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Podcast for EFL/ESL teachers in Spain:  
A proposal for teaching Phonological  
Awareness through songs in Early Childhood

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## Summary

This study aims at evaluating the effect of a 3-episode research-based podcast series “Teaching Phonological Awareness through songs in Early Childhood” can have on EFL/ESL ECE teachers in Spanish schools. Particularly, determining if the podcast does or does not improve their Phonological Awareness knowledge, motivation to include PA sessions into their English Language lessons, use of effective instructional strategies to teach PA skills, and use of songs to take out PA activities. Two experimental groups and a control group of ECE English teachers will be created from 48 Spanish schools chosen to participate in this mixed-method study. The 16 schools in Experimental group 1 will be offered the research-based podcast. The 16 schools in Experimental group 2 will listen to the research-based podcast, attend two vocational training courses to teach English PA to ECE students, and have two individualised follow-ups. The 16 schools in the control group will have no access to the material created. EFL/ESL ECE teachers within the chosen schools must answer a pre and post questionnaire. In addition, their performance when instructing Phonological Awareness sessions in ECE English classes will be observed, if instructed at all. The observations will take place pre-, during and post-test. An analysis using the ANCOVA method will be taken out after questionnaires and observations are completed.

**Key words.** ELT, ECE, Phonological Awareness, Phonemic Awareness, Music and second or foreign language teaching.

Aquest estudi té com a objectiu avaluar l'efecte que pot tenir el podcast acadèmic de 3 capítols "Ensenyament de la consciència fonològica a través de cançons a la primera infància" sobre mestres d'EFL/ESL d'EI d'escoles espanyoles. En particular, si el podcast millora o no els seus coneixements de consciència fonològica, motivació per incloure sessions de CF a les seves lliçons d'anglès, ús d'estratègies d'instrucció efectives per ensenyar habilitats de CF i ús de cançons per dur a terme activitats de CF. Es crearan dos grups experimentals i un grup control a partir de 48 escoles espanyoles escollides per participar en aquest estudi de mètode mixt. A les 16 escoles del grup Experimental 1 se'ls oferirà el podcast basat en la recerca. A les 16 escoles del grup Experimental 2 escoltaran el podcast, participaran en dos cursos de formació professional per ensenyar CF en anglès a alumnes d'EI i gaudiran de dues sessions de seguiment individualitzat. Les 16 escoles del grup Control no tindran accés al material creat. Els mestres d'EFL/ESL d'EI de les escoles escollides han de respondre un qüestionari previ i posterior. A més a més, s'observarà el seu rendiment a l'hora d'instruir sessions de consciència fonològica a les classes d'anglès d'EI, si s'instrueixen. Les observacions es realitzaran abans, durant i després de l'experiment. Després de completar els qüestionaris i les observacions, s'elaborarà una anàlisi mitjançant el mètode ANCOVA.

**Paraules clau.** ELT, EI, Consciència fonològica, Consciència fonèmica, Música i ensenyament de la segona llengua o llengua estrangera.

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## 1. Introduction

The increasing popularity of learning English as a second or foreign language in pre-primary education (Council of the European Union, 2014), has brought a challenge for English as a Second Language (ESL) and English as a Foreign language (EFL) teachers worldwide, especially in non-English speaking countries (Dixon et al., 2012).

Studies have shown that proficiency in L2 takes longer for younger learners, but the results are more likely to be native-like (Dixon et al., 2012). Although it has been determined that the amount of exposure to the target language is more important than the type of exposure (Jaekel et al., 2017), when it comes to pronunciation, children have an advantage to sound more native-like (Abrahamsson & Hyltenstam, 2009). This is due to the fact that they are more aware of the phonological system of language and have a higher sensitivity to the new language's sounds and rhythms (Pinter, 2017).

Considering these findings, there is a growing need for guidelines to teach English Phonological Awareness (PA) (Phillips et al., 2008) in EFL and ESL classrooms among Early Childhood Education (ECE) learners. PA has been defined by Hu (2003) as "the ability to attend to, detect, and manipulate the sound units of words independent of their meanings" (p. 432). It must not be confused with Phonemic Awareness, which refers to the most advanced stage of PA (Chard & Dickson, 1999). Phonemic awareness means recognising a word as a series of individual sounds or phonemes and segmenting oral language into phonemes without the help of the alphabet (Jiménez & O'Shanahan, 2008).

PA skills have been proven to increase pronunciation ability (Cheung, 1995), as well as future literacy skills (Chard and Dickson, 1999) and vocabulary acquisition (De Jong et al., 2000; Hu, 2003). Moreover, there is transference from L1 to other languages and PA should be included in pre-primary classrooms to help bi/multilingual students transfer skills and enhance language learning (Lourenço & Andrade, 2014).

The question of which approach to take when teaching PA is still open to debate (Edelen-Smith, 1997). However, there is a close relationship between music and language acquisition (Mora, 2000). Many studies have proven that teaching PA and music together is beneficial (Anvari et al., 2002; Bolduc & Lefebvre, 2012; Degé & Schwarzer, 2011; Engel, 2020), mainly because,

according to Mora (2000), the melodic approach “leaves a particularly deep trace in our memories and [...] is less energy demanding because musical perception starts before birth” (p. 150). Mora (2000) also states that music and songs have a direct influence towards the awareness of sound, rhythm, pause and intonation, as well as strengthening muscle memory, which results in the storage of foreign sounds in long-term memory.

To further justify, an analysis of the Primary Catalan curriculum has been taken out. The goal of this analysis is to show how, despite its many benefits, Phonological Awareness is barely mentioned and, consequently, ECE and Primary teachers do not have any resources within the curriculum to instruct it in their EFL and ESL classrooms.

English as a foreign language isn't compulsory in Early Years Education in Catalonia, therefore it is not mentioned in the Early Years curriculum. Foreign language learning guidelines start to appear in the Primary curriculum, when students are generally between 6 and 7 years old. However, many public, semi-private and private schools in Catalonia offer English language classes from the early age of 3 years old. There seems to be no official guideline for teachers to instruct EFL or ESL to this age group, which includes the instruction of Phonological Awareness.

If we observe the “Area of Language” section in the Primary Curriculum when it comes to foreign language acquisition, it is divided into five dimensions; oral communication, reading comprehension, written expression, literature and a plurilingual and intercultural dimension. It exposes how foreign language acquisition is linked to paying attention to the negotiation between meaning and form (Departament d'Ensenyament, 2017, p. 33). It also confirms the need to understand phonetic elements that contribute to fluency (Departament d'Ensenyament, 2017, p. 33). These are the only two mentions of subjects related to Phonological Awareness.

The written language section states that students must draw from the production of words and expressions to be able to produce written texts. In addition, the process of learning how to write derives from the previous knowledge of linguistic contents and discourse of texts. (Departament d'Ensenyament, 2017, p. 36). It is perceived by these guidelines that oral communication comes before anything else.

However, as pointed out by Cortés (2018), in the first and second years of Primary Education, there is contents related to written expression (Departament d'Ensenyament, 2017, p. 35). Cortés (2018), adds that if, theoretically, English language isn't compulsory until the first year of Primary and oral skills come before any other, how can we explain that written language is

already introduced in the first year? How do the students acquire the phonological skills to understand and decode the English language sounds and words?

Another issue surfaces in the Catalan Foreign Language Curriculum, an extension of the Primary Catalan curriculum created in 2015. In this document, there is a sentence which expresses the importance of student's knowledge of phonological elements of the language to improve pronunciation (Departament d'Ensenyament, 2015, p.9). There is also a brief indication to pedagogical orientations for teaching pronunciation, some of them being working with stories or songs (Departament d'Ensenyament, 2015, p.93). However, when it comes to exemplifying activities for assessment, there is no guideline for the teacher's specific action to take for bettering the phonological aspect of the language, whether it be PA or pronunciation, as it is mostly focused on the student's production.

After analysing the Primary Catalan Curriculum (Departament d'Ensenyament, 2017) and Foreign Language Curriculum (Departament d'Ensenyament, 2015), and observing a lack of information on the concept and approaches to its instruction, a podcast series has been created to offer teachers the opportunity to gain **further knowledge** on PA. Furthermore, it includes a variety of **instructional strategies** and **songs**, so they feel **motivated** to include them into their pre-primary lesson plans.

### 1.1 Creation objectives

- To develop an empirical and quality research-based podcast which provides EFL and ESL teachers in Early Childhood education **self-reported further knowledge** on **Phonological Awareness**.
- To increase **motivation** for second and foreign language English ECE teachers to include PA into their lesson plans.
- To offer a range of effective **instructional strategies** for Phonological Awareness, so that second and foreign language English ECE teachers can implement them to teach each stage of PA.
- To provide **songs** for second and foreign language English ECE teachers to use when instructing PA activities.

## 2. Material design

When reflecting on what factors influence student's proficiency in English language learning, Dixon et al. (2012) determine that one of the elements to consider is the quality of instruction of the target language, both in English and non-English speaking countries. The previously mentioned authors also state that future foreign language educators must analyse instructional techniques, program features and program configurations for teaching a foreign or second language. It is also states that in many situations, a certain teaching goal isn't achieved because of a teacher's lack of proficiency (Sesek, 2007, as cited in Dixon et al., 2012). In addition, as established by the United Nation's Sustainable Development Goals (United Nations, 2018), goal 4 is to offer quality education to all. For these reasons, it's important for foreign language teachers to be in a state of continued learning to achieve proficiency.

Technological advances have allowed teachers to continue professional development (CPD) through diverse platforms, one of them being the podcast (Turner et al., 2020). It has been shown that listening to podcasts has a positive effect on engagement with research. Moreover, the public and conversational format of the podcast may resonate more with the English Language Teaching (ELT) community than traditional academic resources. In fact, authors have said that "The accessibility, familiarity, and regularity of podcast recordings make them a sustainable platform for providing stimulating introductions to areas of research which may lead to more extensive investigation by teachers in the future." (Turner et al., 2020, p. 3).

The name of the podcast created for this bachelor thesis is TEFLtip Spain. The podcast's first series "Teaching Phonological Awareness through songs in Early Childhood" is directed at ECE foreign or second language English teachers who wish to learn more about the meaning, benefits, and practices of Phonological Awareness. Although the podcast is aimed at EFL and ESL teachers in Spanish schools, it may appeal to teachers worldwide. As well as offering information about this concept, the podcast invites the listener to reflect on the role and instruction of pronunciation as one of the main benefits of PA. It exposes the lack of instructional resources within the Catalan Curriculum and the failing to mention PA in its contents.

To cover all of these topics, the podcast series has been divided into three episodes. Due to a lack of time, the only podcast episode recorded for this thesis is Episode 3: "If you're happy and you know it... Teach Phonology!", because it is the episode which focuses most on the relationship between PA and music, and it offers teachers strategies and songs to put PA skills into

practice in their pre-primary EFL and ESL classrooms. The instructional strategies are presented as overall strategies to use in each stage of PA, whereas the activities and songs have been divided according to Chard & Dickson's (1999) scale of less complex to more complex activities or stages of PA skills which correlates with Phillips et al. 's (2008) 4 stages Developmental of Phonological Awareness. All suggested song links, the activity they relate to, and the minute they can be listened to in Episode 3, can be found in *Appendix A: Material*.

Episode 2 of the podcast series, "Inside the Primary Curriculum: Where's Wally? More like where is PA!" is divided into two parts: Introduction and Guest Interview. In the introduction, there will be a more theoretical approach to English Language learning, with a special focus on student's age, proficiency, and nativelike pronunciation. In the interview, the speaker will lead a conversation about the concept of pronunciation and Phonological Awareness and relate its role in the Catalan Primary curriculum with a Early Years teacher and a TEFL Early Years teacher from Catalonia. The questions in the interview also appear in *Appendix 1: Material* of this senior thesis.

In the following pages, there is a table of contents of Episode 3 accompanied by an empirical research justification of all the topics included. The table is divided into four sections: Episode, Topic, Justification and Citation. **For the tables of Episode 1 and Episode 2, view Table 1 and Table 2 in *Appendix A: Material*.**



**Table 1. Self-made justification of TEFLtip Spain’s first podcast series: “Teaching Phonological Awareness through songs in Early Childhood”. Episode 3:**

<p><b>Episode 3:</b></p> <p><b>If you’re happy and you know it... teach Phonology!</b></p>	<p><b>Listen:</b> <a href="https://drive.google.com/file/d/1yTMtwPtcU4-loqYz9MKHB9w0qK4L-osX/view?usp=sharing">https://drive.google.com/file/d/1yTMtwPtcU4-loqYz9MKHB9w0qK4L-osX/view?usp=sharing</a></p>		
	<p>Positive relationship between PA and music</p>	<p>Teaching musical skills and phonological skills benefits early reading abilities.</p>	<p>Anvari et al. (2002)</p>
		<p>Music programs have a positive effect on the phonological awareness of preschoolers.</p>	<p>Degé &amp; Schwarzer (2011)</p>
		<p>Nursery rhymes foster phonological and musical processing skills in preschoolers.</p>	<p>Bolduc &amp; Lefebvre (2012)</p>
		<p>Songs and chants with words have a positive effect on phonological awareness in an ECE setting.</p>	<p>Engel (2020)</p>
	<p>Holistic VS systematic approaches to teaching PA</p>	<p>A Holistic approach focuses on meaning, and a systematic approach is focused on direct instruction.</p>	<p>Edelen-Smith (1997)</p>
		<p>Most pre-primary teachers don’t explicitly instruct PA.</p>	<p>Ball &amp; Blachman, 1998, as cited in Edelen-Smith, 1997.</p>
	<p>Skill and Drill VS Metalevel approaches to teaching PA</p>	<p>Skill and Drill is taking out PA activities without reflectint upon them. Metalevel is allowing students to reflect upon the goal of each activity and why it is useful. It shows more skills in reading achievement.</p>	<p>Cunningham (1990)</p>
	<p>Skillfully implemented instruction</p>	<p>Combination of PA activities in meaningful contexts.</p>	<p>Edelen-Smith (1997)</p>

	Lack of guidelines	Primary and pre-primary teachers lack guidelines for the instruction of PA.	Phillips et al., (2008)
	Music and memory	Phonological memory is crucial when learning vocabulary in a native and foreign language.	Hu (2003)
		<p>“Music seems to leave a particularly deep trace in our memories, this could be due to the fact that it is related to affective and unconscious factors. It could also be related to the hypothesis that it is less energy demanding because musical perception starts before birth.” (p. 150) A melodic approach can benefit a learner’s awareness of sound, rhythm, pause and intonation. It may also strengthen their muscle memory, which will result in the storage of foreign sound in the long-term memory.</p> <p>We recall lyrics without knowing the meaning of them.</p>	Mora (2000)
	Strategies and songs to teach PA through songs	<p><b>-Overall strategies effective with Second and Foreign Language learners, and students with developmental disabilities:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Activities should last no more than 15-20 minutes and fit the context of the classroom.</li> </ul>	Edelen-Smith (1997)
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Systematic and explicit instruction has been found more beneficial than implicit instruction.</li> <li>• Include multiple choice tasks.</li> </ul>	Phillips et al., (2008)

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support oral activities with visual aid: beads, boxes, markers, pictures...</li> <li>• Support oral activities with movement: holding hands, pointing...</li> <li>• Focus on one PA skill at a time.</li> <li>• Well managed transitions and small groups helps students who may need more attention, such as students with behavioural or learning difficulties.</li> <li>• Move quickly, but not too fast to maintain attention and avoid mistakes. With children with learning difficulties, include more “wait time” in between tasks for them to process verbal and visual prompts.</li> <li>• Newly introduced skills need to be revisited in many different contexts, and they can be referred to throughout the day.</li> <li>• The teacher must plan what is going to be taught, the order in which it will be taught, the pacing and how it will be taught.</li> <li>• Order of a session should be explaining what they must do, showing an example, guided practice and independent practice.</li> <li>• Repeated modelling.</li> <li>• Use positive reinforcement and corrective reinforcement.</li> </ul>	
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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use non-verbal cues.</li> </ul>	
		<p><b>-Rhyming songs:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Easiest stage of PA</li> <li>• Make exaggerations, start slow and increase fastness</li> </ul>	Chard & Dickson (1999)
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rhyming pairs activity</li> <li>• Rhyming circle activity</li> </ul>	Departament d'Educació (2019)
		<p><b>-Sentence segmentation:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teachers can use any sentence for word counting.</li> </ul>	Edelen-Smith (1997)
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Beed activity</li> </ul>	Pullen & Justice (2003)
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wooden blocks activity</li> <li>• Simon Says song</li> </ul>	Departament d'Educació (2019)
		<p><b>-Syllable segmentation and blending</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Start with one-syllable words and so on.</li> <li>• The words chosen must be of the child's day-to-day life.</li> <li>• Clapping out syllables.</li> <li>• When dividing multisyllabic words, the teacher must model the separation correctly ex. "Bu/ter" not "But/ter".</li> <li>• Syllable synthesis can be done with the children's names or</li> </ul>	Edelen-Smith (1997)

		<p>words that are familiar within a jingle.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Going on a bear Hunt jingle.</li> </ul>	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Blending activity based on the song “If you’re happy and you know it clap your hands”</li> </ul>	Yopp (1992)
		<p><b>-Onset and Rime</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In a group of words that vary in meaning when the first consonant or consonant cluster (cl) or digraph (sh) is changed, the first letter is called an <i>onset</i>, and the rest of the word is the <i>rime</i>.</li> </ul>	Phillips et al. (2008)
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use familiar songs to substitute the first sound of a word.</li> </ul>	Chard & Dickson (1999)
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Thumbs up and thumbs down method for rhyming.</li> <li>• Odd word out game with or without visual aid with musical preparation.</li> </ul>	Edelen-Smith (1997)
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Memory rhyming game with musical preparation.</li> <li>• Rhyming words may be used to increase awareness on root words and gerund forms.</li> </ul>	Departament d’Educació (2019)
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• When two or more words are said in the same sentence, and they all begin with the same letter, this is called an alliteration. We can use songs to consolidate this.</li> </ul>	Edelen-Smith (1997)

		For alliteration practice, use a song sung to the tune of “Old McDonald had a farm”. Can also be used for phoneme practice.	Yopp (1992)
		<p><b>-Individual phoneme segmentation and blending</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stop sounds shouldn’t be elongated, even if they are within a song.</li> <li>• Remain on the oral input of each sound and articulate consistently and clearly.</li> <li>• This skill is best learnt by associating a sound with an object, action, or creature (sound personality).</li> <li>• Phoneme synthesis can be done with the children’s names or words that are familiar within a jingle.</li> </ul>	Phillips et al. (2008)
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Elkonin boxes with a tune.</li> <li>• Phonemes need to be taught separately before children can segment and blend them within words.</li> </ul>	Edelen-Smith (1997)

### 3. Methodology

#### 3.1. Participants

To ensure that the study is representative of the population, 48 schools have been chosen according to their socioeconomic status (high, medium and low) and ownership (private, semiprivate and public). All schools chosen instruct English as a foreign or second language to P4 and

P5 ECE students for at least 30 minutes a week. The schools have been selected through an intentional non-probabilistic method (Ruiz, 2008).

An experimental group of EFL/ESL ECE teachers from 16 schools of diverse socioeconomic status will be offered the PA podcast and questionnaire. A second experimental group of EFL/ESL ECE teachers from 16 schools will be offered the podcast, questionnaire, and two vocational training sessions on PA with two individualised follow-ups throughout the year. A control group of EFL/ESL ECE teachers from 16 schools will answer the questionnaire, but will not have access to the podcast, training, or follow-ups. The total amount of EFL/ESL ECE teachers in Spanish schools who will participate in the study will be of approximately 96 teachers.

A table has been created where all 48 schools from experimental group 1, experimental group 2 and the control group are classified into socioeconomic status, ownership (private, semiprivate, or public), city and district and study group (view Table 5 in *Appendix C: Other*). Schools which take out a bilingual, multilingual, or immersive approach to the English language, have been classified so that they are equally present in both experimental groups and the control group.

Because the present study counts on the participation of 48 schools, it will be taken out within the months of the school year. The study will be designed at the beginning of the school year, so that there is time for schools to confirm their participation. Children will be getting used to the school environment, especially the youngest level of ECE students. The questionnaire for pre-data collection (all groups) and the podcast (for experimental groups only) will be included in the 30h online course for EFL/ESL ECE teachers “Anglès a Educació Infantil amb activitats engrescadores” (view details in *Proposal for data collection*). The teachers will answer the questionnaire in November, before starting the course.

For pre-data collection, an observation of the ECE teachers in all 48 schools who answer the questionnaire will also be taken out in November and the first half of December. After all questionnaires and observations for data collection have been completed, teachers will be given 1.5 months, including Christmas holidays in December, to complete the online course and listen to the podcast. The course will remain open until the end of the school year so that teachers in experimental groups 1 and 2 can listen to the podcast again whenever they please.

During the school year, there will be three observations of teachers in all groups. The observations will take place in the months of March, April and May. The study will make sure to observe

English teachers from levels P4 and P5 of ECE in each school, as English is instructed at these levels in all chosen schools.

The teachers in experimental group 2 will partake in two vocational training courses on PA content, skills, instruction and use of songs in February and March, so they have the option to implement what they learn in their ECE English classes during the following months. This group will also be provided with two follow-up sessions in the months of April and May. In the month of June, the teachers in all groups will be asked to answer the post-data collection questionnaire online and observers will take out the post-data collection observations. Inserted below is a calendar of the study's phases within a school year:

**Table 2. Phases of the study within a school year**

Phases of the study	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May.	Jun.
Pre-data collection: Questionnaire								
Pre-data collection: Observation								
30h online course completion and podcast distribution								
Extra vocational training on how to teach PA to ECE EFL/ESL students (Experimental group 2)								
Follow-ups (Experimental group 2)								
During Non-participant observations (All groups)								
Post-data collection: Questionnaire								
Post-data collection: Observation								



## 3.2 Operational variables

### 3.2.1. Extraneous variables

**Years of EFL/ESL teaching experience.** Years of experience in the ELT field could mean that teachers have more or less knowledge and instructing skills of Phonological Awareness. In the questionnaire, the question regarding this variable is presented as “Years of teaching experience”. The multiple-choice answer options are 0-5, 6-10, 11-15, 16-20 and 20+.

**English Level.** Teacher’s proficiency in English has been proved to have a great impact on learner outcomes (Dixon et al., 2012). In the questionnaire, teachers are asked “Have you obtained an English Level Certificate (Cambridge Assessment English)?”. This precise exam has been chosen because it is an internationally recognized level of language ability. The multiple-choice answer options are of all Cambridge exam levels: A2, B1, B2, C1 and C2. There is also an option in case they don’t have any certification: “I don't have an English Level Certificate”.

**Speaking English Level.** When teaching Phonological Awareness, the ability to model correct English sounds, rhythm and intonation is crucial for children’s retention of skills (Phillips et al., 2008). Therefore, good speaking skills are expected from teachers who include PA sessions into their ECE EFL/ESL lesson plans, even if it’s not their native language. In the questionnaire, teachers are inquired about their “Speaking” grade within their English Level Certificate: “If you have an English Level Certificate (Cambridge Assessment English), what was your most recent score on the Speaking part of the exam?”. The multiple-choice answer options are the possible grades given for this part of the exam: Grade A, Grade B or Grade C.

**School ownership.** Spanish schools are divided into private, semi-private or public schools. Although the type of ownership does not portray the socioeconomic status of the school, private institutions tend to include more English into their curriculum, whereas public and semi-public schools must follow the Educational Authorities’ indications. The same happens when distributing resources into certain school needs, like second or foreign language lessons. In the questionnaire, teachers are asked about the name of the school they work in, and its registration: “Please enter the name of the school you work as an English teacher in” and “The school you

teach in is registered as". Participants can fill in the blank box to answer the first question and answer the second multiple-choice question with the options Private, Semi-private or Public.

**School district socioeconomic status.** Although it does not apply to all families who take their children to a particular school in their district, as proximity is also important, participant schools have been chosen according to general family income per district compared to all of Catalonia. Economic resources affect the school's possibilities to acquire material to teach PA. They also affect the option for ECE children to attend extracurricular English classes and better their chances to achieve a higher level of English. All chosen schools can be found classified by socio-economic status in Table 5 in *Appendix C: Other*.

**Hours of English a week at the school.** As mentioned before, some schools provide more English hours to their ECE students than others, therefore the possibilities for PA sessions broaden as children's skills progress. In some cases, schools might not have enough time to provide students with a PA session at all. In the questionnaire, this will be assessed by asking the question "How many hours a week do ECE students learn English or are in a predominantly English-language environment at your school?" with answer options 1-2h, 3-4h and 5h or more.

**Students participating in extracurricular English activities.** The reason for this variable is the same as the previous one. In the questionnaire, teachers will be inquired "Do any of your ECE students participate in English extracurricular activities?" with a dichotomous measurement of Yes or No. In addition, participants will be asked to quantify the number of hours under the question "If the answer is Yes to the previous question, please write how many".

**Students having an English-speaking environment at home.** The reason for this variable is the same as the previous one. In the questionnaire, teachers will be inquired "Do any of your ECE students have an English speaking-environment at home?" with a dichotomous measurement of Yes or No. In addition, participants will be asked to quantify the number of hours under the question "If the answer is Yes to the previous question, please write how many".

**Number of students in the EFL/ESL ECE classroom.** Experts recommend PA sessions to be taken out in small groups (Phillips et al., 2008). This is only possible if the number of students in the classroom is lower than 10 students, or if the teacher has access to cooperative teaching and can divide the classroom into smaller groups. For this reason, the questionnaire includes the questions: "Number of students in your classroom" with the multiple-choice answers 1-5, 6-10, 11-15, 15-20 and 20+, and "Do you have access to cooperative teaching in your EFL/ESL ECE

lessons?" with the multiple-choice answers Yes, No and Sometimes. The third option is added because the teacher might have access to 1h a week of cooperative learning out of the 6h of English lessons they instruct.

**Self-reported PA training.** Because the questionnaire measures self-reported knowledge of PA, it is important to know if teachers have received PA training before the start of this study. Therefore, in the questionnaire, participants are asked the question: "Have you received at least 1h of specific training in teaching Phonological Awareness in your native language or in English?" with a dichotomous measurement of Yes or No.

**Self-reported musical training.** Using songs for PA instruction may be more accessible to teachers with previous musical training for ECE. In the questionnaire, participants are asked the question "Have you received at least 1h of specific musical training for ECE?" with a dichotomous measurement of Yes or No.

**ECE music lessons.** Teacher musical training is not the only variable to consider. The classe's ability to sing and work with musical skills may affect the Use of songs to teach PA variable greatly. In the questionnaire, participants are asked the question "Does the school you work in provide music lessons for ECE students at least once a week?" with a dichotomous measurement of Yes or No.

### **3.2.2. Independent variable**

This study's independent variable is the application of the podcast series by TEFLTip Spain created for EFL/ESL ECE teachers. The podcast series will be distributed to Experimental group 1 and Experimental group 2. The control group will have no access to the material created. Experimental group 2 will also be provided two vocational training sessions on PA, with two individualised follow-ups throughout the year.

### **3.2.3 Dependent variables**

The first dependent variable in this study will be the teacher's **perception** of knowledge, motivation, use of effective instructional strategies and use of songs to teach Phonological

Awareness. In addition, the second dependent variable measured will be the **presence** of effective instructional strategies and use of songs in ECE EFL/ESL PA sessions.

**Presence of effective instructional strategies and use of songs to teach PA.** This variable will be measured by observing the ECE EFL/ESL teachers who answer the questionnaire. An observation guide has been created using 2 of the 8 items of the “Frameworks for teacher practice in selected International teacher evaluation systems” (Martínez et al., 2016). To be more precise, the elements in Japan’s framework: “Facilitate an organised class” and “Provide support to students”, which can be found under the “Instructional skills” section of the table below.

**Table 3**  
Frameworks for teacher practice in selected international teacher evaluation systems.

<i>Fukuoka (Japan)</i>	<i>Singapore</i>	<i>Teach For America</i>
Student development & Counseling Consider pupils’ languages, values, and human rights Build trust and develop pupils; Address student incidents Consider health and safety Facilitate learning environment Provide appropriate counseling Support co-curricular activities	Nurturing the Whole Child Share values with student Take action to develop student Act in student’s interest	Set Big Goals Ambitious, feasible, aligned goals Invest Students and Influencers to Work for the Big Goal Instill “I can” and “I will” message Reinforce effort and mastery Model persistence and success Create a welcoming environment
Instructional skills Develop annual plan based on standardized curriculum Facilitate an organized class Set appropriate objectives Facilitate learning creatively Understand learning conditions Provide supports to students Conduct evaluations to encourage learning Have and improve content knowledge and skills Others Cooperate and collaborate to achieve school missions Build relationships with community and parents Practice risk management Discharge duties as public official	Winning Hearts and Minds Understand the environment Develop others  Knowing Self and Others Emotional intelligence  Working with Others Partner with parents Work in teams  Cultivating Knowledge Subject mastery Analytical thinking Initiative Teach creatively	Plan Purposefully Assess progress toward big goal Design long-term and unit plans Develop aligned lesson plans Differentiate Develop rules and procedures  Execute Effectively Clearly present academic content Monitor student understanding Rules, consequences Time-saving procedures Continuously Increase Effectiveness Identify progress for subgroups Identify key actions (stdnt/tchr) Adjust to solve problems Build on strengths  Work Relentlessly Persist in the face of challenges Solve time/resource constraints

**Figure 1. Frameworks for teacher practice in selected international teacher evaluation systems by Martínez et al. (2016). The items selected from the Fukuoka’s (Japan) evaluation system.**

To evaluate concrete effective PA instructional skills, 6 items have been created for “Facilitate an organised class” and 14 items have been created for “Provide support to students”. All items are affirmations extracted from empirical research-based articles by Bolduc & Lefebvre (2012), Chard & Dickson (1999), Cunningham (1990), Edelen-Smith (1997), Phillips et al., (2008) and Yopp (1992). To evaluate use of songs, another 6 items have been created “Teach content skills through songs”. Each item and its justification are shown in the table below:

**Table 3. Self-made observation rubric item justification according to articles by Bolduc & Lefebvre (2012), Chard & Dickson (1999), Cunningham (1990), Edelen-Smith (1997), Phillips et al., (2008) and Yopp (1992)**

Facilitate an organised class	Provide supports to students	Teach content skills through songs
The session lasts 15-20 minutes (Edelen-Smith, 1997)	Stop sounds are elongated when segmenting syllables (Phillips et al., 2008)	Use of games such as Memory, Thumbs up thumbs down and odd word out for rhyme awareness (Edelen-Smith, 1997)
The lesson is previously planned (Phillips et al., 2008)	Students reflect upon the purpose of each activity (Cunningham, 1990)	Use of familiar songs to substitute the first sound of a word to work on Onset in the Onset and Rime stage of PA (Chard & Dickson, 1999)
The session works on 1 PA skill at a time (Phillips et al., 2008)	The activities are supported with visual aid (Phillips et al., 2008)	Use of familiar songs with a change of lyrics to aim them at teaching a particular PA skill (Yopp, 1992)
Use of well managed transitions between activities (Phillips et al., 2008)	The activities are supported with movement (Phillips et al., 2008)	Use of songs which include repetition (Phillips et al., 2008)

There is a clear order in the session. Ideally divided into: explanation, example, guided practice and independent practice.	Use of non-verbal cues (Phillips et al., 2008)	Use of jingles to teach syllable synthesis in the Blending Syllables level of PA complexity (Phillips et al., 2008)
Activities are taken out in small groups (Phillips et al., 2008)	The teacher starts slow and increases fastness progressively (Phillips et al., 2008)	Use of nursery rhymes (Bolduc & Lefebvre, 2012)
	The teacher makes exaggerations when pronouncing each sound (Phillips et al., 2008)	
	The teacher provides “wait time” for students with learning difficulties (Phillips et al., 2008)	
	Use of repeated modelling (Phillips et al., 2008)	
	Use of positive reinforcement (Phillips et al., 2008)	
	Newly learnt skills are revisited and referred to throughout the day (Phillips et al., 2008)	
	Use of sound personalities (Phillips et al., 2008)	

	The teacher provides multiple choice tasks (Phillips et al., 2008)	
	Explicit instruction of phoneme sounds separately before putting them into words (Edelen-Smith, 1997)	

As for the scale used for each item, the rubric uses a dichotomous categorical qualitative measurement (Kumar, 1999) of “Yes” and “No” under each item. The goal is for the “Yes” responses to increase as the study develops.

**Self-reported knowledge of Phonological Awareness.** Alghazo & Al-Hilawani (2010) took out a questionnaire using a 4-point questionnaire. Participant’s responses were *1 = do not know at all, 2 = know somewhat, 3 = know fairly and 4 = know a lot*. In the questionnaire, participants responded to 18 items. All knowledge questions began with the sentence “I am familiar with...”. It has been decided to use some items presented for this senior thesis but use another study’s 5-point questionnaire (Bernaus et al., 2009), a polytomous qualitative categorical response scale (Kumar, 1999) to measure level of agreement: *strongly agree, agree, neither agree nor disagree, disagree, strongly disagree*. Items of Alghazo & Al-Hilawani (2010) 8 through 18 will be eliminated, as the “PA Knowledge” section of the questionnaire (view *Appendix B: Instruments*) will solely evaluate knowledge on the basic PA skills, benefits of its instruction, the complexity of PA activities, and the difference between Phonological and Phonemic Awareness. In addition, the word “Drilling” in items 5, 6 and 7 will be deleted. In the created questionnaire, items 1 through 9 will begin with the structure: “I am familiar with the skill which consists in...”, as they all refer to PA skills.

Furthermore, because the skills within the stage of “Word Awareness” are not mentioned in the original items by Alghazo & Al-Hilawani (2010), two items will be added: “I am familiar with the skill which consists in combining and segmenting words within a sentence (e.g., I like tomatoes: I. Like. Tomatoes)” and “I am familiar with the skill which consists in detecting and manipulating words within words (e.g., rainbow: rain / bow)”.

To evaluate further knowledge on PA, it has been found necessary to include three more items: “I am familiar with the benefits of including PA into my lesson plans”, “I am familiar with the order of complexity of PA activities”, “I am familiar with the difference between Phonological Awareness and Phonemic Awareness”.

<i>Core Items</i>	<i>Knowledge and Skills</i>	<i>Knowledge and Practice</i>	<i>Skill and Practice</i>
1. Breaking words into syllables (e.g., <i>telephone</i> : te. le. phone)	.79** $p < .001$	.17 $p = .130$	.33** $p < .002$
2. Breaking words into sounds (e.g., <i>cat</i> : “k. a. t”)	.69** $p < .001$	.13 $p = .251$	-.01 $p = .918$
3. Blending syllables (e.g., te. le. phone: <i>telephone</i> )	.62** $p < .001$	.23* $p < .03$	.49** $p < .001$
4. Blending sounds to form words (e.g., k.a.t: <i>cat</i> )	.52** $p < .001$	.16 $p = .150$	.44** $p < .001$
5. Drilling on rhyming words (e.g., <i>bat, rat, mat / cup</i> )	.69** $p < .001$	.12 $p = .267$	.39** $p < .001$
6. Drilling on detecting the first sound in a word (e.g., “k”: <i>car</i> )	.47** $p < .001$	-.05 $p = .633$	-.11 $p = .334$
7. Drilling on detecting the last sound in a word (e.g., “g”: <i>dog</i> )	.56** $p < .001$	.14 $p = .200$	.14 $p = .208$
8. Forming meaningful words out of letters sequenced randomly (e.g., r-a-c: <i>car</i> )	.47** $p < .001$	.08 $p = .487$	.23* $p < .04$
9. Reversing letters to form meaningful words (e.g., <i>Dog</i> : god; <i>mug</i> : gum)	.50** $p < .001$	.18 $p = .111$	.08 $p = .490$
10. Using different colors to represent different letters in a word (e.g., Using the [d] letter in the word <i>Dad</i> in a red block and the [a] letter in a blue block)	.53** $p < .001$	-.05 $p = .682$	.05 $p = .683$
11. Using nursery rhymes in class	.60** $p < .001$	.01 $p = .900$	.02 $p = .861$
12. Using storybooks that contain rhymes (e.g., <i>Dr. Seuss</i> )	.43** $p < .001$	.21 $p = .06$	.64** $p < .001$
13. Using tapes to teach letters, rhymes, and other activities related to literacy.	.57** $p < .001$	.41** $p < .001$	.54** $p < .001$
14. Using flashcards to introduce new vocabulary	.67** $p < .001$	-.01 $p = .964$	.08 $p = .497$
15. Asking students to copy texts from books	.21 $p = .06$	.13 $p = .244$	-.02 $p = .863$
16. Asking students to use new vocabularies in sentences	.30** $p < .006$	-.20 $p = .06$	.21 $p = .06$
17. Requesting students to write their own stories	.37** $p < .001$	.23* $p < .04$	.05 $p = .672$
18. Giving a spelling test at least once a week	.50** $p < .001$	.24* $p < .03$	.37** $p < .001$

\* $p < .05$ , \*\* $p < .01$ .

**Figure 2: Core items to evaluate Self-reported Knowledge and Phonological Awareness Skills of Early Childhood teachers proposed by Alghazo & Al-Hilawani (2010).**

**Self-reported level of motivation.** This variable will be measured within the same questionnaire under the section “Motivation”. Therefore, the same 5-point questionnaire (Bernaus et al., 2009) will be used with the responses *strongly agree, agree, neither agree nor disagree, disagree, strongly disagree*. To evaluate teacher motivation to teach PA in their early childhood ESL and EFL classrooms, 5 items have been created: “I believe PA should be taught in my ECE ESL/EFL classroom”, “I feel confident in my skills and training regarding PA and therefore am prepared to instruct it”, “I have freedom/autonomy to try new ideas, to compile tests/syllabuses”, “I keep updated in my field (ELT in ECE)”, “I use my initiative and enthusiasm to choose additional material for teaching PA”. The third and fourth items have been taken from Koran (2015). The fifth has been adapted so that instead of assessing motivation to teach ELT, it assesses motivation to teach PA.



Table 2: Rate how much does the following statement correspond to the truth in your case - (1 point - least, 5 – most)

	Teacher A	Teacher B	Teacher C
1. I keep updated in my field (English language, TEFL).	5	4	3
2. As a teacher I try to work at the peak of my abilities.	4	4	3
3. Teaching boosts my self-esteem as of a person.	3	3	2
4. Teaching boosts my self-efficacy as of a professional.	4	3	3
5. This job is necessary for my survival.	4	4	4
6. I have good working conditions.	4	3	2
7. I am positively affiliated with my colleagues.	5	4	3
8. I see students' success as the main stimulus of my job.	5	3	3
9. I feel secure in this job.	4	4	4
10. I am adequately treated / respected by administration / supervisors.	4	3	2
11. I am afraid to be criticized and regarded as a bad teacher.	4	3	3
12. I have adequate salary / wages.	4	2	2
13. I have freedom/autonomy to try new ideas, to compile tests / syllabuses.	3	2	1
14. I am in my mid-career phase and I feel I have achieved enough.	3	2	4
15. I have opportunities for professional development.	4	1	1
16. I use innovative ideas in TEFL in the classroom.	4	3	3
Average point for the above questions	4,0	3,125	2,56
17. Do you have other official responsibilities in or out of your work connected with your profession?	yes	yes	no
18. Do you feel any discomfort in teaching?	yes	yes	no
If "yes", what do you do?	try to change	ignore the situation	try to get used to it
19. How often do you use your initiative and enthusiasm to choose additional material for teaching EFL?	always	sometimes	seldom
20. How often do you provide students with feedback?	always	sometimes	seldom

**Figure 3. Teacher motivation questionnaire proposed by Koran (2015). Items 1, 13 and 19 have been used in the questionnaire created for this senior thesis.**

**Self-reported use of effective PA Instructional strategies.** This variable will be measured within the same questionnaire as “Self-reported knowledge of Phonological awareness” and “Self-reported level of motivation”. Therefore, the same 5-point questionnaire (Bernaus et al., 2009) will be used with the responses *strongly agree, agree, neither agree nor disagree, disagree, strongly disagree*. To evaluate teacher use of effective PA instructional strategies in their early childhood ESL and EFL classrooms, the same items as the ones justified in Table 3 will be turned into questions in the questionnaire. The items regarding this variable are the ones under “Facilitate an organised class” and “Provide supports to students” as shown in Table 3. In the questionnaire, they will appear as “Class organisation” and “Student Support” in the “Phonological awareness Instruction” section.

Before the “Class organisation” and “Student Support” sections within “Phonological Awareness instruction”, there will be two questions to determine if ECE English teachers believe they teach PA in any way in their lessons and, more specifically, if they consider they include PA sessions as a part of English lessons. In the questionnaire, these questions are: “Do you consider you instruct phonological awareness in your lessons?” and “Are you aware of including PA sessions within your ECE English lessons?”. Both have a dichotomous answer of “Yes” or “No”.

**Self-reported use of songs for PA instruction.** This variable will be measured within the same questionnaire as “Self-reported knowledge of Phonological awareness”, “Self-reported level of motivation” and “Self-reported use of effective PA Instructional strategies”. Therefore, the same 5-point questionnaire (Bernaus et al., 2009) will be used with the responses *strongly agree, agree, neither agree nor disagree, disagree, strongly disagree*. To evaluate teacher use of songs for PA instruction in their early childhood ESL and EFL classrooms, the same 6 items as the ones justified in Table 3 will be turned into questions in the questionnaire. The items regarding this variable are the ones under “Teach content skills through songs” as shown in Table 3. In the questionnaire, items appear in the section “Teaching content skills through songs”.

### 3.3. Study objectives

- To determine if EFL and ESL teachers in Early Childhood education present higher levels of **self-reported knowledge on Phonological Awareness**.
- To verify that second and foreign language English ECE teachers feel more **motivated** to implement PA into their lesson plans.
- To determine if second and foreign Language English ECE teachers use a range of **instructional strategies** to teach each stage of PA.
- To prove that second and foreign language English ECE teachers **use songs** in the classroom when instructing PA activities.

### 3.4. Proposal of data collection

As mentioned in the *Operational Variables* section of this study proposal, two data collection instruments have been created for the two main dependant variables. The first being teacher’s **perception** of knowledge, motivation, use of effective instructional strategies and use of songs to teach Phonological Awareness. The second being the **presence** of effective instructional strategies and use of songs in ECE EFL/ESL PA sessions.

The 48 participant school’s ECE English teachers will be offered the opportunity to complete a 30h online course for EFL/ESL ECE teachers called [“Anglès a Educació Infantil amb activitats engrescadores”](#). This is an existing course on a website which creates vocational training online courses recognised by the Generalitat de Catalunya. Therefore, it provides teachers with the opportunity to earn favourable points to increase their salaries. This presents a motivation for schools and teachers to participate in the study, because the school will benefit for better

trained teachers, and teachers will benefit from training, possible higher salaries, and other benefits.

The data collection questionnaire and podcast (view Table 1 in *Material Design*) will be included within this online course, so teachers must answer and listen to complete it. It will be used to measure teacher's perception. After completion, the course will remain open throughout the school year so that teachers can listen to the podcast as many times as needed. Some examples of the items included in the questionnaire are included in *Appendix B: Instruments*. To view the whole questionnaire, go to this link: <https://forms.gle/sNbTL4b6LD3sTZRa8>. Episode 3 song links will also be provided within the online course, they may also be viewed in Table 3 of *Appendix A: Material* of this senior thesis.

To verify the answers given by ECE EFL/ESL English teachers in the questionnaires regarding presence of effective instructional strategies and use of songs in ECE EFL/ESL PA sessions, an observation will be taken out of their ECE English classes. This will also help determine if teachers unconsciously include PA activities into their English classes. According to Roigé et al. (1999), there are two types of observations. For this study, the observer will take on a non-participant observation role to plan better and collect information systematically (Roigé et al., 1999). The instrument used will be an observation guide, which includes the key points and topics of interest of each point (view Table 4 in *Appendix B: Instruments*).

The justification of all items included can be found in Table 3 in the *Operational Variables* section of this senior thesis. Because the goal is for teachers to include more effective strategies and songs to instruct PA progressively into their ECE English classes after listening to the podcast series, there will be 1 pre, 1 post observation and 3 during observations of all teachers from the 48 participant schools throughout the school year (view Table 2 in *Participants*).

### **3.5. Proposal for data analysis**

The study's design opts for pre-test and post-test instruments. Identical questionnaires will be given out pre- and post- test, as well as a non-participant observation with the same items considered in the pre- and post-tests. For this reason, a pre-test/post-test study design (Kumar, 1999) will be implemented for data analysis. An ANCOVA analysis will be used to prevent extraneous variables from biasing results, ensuring that the study's multiple dependant variables and multiple measurements are analysed more accurately. Furthermore, because many items have been altered and added to both the questionnaire and the observation rubric, they will have to be submitted to revision and a pilot run to check effectiveness and reliability.

### 3.6. Hypothesis

- H1<sub>0</sub>: EFL and ESL teachers in Early Childhood education don't present higher levels of **self-reported knowledge on Phonological Awareness**.
- H1: EFL and ESL teachers in Early Childhood education present higher levels of **self-reported knowledge on Phonological Awareness**.
- H2<sub>0</sub>: second and foreign language English ECE teachers don't feel more **motivated** to implement PA into their lesson plans.
- H2: second and foreign language English ECE teachers feel more **motivated** to implement PA into their lesson plans.
- H3<sub>0</sub>: second and foreign language English ECE teachers don't use a range of **effective instructional strategies** to teach each stage of PA.
- H3: second and foreign language English ECE teachers use a range of effective **instructional strategies** to teach each stage of PA.
- H4<sub>0</sub>: second and foreign language English ECE teachers don't **use songs** when instructing PA activities.
- H4: second and foreign language English ECE teachers **use songs** in the classroom when instructing PA activities.

These hypotheses have been created to be concise and precise to present study, but the reality of most educational environments is that many well-thought-out lessons and learning goals don't usually develop as planned. The study considers that it is dealing with people who are still learning, children and teachers alike. Society is constantly changing and developing, and so it should be, therefore the process of teaching and learning is very complex and can't be measured with exact preciseness.

### 3.7. Possible study limitations

The dependent variables of teacher's perceptions on PA knowledge and motivation are difficult to measure precisely, as it is up to each teacher to answer the questionnaire truthfully. Therefore, it may present a limitation to the study's validity. Furthermore, motivation can be affected by many factors in the teacher's personal life, such as available time. This element has been considered, because the podcast will be available to the teachers all through the school year. When completing the course in December and January, they must listen to the podcast episodically to complete the 30h course, but they can listen to it again during the year.

When it comes to the session observations, the study is dealing with very different students in each classroom and ECE level. There might be students with learning difficulties or various levels of English. Although the instructional strategies offered are thought to cater to all types of student needs, there will always be a certain element of unpredictability. Finally, the participant schools may not be prepared to include or better EFL/ESL ECE PA sessions, even if teachers are highly motivated to do so. Some of the 48 schools may not be compatible with the study's phases or some teachers may have to withdraw from the study (Kumar, 1999), in consequence some observations may have to be eliminated and, therefore, reduce the study's reliability.

In addition, many schools with lower socioeconomic status don't start English lessons until Primary school. In the participant table (view Table 5 in *Appendix C: Other*), there aren't as many of this type of school compared to institutions with medium and high socioeconomic status because of this fact. The difference is probably due to the higher rate of immigration in lower socioeconomic status public schools, and therefore an increased amount of non-Catalan-speaking families. In schools in Catalonia, it is compulsory to learn Catalan in ECE so, if students don't speak Catalan at home, it means that schools must dedicate more time and resources into their students learning Catalan, not English.

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**Maria Chapman Puig**

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Appendixes

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Appendix A: Material

**Table 1. Self-made justification of TEFLtip Spain’s first podcast series: “Teaching Phonological Awareness through songs in Early Childhood”. Episode 1:**

Episode	Topic	Justification	Citation	
<b>Episode 1</b> <b>5 things you didn’t know about Phonological Awareness.</b>	Definition of Phonological Awareness	“The ability to attend to, detect, and manipulate the sound units of words independent of their meanings” (p. 432).	Hu (2003)	
		Manipulation of sounds “includes deleting, adding, or substituting syllables or sounds (e.g., say can; say it without the /k/; say can with /m/ instead of /k/).” (p. 262)	Chard & Dickson (1999)	
	1-Phonological Awareness VS Phonemic Awareness		Phonemic awareness is the last stage of Phonological awareness. It refers to recognising a word as a series of individual sounds or phonemes.	Chard & Dickson (1999)
			Instructing students to segment oral language into phonemes without the help of the alphabet.	Jiménez & O’Shanahan (2008)
			Phonemic awareness skills also include manipulating phonemes within words.	Snider, 1995, as cited in Chard & Dickson, 1999.
			Phonological and phonemic awareness “involve the auditory and oral manipulation of sounds. Phonics is the association of letters and sounds to sound out written symbols.” (p. 262)	Chard & Dickson (1999)
	2- The stages of PA	The Developmental of Phonological Awareness is divided into 4 stages, which	Phillips et al. (2008)	

		<p>range from larger units of sound to more abstract units of sound.</p> <p>The following stages overlap, meaning they are not acquired one after the other:</p> <p><b>-Word awareness</b> (includes <b>Compound Word awareness</b>): Combining and segmenting words within a sentence.</p> <p>Compound word awareness is detecting words within words like <i>rain + bow</i> in the word <i>rainbow</i>, as well as taking one word away to see what is left (e.g., taking <i>base</i> out of the word <i>baseball</i>, leaving the word <i>ball</i>).</p> <p><b>-Syllable Awareness</b>: Breaking and blending syllables within words (e.g., telephone: te. le. phone and vice versa).</p> <p><b>-Onset-Rime awareness</b> (includes <b>Rhyme awareness</b>): In a group of words that vary in meaning, when the first consonant (l) or consonant cluster (cl) or digraph (sh) is changed, the first letter is called an <i>onset</i>, and the rest of the word is the <i>rime</i> (e.g, the <u>onset</u> of the word <i>car</i> is /k/. and the <u>rime</u> is /ar/.</p> <p>In this case the final consonant /r/ is unvoiced so the <u>rime</u> corresponds to the <u>rhyme</u>.</p> <p><b>-Phoneme awareness</b>: Breaking and blending individual sounds within a word (e.g., red is formed by /r/+ /e/ + /d/.)</p>	
	<p>3- Less complex to more</p>	<p>-Rhyming songs.</p> <p>-Sentence segmentation.</p>	<p>Chard &amp; Dickson (1999)</p>

	<p>complex activities or PA skill stages</p>	<p>-Syllable segmentation and blending.          -Onset-rime blending and segmentation.          -Blending and segmenting individual phonemes.</p>	
	<p>4- Phonemic awareness is the most important to predict literacy abilities.</p>	<p>Phoneme deletion and identification “was strongly correlated with attainment in reading and spelling in reading and spelling at the end of the first year at school, through Rhyming was not” [...] By the end of the second year of school, however, rhyming had started to exert a predictive effect on spelling, but not on reading.” (p. 370)</p>	<p>Muter et al. (1998)</p>

	5- Benefits of PA instruction in ECE EFL and ESL classrooms	There is transference from L1 to other languages. PA should be included in pre-primary classrooms to help bi/plurilingual students transfer skills and enhance language learning.	Lourenço & Andrade (2014).
		Schools should teach PA in both L1 and L2.	Quiroga et al., (2002)
		<b>The benefits are:</b>	
		-Literacy skills: A lack of PA creates an impediment for early reading skills. It is crucial for pre-readers as young as 4 years old.	Chard & Dickson (1999)
		-Pronunciation in the second language.	Cheung (1995)
		-PA indicates future success in foreign language learning, especially phonological memory which aids vocabulary acquisition.	Hu (2003)
	Rhyming and first word categorising support new word Integration.	De Jong et al. (2000)	

**Table 2. Self-made justification of TEFLtip Spain’s first podcast series: “Teaching Phonological Awareness through songs in Early Childhood”. Episode 2:**

Episode	Topic	Justification	Citation
<b>Episode 2</b> <b>Inside the Curriculum: Where’s Wally? More like where is PA!</b>	English language’s increasing popularity	Teaching English as a foreign language is a challenge and in non-English speaking countries there is less exposure.	Dixon et al. (2012)
		One of the European Council’s goals is to teach at least two foreign languages from a very early age. The most popular being English.	Council of the European Union (2014)

	The younger, the better?	Common belief is that when a child starts to learn a language, the younger they start, the better. Even policymakers, including the European Commission. Many studies have found that it is not the age of exposure, but the amount of exposure.	Jaekel et al., 2017
		Older learners have an advantage in learning explicitly and understanding rules, and the fact that they are more advanced in oral and literacy skills in the L1.	Pfenninger & Singleton, 2016, as cited in Jaekel et al., 2017.
		Early onset in foreign language education increases the amount of exposure to the language, but the hours dedicated to learning a foreign language in schools do not provide enough input time with the foreign language. In addition, to reach full benefits of early exposure, the instruction of the language should be made in a meaningful context, this will lead to more accuracy and complexity of the foreign language production.	Robinson, 2003, p.45; Robinson, 2007, as cited in Jaekel et al., 2017.
		Proficiency typically takes longer with younger learners, although the results are more likely to be more native-like.	Dixon et al. (2012)
		In pronunciation, early learners of L2 are more likely to achieve native likeness, and that adults will never pass as native speakers.	Abrahamsson and Hyltenstam (2009)
	What determines student's	It is important for instruction to have good quality in English and non-English speaking countries.	Dixon et al. (2012)



	proficiency in EFL and ESL?	A certain teaching goal may not be achieved because of lack of teacher proficiency.	
	The role of PA and pronunciation in EFL and ESL ECE classrooms.	<p><b>-Sensitivity:</b> When it comes to teaching PA, children are more aware of the phonological system of language and have a higher sensitivity to the new language's sounds and rhythms.</p> <p><b>-Enjoyment:</b> "Children enjoy copying new sounds and patterns of intonation". (p.29)</p> <hr/> <p><b>-Voice setting phonology:</b> Accents present a difference in lip, cheek and jaw posture and movement. English natives are known for speaking with a loosely closed jaw.</p>	<p>Pinter (2017)</p> <hr/> <p>Thornbury (1993)</p>
	Pronunciation instruction in EFL and ESL ECE classrooms.	<p><b>Intelligibility over native likeness:</b> Because of lack of exposure in schools, teachers must promote intelligibility over nativelikeness.</p> <hr/> <p><b>Possible problems transferred from L1 to L2:</b> Phonemic awareness is key to pronounce the English sounds correctly, seeing as English sounds do not correspond with the alphabet. Teachers are recommended to be aware of possible phonemic difficulties when transferring from L1 to L2 (e.g. Spanish students find it difficult to pronounce a voiced consonant at the end of a word and will pronounce an unvoiced consonant; instead of <i>blo/g/</i> they will say <i>blo/k/</i>.)</p>	<p>Robinson, 2003, p.45; Robinson, 2007, as cited in Jaekel et al., 2017.</p> <hr/> <p>Coe (2001)</p>

		<p><b>Anticipation:</b> Anticipating pronunciation difficulties that might take place and acting accordingly can benefit future production.</p> <p><b>Types of pronunciation lessons:</b> Integrated, Remedial and Practice.</p> <p>The third type of lesson, the practice lesson, seems to be the most communicative and meaningful to student's context.</p>	Kelly (2006)
		<p>A communicative approach to pronunciation teaching starts with a focus in the phonological form and then progresses to combining form and meaning.</p>	Celce-Murcia, Brinton & Goodwin (1996, as cited in Levis & Grant, 2003.)
	Pronunciation and PA in the Catalan Curriculum	<p>Primary and pre-primary teachers lack guidelines for the instruction of PA.</p> <p>Primary students write in English before acquiring Phonological Awareness skills.</p>	<p>Phillips et al. (2008)</p> <p>Cortés (2018)</p>

**Interview questions for Part 2 of Episode 2: “Inside the Curriculum: Where’s Wally? More like where is PA!”**

1. Do you believe teaching pronunciation from a young age makes a difference in the long run?
2. Have you heard of the term “teaching pronunciation communicatively”?
3. Do you think native likeness in English is highly valued when looking for a job?
4. What do you know about the term “Phonological Awareness”? Do you instruct it in some way in your early childhood classroom?
5. Have you heard of the benefits of teaching PA?
6. Did you know that the term PA only appears once in the Primary Curriculum for foreign language teaching? What is your take on that?
7. What age are children supposed to be able to read and write in the English Language at the school you work in?
8. Do you think there is a way to teach PA within a meaningful context?
9. Do you believe the Educational Authorities should create a specific curriculum for ECE TEFL in Catalan schools?

**Table 3. References of songs used in Episode 3: “If you’re happy and you know it... Teach Phonology!” with their corresponding activity or PA skill stage by Chard and Dickson (1999), and the minute they can be listened to on the podcast.**

Activity or PA skill stage	Song	Minute
Rhyming songs	Chuchu TV - One, two, buckle my shoe: <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ad1h8fSqSzw">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ad1h8fSqSzw</a>	21:40
Rhyming songs	Jack Hartmann - Rocco the rhyming rhino: <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nAUdQZ8Xivw">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nAUdQZ8Xivw</a>	22:50
Sentence segmentation (Beed, wooden blocks and legos games)	Super Simple Songs - The wheels on the bus: <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yWirdnSDsV4">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yWirdnSDsV4</a>	26:14
Understanding how sentences are formed	Miss Patty - Simon says song for children: <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OkO8DaPIyXo">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OkO8DaPIyXo</a>	28:00
Syllable segmentation (Clapping syllables)	Sung on podcast by Maria Chapman - Colours of the Rainbow	30:00
Compound word awareness	Sung on podcast by Maria Chapman - Colours of the Rainbow	31:03
Compound word awareness	Mat Rat - Compound boogie: <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jP88434Whjs">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jP88434Whjs</a>	31:45
Syllable blending	Sung on podcast by Maria Chapman - Blending jingle	32:30
Syllable blending	Sung on podcast by Maria Chapman - If you’re happy and you know it clap your hands Instrumental by Music For Baby: <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=a3WUghQDbiw">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=a3WUghQDbiw</a>	33:29
Syllable segmentation and blending	Sung on podcast by Maria Chapman - Going on a bear Hunt chant	34:40

Onset (Changing onsets for different sounds)	Sung on podcast by Maria Chapman - Row Row Row Row your boat	38:00
Rime (Thumbs up, Thumbs down and Odd Word Out games)	Move to learn MS – I want to rhyme <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZQpMUs4EMv8">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZQpMUs4EMv8</a>	39:35
Memory game for rhyming words	TheMissJaymin – The Color Game Song: <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dRgJHfA5-hw">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dRgJHfA5-hw</a>	41:08
Producing new rhymes	Miss Patty – Rhyming Time: <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=37SJZSIqhMc">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=37SJZSIqhMc</a>	42:18
Rime	The Kiboomers - Five green and speckled frogs: <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ziGG_L9C12o">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ziGG_L9C12o</a>	42:50
Rime (Root words and their gerund forms)	Teacher Ham- Easy Peasy Present Continuous song: <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3gVNgqnSA0c">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3gVNgqnSA0c</a> English Sing Sing- Theame 18: Doing – What are you doing?: <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MNQMpFVr-MOs">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MNQMpFVr-MOs</a>	44:26
Onset Alliteration	The Learning Station - Green Grass Grows All Around: <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CTbswd1Q3-o">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CTbswd1Q3-o</a> Double Double This – Miss Mary Mack: <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hCvH74vrOfg">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hCvH74vrOfg</a>	45:22
Onset Alliteration	Sung on podcast by Maria Chapman – Old McDonald had a farm with new words Instrumental by Kid Saga TV: <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ndxitY4eYas">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ndxitY4eYas</a>	46:40
Individual phoneme segmenting	Patty Shukla Kids TV – STOP: <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bJnfhYCC-Bo">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bJnfhYCC-Bo</a>	48:35

Learning individual phonemes to blend and segment	Glam Glooms Pet Spa and Hotel – Jolly Phonics Phase 1 songs: <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FHfp3ZAUeqw">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FHfp3ZAUeqw</a>	51:55
Learning individual phonemes to blend and segment	Jack Hartmann – Party in the Jungle: <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KR-c0FXR9sA">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KR-c0FXR9sA</a>	54:45
Blending individual phonemes	Sung on podcast by Maria Chapman – Blending jingle	55:24
Phoneme segmentation	HeidiSongs - How do you sound it out?: <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lQEsa7lO3YA">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lQEsa7lO3YA</a>	56:30

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## Appendix B: Instruments

**Table 4: Self-made observation rubric with dichotomous scale of Yes/No to measure the presence of effective instructional strategies and use of songs to teach PA.**

<b>School Name</b>							
<b>Class level</b>							
<b>Teacher observed</b>							
<b>Session number</b>							
<b>Facilitate an organised class</b>		<b>Provide supports to students</b>		<b>Teach content skills through songs</b>			
The session lasts 15-20 minutes.		Stop sounds are elongated when segmenting syllables.		Use of games such as Memory, Thumbs up thumbs down and odd word out for rhyme awareness.			
YES	NO	YES	NO	YES	NO		
The lesson is previously planned.		Students reflect upon the purpose of each activity.		Use of familiar songs to substitute the first sound of a word to work on Onset in the Onset and Rime stage of PA.			
YES	NO	YES	NO	YES	NO		
The session works on 1 PA skill at a time.		The activities are supported with visual aid.		Use of familiar songs with a change of lyrics to aim them at teaching a particular PA skill.			



YES	NO	YES	NO	YES	NO
Use of well managed transitions between activities.		The activities are supported with movement.		Use of songs which include repetition.	
YES	NO	YES	NO	YES	NO
There is a clear order in the session. Ideally divided into: explanation, example, guided practice and independent practice.		Use of non-verbal cues.		Use of jingles to teach syllable synthesis in the Blending Syllables level of PA complexity.	
YES	NO	YES	NO	YES	NO
Activities are taken out in small groups.		The teacher starts slow and increases fastness progressively.		Use of nursery rhymes.	
YES	NO	YES	NO	YES	NO
		The teacher makes exaggerations when pronouncing each sound.			
		YES	NO		
		The teacher provides “wait time” for students with learning difficulties			
		YES	NO		

	Use of repeated modelling.		
	YES	NO	
	Use of positive reinforcement.		
	YES	NO	
	Newly learnt skills are revisited and referred to throughout the day.		
	YES	NO	
	Use of sound personalities.		
	YES	NO	
	The teacher provides multiple choice tasks.		
	YES	NO	
	Explicit instruction of phoneme sounds separately before putting them into words.		
	YES	NO	

Section 1 of 9

## Are you aware of Phonological Awareness?


Before and after listening to TEFLtip Spain's podcast series "Teaching Phonological Awareness through songs in Early Childhood", please fill out this quick questionnaire about Phonological Awareness in an English as a Second or Foreign Language ECE setting.

The answers will help TEFLtip Spain's team learn if teachers have the knowledge, motivation, instructional strategies and songs to include Phonological Awareness instruction into their English ECE classrooms.

This questionnaire takes about 10 minutes to complete.

Thank you for your collaboration!

Image title



**Figure 1: First page of the data collection questionnaire: Are you Aware of Phonological Awareness? (self-made).**

Teacher

Years of ESL or EFL ECE teaching experience \*

0-5

6-10

11-15

16-20

20+

Have you obtained an English Level Certificate (Cambridge Assessment English)? \*

I don't have an English Level Certificate

A2 Key (KET or Key English Test)

B1 Preliminary (PET or Preliminary English Test)

B2 First (FCE or First Certificate)

C1 Advanced (CAE or Certificated in Advanced English)

C2 Proficiency (CPE or Certificate of Proficiency in English)

**Figure 2: Example of "Teacher" section of the data collection questionnaire: Are you aware of Phonological Awareness? (self-made)**

**School**

The school you teach in is registered as \*

Private  
 Semi-Private  
 Public

---

Please enter the name of the school you work as an English teacher in \*

Your answer \_\_\_\_\_

---

How many hours a week do ECE students learn English or are in a predominantly English- \*  
language environment at your school?

None  
 1-2h  
 3-4h  
 5h or more

**Figure 3: Example of “School” section of the data collection questionnaire: Are you aware of Phonological Awareness? (self-made)**

**PA Knowledge**

Have you received at least 1h of specific training in teaching Phonological Awareness in your native language or in English ? \*

Yes  
 No

---

I am familiar with the skill which consists in combining and segmenting words within a sentence (e.g., I like tomatoes : I. Like. Tomatoes) \*

Strongly agree  
 Agree  
 Neither agree nor disagree  
 Disagree  
 Strongly disagree

**Figure 4: Example of “PA Knowledge” section of the data collection questionnaire: Are you aware of Phonological Awareness? (self-made)**

**Motivation**

I believe PA should be taught in my ECE ESL/EFL classroom \*

Strongly agree  
 Agree  
 Neither agree nor disagree  
 Disagree  
 Strongly disagree

---

I feel confident in my skills and training regarding PA and therefore am prepared to instruct it \*

Strongly agree  
 Agree  
 Neither agree nor disagree  
 Disagree  
 Strongly disagree

**Figure 5: Example of “Motivation” section of the data collection questionnaire: Are you aware of Phonological Awareness? (self-made)**

**Class organisation**

The questions in this category refer to the overall structure of the EFL/ESL ECE PA session.

---

My PA sessions last between 15 and 20 minutes

Strongly agree  
 Agree  
 Neutral  
 Disagree  
 Strongly Disagree

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My PA sessions last between 15 and 20 minutes

Strongly agree  
 Agree  
 Neither agree nor disagree  
 Disagree  
 Strongly Disagree

**Figure 6: Example of “Phonological Awareness instruction: Class Organisation” section of the data collection questionnaire: Are you aware of Phonological Awareness? (self-made)**

**Student support**

The questions in this category refer to the strategies and materials the teacher uses to help second and foreign language ECE students to develop their Phonological Awareness in English. The strategies mentioned have proven to be beneficial to second and foreign language students as well as students with learning difficulties.

I make sure I don't elongate stop sounds (eg. p and b) when segmenting words or syllables.

Strongly agree

Agree

Neither agree nor disagree

Disagree

Strongly Disagree

**Figure 7: Example of “Phonological Awareness instruction: Student Support” section of the data collection questionnaire: Are you aware of Phonological Awareness? (self-made)**

**Teaching content skills through songs**

Music and language taught together has been proven to increase sound retention in the long term memory, and therefore have a positive effect on children's Phonological Awareness. Songs can be introduced in many ways in a PA session, for example, through the games mentioned in the first question.

In this last section, questions refer to the teacher's ability to instruct PA skills through songs.

I am aware of the benefits music has on children's PA

Strongly agree

Agree

Neither agree nor disagree

Disagree

Strongly disagree

**Figure 8: Example of “Phonological Awareness instruction: Teaching content skills through songs” section of the data collection questionnaire: Are you aware of Phonological Awareness? (self-made)**

**Maria Chapman Puig**

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Appendix C: Other

**Table 5. Participant schools in the study and their characteristics**

Socioeconomic status	School name	Ownership	City and district	Study group
Low socioeconomic status	E.F.G	Public	Vallbona, Barcelona	Experimental group 1
	E.M	Public	Guineueta, Barcelona	Experimental group 2
	E.C	Public	El Raval, Barcelona	Control group
	E.R.D	Public	El Raval, Barcelona	Experimental group 1
	E.H	Public	Horta-Guinardó, Barcelona	Experimental group 2
	E. S. J. O	Public	Barri Gòtic, Barcelona	Control group
	E. A	Semi-private	Nou Barris, Barcelona	Experimental group 1
	FEDAC A	Semi-private	Nou Barris, Barcelona	Experimental group 2
	J.M.C.T	Semi-private	Nou Barris, Barcelona	Control group
	B	Semi-private	Cornellà de Llobregat, Barcelona	Experimental group 1



	E.N	Semi-private	Hospitalet, Barcelona	Experimental group 2
	G.C	Semi-private	Sant Joan Despí, Barcelona	Control group
Medium socio-economic status	E.A	Public	Sant Antoni, Barcelona	Experimental group 1
	I.E.L	Public	Antiga Esquerra de l'Eixample, Barcelona	Experimental group 2
	E.M	Public	Antiga Esquerra de l'Eixample, Barcelona	Control group
	E.E	Public	Navas, Barcelona	Experimental group 1
	E.C.I	Public	La Sagrera, Barcelona	Experimental group 2
	E.O.P	Public	Navas, Barcelona	Control group
	E. I	Semi-private	Antiga Esquerra de l'Eixample, Barcelona	Experimental group 1
	M.S.L.C	Semi-private	Sants, Barcelona	Experimental group 2

	E.P.V	Semi-private	La Font de la Guatlla, Barcelona	Control group
	E.P	Semi-private	Terrassa	Experimental group 1
	E.P.T	Semi-private	Terrassa	Experimental group 2
	CE. M	Semi-private	Poblenou, Barcelona	Control group
	I	Private	Vallcarca i els Penitents, Barcelona	Experimental group 1
	P. I	Private	La Dreta de l'Eixample, Barcelona	Experimental group 2
	E. N	Private	Hostafrancs, Barcelona	Control group
	E.P.C	Private	La Vall d'Hebron, Barcelona	Experimental group 1
	P.M.S	Private	El Guinardó, Barcelona	Experimental group 2
	L.S.H	Private	Horta, Barcelona	Control group
	G.I.A.S	Private	Terrassa	Experimental group 1

	T.O.T.S	Private	Sant Pere de Ribes	Experimental group 2
	R.I.S	Private	Sant Pere de Ribes	Control group
High socio-economic status	E.C	Public	Sant Cugat del Vallès	Experimental group 1
	E.Co	Public	Cerdanyola del Vallès	Experimental group 2
	E.J.M	Public	Sant Cugat del Vallès	Control group
	E.O	Public	Sarrià-Sant Gervasi, Barcelona	Experimental group 1
	E.T	Public	Sarrià- Sant Gervasi, Barcelona	Experimental group 2
	E.E.X	Public	Vallvidrera, El Tibidabo i les Planes, Barcelona	Control group
	S.P.S	Semi-private	Pedralbes, Barcelona	Experimental group 1
	C.R.M.I	Semi-private		Experimental group 2

			Sant Gervasi-Galvany, Barcelona	
	C.B.S	Semi-private	Sarrià-Sant Gervasi, Barcelona	Control group
	A.S.C	Semi-private	Sant Cugat del Vallès	Experimental group 1
	E.L.F	Semi-private	Sant Cugat del Vallès	Experimental group 2
	V.G.S	Semi-private	Sant Cugat del Vallès, Barcelona	Control group
	S.P.S	Private	Pedralbes, Barcelona	Experimental group 1
	A.E.E	Private	Pedralbes, Barcelona	Experimental group 2
	M	Private	Pedralbes, Barcelona	Control group
	K.S	Private	Pedralbes, Barcelona	Experimental group 1
	B.S.B	Private	Castelldefels, Barcelona	Experimental group 2

	A.S.B	Private	Esplugues de Llobregat, Bar- celona	Control group
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