity for their students." In other words, FLAs become the cultural ambassadors who share their language and culture by using their home language naturally and encouraging pupils to compare and contrast two different cultures through a series of activities. As a result, FLAs would "not only transmit but also create new meanings, values and forms of communication and share them with their students" (Nurdin, Dewitt & Sukhoverkhov, 2020, p. 202) and the teaching staff.

In order to perform that role, FLAs have three primary responsibilities (Caparrós-Cabezas, 2010). To begin with, they assist foreign language teachers for about 16 hours a week (this timetable should include weekly meetings with the mentor to plan their lessons and bring authentic co-teaching to the classroom). They should also perform diverse activities with the main goal of motivating students to learn cultural and linguistic aspects from their home language. In addition, they can work with small groups to develop students' communicative skills and foster cultural understanding. Lastly, in subjects whose content is taught using the foreign language (i.e. subjects taught using the Content and Language Integrated Learning methodology, also known as CLIL), FLAs can assist teachers in the classroom and during the creation process of materials, and they can even improve teachers' linguistic competence.

Apart from those responsibilities, Servei d'Educació Plurilingüe has designed two different guides that specify the actions that FLAs can or cannot carry out in the classroom. Those guides are aimed at FLAs and their mentors. According to the FLAs' guide (Servei d'Educació Plurilingüe, 2020a), they can do many activities under the coordination and supervision of their mentor or other foreign language teachers while they avoid using the

students' home language. For instance, FLAs can create activities to foster interaction in students; they can teach some cultural aspects from their country and create different materials with the teacher's aid to support pupils' learning process. They can even motivate students to learn more about the foreign language and appreciate and explore their own culture to establish connections and compare it with others. Moreover, FLAs can record themselves whilst they speak their home language with other native speakers so that foreign language teachers can have authentic materials for the future. Lastly, they can even contribute to teachers training providing that their schedule is free.

Nevertheless, there are a series of actions FLAs cannot perform. For example, they are not allowed to teach some content without teachers' supervision and write part of the syllabus or the final report that teachers fill in after every school year. In this way, they cannot teach grammar, as they should provide activities to put into practice the grammatical aspects students are studying. Moreover, FLAs are not dictionaries, which is the reason why they should not be used to translate texts, but they can help students understand words' meaning. What is more, they cannot correct students' tests, meet their parents and control students' behaviour when they are in the playground or the canteen. Finally, they are not responsible for students' security and discipline. For those reasons, if FLAs encounter some behavioural problems, they need to communicate them to their teachers so that they can deal with them.

Another important aspect that the FLAs' guide mentions is that they must establish a professional relationship with students, but it needs to be close in order to obtain pupils' respect and confidence. However, that does not mean that they can socially involve themselves with students. For example, pupils and FLAs should not have contact through social networks unless they have the centre's consent. Regarding the teaching staff, FLAs should also have a close relationship with them so that all of them can learn and share their personal and professional experiences.

Furthermore, as aforementioned, FLAs have not usually received any pedagogical training, which is why Servei d'Educació Plurilingüe (2020a) encourages them to initially carry out the role of observer in the different classrooms they attend. This observation period has the primary goal of familiarizing themselves with the teachers' methodology and classroom management. In that period, they can pay attention to students' level of English, correction feedback, diversity, discipline, among others.

Apart from that, according to the mentor's guide (Servei d'Educació Plurilingüe, 2020b), FLAs have to attend weekly coordination meetings with their mentors to plan the lessons and share some ideas, learning perceptions and other aspects. In fact, it specifies that those meetings should include the following topics: class objectives, linguistic and cultural aspects to cover (e.g. grammatical structures, vocabulary and opportunities for cultural exchanges), identification of teachers' and FLA's responsibilities, classroom management and materials.

2.1.3. Benefits of having FLAs in an ELF classroom

Although their roles can be limited, FLAs can be considered an asset in foreign language learning because they can bring different benefits not just for students' learning but also for teachers' methodology. Those benefits can be related to motivation, the development of a series of competences and the use of co-teaching in the classroom.

To start with, thanks to FLAs' role, pupils can increase their motivation and stimulate their interest to learn more about a foreign language after interacting with a native speaker (Caparrós-Cabezas, 2010; Castaño-Blanco, 2012; Grinager, 2018; Ordóñez-Dios & Polo-Recuero, 2020). That means that students can be more interested in learning and applying the foreign language with a more communicative purpose as they are learning thanks to maintaining a conversation with FLAs. Furthermore, having a FLA can help

disinhibit pupils and improve their communicative competence since students usually feel more at ease when talking with a person who is closer to their age.

Another benefit is that students can increase their linguistic and cultural competences in a more real context as they perceive that the interaction is not a mere simulation. This situation can make students do their best to express themselves and understand others by using the foreign language (Caparrós-Cabezas, 2010; Nurdin, DeWitt & Sukhoverkhov, 2020). FLAs can also bring a fresh and authentic view of their country's culture and current lifestyles, which can help develop students' intercultural competence. In other words, it can contribute to making students more receptive and open-minded in a multilingual and multicultural context (Grinager, 2018).

Other aspects related to the linguistic competence is that pupils can improve their pronunciation and knowledge of phonetics and practice the grammatical features they are studying in a real context. In fact, as Ordóñez-Dios and Polo-Recuero (2020, p. 76) mention, FLAs' presence can improve "students' language proficiency by doubling the chances to interact with competent communicators, increasing the quantity and quality of inputs and outputs."

Regarding teachers, Castaño-Blanco (2012) states that FLAs can help them develop their communicative competence, and they can give suggestions to improve the quality of the teachers' methodology. For instance, they can explain how they were taught a foreign language, particularly if there are evident differences, as a way to bring a fresher and more dynamic methodology to the classroom.

Another benefit concerns the use of co-teaching in the classroom. As stated by Dieker and Murawski (2003) and Liwei Liu (2008, p. 106), "classes in a co-teaching environment can provide students more effective monitoring and input than what a single teacher can accomplish, and therefore can better facilitate the learning process." For example, by having

a foreign language teacher and a FLA, students' diversity can be approached better if the class is divided into small groups (Gately & Gately, 2001). This situation can enhance students' motivation and make them participate more, in particular those pupils who are usually apathetic or do not want to participate in front of the whole class.

2.2. Task-based language teaching

Prior to explaining the present study, it is relevant to present a review of Task-Based Language Teaching -hereinafter TBLT-, since this approach is used to improve the quality of the FLA's activities. This approach works through tasks; that is why a definition of *tasks* is a good starting point to illustrate TBLT. According to Nunan (2004), a task is:

> a piece of classroom work that involves learners in comprehending, manipulating, producing or interacting in the target language while their attention is focused on mobilising their grammatical knowledge in order to express meaning, and in which the intention is to convey meaning rather than to manipulate form. (p. 4)

In other words, a task can be defined as an oral or written activity when it has a clear communicative outcome, which implies that its objective is the conveyance of meaning in an appropriate and real context. In order to do that, learners have to manipulate the knowledge they already have about the target language and interact by using that insight.

The reasons why this study uses TBLT are linked to the benefits that Nunan (2004) believes it has brought to language learning. Firstly, the use of this approach has led to the introduction of realia, which are materials characterised by the presence of authentic input from the target language. That is of paramount importance because many learners are not usually exposed to the foreign language in their daily lives. That situation limits learners' contact with that language to the textbooks employed in the classroom, which usually reflect the use of the target language in an unnatural way.

Moreover, the way tasks are sequenced (i.e., pre-task, task and post-task) make the learning process more effective as tasks are focused on the process rather than the final product (Ellis, 2003). That is possible because, thanks to the pre-task, students can activate

their prior knowledge and start using it in the main task after doing a series of preparatory activities. Lastly, teachers can give them feedback to improve what they already know in the post-task.

Another positive aspect of TBLT highlighted by Nunan (2004, p. 1) is that it relates "classroom language learning with language use outside the classroom." That means learners can feel that the use of the target language is not alien to their daily lives, as they would practise it in a real and familiar context. Lastly, the emphasis in TBLT is placed on learning how meaning can be conveyed by interacting with other individuals (Nunan, 2004). That is crucial because, as it can be seen in Spanish education, it is pointless to teach learners the different grammatical aspects without teaching them how to use them in interaction.

3. The study

After reviewing the use of FLAs in Valencian education, this Master's thesis will deal with a proposal to improve the role of the FLA after doing an internship in *IES Botànic Cavanilles*. This section presents a thorough explanation of the aim of the study, the methodology used, the results found from the data collected through three different research instruments, and lastly, the pedagogical treatment that was carried out.

3.1. Aim of the study

The aim of the present study is to analyse the role performed by an American FLA in *IES Botànic Cavanilles* and implement a pedagogical treatment to enhance the FLA's role, particularly in activities design and co-teaching, after observing that his role was under-exploited in that state secondary school.

3.2. Research methodology

In this section, a review of the methodology used in the present study is displayed. Firstly, an explanation of the academic context that was found in *IES Botànic Cavanilles* is

provided. Then, the participants of this study are described, and lastly the processes of data collection and data analysis are exposed in order to specify how this study was conducted.

3.2.1. Academic context

The analysed problem was found in *IES Botànic Cavanilles*, a state secondary school from *La Vall d'Uixó*. This school offers all the courses from secondary education as well as *Batxillerat* courses. With regards to vocational training, they have courses from three different fields: administration and management, transport and vehicle maintenance, and electricity and electronics.

Regarding students, they come from *La Vall d'Uixó*, particularly from four state primary schools located in three different neighbourhoods characterised by the neighbours' origin: they come from non-Catalan-speaking areas. For example, there is a strong presence of people from Romania, Latin America, Morocco and other Arab countries. As a result, this school provides a multicultural environment. Another significant feature is that parents have a low sociocultural level and a poor economic status due to the fact that just 10% of families have a degree.

Furthermore, this project was performed in two different periods. The first period started on the 11th of January and finished on the 22nd of January, when the role of the American FLA was observed. The second period was devoted to starting the pedagogical treatment (from 16th of February to 16th of April), in which the author met the FLA in some meetings and applied the tasks in 1st *Batxillerat* A and 1st *Batxillerat* B. As a result, both groups are analysed in the following paragraphs.

With reference to 1st *Batxillerat* A, this multicultural group is devoted to Humanities and Social Sciences and is formed by twenty-eight students. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, there are no students who are retaking this course. In broad terms, 1st *Batxillerat* A is considered non-participative, apathetic and with a low educational level, particularly on

linguistic subjects such as Spanish, Catalan and English. For those reasons, English lessons are a monologue because students do not participate, and if they do it, it is with yes/no answers. The problem is that the group is so numerous that the level of English is not consistent. For example, seven students have a B2 level, but there are fourteen pupils who have an A1-A2. In fact, students with the highest level do not participate because they are too shy and do not want to stand out, whereas the others do not speak English because of their lack of self-confidence and linguistic knowledge.

Moreover, most of those students are bilingual as they live in a bilingual area where Spanish and Catalan are the two official languages. Nevertheless, they seem to prefer using Spanish in their daily life, and they have many problems with written expression. Apart from that, there are three students from Morocco and two from Romania. In their case, they understand both official languages and their home language. Nonetheless, they have lots of problems with written expression and comprehension in Valencian and English.

Concerning special needs, a student has a cochlear implant, which means that materials must be adapted and accompanied by visual resources. In addition, the use of transparent and inclusive face masks is required so that she can follow the class with no assistance. However, when doing listening activities, she needs headphones or videos in order to understand them.

On the contrary, 1st *Batxillerat* B is the group that studies science and is formed by twenty-three students from different nationalities. In this case, there are three foreign students from Morocco, Algeria and Romania. Just like 1st *Batxillerat* A, there are no students who are retaking the course due to the pandemic, and they also speak and understand the two official languages. Nonetheless, in this case, this group is highly participative and active, and students are interested in learning. The level of English in this group is also different: three students are preparing for the C2 exam, whereas thirteen pupils have a B1-B2 level and seven

students have an A1-A2 level. However, students who participate are always the same, and since they participate a lot, others with a low level of English do not stand out.

Finally, concerning the English subject, 1st *Batxillerat* usually has three lessons per week, and they have the assistance of the FLA once every two weeks. Regarding materials, both groups use the textbook called *Key to Bachillerato 1* with a B1-B2 level from the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages. They normally use the students' book, but the teacher sometimes uses the workbook to give further practice as regards grammar and reading exercises. In other words, that textbook is used to practice and study from vocabulary and grammar exercises to written comprehension and expression activities. Furthermore, as *Batxillerat* is a course devoted to passing the university entrance exam, the course heavily focuses on improving students' writing and reading skills. For that reason, the FLA is used to practice speaking and interaction skills as complementary to the written skills.

3.2.2. Participants

Four teachers and the American FLA were involved in this study. On the one hand, the 26-year-old American FLA was the person who accepted being the subject of the present Master's thesis. He was responsible for attending the meetings that we planned as well as participating in the different tasks. On the other hand, four English teachers participated by answering two questionnaires to discover their perceptions concerning the FLA's role. There were three female teachers. Two of them worked there as replacements, whereas the other one has been working in that high school for three years. The other male teacher is the head of the English department and has been an English teacher in *IES Botànic Cavanilles* for ten years.

3.2.3. Instruments of data collection

Three different types of research instruments were used in this Master's thesis to collect different data: i) an observation sheet, ii) an initial interview with the FLA and iii) two

questionnaires. Firstly, the observation sheet (see *Appendix 1*) was employed with the main purpose of making notes of the features that could define the methodology employed by the FLA. It was also employed by the researcher to analyse some specific aspects detected during the FLA's teaching experience such as the use of realia, the establishment of a clear communicative outcome in his activities, or his accommodation to students' level of English and special needs. This observation sheet was used in January and May and dealt with: FLA's classroom management, the manner in which he designed his activities, how he performed them; and lastly, how he worked with the English teacher, paying special attention to organisation and co-teaching. The main reason for using it twice was to observe if there were some improvements regarding his teaching practices and role in the classroom. Moreover, the author of this Master's thesis had two meetings with the FLA. During the first meeting on 25th February, a short interview (see *Appendix 2*) was performed to comprehend the FLA's academic background, his knowledge as regards pedagogy, how he was taught a foreign language, and his schedule while working in *IES Botànic Cavanilles*. This information was used to define his profile and understand the tentative causes of the problems that were found during the observation that was carried out in January. Finally, in order to discover a possible improvement in the FLA's role, two questionnaires were administered to four English teachers who worked in collaboration with him. These questionnaires include open-ended questions and rating scales.

The first questionnaire (see *Appendix 3*) includes nine open-ended questions in order to discover the teachers' views concerning the use of the FLA and their prior experience, his strengths and weaknesses at the beginning of his teaching experience, how they used the FLA as well as the employed ways of communication. Then, it contains eight questions with a rating scale from 1 (strongly dissatisfied) to 5 (strongly satisfied), in which teachers' satisfaction is measured to discover how they rate specific aspects that were considered

problematic at the end of February. Those aspects are his accommodation to students' needs and level of English, the use of realia, the presence of activities' communicative outcome, activities' diversity, the quality of materials, co-teaching and a final question to know the general satisfaction of his performance.

The second questionnaire (see *Appendix 4*) includes the same questions with the rating scale to discover if the FLA improved his role after the pedagogical treatment. Moreover, it contains two open-ended questions so that teachers can briefly explain if there were changes in the teaching methodology and the ways of communication. In this case, the second questionnaire was performed at the end of June to find if he improved some of the aspects that were considered problematic.

3.2.4. Data analysis

After collecting the data from the observation sheet, the interview and both questionnaires, different types of analysis were conducted. In the case of both questionnaires, the analysis depended on the types of questions. On the one hand, answers in open-ended questions were classified into different labels. Those labels were used to perform a quantitative analysis to see the percentages of teachers who mentioned similar ideas. Moreover, those results were compared with the data collected by means of the observation sheet used in January to analyse and define the FLA's initial role.

On the other hand, the answers received in the rating scales served to carry out two different analyses. First, a quantitative analysis was performed to determine the percentages of the teachers who had the same level of satisfaction. Afterwards, a comparative analysis between both questionnaires was executed. In other words, the answers of the initial questionnaire were compared with the second one to find out if the FLA improved in the aspects that were analysed. Lastly, these results were also compared with the data from the observation sheet employed in May.

3.3. Results and discussion

After explaining the methodology used in this study, the results of the research instruments are analysed and discussed in this section. Firstly, the results of the open-ended questions in the first questionnaire and the data from the observation sheet from January are compared. The main purpose is to discover the problems that need to be monitored as well as their causes. Afterwards, and in a different section, the comparative analysis between both questionnaires is displayed with some reflections to find out if there were some improvements in the FLA's role.

3.3.1. Results of the open-ended questions in the first questionnaire and the observation sheet used in January

This section is divided into two parts. Firstly, in teachers' prior experience and perceptions, teachers' comments about their working experience and their views regarding the use of FLAs in the classroom are exposed. Then, in the section entitled analysis of the FLA's role, a comparative analysis between the questionnaire and the data collected through the observation sheet is carried out to discover the reasons why the FLA's performance was lacking.

A. Teachers' prior experience and perceptions

In this section, teachers' views are shown in order to discover if they have already worked with a FLA as well as their perceptions regarding his use in the classroom.

First and foremost, as shown in *Table 1*, although 50% of teachers had a prior experience with the role of FLAs (*Teacher A* had worked as a FLA in England, whereas *Teacher B* had supervised a FLA in another secondary school), all of them have a positive attitude concerning their use in the classroom. As a matter of fact, the four teachers highlight that FLAs can bring a richer input and learning environment to the English classroom, which can motivate students to use the foreign language with more frequency.

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Table 1. Review of teachers' answers about their attitudes and experience regarding the role of FLAs.

	Teacher A	Teacher B	Teacher C	Teacher D
Prior experience	Yes	Yes	No	No
Attitude towards the use of FLA	Positive	Positive	Positive	Positive
Responsibilities of the FLA	Improve students' communicative competence.	Design the activities that were suggested by the teacher.	Design activities with the teacher to foster the use of the foreign language and bring co-teaching to the classroom.	Create activities depending on students' level with or without the teacher's assistance.

Nevertheless, regarding the FLA's role, different perspectives seem to appear. For instance, *Teacher A*, who actually worked as a FLA in England, focuses on students by mentioning that the FLAs' role should be aimed at improving pupils' communicative competence. However, the other three participants, who never had that role before, centre their attention from the teacher's point of view. That is the reason why all of them mention that FLAs' role consists of designing activities in collaboration with the English teacher. Furthermore, just 25% of the participants referred to coordination in the teaching methodology. In other words, co-teaching was not an element to take into account for most of them. Therefore, it seems as if those teachers have a simplistic view of the FLA's role, and that they also consider it secondary since the FLA is just used to perform and design activities. Moreover, when describing the role that FLAs should have, answers were centred on linguistic aspects, and none of the teachers mentioned the importance of bringing sociocultural aspects to the classroom.

As for their views concerning how the FLA was performing his pedagogical role, teachers were asked to list a series of positive and negative aspects. As regards the positive ones (see *Figure 1*), 3 out of 4 participants agree that the FLA improved students' motivation. 2 out of 4 also mention his attitude towards pupils, and just one teacher highlights his role as

a cultural ambassador. However, these aspects are considered in the section called Analysis of the FLA's initial role.
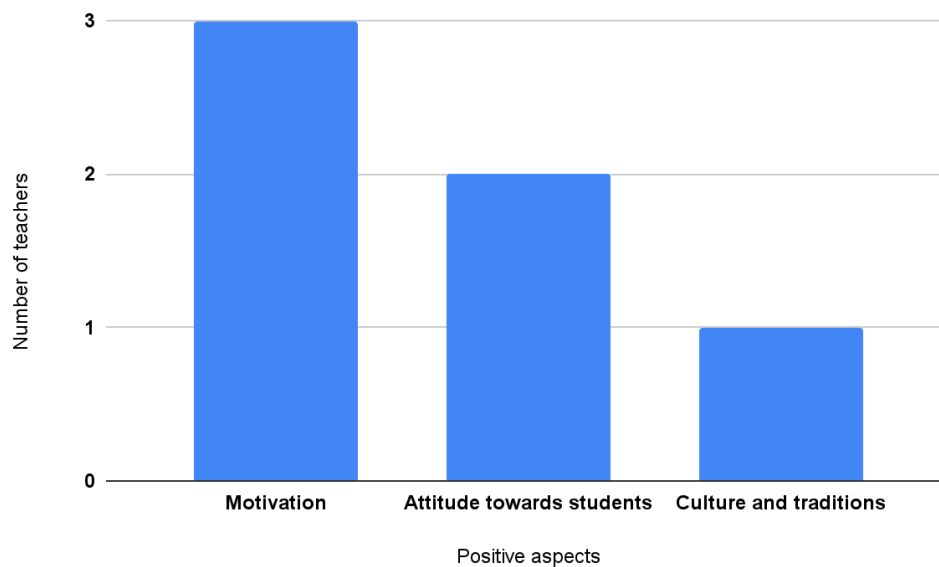
Figure 1. Positive aspects of the American FLA.

Nevertheless, as for negative aspects, four divergent elements were pointed out by teachers. Half of the participants (2 out of 4) expressed their dissatisfaction as regards classroom management, but the most prominent aspects that need improvement according to those teachers are organisation and coordination. For example, 75% of teachers mentioned the lack of coordination at the beginning of this study, whereas 50% also believed that the FLA's organisation needed some improvement. Finally, one teacher highlighted the FLA's lack of initiative. Just like the positive aspects of the FLA's role, these percentages are explained in further detail in the following section.
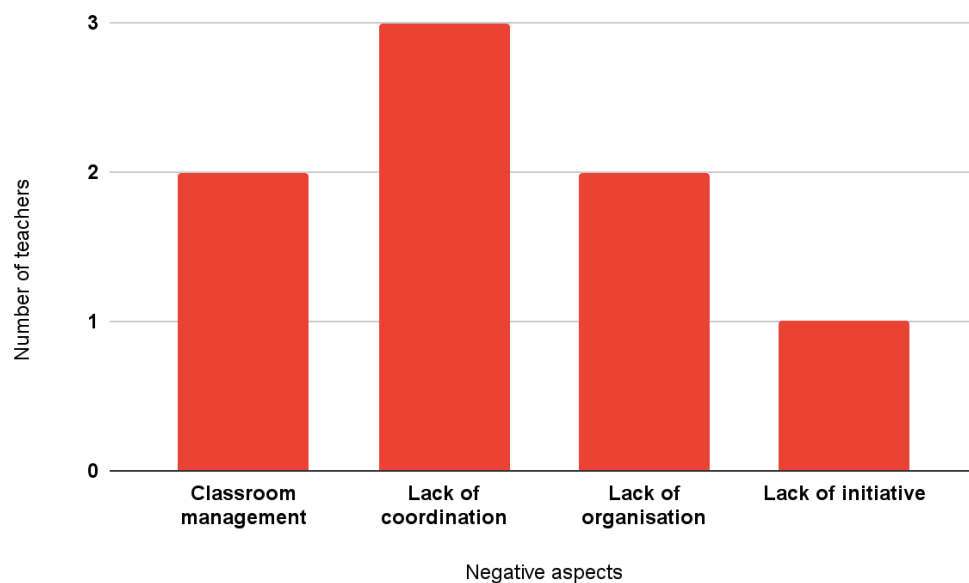
Figure 2. Aspects that need improvement in the FLA's role.

B. Analysis of the FLA's initial role

Thanks to the interview carried out on 25th February, it was found out that the American FLA studied the Bachelor's Degree in Spanish and the Master's Degree in World's Languages and Literature (Spanish) at the University of Nevada. After being asked about linguistic subjects, he explained that he was taught two subjects related to second language learning and teaching. The first one was included in the Bachelor's Degree in which he studied in a broad way how languages are learnt. Then, in the Master's Degree, he had a subject about teaching methodologies where he learnt how foreign languages have been taught from the 20th century to nowadays. What is more, he had the experience of teaching Spanish in the USA as part of his master's degree, but he did it during a short period of time. As part of the FLA program, he arrived in October and finished his role at the end of May. Moreover, he was supposed to work for sixteen hours and four days a week, from Tuesdays to Fridays. Those hours included an hour on Thursdays when he could meet with other English teachers to plan their lessons. Nonetheless, during the author's internship, he never used it to meet the teachers with whom he was working.

After introducing the FLA's profile, the comparative analysis between the open-ended questions in the first questionnaire and the collected data through the observation sheet is explained to justify the areas of improvement and give reasons why it is believed that his role was under-exploited and lacking. That information is classified into three primary topics: classroom management, activities design and co-teaching.

Classroom management

In this section, diverse aspects are analysed as regards the FLA's classroom management, such as his attitude towards students and how he manages diversity and students' levels.

Firstly, concerning his attitude, he tries to establish a close relationship with students, which they are grateful for. Due to that, students usually get involved with the FLA and are motivated to maintain a conversation with him. As a matter of fact, there were no problems concerning his attitude towards students during the observation period. This aspect was also highlighted by some teachers in the first questionnaire. For example, when asked about positive aspects of the role paid by the American FLA, 3 out of 4 participants agree that he improved students' motivation and fostered the use of the English language in the classroom. 2 out of 4 also mention his attitude towards pupils, as he created a close and safe environment so that students could use the foreign language. Nevertheless, in the case of aspects that need improvement, *Teacher D* mentions that he seems to misinterpret closeness with being a friend, which led to some problems during the school year since he gave some inappropriate comments that were misinterpreted by pupils.

With regards to diversity, according to the data collected by means of the observation sheet, this is one of the main areas of concern. During the observation, it seemed that he did not pay attention to students' level of English. For instance, in the first week of the observation period, he performed the same activity, which was about entertainment, with the

following courses: 1st ESO, 1st *Batxillerat*, 4th ESO and the first year from the intermediate level in the Administration and Finances course. In this case, the level in each course differs from A1 in 1st ESO to A2 in 4th ESO and vocational training courses and B1 in *Batxillerat*. Nevertheless, not only was the activity about entertainment inappropriate due to students' level but also because of the content as he did not ask teachers what they were studying at that moment. A teacher who teaches in 1st ESO and PMAR even explained that she asked for the FLA's assistance once. That day he introduced himself and explained some cultural aspects of his hometown. However, his tone was inadequate; he spoke very fast, and wearing face masks made comprehension more difficult. As a result, students did not understand anything and kept asking the teacher if she could explain what he was saying. For all those reasons, that teacher never used him again, as she saw that he did not adapt his speech depending on students' level of English. In the questionnaire *Teacher A* also brought to light that concern, as she mentions that the FLA had problems with diversity in the classroom, especially when activities were performed with the whole group. In that case, students who participated were always the same, and he did not approach pupils who were reluctant at that time.

Finally, regarding special needs, it is also important to remember that in 1st *Batxillerat* A, there is a student with a cochlear implant who needs assistance to follow the lessons. Owing to the COVID-19 pandemic and the obligation of wearing face masks, students suffering from hearing problems are at a disadvantage if they cannot read teachers' lips. Consequently, the high school provided the teaching staff with inclusive and transparent face masks to avoid hindering their learning process. The problem is that the FLA never wore it, and when he designed some slides to reflect upon different cultural aspects, he showed just pictures with no titles or written text. For that reason, the FLA was not of benefit for that student as she could not understand him. However, it was surprising that no teachers

mentioned that problem in their questionnaires, especially those who have students with special needs in the classroom.

Activities design

In this section, a description of the way the FLA designed his activities is explained, paying special attention to the employed materials, the methodology and outcomes. However, it is significant to mention that few comments were received as regards activities design. For example, no teachers referred to this type of information in aspects that need improvement, whereas *Teacher C* is the only participant who highlighted the FLA's role as a cultural ambassador due to the debates he performed in the classroom, where he treated culture and traditions in the USA. As a result, the data used in this section was collected by means of the observation sheet.

A class in secondary education has a 55-minute duration. In January, his methodology was analysed during three lessons where he assisted the English teacher during the last fifteen minutes. For that reason, it could be said that there were two stages in those lessons: the observation and the teaching periods. First of all, in the observation period, he listened to the English teacher to discover what they were studying and plan some activities. Moreover, at that moment, he sat on a desk with the rest of the students and did not get involved unless the English teacher asked him about grammar or vocabulary. On the contrary, in the teaching period, he stood up in front of the whole class whilst they performed a debate. When activities were aimed at working in groups, he usually wandered around the class in order to see students' interaction and help them if there were some doubts. In general, it could be said that he employed a traditional methodology.

Concerning materials, the first lessons were characterised by the absence of handouts, slides, videos or pictures. In fact, he used the blackboard to copy the questions students needed to answer or a few idioms when they were studying some vocabulary. Regarding

idioms, not only did he copy the English expressions, but also their equivalent in Spanish. Nevertheless, the selected idioms were not related to the topics students had already studied, and they seemed to be chosen at random. To make matters worse, he did not design an activity, as he just copied the idioms and explained them to students. For that reason, pupils did not practice what he was explaining, which led idioms to fall into oblivion. Furthermore, during the observation period, it was discovered that he never used realia in 1st *Batxillerat* and 1st ESO.

Lastly, activities design depended on the instructions he was given. When the English teacher gave him some guidelines, activities design was similar to the kind of exercises students can find in textbooks. For example, in the entertainment activity mentioned in the previous section, he copied some questions (see *Table 2*) on the blackboard and made students work in pairs in order to answer them. In this case, the linguistic outcome was defined as the activity served to see how students express reason and entertainment vocabulary.

Table 2. Questions for the entertainment activity

1. Do you prefer sports, tv-series or movies? Why?
2. What is your favourite team/tv-series/movie? Why?
3. What is your favourite sportsman/actor/actress? Why?

Nonetheless, when he had complete freedom to design an activity, he tended to give a speech about particular cultural aspects, and then he let students interview him. For instance, in the case of a debate, he prepared some slides in order to explain some cultural aspects, which included pictures without written text. After the explanation, he let students ask him some questions about aspects that interested them. However, instead of carrying out a debate, it seemed like an interview. Consequently, there were no meaningful activities with a real communicative purpose unless the teacher explained to him what pupils should practice.

Bearing in mind all the above-mentioned aspects, the problems encountered in how the FLA designed his activities are synthesised here. To start with, activities were not created

according to students' level of English and content. Moreover, the FLA had difficulties adapting his teaching methodology to students' special needs. Activities design was also too superficial as the communicative outcome did not usually reflect the uses students would make of the foreign language, and the use of realia was non-existent. For those reasons, it could be said that activities were too textbook-like and not meaningful.

To my understanding, the main cause for those problems might be the FLA's basic pedagogical knowledge. For example, he kept using a traditional approach like the teachers he found in both *IES Botànic Cavanilles* and the educational institutions in the USA where he was a student. As a matter of fact, during his interview, he explained that foreign languages in the USA are taught by means of the same traditional methodology, which is characterised by a focus on written comprehension and written expression. The teacher is also the centre of the learning process, and there is a strong reliance on textbooks. Therefore, as he discovered that teachers used the same methodology he knew, he decided to use it as it was familiar to him and not time-consuming. In this aspect, although he had learnt about applied linguistics at college, it seems as if it was not enough, especially because he did not know about TBLT or other practices such as gamification.

Co-teaching

Concerning co-teaching, the focus of this section moves towards the organisation, planning and the methodology used by the FLA and the English teachers to discover if they actually brought to life this type of methodology in the foreign language classroom. This information was collected through the first questionnaire (see *Table 3*).

Table 3. Communication and co-teaching between teachers and the FLA.

	Teacher A	Teacher B	Teacher C	Teacher D
Communication	Weekly meeting + Whatsapp	Weekly meeting + Whatsapp	Whatsapp	5-minute meeting at school + Whatsapp
Teaching methodology	The FLA worked with the whole class	Class divided into different groups	The FLA worked with the whole class	The FLA worked with the whole class

	without being interrupted by the teacher.	depending on students' level. The FLA always worked with advanced students.	without being interrupted by the teacher.	without being interrupted by the teacher.
Teacher intervention	To keep the class under control.	She worked with students who had a basic level and maintained the group's discipline.	To motivate those students who never participated in dialogues or to explain when students did not understand the FLA.	To keep the class under control.
FLA's initiative	He went his own way.	She is satisfied because he sometimes followed her guidelines.	He never asked about what he could do.	He waited until she told him what he needed to do.

First of all, concerning organisation and planning, the two teachers who had prior experience and were familiar with the role of the FLA were the only participants who carried out a weekly meeting with the American FLA. In their case, they usually have it at the beginning of the week to cover the activities he should design in their different groups. During those meetings, different aspects were covered. For example, *Teacher A* gave him ideas to design some activities, but he had freedom to perform what he wanted, whereas *Teacher B* used that moment to explain lesson objectives, the topic of the activity and communicative outcomes that he should include in the exercises. Moreover, they also tended to send messages through *Whatsapp*. In their case, they used that application during the week to monitor how he was planning the activities.

Nevertheless, the remaining two teachers kept in touch via *Whatsapp* or in school. For instance, *Teacher C* always told the FLA what he should prepare the previous day through an audio file. As regards face-to-face meetings, they had some conversations, but they were just before giving a lesson. Therefore, planning was superficially discussed as the only topic that was taken into consideration was the activities that eventually would be performed. In fact, that English teacher just sent him some instructions like the vocabulary or the grammar that

students would practice and the objectives of the lessons. Finally, in the case of *Teacher D*, she usually told the FLA how and what he needed to design for the next lesson through *Whatsapp* or when she found him at school. As a result, the information that the FLA received was simple, and when he was not given lots of requirements, activities design heavily relied on his learning experience. That is the reason why his activities were so textbook-like, particularly because teachers did not give him other resources to plan different exercises.

When asked about aspects to be improved, *Teacher C* and *Teacher D* denoted a lack of organisation. For example, *Teacher D* complained that the FLA committed many mistakes due to his schedule and was constantly confused about the group he should teach. This organisational problem could be caused due to the number of groups where he put his activities into practice. According to the data collected through the interview, the FLA usually worked with seven teachers every week (five teachers from the English department, a teacher for Art and a teacher for IT). As a result, it is estimated that he continuously taught at least twenty groups during eight months. For that reason, the high school gave him two different schedules because he went to all groups once every two weeks. This arrangement may be problematic as it can impede his understanding with regards to pupils' needs, their level of English and the curriculum they are studying, which can reduce FLA's effectiveness (Carless, 2006). In other words, the more groups the FLA has, the more difficult it is to prepare appropriate activities since he needs to design lots of materials during the week. Consequently, those activities are superficial, meaningless and too similar to those encountered in textbooks. For example, activities like the entertainment exercise do not require lengthy resources (e.g., he just copied the questions on the blackboard or used materials from other sources without creating them). As regards dialogues, when he brought

cultural aspects to the classroom, he usually designed the table of contents and some slides with pictures, but the oral text was primarily improvised.

Another cause could be the amount of time that he was given to design those materials. For example, teachers who communicated with him via *Whatsapp* explained to him the topic of the next class the previous day. The problem is that the FLA seemed to pay little attention to that application as sometimes he answered teachers at night, and other times he never replied to them. For that reason, he had little time to prepare his activities for all the groups he taught during the week, which could even lead to applying the same activities in different groups without taking into account students' proficiency level or even the content.

With reference to the teaching methodology, according to Liu (2008, p. 105), "co-teaching is characterised by having two or more teachers taking the same or different teaching responsibilities for all students grouped in the same physical classroom." Therefore, 75% of the participants used the same traditional methodology, which could not be considered as co-teaching. In their case, the FLA addressed the whole class without being interrupted by teachers. For example, *Teacher A* and *Teacher D* just intervened to keep the group class under control, whereas *Teacher C* participated when the FLA did not motivate all students to participate or when pupils had problems understanding him. Nonetheless, with the exception of those two situations, *Teacher C* spent that time planning further lessons. On the contrary, *Teacher B* used a co-teaching model called *Alternative Teaching* (Liu, 2008), in which she divided the class into two groups depending on students' level of English, and the American FLA was usually responsible for doing activities with the most advanced pupils.

After explaining the teaching methodology carried out in the English classroom, it is crucial to highlight that 75% of participants mentioned a lack of coordination in the first questionnaire. For instance, *Teacher B* explains that she asked him to prepare more dynamic activities after repeatedly doing textbook-like exercises. However, he never did them, and the

teacher complained that what he designed did not follow the requirements she had given to him.

Lastly, although *Teacher C* pointed out that initiative was an aspect to improve in the FLA's role, 75% of the participants have declared that the FLA used to go his own way, he just did what he was asked, and he never made suggestions. As a result, they agree that there was a lack of initiative. In contrast, Teacher B considers that she is satisfied with his initiative as he usually designed what he was asked to do. However, considering that the Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English (n.d.) defines *initiative* as "the ability to make decisions and take action without waiting for someone to tell you what to do", her answer also indicates that initiative was non-existent.

3.3.2. Comparative analysis between both questionnaires in rating scales

After analysing the FLA's initial role and identifying the main concerns, a proposal for the redefinition of the FLA's role was planned and applied. After its application, the FLA was observed again in May, and teachers answered the second questionnaire in June. For that reason, it is important to compare the results of the rating scales in both questionnaires to see if there was an improvement in the FLA's role.

The evaluated aspects in the questionnaires are adaptation to students' special needs, activities design (i.e., adaptation to students' level of English and content, communicative outcome, diversity and use of realia), the quality of materials for the English department, and co-teaching. Those aspects are rated from 1 (strongly dissatisfied) to 5 (strongly satisfied). The results are displayed in *Table 4*, which contains the answers from the first questionnaire (Feb.) and the second questionnaire (June).

	Teacher A		Teacher B		Teacher C		Teacher D	
	Feb.	June	Feb.	June	Feb.	June	Feb.	June
Adaptation to students' special needs	4	4	5	5	2	3	3	4
Activities design: accommodation depending on students' level and content	3	3	4	4	2	4	3	4
Activities design: communicative outcome	5	5	4	4	2	3	3	4
Activities design: diversity	4	4	3	2	3	4	3	4
Activities design: use of realia	4	5	3	4	2	3	3	4
Creation of other materials for the English department	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Quality of those materials	-	-	4	4	3	3	3	3
Co-teaching evaluation	4	5	4	5	3	3	3	4
General satisfaction in the role performed by the FLA	3	4	4	5	2	3	3	4

During the meetings carried out between the author of the present Master's thesis and the FLA, adaptation to students' special needs was a topic that was dealt with. The aspect covered was the presentation of information, especially as regards visual elements, which can be an asset with students suffering from hearing problems, Asperger's syndrome or dyslexia. During those two sessions, it was explained that images are useful resources as they reinforce the meaning of what is uttered. As a result, it was suggested that written text and images should be present in his slides. When asking teachers about this aspect, answers are a little dissimilar, as 50% of the teachers believe that he improved it, whereas the other participants

ponder that there was neither an improvement nor a decline. Nevertheless, it is important to mention that the teachers who believe adaptation improved did not usually have weekly meetings with the FLA. For that reason, that improvement is understandable because those teachers never brought to light that problem before.

Referring to activities design, similar answers appear if we compare them with the previous aspect. In this case, the teachers who did not organise meetings considered that there was a slight improvement concerning activities design, particularly on the accommodation of activities depending on students' level and the content they were studying, the presence of a more defined communicative outcome and diversity. The primary cause for that positive change is the same as the prior aspect: the FLA started to pay attention to those elements after having explained the aspects that were problematic in his exercises. The other 50% did not notice a particular improvement since they always gave him more defined requirements, he had the possibility of negotiating those activities, and on the whole, he was mostly informed. Nevertheless, *Teacher B* considers that the FLA worsened as regards diversity. That happened because initially, she gave lots of instructions to assure herself that the FLA was going to create some satisfactory exercises. However, as the course progressed, she wanted him to do more dynamic exercises, but she never explained to him how to do that or showed him different resources. Therefore, when the FLA had to design them, he lacked that knowledge, and instead of asking his doubts, he proceeded to design activities following the same approach that he had been using since the beginning of the course.

With reference to the use of realia, it is significant to point out that this is the first element in which 100% of participants agree: there was a slight improvement. As aforementioned, during the meetings, the FLA was explained the benefits of using that resource. Moreover, diverse examples were used (e.g., receipts, catalogues, videos or menus), and some suggestions were given in order to design different activities so that he could

understand how to apply them. Therefore, after understanding it, he began using realia with more frequency. Nonetheless, *Teacher C* is not entirely satisfied with how he used realia because he mentioned that the FLA used only videos and avoided the usage of written resources. The probable reason for that avoidance is that he never brought handouts to school because he always prepared his activities at the last minute.

Apart from designing activities to perform in class, 75% of participants asked him to create different materials for the English department. Two of the teachers even explained that they asked him to design them because they felt that he was not hard-working and wanted him to work more. Besides, teachers gave him all the time he needed, and they were at his disposal in case he had doubts. Nevertheless, all of the teachers who asked him to create those materials do not consider that he improved that aspect. For instance, *Teacher C* explained that he asked the FLA to write some essays so that 2nd *Batxillerat* students could have some models for the university entrance exam. This task was given in January, and the FLA submitted it in April. However, when the teacher read them, they had to be revised as they did not follow the appropriate format: there was no structure, a few cohesive devices were used, it included some personal information and informal language, among other problems.

Regarding co-teaching, 75% of teachers believe that their co-teaching improved at the end of the course, whereas 25% consider there was no improvement. This aspect is a little problematic because 50% out of that 75% seem not to understand what co-teaching implies. The main reason for that statement is that the methodology employed by the two teachers who consider that co-teaching improved consisted of the FLA working with the whole class without being interrupted by the teacher. Since that is not what the term co-teaching implies, these two answers are not considered as a current improvement on the FLA's role. Nevertheless, the teacher who used the co-teaching model *Alternative Teaching* believes that

their coordination improved, which could also be related to the presence of meetings since the FLA had more information to plan lessons.

When asked about general satisfaction concerning the FLA's role, 100% of participants agree that there was a slight improvement. Nonetheless, it is significant to point out that the three teachers who did not use co-teaching are not as satisfied as the teacher who actually used it. Moreover, they point out that students could not benefit a lot from this experience because the FLA was working with the whole group and without addressing students' individual differences. For instance, *Teacher A* mentioned that the best way to work with FLAs is by dividing the class into groups (i.e., *Alternative Teaching*). However, even though she has that view, she never used it because the number of students in the classroom was too numerous. Another aspect to highlight is that the teacher who used only *Whatsapp* to plan the activities with the FLA is not satisfied by his role. This is noteworthy because it reflects how necessary coordination and organisation are when working with other individuals, which were two aspects that were not present when they were in the classroom and during planning.

Lastly, in order to monitor his teaching performance after the internship, another observation period was carried out in May, when I attended two lessons and employed the observation sheet again. In one of those lessons, he followed the same traditional methodology he had been using since the beginning of the school year. In other words, he was not using TBLT. Activities were also textbook-like, but he improved some specific aspects. For instance, some activities were created taking into account students' level of English. An example could be an exercise for 1st ESO students, in which they had to use the comparative and superlative forms. Since those students were not able to speak in English, he made them write their answers. Therefore, students were not at a loss in this exercise in comparison to the entertainment activity that was carried out in January. Another aspect that was improved was the establishment of a communicative outcome, which in this case,

involved the use of a particular grammar structure. Nevertheless, in the second lesson, he continued exhibiting the same relaxed attitude that was mentioned above. This lesson was supposed to occur in 1st *Batxillerat* A, where he was going to explain the educational system of the USA. The problem was that he arrived late at school, and as a result, he had to explain it in just 5 minutes and with no visual resources such as slides. Consequently, this lesson brought the idea that his performance became a case of one step forward and two steps back.

3.4. Proposal for the redefinition of the FLA's role

As aforementioned, the FLA working in *IES Botànic Cavanilles* did not take into consideration students' level of English, their special needs, nor the content they were studying when designing his activities. Moreover, handouts were non-existent, and realia were not used. In addition, few activities had a defined communicative outcome, and they could not even be considered meaningful because they were too textbook-like and not very useful in a real context.

After detecting these issues, a pedagogical intervention was planned. On the one hand, two meetings with the FLA were held so that he could learn other ways of teaching as well as what was expected from him in the tasks that were designed. On the other hand, two different activities were created by the FLA and this author which involved the use of TBLT, where realia were used. The main aim was making the FLA see the potential that integrating skills can have in language learning. This plan was put into practice in order to make him aware of new directions in his teaching and therefore make the most of his role in the school.

3.4.1. Meetings

As mentioned above, two different meetings were carried out with the American FLA. Those meetings were done on Thursdays, as both the FLA and the researcher had a free hour from 8:55 to 9:50. Initially, three meetings were arranged at the beginning.

- The first meeting was scheduled for 25th February, which had the purpose of understanding FLA's educational background and knowledge concerning pedagogy as well as introducing the TBLT approach.

- The second meeting was planned for 4th March, but it had to be adjourned as the FLA called in sick. Consequently, this meeting was carried out on 11th March. In this case, this meeting was used to explain the task "Hitting the road". This change in schedule also led to the postponement of the dates in which we were going to teach collaboratively.

- The final meeting was supposed to occur on 25th March due to the prior adjournment, but it never happened since another teacher asked for his assistance. As a result, the explanations had to be delivered via messages through *Whatsapp*. Those texts included information about how he could plan a complete task using TBLT, and aspects that he should always take into account when designing activities (i.e., student's level of English, content, etc.).

As explained above, the first meeting was planned to break the ice and learn about his teaching experience and pedagogical knowledge through a short interview. First of all, he explained what he studied in the USA and the subjects related to linguistics. At that time, it was found out that both the degree and the master had a strong focus on literature and the Spanish language, but with little content regarding linguistics. Furthermore, he confirmed that he had little recollection of those subjects, as he decided to specialise in Spanish literature. For those reasons, a detailed explanation of this plan was done. To start with, the TBLT methodology was introduced, especially the three different phases that a complete task should include: pre-task, task and post-task. An example of a task was used to illustrate this methodology, as well as the benefits of using realia.

The second meeting was performed on the 11th of March after the supervisor approved the tasks that were planned. During that meeting, the topics that were developed were those which appeared on the FLA's guide - i.e. tasks objectives, linguistic and cultural aspects to cover (e.g., expression of agreement, disagreement and points of view as well as vocabulary related to travelling), identification of the teacher's and the FLA's responsibilities, classroom management and employed materials. Furthermore, it was specified that he would serve as a linguistic and cultural model in the pre-task, but he was also advised that he could participate in the three stages of the tasks. Lastly, he had complete freedom to design his activity provided that it was related to the topic of travelling.

However, a problem, which was not perceived in the observation period, arose during the meetings: the FLA's lack of initiative and his passive attitude. These features were particularly noted during the second meeting, where he was shown the activities that were created except from the exercise that he had to develop for the pre-task. When asked about possible changes or suggestions to improve those activities, he kept silent and did not provide any comments.

3.4.2. Tasks

Initially, three tasks were designed to learn diverse linguistic and cultural aspects with the assistance of the FLA in 1st *Batxillerat*. However, due to the fact that he had lessons with all groups once every two weeks, the number of tasks to perform with him had to change. As a result, he directly participated in the task entitled "Hitting the road" (see *Appendix 4*), which was designed for practising expressions to agree and disagree as well as how to express your point of view while learning about different locations in the USA. In this case, the FLA had to prepare an activity for the pre-task, and he was supposed to become a tour guide for the main task.

However, there were differences between 1st *Batxillerat* A and 1st *Batxillerat* B when teaching that task. The group who was taught it first was 1st *Batxillerat* A. Even though he was advised that he should participate at any time, he limited himself to teaching the activity he had designed. The rest of the class, he sat on a desk with the rest of the students. Consequently, there was no co-teaching in that group. However, before performing the task with 1st *Batxillerat* B, I communicated to him the aspects that were thought to need improvement from the previous lesson. Therefore, he participated more in all the stages. In addition, we worked in groups in the main task, where he was responsible for listening and helping the most advanced students, whereas I worked with the shyest students and those with a more basic level of English.

Furthermore, concerning the activity he had to design, he was given freedom to create what he considered as appropriate, and he had four days to prepare it. Nevertheless, the day before teaching that task, he received a message as a reminder, and it was discovered that he had not prepared anything. As a result, he specifically asked about what type of activity he could design, and at the end, he prepared what he was told following a series of requirements. That was one of the reasons why it was decided that he should try to design a complete task since it was considered that he still needed to improve in activities design with less assistance from the teacher.

As for the second task, this is where he designed one of the sessions following the indications that were sent via *Whatsapp*. The primary objective of that change was to ensure that he knew how to create activities by using this methodology, as well as to prepare him for the last two months of the school year. For that reason, it could be said that the American FLA participated indirectly in the task called "We are all equal" where students learnt about stereotypes, prejudices and racism in the USA. That task was divided into three sessions. The first session was taught and designed by the FLA, who made students think critically about

stereotypes and prejudices not just in the USA but also in Spain. In that session, he carried out two different activities: a pre-task and a main task. In the pre-task, he used some realia where he showed opinions from diverse foreigners about Americans, and then he asked students to explain the main topic of the video: stereotypes. After that, the main task included a debate in small groups about stereotypes and prejudices in Spain. Finally, the whole class shared their ideas and discussed them with the FLA. The author of this Master's thesis taught the other two sessions, which were devoted to racism in the USA, where students learnt about its depiction in literature, cinema, and music.

4. Conclusion, limitations and further research

During the internship, I had the opportunity to meet an American FLA who was working in *IES Botànic Cavanilles*. Nevertheless, after analysing his methodology by means of an observation sheet and an interview, it was discovered that he was not employed to his full potential because some problems arose: he did not accommodate activities design to students' level of English and content, he did not pay attention to students' special needs or realia were non-existent, among others. For that reason, a plan was designed to help him with his role by means of two meetings and the possibility of bringing co-teaching to the classroom through TBLT. Moreover, to monitor his performance, two questionnaires were administered to four English teachers.

After analysing those questionnaires, different conclusions are encountered. Firstly, teachers must have a clear knowledge of the FLA's role because that can lead to undesirable results (Backingham, 2018). That is important so that teachers and the FLA can plan their lessons more appropriately. In that planning, communication and organisation among them are key in order to make the English lessons richer.

As aforementioned, one of the causes which led to his under-exploited role is the lack of organisation in *IES Botànic Cavanilles*. Due to the fact that he had too many groups to

teach, he never knew those groups, and he was not conscious of the primary characteristics of each (e.g., number of students, level of English, presence of students with special needs, among others). As a result, the first suggestion is to reduce the number of groups the FLA has to teach. In this way, he could notice the previous features and design more appropriate activities. Moreover, those activities can have a better quality because the workload would be smaller. When choosing groups in that school, it would be better to use the FLA from 3rd ESO to 1st *Batxillerat* and vocational courses, as students' level of English is a little more advanced than in 1st and 2nd ESO, where few students can interact by using this language.

Another advice is the arrangement of meetings with all the teachers that the FLA has to work with. That should be compulsory, particularly on those FLAs who have no teaching experience, or it is too scarce since teachers can provide them with feedback so that they can know which aspects could be enhanced. Furthermore, meetings should not be limited to activities design and the main objectives of the lesson, as it happened in this high school, but it also should include information about pedagogy. In this way, FLAs can benefit from the teacher's work experience and learn other ways to teach.

Regarding the teaching methodology, co-teaching should be applied in the classroom to approach students' diversity more efficiently. The best option could be to divide the classroom into diverse groups. However, students should not always be grouped with the same classmates. Moreover, if teachers decide to divide the class according to their level, it could be more beneficial to group them by mixing different levels of proficiency. In this way, students can learn to cooperate between them and help each other. Another relevant aspect is that teachers should not limit the interaction between FLAs and students with a higher level of proficiency. In other words, FLAs should take turns between all groups so that all students can benefit from this experience. That would also help FLAs improve their teaching experience because they would know how they can accommodate themselves to students'

diversity. What is more, since coordination is key in co-teaching, meetings are advisable to treat how the lesson would develop, which could even strengthen the working relationship between both individuals.

In addition, using a TBLT approach is desirable since the FLA can participate in two different stages. For example, when reading the guides from Servei d'Educació Plurilingüe (2020a, 2020b), it mentions that FLAs serve as a linguistic and cultural model for students and teachers. Therefore, they can be considered an asset in pre-tasks, as they would not just be the linguistic model for the main task, but they would also help them remember the linguistic aspects that are targeted. Moreover, the teacher and the FLA can work together during the main task by grouping students according to what was mentioned above so that co-teaching is actually brought to life in the classroom.

Another aspect that it is crucial to highlight is the importance of the FLA's attitude. According to the guide from Servei d'Educació Plurilingüe (2020b), FLAs are young individuals characterised by being strongly motivated. Nevertheless, although the American FLA was content about living in Spain, he showed a lack of initiative and was not hard-working. Besides, he sometimes showed a passive attitude towards the tasks he should prepare, making it even more challenging to work cooperatively with him. Therefore, FLAs should have an open attitude and should not be afraid of uttering their point of view. In the end, if FLAs negotiate with the teacher aspects like activities design and the teaching methodology, that experience could benefit both individuals.

Although teachers reported a slight improvement in his role, this Master's thesis presents a series of limitations. The first one is related to the administered questionnaires. They were answered by all the teachers who worked with the FLA. Nevertheless, three teachers did not participate in this study. Furthermore, it could have been interesting to have the answers of the Art and IT teachers in order to compare the FLA's role in Content and

Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) and his role in English lessons. Another limitation is that this study reflects just one side of the coin. In other words, the only perceptions that were considered in this study are those from the teaching staff, while students' views are not present. Additionally, to compare his accommodation to students' level, the analysis of his role would have been better if more groups were directly analysed. However, due to the COVID-19 protocol, I could not observe how the four teachers worked with the FLA. Thus, the results of the present study depend exclusively on teachers' perceptions.

Finally, it is also important to point out that further research is needed because although FLAs' role is more present in the current educational system, there are still problems with how teachers and FLAs work cooperatively. Another area that needs revision is the use of different approaches to integrating the use of the FLA and activities design. In addition, further studies could reflect the expectations that teachers, students and authorities have concerning the FLA's role and their fulfilment. Lastly, bearing in mind the case of *IES Botànic Cavanilles*, studies should reflect the importance of meetings and feedback to make the FLA's experience more fruitful so that the FLA can use his potential and foster the use of the English language in the classroom.

To sum up, making the most of FLAs in secondary education is a complex and challenging process that requires a common agenda for teachers, FLAs and educational stakeholders.

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Appendices

Appendix 1. Observation sheet

CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT
Does the FLA speak to the whole class, a small group or just a particular student? When he speaks, does he get any reaction from all the students?
Does the FLA show positive affectivity during lessons? And negative? When? Does it have any purpose? How do students react?
How does the FLA motivate students? Does he pay attention to students' understanding? If students do not understand what they have to do, does he explain it again using basic expressions?

ACTIVITIES DESIGN
Does he use slides, handouts, realia or other materials? Does he use the blackboard, the desktop computer or other resources? How does the FLA present his activities? Is it appropriate and takes into account students' special needs?
Do his activities have a clear communicative outcome?
When he designs some activities, are they adapted to the content students are studying? And to students' level of English? How does he practise his activities? Does he make students work in small groups or do they carry out a debate with the whole class? Does he use the same activity with different groups but from the same course or even with different courses?

ORGANISATION AND CO-TEACHING
How does the FLA plan his lesson with the teacher?   Do they have weekly meetings? If not, how do they keep in touch?   Do they give the lesson together or work separately? How do they interact during the lesson?

Appendix 2. Interview performed to the FLA in the first meeting

ACADEMIC BACKGROUND

1. What did you study at college?

2. Did you have some subjects related to applied linguistics? If so, could you tell me what they were about?

3. Did you have some subjects related to pedagogy?

4. Have you ever taught a foreign language in a classroom? If so, how did you teach it?

FOREIGN LANGUAGE LEARNING IN THE USA

1. How were you taught Spanish in the USA when you were in high school?

2. Did you use the textbook every day?

3. What about teaching the four basic skills? Did teachers give more importance to some of those skills?

4. Do you think there are similarities and differences between the way you were taught the foreign language in your country and the way English is taught here? If so, explain them.

FLA'S ROLE IN IES BOTÀNIC CAVANILLES

1. How many days do you work in this high school? Which ones?

2. How many teachers do you usually work with?

3. How many groups do you have?

4. Do you have a free hour to have meetings with teachers? When?

Appendix 3. First questionnaire

GENERAL INFORMATION

1. Is this the first time you have worked with a foreign language assistant (FLA)? Tell me your view regarding the FLAs' role.

2. What responsibilities do you believe a FLA has?

3. Now that you are working with a FLA, specify the aspects which you consider are positive about his role.

4. And what about the aspects that need improvement?

ASSESSING DIFFERENT ASPECTS

Here, you will find a series of aspects graded from 1 (strongly dissatisfied) to 5 (strongly satisfied). Therefore, rate them according to your current satisfaction and give reasons for it.

1. FLA's accommodation to students' special needs. Assess if you believe that he takes them into account (e.g. he wears face masks, materials are visual, etc.).

2. When designing activities, their accommodation depending on students' level of English and the content they are studying is appropriate.

3. The activities that the FLA designs usually have a clear communicative outcome.

4. The activities created by the FLA are diverse.

5. The FLA usually employs realia in the classroom.

6. Have you asked him to create other materials for the English department? If so, rate those materials according to their quality.

COORDINATION

1. As regards lesson planning, how have you kept in touch with the FLA?

2. Do you usually have meetings with him?

3. Tell me the aspects you usually address with the FLA during lesson planning (e.g. class objectives, curriculum, content, identification of the teacher's and FLA's roles, etc.).

4. How do you assess the FLA's initiative?

5. How have you worked with the FLA in the classroom? For example, does he usually address the whole class, or the class is separated into groups?

6. Following the same rating scale as before, indicate your satisfaction as regards the co-teaching that you have employed in the classroom. Remember, the scale goes from 1 (strongly dissatisfied) to 5 (strongly satisfied).

GENERAL SATISFACTION

Lastly, grade your final satisfaction according to how you think his role is performed. Remember, the scale goes from 1 (strongly dissatisfied) to 5 (strongly satisfied).

Appendix 4. Second questionnaire

ASSESSING DIFFERENT ASPECTS

Here, you will find a series of aspects graded from 1 (strongly dissatisfied) to 5 (strongly satisfied). Therefore, rate them according to your satisfaction after the school year in order to see if he improved them. Then, give reasons for it.

1. FLA's accommodation to students' special needs. Assess if you believe that he takes them into account (e.g. he wears face masks, materials are visual, etc.).

2. When designing activities, their accommodation depending on students' level of English and the content they are studying is appropriate.

3. The activities that the FLA design usually have a clear communicative outcome.

4. The activities created by the FLA are diverse.

5. The FLA usually employs realia in the classroom.

6. Have you asked him to create other materials for the English department? If so, rate those materials according to their quality.

COORDINATION

1. As regards lesson planning at the end of the course, did you keep in touch with him using the same ways of communication?

2. Did you change the way you used co-teaching? If so, explain it.

3. Following the same rating scale as before, indicate your satisfaction as regards the co-teaching that you have employed in the classroom at the end of the school year. Remember, the scale goes from 1 (strongly dissatisfied) to 5 (strongly satisfied).

GENERAL SATISFACTION

Lastly, grade your final satisfaction according to how you think his role was performed at the end of the school year. Remember, the scale goes from 1 (strongly dissatisfied) to 5 (strongly satisfied).

Appendix 5. "Hitting the Road": explanation

Introduction

The task "Hitting the road" was designed for 1st *Batxillerat* students from *IES Botànic Cavanilles* in La Vall d'Uixó. This task was conducted so that students could decide which is the best package tour to go on a trip with their classmates in a 55-minute session. For this reason, they practice the use of expressions to agree and disagree and to give opinions in an informal context. Furthermore, they do it in a session divided into three parts: pre-task, task and post-task. Additionally, students use their background knowledge as regards travelling and expressions to agree and disagree, which were explained in the previous session.

This task was also performed to encourage the use of the English language during speaking activities with the help of the FLA. In this case, he participated in a pre-task activity, where he explained different interesting places from San Francisco. He also had the role of being a tourist guide, in which he helped students decide the best package tour by giving them his opinion regarding cities in the western states.

Lastly, this task also tries to foster cooperative learning, as students have a discussion in order to reach an agreement. Therefore, students' interaction would be fostered; they can help each other and learn a series of cultural and social values such as comradeship, honesty and respect.

Programming

This task was created to practise different linguistic elements such as expressions to agree and disagree. Nevertheless, it has a clear cultural focus since students learn different historical, cultural and linguistic aspects from the United States. They do it by carrying out some activities which integrate the four skills: reading, listening, writing and speaking.

As it was stated above, this task is divided into pre-task, task, and post-task. The pre-task was designed to activate students' prior knowledge and motivate them to participate. The task consists of a discussion where students are placed in groups of four members, and they have to decide the best package tour after reading the itineraries of an American tourist agency. Finally, in the post-task, there is an optional activity that involves written expression.

Objectives

This task was created to develop students' linguistic and cultural competences with the assistance of a native speaker. Students learn the importance of pragmatics in conversation, as they have to employ expressions to show agreement or disagreement in an informal context. Regarding the cultural component, students learn different historical and cultural aspects of the United States, such as the role of Jazz in the Black community or Thanksgiving, thanks to a cultural map which contains different written and oral comprehension activities. However, as there was not enough time, students had access to that map so that they could discover those cultural aspects. This learning process also involves the integration of four skills: reading, writing, listening and speaking.

Lastly, this task aims at stimulating students' cooperative learning as they need to work together to decide which is the best package tour. Furthermore, they need to listen actively to their classmates, respect their opinions, and avoid judging. As students are engaged in a conversation, they also learn about turn-taking and avoiding interrupting their classmates.

Competences

Taking into consideration the Spanish Ministry of Education and Vocational Training, students develop the following competences in this task:

- CCLI: *competència lingüística.*

- CAA: *competència aprendre a aprendre*.

- CSC: *competència social i cívica*.

- CEC: *consciència i expressió cultural*.

- CMCT: *competència matemàtica i competència bàsica en ciència i tecnologia*.

- SIEE: *sentit de la iniciativa i esperit emprenedor*.

- CD: *competència digital*.

Contents

The content of this task was designed on the basis of the curriculum that is established by the *Decret 87/2015, de 5 de juny del Consell*, which was published on the 10th of June in *Diari Oficial de la Generalitat Valenciana*. The contents that this task deals with are explained below.

	Contents
Bloc 1. Comprensió de textos orals	Distinció de tipus de comprensió: sentit general, informació essencial, punts principals, detalls rellevants a partir de la comprensió d'elements significatius, lingüístics i paralingüístics. Tècniques d'escolta activa (mostrar empatia, no jutjar, parafrasejar, emetre reforços, resumir per a aclarir).
Bloc 2. Expressió de textos orals: producció i interacció	Recursos per a l'elaboració d'un text conjunt amb altres companys de forma col·laborativa: torn de paraula, discussió, negociació i presa de decisions. Expressió del missatge amb claredat, coherència i confiança, i estructurar-lo adequadament i adaptar-se al context, a l'interlocutor i als models i fórmules de cada tipus de text. Descripció de qualitats físiques i abstractes de llocs, activitats. Intercanvi d'opinions. Expressió del dubte, la intenció, la decisió, l'objecció, l'aprovació, la satisfacció. Formulació de suggeriments, desitjos, condicions i hipòtesis.
Bloc 3. Comprensió de textos escrits.	Distinció de tipus de comprensió: sentit general, informació essencial, punts principals, detalls rellevants. Inferència i formulació d'hipòtesiss sobre significats (anticipació i predicció), actitud i predisposició mental, a

	partir de la comprensió d'elements significatius, lingüístics i paralingüístics. Descripció de qualitats físiques i abstractes de persones, objectes, llocs, activitats, procediments i processos.
Bloc 4. Producció de textos escrits: expressió i interacció.	Busca i selecció d'informació i documentació en entorns virtuals d'aprenentatge. Utilització de ferramentes digitals per a la producció de textos continus i discontinus, incloent-hi imatges i gràfics, que contribuïsquen al missatge. Expressió del missatge amb claredat i coherència, ajustant-se als models i fórmules de cada tipus de text i al propòsit comunicatiu. Fonamentada en els coneixements previs de textos i estructures semblants. Descripció i apreciació de qualitats físiques i abstractes de llocs, activitats. Patrons gràfics i convencions ortogràfiques. Convencions de format, ortogràfiques, tipogràfiques i de puntuació.
Bloc 5. Elements transversals a l'assignatura.	Creació de contingut digitals. Realització, formatat senzill i impressió de documents de text. Imaginació i creativitat. Compartir informació i construir un producte o meta col·lectiu. Anàlisi del públic destinatari i adaptació de la comunicació en funció d'este. Habilitats de comunicació. Iniciativa i innovació. Sentit crític. Treball cooperatiu. Responsabilitat i eficàcia en la resolució de tasques. Solidaritat, tolerància, respecte i amabilitat. Tècniques d'escolta activa. Diàleg igualitari. Ús del vocabulari específic de l'assignatura.

Methodology

In order to perform this task, a master class was given to students. Moreover, it tried to use a methodology which fosters students' active participation by carrying out some debates with the whole class and in four-member groups. Therefore, students work collaboratively while they learn different cultural aspects and discuss an engaging topic like travelling.

Furthermore, this task includes some ICTs resources. For instance, students use *Menti* to select their final choice and *Canva* if they decide to write a leaflet about a Spanish city. In addition, *Google Maps* was used to create an interactive map, where students can find different reading and listening comprehension activities. Those oral and written texts include *Youtube* videos, blog posts, and articles on websites. Finally, if students want to practice their comprehension, they have different activities on *Google forms*.

Materials

In order to teach this task, different materials are necessary:

- A computer with an internet connection.
- A projector and a big screen.
- The materials that were designed: slides with the activities and the handout with the package tours for the discussion.
- Students' notes, especially concerning expressions to agree and disagree.
- Students' smartphones.
- ICT resources: *Youtube*, *Menti*, *Google Maps*, *Google Forms*, *Canva*, blog posts and web articles.

Assessment

Before explaining the assessment that should be performed, it is crucial to know the assessment criteria according to the *Decret 87/2015, de 5 de Juny del Consell*, which was published on the 10th of June in *Diari Oficial de la Generalitat Valenciana*. Those criteria are shown below together with the competences that are developed.

	Assessment criteria	**Key competences**
Bloc 1. Comprensió de textos orals.	BL1.1. Identificar, per mitjà de l'aplicació d'estratègies de comprensió oral, informació essencial, les idees principals, opinions i implicacions generals en textos orals ben organitzats, en diferent suports, en llengua estàndard i articulats a velocitat normal sobre temes d'especialització o d'interès en els àmbits personal, públic, acadèmic i professional, fins i tot amb un poc de soroll de fons.	CCLI CAA
	BL1.4. Inferir el significat de lèxic comú i especialitzat, d'expressions i modismes habituals, en l'àmbit personal, públic, acadèmic i professional, en diferents suports i situacions comunicatives, i avaluar la intencionalitat, l'impacte i eficàcia del text, així com l'ús humorístic, lúdic i estètic.	CCLI CAA
Bloc 2. Producció de textos orals: expressió i interacció	BL2.1. Produir i coproduir textos diversos, estructurats i d'una certa extensió, en diferents suports i en els seus corresponents registres, en els àmbits personal, públic, educatiu i professional, i aplicar estratègies d'expressió oral de planificació, execució i revisió i de reformulació del text oral per a adaptar-lo a l'interlocutor i aconseguir el propòsit comunicatiu.	CCLI CAA
	BL2.2. Integrar, amb actitud crítica i empatia, en els textos orals, els aspectes sociolingüístics i socioculturals, relatius a la vida quotidiana, a les relacions interculturals i interpersonals, a les convencions socials i les manifestacions culturals i artístiques, i acceptar les diferències com un element enriquidor, evitant estereotips i prejuís fent un ús no discriminatori del llenguatge (gènere, ètnia o classe social) i adaptant el discurs a les característiques del interlocutor i de la situació comunicativa.	CCLI CSC CEC
	BL2.3. Planificar i crear, en qualsevol suport, textos orals adequats a les funcions i intencions comunicatives, i seleccionar el lèxic comú i especialitzat, les estructures morfosintàctiques, els patrons discursius i els elements de connexió i de cohesió apropiats per a l'èxit d'un discurs organitzat i eficaç.	CCLI CAA

	BL2.4. Seleccionar i utilitzar expressions, modismes i lèxic menys comú i més especialitzat, i incloure-hi paraules i expressions que permeten argumentar, qüestionar i defendre punts de vista, així com l'expressió senzilla de la poesia, l'humor, per a l'èxit d'un discurs organitzat i eficaç.	CCLI CAA CSC
Bloc 3. Comprensió de textos escrits.	BL3.1. Identificar, mitjançant l'aplicació d'estratègies de comprensió escrita, les idees i opinions principals, informació rellevant i implicacions de textos complexos i d'una certa extensió, en llengua estàndard, en diferents suports i sobre una àmplia varietat de temes i àmbits.	CCLI CAA
	BL1.4. Inferir els significats de lèxic menys freqüent i més especialitzat, modismes i expressions habituals, en l'àmbit personal, públic, acadèmic i professional, en diferents suports i situacions comunicatives, i avaluar l'impacte i l'eficàcia del text, així com el possible ús lúdic, humorístic o estètic de l'idioma.	CCLI CAA
Bloc 4. Producció de textos escrits: expressió i interacció.	BL2.1. Produir i coproduir textos escrits estructurats i d'una certa extensió, en diferents suports i registres, sobre una àmplia sèrie de temes i àmbits, i crear descripcions, sintetitzar informació organitzada de manera lògica, defendre punts de vista, aplicar les estratègies de busca i selecció d'informació, planificació, execució i revisió, i reestructurar el text amb cohesió, coherència, creativitat i sentit estètic, amb lèxic adequat al context i al propòsit comunicatiu.	CCLI CMCT CAA
	BL2.3. Planificar i crear en diferents suports textos escrits adequats a les funcions i intencions comunicatives, seleccionar els patrons discursius, les estructures morfosintàctiques, les convencions ortogràfiques, tipogràfiques i de puntuació, el lèxic comú i més especialitzat, expressions i modismes habituals, i elements de coherència i cohesió, utilitzar l'argumentació, qüestionar i justificar punts de vista per a l'èxit d'un discurs organitzat i eficaç.	CCLI
	BL2.4. Utilitzar expressions, modismes i lèxic menys freqüent i més especialitzat, i incloure-hi paraules i expressions que permeten argumentar, qüestionar i defendre punts de vista, així com l'expressió senzilla de la poesia o l'humor.	CCLI CSC

Bloc 5. Elements transversals a l'assignatura.	BL5.3. Crear i editar continguts digitals com documents de text, presentacions multimèdia i produccions audiovisuals amb sentit estètic mitjançant l'ús d'aplicacions informàtiques d'escriptori o servicis de la web per a incloure'ls en els seus propis projectes i tasques, i conèixer com aplicar els diferents tipus de llicències.	CD
	BL5.4. Gestionar de forma eficaç tasques o projectes, fer propostes creatives i confiar en les seues possibilitats, mostrar energia i entusiasme durant el seu desenrotllament, prendre decisions raonades i assumir riscos i responsabilitzar-se de les pròpies accions i de les seues conseqüències.	SIEE
	BL5.5. Planificar tasques o projectes, individuals o col·lectius, descrivint accions, recursos materials, terminis i responsabilitats per a aconseguir els objectius proposats, adequar el pla durant el seu desenrotllament considerant diverses alternatives per a transformar les dificultats en possibilitats, avaluar el procés i el producte final i comunicar de forma creativa els resultats obtinguts amb el suport dels recursos adequats.	SIEE CAA

In this task, it is important to mention that an assessment tool was used to evaluate students' writing performance. The main reason is that the activities in which students practise reading and listening skills can be done at home, as the exercises provide students with the correct answer. Then, the speaking activities are carried out in class with the whole group. Therefore, the teacher gives feedback about students' performance after observing how they express themselves.

Concerning the main speaking activity, students are divided into different groups. While students are having a discussion, the FLA observes students' performance in those groups where students' level is higher, whereas the teacher monitors the shyest students as well as pupils with a lower level of English. During that observation, they focus on students' participation, use of the language —especially concerning expressions to agree and

disagree— and pronunciation. Finally, in the post-task, all the groups explain their reasons after selecting their final choice in *Menti*, and then, the teacher gives feedback.

Lastly, a rubric is used to assess the writing composition. This rubric assesses five different items: presentation, organisation, cohesion, grammar and vocabulary. The rubric is also divided into four categories depending on students' performance: needs improvement, satisfactory, good and excellent. It is also significant to point out that in the presentation item, creativity is considered as well as other features that are characteristic of written texts that are created using ICTs.

	Needs improvement	Satisfactory	Good	Excellent	
	1	2	3	4	Weight
Presentation	Messy presentation with no attempt to use visual elements like images. The text is presented without justifying the lines.The whole text is written in one paragraph and with lots of punctuation mistakes.	Presentation is better, but the text is still presented without justifying the lines. Punctuation is still inconsistent.	Good presentation. The text is not presented consistently, as not all lines are justified. There are few errors regarding punctuation.	Excellent and creative presentation. All the lines are presented with juatifying. The use of punctuation marks is good.	**20%**
Organisation and format	It does not follow the format of a leaflet. The text is not coherent, and the information is not presented in a logical and coherent way. The content is	The text does not follow the format of the leaflet. Most of the time, the text is incoherent and the main ideas are not linked. The content is not appropriate	The format of the leaflet is clear, and most of the time, the text is coherent. The content is appropriate.	The format is clear. It presents a coherent text, with an excellent organisation and structure. The content is appropriate.	**20%**

	not appropriate as it does not follow the instructions.	because some parts are missing.			
Cohesion	The information is not linked as there are no linking words. For that reason, the text is confusing and difficult to understand.	The student tries to use some linking words, but the organisation is not clear. Those linking words are basic and too repetitive.	The information follows a logic sequence thanks to the use of linking words. However, the text is not always clear.	All the sentences are linked thanks to the use of connectors, which result in a clear text that is easy to understand.	**20%**
Grammar	Grammar is too basic and inconsistent. There are lots of basic grammar mistakes, which make the text difficult to understand.	The student chooses some grammatical elements that are not appropriate. There are mistakes regarding verb tenses. There are also some basic mistakes, but they do not make the text difficult to understand.	Grammatical elements are usually appropriate. There are few basic mistakes.	Grammatical elements are appropriate and there are not severe basic mistakes.	**20%**
Vocabulary	There are lots of severe mistakes regarding vocabulary. As a result, the text is difficult to understand.	There are still some problems with vocabulary, but they do not interfere in its meaning.	Vocabulary is appropriate, but there are occasional mistakes.	There are no problems as regards vocabulary, as it seems appropriate for the text.	**20%**

Activities

As it was stated above, this task was planned for one session, in which there are five activities divided into three parts: pre-task, task and post-task. The pre-task includes two

activities which have the main goal of activating students' prior knowledge and noticing how language is used on travel websites. The task contains an activity in which students must practise expressions to agree and disagree, which were studied in another lesson. Finally, the post-task has two activities where the teacher provides students with feedback.

- **Pre-tasks**. The first activity deals with a discussion in which students express their views and experiences as regards travelling abroad. This activity was designed to prepare students for the main task and foster their participation. Finally, the last activity includes some listening and reading comprehension activities in order to make students notice how people use the English language to talk about tourism. Moreover, those activities are performed at home as the language assistant is responsible for giving a talk about San Francisco.

First activity in the pre-task	
Instructions	Answer the following questions: - Have you ever travelled abroad? Where? What did you visit? - What do you like doing when you are on a trip? - Do you prefer going to the beach and going shopping rather than going sightseeing? - Do you prefer visiting monuments or natural environments? Why? - Do you try local food when you are abroad?
Timing	10 minutes
Objectives	- Activate students' prior knowledge regarding travelling. - Motivate students to participate. - Create a safe environment so that students can express themselves without being afraid. - Prepare students for the topic of the main task.
Contents	Oral expression. - Expressió del missatge amb claredat, coherència i confiança. - Descripció i apreciació de qualitats físiques i abstractes d'objectes, llocs, activitats. - Narració d'esdeveniments passats puntuals i habituals, descripció d'estats i situacions present. - Intercanvi d'opinions.

	- Formulació de suggeriments, desitjos, condicions i hipòtesis. Transversal elements of the subject. - Habilitats de comunicació. - Iniciativa i innovació. - Solidaritat, tolerància, respecte i amabilitat. - Ús del vocabulari específic de l'assignatura.
Key competences	CCLI, CAA, CSC, SIEE
Materials	The slides with the questions (see *Appendix 6*).
Students' role	Students remember, state, describe, and discuss.
Teacher's role	The teacher encourages students' participation and personal autonomy, assists students when there are problems with the use of the language, and gives feedback.
Assessment	The teacher gives feedback regarding the use of the language and pronunciation. There are no assessment tools for this activity.

Last activity in the pre-task	
Instructions	You will find an interactive map with 11 stops. Every stop has a reading or listening activity. We will do the first stop all together. Listen to Isaiah and prepare some questions about San Francisco and the West of the USA. Then, you can do the other stops at home if you want to learn about other cultural aspects.
Timing	20 minutes
Objectives	- Notice how the language is used on different resources dealing with travelling or tourism. - Motivate students to learn about the American culture.
Contents	Oral comprehension. - Distinció de tipus de comprensió: sentit general, informació essencial, punts principals, detalls rellevants. - Tècniques d'escolta activa (mostrar empatia, no jutjar, parafrasejar, emetre reforços, resumir per a aclarir). Oral expression. - Expressió del missatge amb claredat, coherència i confiança i estructurar-lo adequadament i adaptar-se al context, a l'interlocutor i als models i fórmules de cada tipus de text. Written comprehension. - Distinció de tipus de comprensió: sentit general, informació essencial, punts principals, detalls rellevants. - Inferència i formulació d'hipòtesiss sobre significats (anticipació i predicció), actitud i predisposició mental, a partir de la comprensió d'elements significatius, lingüístics i paralingüístics.

	Transversal elements of the subject.
	- Habilitats de comunicació.
	- Iniciativa i innovació.
	- Sentit crític.
	- Solidaritat, tolerància, respecte i amabilitat.
	- Ús del vocabulari específic de l'assignatura.
Key competences	CCLI, CAA, CSC, SIEE, CD
Materials	- In class: the interactive map on *Google Maps* and Isaiah's slides.
	- At home: the interactive map, *Youtube*, *Google forms*, blogs and articles on different websites.
Students' role	Students analyse, interpret, question, and solve.
Teacher's role	The teacher supports the language assistant, helps to encourage students' participation and encourages students to enter the interactive map.
Assessment	The teacher lets the language assistant correct students' performance. Regarding the other activities, students receive immediate feedback. There are no assessment tools for this activity.

- **Task**. The discussion is used to practice expressions to agree and disagree and to give opinions and vocabulary related to travelling. In this activity, students need to decide which is the best package tour to go on a trip after finishing 1st *Batxillerat*. This activity was designed to motivate students to participate as they can identify themselves with this situation, especially after the impossibility of travelling abroad during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Discussion in the task	
Instructions	You will work in groups of 3-4 people. Read the leaflets which contain information about different package tours. Decide which tour you would like to go to with your classmates.
Timing	15 minutes
Objectives	- Using expressions to agree and disagree in an informal context.
	- Fostering cooperative work as students need to come to an agreement.
	- Fostering active listening and respect.
Contents	Oral comprehension.

	- Distinció de tipus de comprensió: sentit general, informació essencial, punts principals, detalls rellevants. - Tècniques d'escolta activa (mostrar empatia, no jutjar, parafrasejar, emetre reforços, resumir per a aclarir). - Expressió de l'objecció, l'aprovació. - Formulació de suggeriments, desitjos. Oral expression and interaction. - Recursos per a l'elaboració d'un text conjunt amb altres companys de forma col·laborativa: torn de paraula, discussió, negociació i presa de decisions. - Expressió del missatge amb claredat, coherència i confiança, i estructurar-lo adequadament i adaptar-se al context, a l'interlocutor i als models i fórmules de cada tipus de text. - Descripció de qualitats físiques i abstractes de llocs, activitats. - Intercanvi d'opinions. - Expressió del dubte, la intenció, la decisió, l'objecció, l'aprovació, la satisfacció. - Formulació de suggeriments, desitjos, condicions i hipòtesis. Writing comprehension. - Distinció de tipus de comprensió: sentit general, informació essencial, punts principals, detalls rellevants. - Inferència i formulació d'hipòtesiss sobre significats (anticipació i predicció). Transversal elements of the subject. - Compartir informació i construir un producte o meta col·lectiu. - Anàlisi del públic destinatari i adaptació de la comunicació en funció d'este. - Habilitats de comunicació. - Iniciativa i innovació. - Treball cooperatiu. - Responsabilitat i eficàcia en la resolució de tasques. - Solidaritat, tolerància, respecte i amabilitat. - Tècniques d'escolta activa. - Diàleg igualitari. - Ús del vocabulari específic de l'assignatura.
Key competences	CCLI, CAA, CSC, CEC, SIEE
Materials	The slides with the instructions and the leaflets with the itineraries that were extracted from an American tourist agency (see *Appendix 7*).
Students' role	Students analyse, interpret, repeat, execute, discuss and select.
Teacher's role	The teacher and the language assistant guide students' social interaction, provide some assistance and foster personal thinking.
Assessment	The teacher and the language assistant move around the class to observe how students interact and help them when necessary. During this observation, they ensure that students use the expressions that were studied previously.There are no assessment tools for this activity.

● **Post-task.** There are two activities in the final stage. The first activity has a discussion where the teacher discovers the most popular option in every group. After every group has decided the package tour they would like to go to, they enter their choice on *Menti*, and after that, students explain the option they prefer. Finally, the last activity is an optional writing composition, in which students write a leaflet using *Canva*, where they describe a Spanish city. These texts can be used so that the language assistant can learn other cultural aspects from our country.

Discussion in the post-task	
Instructions	When the group decides the best option, select your answer in *Menti*. Then, comment on your decision with the whole class.
Timing	10 minutes
Objectives	- Letting students express themselves after designating a spokesperson. - Giving feedback after the observation in the previous task.
Contents	Oral expression. - Expressió del missatge amb claredat, coherència i confiança. - Intercanvi d'opinions. - Expressió del dubte, la intenció, la decisió, l'objecció, l'aprovació, la satisfacció. - Formulació de suggeriments, desitjos, condicions i hipòtesis. Transversal elements of the subject. - Habilitats de comunicació. - Iniciativa i innovació. - Solidaritat, tolerància, respecte i amabilitat. - Ús del vocabulari específic de l'assignatura.
Key competences	CCLI, CAA, SIEE, CD
Materials	The slides with the instructions and *Mentimeter*.
Students' role	Students state, explain, discuss and select.
Teacher's role	The teacher encourages students' participation, assists students when they struggle and gives feedback about the role-play and this discussion.
Assessment	The teacher gives feedback regarding the use of the language paying attention to the expressions to agree and disagree, and pronunciation. There are no assessment tools for this activity.

Writing composition in the post-task	
Instructions	Use Canva to write a leaflet about a Spanish city. Include pictures and information about monuments, festivities, local food and other cultural aspects. This task is optional, but it can help you to improve your writing style.
Timing	To do at home (it is optional).
Objectives	- Letting students express themselves in written format. - Improve their digital competence. - Enhance students' creativity.
Contents	Written expression. - Expressió del missatge amb claredat i coherència, ajustant-se als models i fórmules de cada tipus de text i al propòsit comunicatiu. Fonamentada en els coneixements previs de textos i estructures semblants. - Descripció i apreciació de qualitats físiques i abstractes d'activitats, procediments i processos. - Patrons gràfics i convencions ortogràfiques, de format, ortogràfiques, tipogràfiques i de puntuació. Transversal elements of the subject. - Creació de contingut digitals. - Realització, formatat senzill i impressió de documents de text. - Imaginació i creativitat. - Anàlisi del públic destinatari i adaptació de la comunicació en funció d'este. - Habilitats de comunicació. - Iniciativa i innovació. - Ús del vocabulari específic de l'assignatura.
Key competences	CCLI, CMCT, CAA, CSC, SIEE, CD
Materials	The slides with the instructions and *Canva*.
Students' role	Students remember, describe, explain, execute, construct and examine.
Teacher's role	The teacher gives feedback.
Assessment	The teacher uses a rubric to assess writing performance.

Appendix 6. Hitting the road: slides.

OPTIONAL WRITING ACTIVITY

04

WRITE A LEAFLET

✔ Use Canva to write a leaflet about a Spanish city.

✔ Include pictures and information about monuments, festivities, local food and other cultural aspects.

✔ This task is optional, but it can help you to improve your writing style.

HITTING THE ROAD

Tour guides: Igor, Isaiah and Nuria

Appendix 7. Hitting the road: handout with the itineraries for the speaking activity

(materials extracted from Taketours website)

Itinerary 1: 7-Day Yellowstone, Antelope Canyon, Grand Canyon West, Horseshoe Bend Tour from Los Angeles/Las Vegas

PACKAGE TOUR – $628 – INTERNATIONAL FLIGHT NOT INCLUDED

ITINERARY
DAY 1: LOS ANGELES – LAS VEGAS – ST. GEORGE In the morning, we will depart from **Los Angeles** and drive through the immense **Mojave Desert**. Then, we will make a stop at **Seven Magic Mountains**, which is located around 20 miles south of Las Vegas. In the afternoon, we will pass by **Las Vegas** and then, we will arrive at **St. George** where we will spend the night.
DAY 2: ST. GEORGE – ANTELOPE CANYON – HORSESHOE BEND – SALT LAKE CITY In the morning, we will head to the **Lower Antelope Canyon**, a popular destination for photographers and sightseers, then we will visit **Horseshoe Bend**. Afterward, we will continue to **Salt Lake City**, where we will spend the night.
DAY 3: SALT LAKE CITY – YELLOWSTONE In the morning, we will head to **Yellowstone National Park**. We will visit 12 of Yellowstone's unique scenery over the span of 2 days, such as **Old Faithful**, **Grand Prismatic Spring** and **Fountain Paint Pot**, **Fountain Hiking trail**, **Morning Glory pool** and so on. We will spend the night in West Yellowstone.
DAY 4: YELLOWSTONE NATIONAL PARK - SALT LAKE CITY In the morning, we will continue our tour inside Yellowstone National Park, visiting **Norris Basin**, **Yellowstone Canyon**, **Yellowstone Fall**, **Mud Volcano** and **Yellowstone Lake**. After that, we will visit the **Yellowstone Bear World** and **Idaho Fall**. Stay overnight in Salt Lake City.

DAY 5: SALT LAKE CITY - LAS VEGAS

In the morning, we will explore Salt Lake City. We will visit the **Utah State Capitol**, the **Salt Lake Temple** and the **Great Salt Lake**. After that, we will travel to Las Vegas, NV.

DAY 6: LAS VEGAS - GRAND CANYON - LAS VEGAS

Today, guests may choose to go to either the **South Rim** (home to Grand Canyon National Park) OR the **West Rim** (home to the Eagle Point, Guano Point and Skywalk Glass Bridge) of the Grand Canyon. At the end of the day, we will return to Las Vegas.

DAY 7: LAS VEGAS - BARSTOW - LOS ANGELES

Today, we will head toward the **Ethel M Chocolate Factory** and its **Botanical Garden**, where you can enjoy some chocolate. After lunch, we will go to **Barstow Outlet**. In the early evening, we will return to Los Angeles.

Itinerary 2: 8-Day Grand Canyon, Berkeley, Las Vegas Tour from San Francisco

PACKAGE TOUR - $728 – INTERNATIONAL FLIGHT NOT INCLUDED

ITINERARY
Day 1: San Francisco Today, we will gather in San Francisco at San Francisco International Airport. You will have some free time to explore the city on your own.
Day 2: Berkeley - San Francisco City Tour - Modesto We will visit the campus of **UC Berkeley** in the morning. Afterward, we will drive to San Francisco. Then, we will see the **Golden Gate Bridge** before visiting **Fisherman's Wharf**. Next, we will visit **Madame Tussaud** or **Exploratorium** and then, we will go to the only building remaining from 1915 world's exposition: the **Palace of Fine Arts**. Stay overnight in Modesto.
Day 3: Modesto - Yosemite - Los Angeles In the morning, we will depart from our hotel and drive to Yosemite National Park, where we will see famous landmarks like **El Capitan**, **Yosemite Falls**, **Yosemite Valley**, **Half Dome**, **Bridal Veil Falls**, and much more. After lunch, we will travel across the Central Valley of California until we reach Los Angeles.
Day 4: Los Angeles - Las Vegas Today, we will journey through the San Bernardino Valley Area and the immense Mojave Desert to fabulous Las Vegas. Upon our arrival in Vegas in the afternoon, guests are free to spend their time as they please.
Day 5: Tour Options: Grand Canyon South/West Rim **Option 1: Hoover Dam - Grand Canyon West Rim** In the morning, guests will visit the **Hoover Dam**. Afterward, we will proceed to the **Grand Canyon West Rim**. Then, guests will return to Las Vegas for the night.

Option 2: Grand Canyon South Rim - Hoover Dam

Guests will head to the **South Rim** of the Grand for the day. Afterward, we will see Hoover Dam and return to Las Vegas.

Day 6: Las Vegas - Barstow - Los Angeles

Before we leave Las Vegas, we will travel to the **Ethel M Chocolate Factory** and its **Botanical Cactus Gardens.** We will visit **Seven Magic Mountains** before stopping in Barstow to visit the **Tanger Outlets**. We will arrive back in LA at night.

Day 7: Los Angeles City Tour

Firstly, we will go to **El Pueblo Los Angeles Historic Monument**, then continue our trip to **Hollywood Walk of Fame** and the Dolby Theater. Next stop will be **Rodeo Drive** and **Beverly Center**. We will also stop at **Urban Light** and **Petersen Auto Museum** (outside visit only). Last, we will visit **The Getty**.

Day 8: Universal Studios

You will be picked up in the Los Angeles area in the early morning and enjoy your whole day in **Universal Studios Hollywood**. After that, you will be transferred to LAX.

Itinerary 3: 8-Day USA East Coast Tour from New York

PACKAGE TOUR - $1999 – INTERNATIONAL FLIGHT INCLUDED

ITINERARY
Day 1: New York Night tour of the city. New York City is at its best at night! Join this special tour of the City that Never Sleeps and see for yourself the constant buzz and murmur always present under the eternally bright lights of the Big Apple.
Day 2: New York We will begin our tour of New York City in **Wall Street**. Then, we will see the **Charging Bull** and the **Statue of Liberty**. Free time at the **Chelsea Market** (1 hour), where you can enjoy your lunch as well. After that, the tour guide will bring you to the new tourist icon, **The Vessel** and the ancient **Chinatown**.
Day 3: New York – Washington DC After visiting the United **Nations** and **New York Public Library**, we will travel to Washington DC.
Day 4: Washington DC We will begin with a visit to the **White House**, followed by a **Capitol 360 Panorama Tour**, including the **Capitol Hill** (Inside visit), **Library of congress** (Inside visit) and **Supreme Court** (Photo stop). After lunch at Capitol Hill, we will take a depth tour in **National Air** and **Space Museum** and **Bureau of Engraving and Printing**. Walk around the **Lincoln Memorial**, the **Vietnam War Memorial** and the **Korean War Memorial** before having dinner in Washington seafood Wharf.
Day 5: Washington, DC - Corning - Niagara Falls This morning, we will go to Niagara Falls, stopping on the way for lunch. Then, we will visit the **Corning Glass Museum** in New York. Finally, we will go to the hotel. You will have free time in the evening.

Day 6: Niagara Falls - Boston

Today, we will go sightseeing around **Niagara Falls**, where we will take an exciting **Maid of the Mist** (the boat) and visit **the Cave of the Winds**. We will have our lunch at Hard Rock Cafe. Afterwards, we will drive to Boston for the night.

Day 7: Boston

Today, we will tour the sights of Boston. Our first stop will be **Harvard University**, the oldest higher education institution in the US. Then, we will go to Copley **Square**, where we will visit **Trinity Church**, **John Hancock Tower** and **Boston Public Library**. We will also walk along **the Freedom Trail** and take a famous Boston Duck Tour to see the city from the land and water. Lastly, we will have a Lobster Dinner.

Day 8: Boston - New Haven - New York

On the way back to New York, we will firstly visit **Yale University**, where we will visit the Old Campus and the Harkness Tower. Once in New York, we will visit **Grand Central Terminal**, then you will get some leisure time to shop on **Fifth Avenue**. At the end of the tour, you will be transferred to the airport.

Itinerary 4: 7-Day Fairbanks, Denali National Park and Anchorage Tour from Fairbanks

PACKAGE TOUR - $1924 – INTERNATIONAL FLIGHT INCLUDED

ITINERARY
Day 1: Fairbanks Today, we will gather in Fairbanks to stay overnight there. Guests will have some free time this evening.
Day 2: Fairbanks Today, we will visit the **Museum of North**, cruise on the **Chena River** aboard a sternwheeler and experience the thrill of river travel. You will have some free time to go shopping, walking or dining on your own in the downtown area.
Day 3: Fairbanks - Denali National Park - Anchorage We will drive to **Denali National Park** to enjoy an afternoon exploring this pristine area at your leisure. You have the following options: mild or wild river rafting, flight seeing, a jet boat safari on the Nenana River or a visit to an Iditarod champions award winning dog kennel.
Day 4: Anchorage - Denali National Park Today, we will travel deep into Denali National Park on the **Tundra Wilderness Tour** and search the vast wilderness for bear, moose, caribou, and Dall sheep. This journey is narrated allowing for insight into the animals, flora and fauna of this spectacular region.
Day 5: Denali - Talkeetna - Anchorage This morning, we will drive to **Talkeetna**. Then, we will see the majestic **Mt. McKinley** or black bear along the banks of the **Susitna River**. You will have free time to explore this Alaskan town. In the afternoon, our journey will continue south to Anchorage by rail.

Day 6: Anchorage

Today, we will enjoy a brief city tour of Anchorage, which includes the historic downtown district, and visit the **Alaska Native Heritage Center**. Tonight, you may share stories of your Alaskan Adventure with your traveling companions at a closing night dinner.

Day 7: Anchorage

Today our adventure will come to an end with a transfer to the airport. However, you will have some free time to go shopping.