

**SPECIAL L2 LEARNING PROCESSES IN STUDENTS WITH AND
WITHOUT NEEDS**

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ABSTRACT

Montessori is a private bilingual school located in Manga neighborhood which is a high class community surrounded by different kinds of places such as banks, parks, restaurants, schools and is right next to Cartagena bay, the school provides a good quality of education based on Montessori's methodology.

The increase of students with learning difficulties has caught the attention of the school communities, reason why this research project is focused on L2 learning process in students with and without special needs and also on the kind of strategies that can be used with them.

As a strategy, we proposed the following lesson plan which aim to foster L2 learning through inclusive activities promoting interactive learning on students with and without special needs. (See below)

Week	Date	Description of activity/Workshop
1	April 21 st to April 25 th	Workshop <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Match the image of the place of the city with the word written. 2. Think about your neighborhood and draw the places that you remember 3. Fill the blanks with the vocabulary learned

As a result of the application of this lesson plan, students have shown an active attitude to resolve it, including a student with special needs that was in the group, the students without special needs were supported by the student in mention demonstrating that there is no exclusion in a social perspective. In addition, the student with a specific diagnostic was encouraging the regular students to develop this activity

Bilingualism

Special needs

Inclusion education

INTRODUCTION

Montessori School has around an 800 students population, where they are constantly exposed to the target language. There are approximately 20 students per classroom, allowing the interaction and more personalized learning process during the classes.

Picture 1 displays a scene of Montessori School.



Picture 1. Montessori School (Cartagena, Bolívar)

The bilingual emphasis in Montessori school has been improved with a recently agreement made with Cambridge University. Due to the standards and goals of Montessori school the agreement is being implemented in order to achieve good results in the standardized tests (e.g. Icfes, Michigan) and in the students'

development of communications skills. The school is very prestigious in Cartagena. This might be due to the school's educational policy. It has been stated that the school is based on Maria Montessori's educational philosophy where there is a pedagogical idea to "to form entire, important and conscious human beings of their transforming mission as citizens of the world. Our project make emphasis in a cosmic vision in order to understand the whole and also our comprehension of the world that surround us, that is why we gather science, art and languages. (Montessori school, 2014)

The report of students with learning problems in all school subjects provided by the Psychology Department has been notorious. The main difficulties were firstly reported on reading and writing processes in students' mother tongue. Secondly, weaknesses were also pinpointed in most bilingual school subjects.

The assessment process conducted by this Department started with different tests that aim to discover the reasons causing students' disabilities and a representative number of students were diagnosed with some learning problems or special needs. See attachment 1

The process to follow with these students is to work with them implementing an action plan recommended by external therapists. Most of the time they recommend to work on students' reading and writing difficulties in their mother tongue and once these difficulties are overcome, work is started on the bilingual subjects.

On formal teachers' meeting, professors express that dealing with this action plan is a waste of time because students with learning problems or special needs are not able to learn a second language. Another argument put forward is that the learning process with students with special educational needs takes time that they can invest on improving regular learning process with regular students.

The learning process on students with special educational needs requires different strategies on the teaching process implemented by teachers. Therefore the perspective of some teachers about the L2 learning process has been debated. Most teachers agree that special needs are an impediment on the second language acquisition process despite the fact that teachers do not have enough resources to deal with those students. Therefore our research projects attempts to find out and describe strategies that can be used with student with and without special needs to foster their L2 learning processes.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Educators and students benefit through interacting with different people. Integrating students with disabilities into the classroom may also force teachers to leave their comfort zones and learn new techniques to become better instructors.

Proponents of inclusion cite enhanced social interaction as a big benefit for students of all levels of ability. Throughout their lives, students with special needs will encounter others who do not think or act as they do; by learning how to work and interact with these individuals, they gain an advantage not only in the classroom, but also in life in general. As a result, this small-scale research is supported by the Montessori theory, literature about inclusive education and special educational needs.

Montessori theory: This system of education is both a philosophy of child development and a rationale for guiding such growth. It is based on two important developmental needs of children:

1. The need for freedom within limits
2. A carefully prepared environment which guarantees exposure to materials and experiences.

Through these developmental needs, the child develops intelligence as well as physical and psychological abilities. The Montessori method of education is designed to take full advantage of the children's desire to learn and their unique ability to develop their own capabilities. Children need adults to expose them to the

possibilities of their lives, but the children must determine their response to all the possibilities. The main premises of Montessori education include:

- Children are to be respected as different from adults and as individuals who differ from each other.
- Children possess an unusual sensitivity and intellectual ability to absorb and learn from their environment
- The most important years of children's growth are the first six years of life when unconscious learning is gradually brought to the conscious level. (Maria Montessori 1912)

Inclusive education: Inclusive education means assisting with quality and equality common and specific necessities as expressed by students. To succeed, it is necessary to count with organizative strategies that offers effective answers to address the diversity of the students and ethical perceptions that allow considering inclusion as forms of rights, values, variety and flexible teaching strategies that permit a personalized education. (Tim Loreman, Joanne Deppeler& David Harvey, 2010)

Special educational needs: A child has special educational needs (SEN) if he or she has learning difficulties or disabilities that make it harder for him or her to learn compared to most other children of about the same age.

Many children will have special educational needs of some kind during their education. Schools and other organizations can help most children overcome their

barriers and difficulties quickly and easily. A few children will need extra help for some or all of their time in school.

So special educational needs could mean that a child has:

- learning difficulties – in acquiring basic skills in school
- emotional and behavioral difficulties – making friends or relating to adults or behaving properly in school
- specific learning difficulty – with reading, writing, number work or understanding information
- sensory or physical needs - such as hearing or visual impairment, which might affect them in school
- communication problems – in expressing themselves or understanding what others are saying
- medical or health conditions – which may slow down a child's progress and/or involves treatment that affects his or her education.

Children make progress at different rates and have different ways in which they learn best. Teachers take account of this in the way they organize their lessons and teach.

Children making slower progress or having particular difficulties in one area may be given extra help or different lessons to help them succeed. (Ronald & Graham, 1999)

METHODOLOGY

This research project has used different pedagogical activities in order to support the idea related with L2 language acquisition on students with and without special needs. This idea presupposes that by implementing specific activities both type of students could share the same learning environment and learn a second language. Based on our experiences in L2 learning process, we would like to argue that by the implementation of inclusive strategies, cooperative and collaborative work students with and without special needs will increase interaction. This, consequently, will lead them to be more exposed to the target language (English). Workshops or classwork should be designed focusing on cognitive process to know the way these students learn; the Montessori methodology is rich in a great variety of inclusive activities used by the students who are constantly guided by well experienced teachers.

The activity was developed on April 25th with the population of 10 students between seven and eight years old in classroom where they share the classroom with 3th grade as Montessori philosophy promotes, with 6 girls and 4 boys.

They are surrounded by different kinds of Montessori materials as a flashcards and abstract materials keeping the order and a well use of these materials.

Students are able to use them any time they please once finished their duties, the size of the classroom is big enough for them in order to move with comfort. **Attachment**

One special case is taken as an example to support this small-scale research. To protect the privacy of the minor, she will be named student S, this student was registered in 1st grade and at the moment to read the file of the student, she has a diagnostic of intellectual quotient of 67% taking into count that the normal level of regular students is 100%.

Student S was received in the school with a strict commitment to get better in subjects like English, Spanish, math, and science. Besides the external support the student also has a speech therapist and an occupational therapist in order to accomplish the academic level.

In the development of this work, it will be demonstrated how this student who has learning difficulties with an IQ lower than the average range, achieves the planned objectives in the bilingual school subjects and Spanish and Mathematic , this appears to be possible thanks to the appropriate support of the school, her parents and potentially thanks to the implementation of inclusive strategies (see data analysis section below).

Type of research and instruments

This is a qualitative research that describes and interprets the use of inclusive strategies in the education of shared learning environments by students with and without special needs. The instruments used on this small-scale research project were videotaping, a sociometric test and documentary evidence.

- ✓ Videotaping was used in order to cover socialization, interaction and inclusion or exclusion in the classroom, this instrument helped us to have abroad perspective about how the behavior of children was during the pedagogical intervention (see activities below) and who interacted with special-educational-needs students and vice versa.
- ✓ Documentary evidence was collected in the development of the first activity were students, including Student S, worked in a workshop including different assignments about a topic related to the syllabus of the school.
- ✓ A sociometric test was used drawing on the videotaping. to recognize the interaction, feelings, cooperative and collaborative work of the students during the development of the activities.

Pedagogical intervention

The first pedagogical activity implemented was a workshop for 10 students. This activity was related to Social Studies content (Places around the community), where the students must identify the common places around their neighborhood, write

them down and then relate flash cards of each place with the correct name.

(Attachment 1)

During this activity students were gathered in a circle and instructions were explained to them, later students walked to their tables and started to work on their activities

To develop a second activity, it was necessary to gather the students one more time in a circle to explain them the instructions. They seemed to be excited about working on the workshop. They were organized in 2 groups: A and B.

Group A held up flash cards of community places without names and group B held up just names of each place. One student from group A, stood up in front of the board and showed the image of one place and any student from group B who had the correct name had to look for it and stand next to the matching student from group A.

Ethical considerations

The teaching activity is a profession that is inherent to the ethics and values of society.

This project is surrounded by ethical considerations knowing that the learning process is different for each student, and skills of children are running on different speeds, so, this research project is based in the ethics of professors and teachers who are in

the duty of finding new strategies in order to help students with their learning process. Some considerations must have taken into account at the development of this project, one of them is the protection of the identity of student S who is still a child and their privacy rights must be respected.

.DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

In this small – scale research we used three different kinds of instruments:

- Sociogram
- Videotaping
- Workshops

On April 24th a written workshop was applied on second graders students with the intentions of observing the interaction of Student S and the rest of her classroom mates at the moment to develop a content activity (Workshop about places in the city), and also verifying her academic level in Social Studies also, we videotaped this activity in order to observe the interaction among the students. (Student S and the rest of the classroom)

On this video there were 10 students developing the workshop, we notice that Student S was the first student who finished the first part of the activity which was about matching exercise, once she finished the girl next to her ask her for help to

conclude her activity. Student S looked very enthusiastic at the moment of working also she was willing to help her peers and they felt confident with her help.

Also was videotaped another part which consist on working in groups, where we observed that during the development students helped each other to succeed in the activity.

	Mutual work
	Leadership
	Collaborative work

Matching Activity

Most of the students worked in pairs and some of them by themselves, during this activity student S sat on a desk with other students, they discussed and helped each other in the development of the . See figure No 1

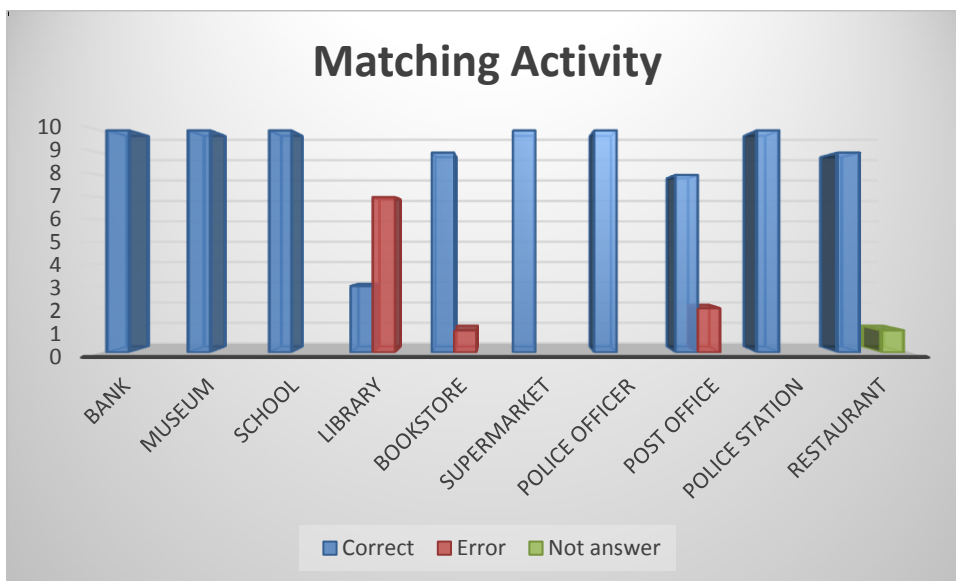


Figure No1

The students had to write and name correctly different places around their community, filling blanks with the vocabulary that was already socialized in class, a total of ten words with the most common places around town were used.

Analysis: On this activity six of ten student did not have any error. Seven students did not write correctly the word library, one student did not write correctly the word bookstore, and two students did not write correctly the word post office and finally one student did not answer the word restaurant.

Is important to mention that within the group of the students who made mistakes, Student S was not part of it.

Drawing Activity

Students had to draw and name correctly the different places around the community that they remember and liked the most. See figure No 2

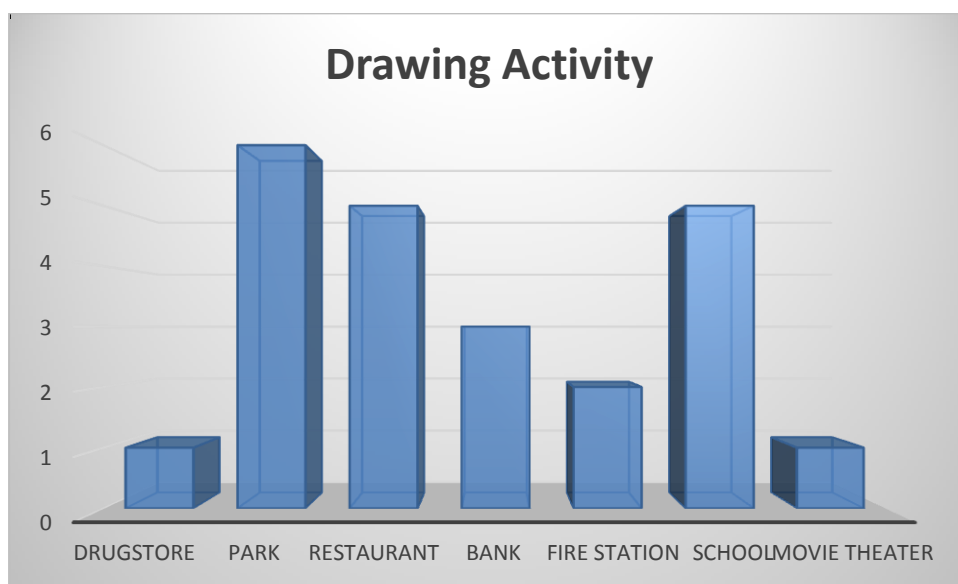


Figure No 2

Analysis: In this activity the places which students remember and like the most are: Park with 6 of ten students, Restaurant with 5 of ten students and School with 5 of ten students.

Interactional Activity

In the development of this part of the activity students were enthusiastic, helped each other specially group B who were in charge of the written names of the community places. Student S was placed in group A, the one with the pictures. She was

organizing students in line and was supervising them to do an appropriate work. She clearly demonstrated to be a leader in the classroom, and the rest of the students, felt comfortable with it.

As a result of these activities, leadership, mutual and collaborative work was identified on these students as a suitable approach for classroom work. In addition, Student S seemed to be a very confident student who showed herself as a competent student to develop any activity assigned.

Characterization of Students with Special Needs at Montessori School

Following we show the data of the students with special needs in preschool level,

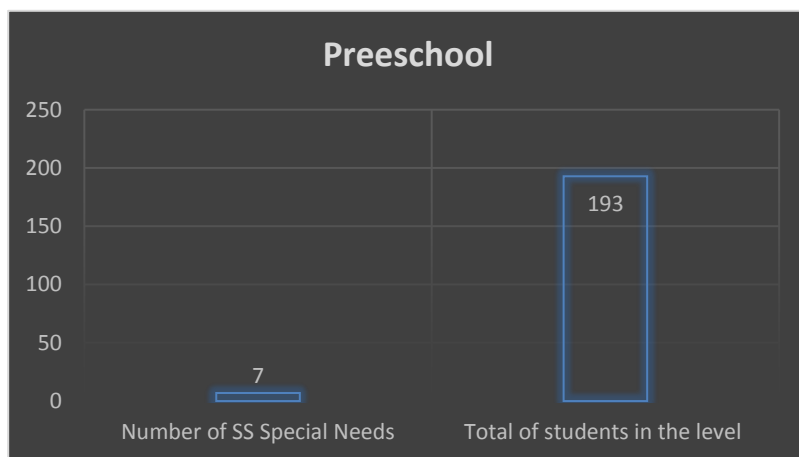


Figure No 3

Number of students	Number of SS Special Needs	Total of students in the level	% of population
Preschool	7	193	4%

Following we show the data of the students with special needs in primary level

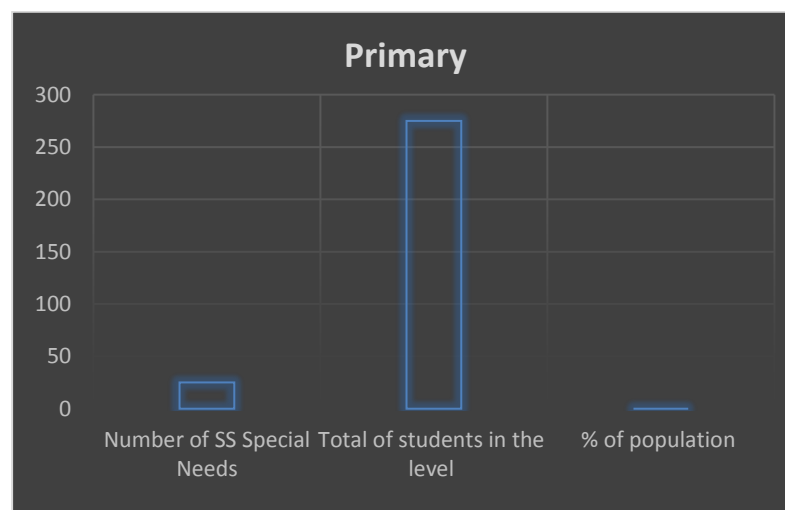


Figure No 4

Number of students	Number of SS Special Needs	Total of students in the level	% of population
Primary	25	275	9%

Following we show the data of the students with special needs in high school level

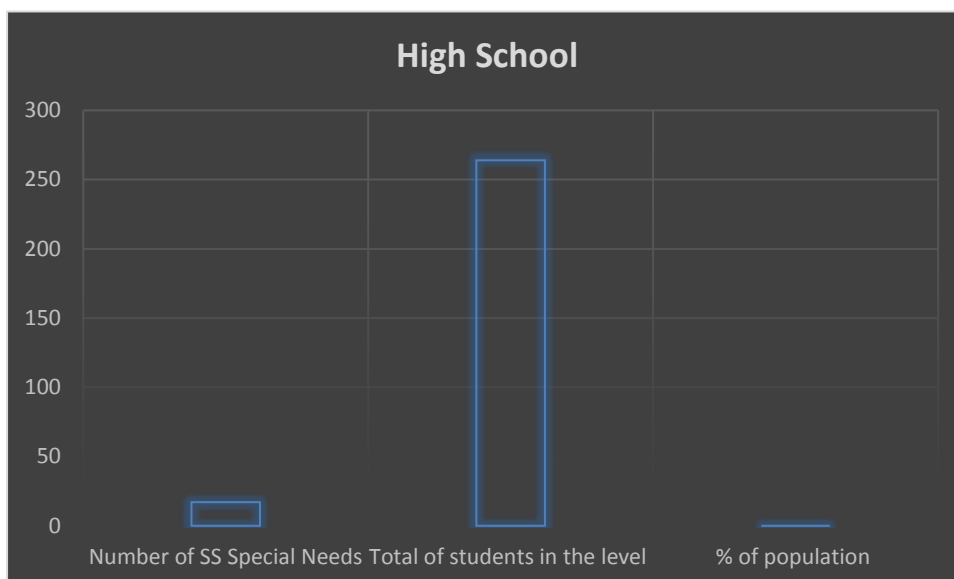


Figure 5

Number of students	Number of SS Special Needs	Total of students in the level	% of population
High School	17	264	6%

CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS

According to the result of the first activity which was about matching exercise, we observed that the behavior of Student S was enthusiastic, with a good attitude toward the activity, she was the first one to finished and was willing to help others, the classmates near to her accepted her help, this show to us the leadership characteristics that Student S have even her lower IQ level.

The video tape show us how the interaction of these second graders students were, they are very active to learn and work out on new and different input activities, Student S was the one who was all the time trying to organize her classmates in lines and guided them to do the activity in an appropriate way, her participation on the group activity was very noticeable, one more time showing her leadership skills in the classroom.

We can say that to include student with special needs in regular classrooms is important to create and design strategies that promote the collaborative and peers work in order to lead the students with any learning difficulties to the acquiring of knowledge helped by their friends in the classroom, and also to promote the acceptance of these students in a regular context

We can also say that strategies based on activities using didactics materials, flash cards, pictures, games, drawing promote the L2 learning process on students with an average age in spite of any learning difficulties they could have. These

strategies encourage the students to a collaborative and inclusive work helping to acquire the L2 learning process.

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<http://www3.hants.gov.uk/childrens-services/specialneeds/sen-home.htm> Hampshire County Council, The Castle, Winchester, Hampshire, SO23 8UJ

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ATTACHEMENT 1

ATTACHMENT2: Characterization of SS at Montessori School

Grade	Name	Diagnostic
Level I – II A	Student 1	TDAH
Level I-II B	Student 2	Hidrocefalia con Válvula de Hakim
	Student 3	CI Limite
Level I-II C	Student 4	Retraso en el desarrollo del lenguaje por inatención
	Student 5	Autismo
1th - A	Student 6	Asperger – Retraso en el desarrollo
1th - B	Student 7	Mutismo Selectivo

PRIMARIA

Grade	Name	Diagnostic
2th	Student 8	Desfase en el proceso lectoescritor
2º	Student 9	Regresión epileptiforme del espectro del autismo, trastorno generalizado de la infancia
	Student 10	Inmadurez cerebral (hemisferio lento el izquierdo)
2º	Student 11	Desfase en el proceso lectoescritor
2º	Student 5	Deficit cognitivo
	Student 12	Desfase en el proceso lectoescritor.
	Student 13	Deficit cognitivo
3º	Student 14	Déficit cognitivo - Retardo mental

	Student 15	Trastorno de aprendizaje tanto en la lectura como en la escritura - Déficit de atención
3°	Student 16	Trastorno de aprendizaje tanto en la lectura como en la escritura
	Student 17	Trastorno por déficit de atención.
3°	Student 18	Trastorno de aprendizaje tanto en la lectura como la escritura
4°	Student 19	Trastorno por déficit de atención
4°	Student 20	Trastorno en el aprendizaje o habilidades académicas teniendo en cuenta que su rendimiento en lectura, cálculo y expresión escrita es sustancialmente inferior al esperado para su edad, escolarización y nivel de inteligencia.
5°	Student 21	Trastorno de aprendizaje, TDAH, hipotonía muscular, Nistagmus, pubertad temprana
	Student 22	Trastorno límite de la personalidad
	Student 23	Trastorno por déficit de atención.
5°	Student 24	Trastorno por déficit de atención.
	Student 25	Hipotonía - Hiperlaxo, TDAH, trastorno de aprendizaje, retardo en el desarrollo del lenguaje, trastorno de conducta
5°	Student 26	Trastorno de aprendizaje, carga emocional en la relación disfuncional padre y madre

	Student 27	Síndrome de asperger
5°	Student 28	Dificultades en la memoria audioverbal a corto plazo, habilidades espaciales y función ejecutiva especialmente para la organización, planeación y verificación, matemáticas y cálculo mental.
	Student 29	Inmadurez en lo relacionado con integración visual motora, agarre de lápiz, percepción visual compleja, memoria y atención auditiva.
5°	Student 30	Trastorno de la lectura y escritura (dislexia) de tipo combinado, involucra funciones lingüística tales como: conciencia fonológica y perceptiva visual motora
	Student 31	Trastorno de aprendizaje
	Student 32	Dificultades en el aprendizaje

High School

Grade	Name	Diagnostic
6°	Student 33	Trastorno por déficit de atención.
6°	Student 34	Trastorno por déficit de atención.
	Student 35	Trastorno Afectivo Bipolar (Actualmente se encuentra medicado)
	Student 36	Desfase del lenguaje comprensivo, expresivo, y del proceso lector (nivel correspondiente al de un niño de 7 a 8 años aproximadamente), con compromiso de los procesos de pensamiento.
	Student 37	Dificultades en algunos procesos de aprendizaje
7°	Student 38	Desfase Severo en el Proceso Lector y Trastorno de déficit de atención.
7°	Student 39	Trastorno de aprendizaje
8°	Student 40	Trastorno de aprendizaje
	Student 41	Trastorno de aprendizaje
9°	Student 42	Desfase en el proceso lectoescritor
10°	Student 43	
	Student 44	Desfase en el proceso lectoescritor
	Student 44	Dislexia
	Student 45	Trastorno de aprendizaje
	Student 46	Trastorno de aprendizaje
11°	Student 47	Trastorno de aprendizaje
	Student 48	Trastorno de aprendizaje

ATTACHEMENT 3

TIPO DE EVALUACIÓN		Objetiva () Diagnóstica () Recuperación () Quiz () Otro () ¿Cuál?:					
TALLER							
PROFESOR		JOHN JAIRO ARRIETA, CARMEN JULIA, CARLOS RODRIGUEZ				PERÍODO	1
ÁREA	Idiomas Extranjeros	ASIGNATURA	English	GRUPO	2º <u>1</u>	FECHA	<u>24</u>
ESTUDIANTE							

Activity No 1
Objective:
Write and name correctly the different Places around the community.

Fill the blanks with the vocabulary learned
In pairs the students will filled the blanks of the following vocabulary:

1. Bunk
2. Museum
3. Schul
4. Librrary
5. Bookstore
6. Supermarket
7. Police office
8. post ofice
9. Police station
10. Restaurant

Activity No 2
Objective:
Write and name correctly the different places around the community.

The teacher will split the class in two teams A-B, one of them will have written the vocabulary list.
And the other group will have the flash cards that correspond to the word list.

Bookstore
Supermarket
Police office
Post office
Police station
Restaurant
Movie theater

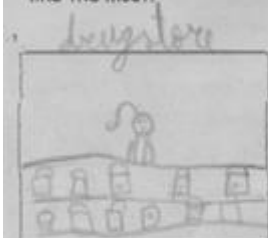
Students from team A, will go to the front and speak up the place. And a student from team B will go to the front if he has the correct image.
After they finish they will swap places.

OBJETIVO DE LA ACTIVACIÓN		Objetiva () Diagnóstica () Recuperación () Quiz () Otro () ¿Cuál?:	
TALLER			
PROFESOR		JOHN JAIRO ARRIETA, CARMEN JULIA, CARLOS RODRIGUEZ	
PERÍODO		1	
AREA	Idiomas Extranjeros	ASIGNATURA	English
GRUPO	2º D	FECHA	April 25
ESTUDIANTE			

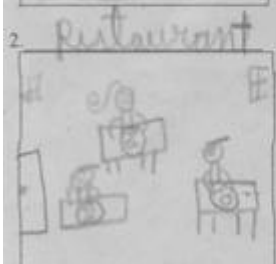
Objective:

Write and name correctly the different places around the community.

Think about your neighborhood, write a list of the places that you remember and then draw the one you like the most.



ADD MORE.



ATTACHMENT 4

INSTITUTION: Montessori School

Teacher's name: John Arrieta Carlos Rodriguez Carmen Julia Torres	Grade: 2th	Term: first term	Date: April 29, 2014	Allocated time: 50 min
Unit in the syllabus:		Unit 2		
Relevant recent work:		<i>Who are we? Simple present – Verb To Be</i>		
Topic of the lesson:		Where are we? Places in my city		
Objective: Write and name correctly the different places around the community.				
Key words: Bank Museum School Library Bookstore Supermarket Police office Post office Police station Restaurant Movie theater Hospital Park Airport Hotel Gym Toys shop Mall Video shop Mall Fire				
Materials/equipment: <i>Flashcards or pictures, Videos, TV, Internet, Student´s book, workbook, markers, eraser, boardcard.</i>				

INSTRUCTIONAL PROCEDURES:			
Lesson stages	Interaction	Skills involved	Time
warm-up activity: The teacher will ask the students to mention the places that they know in their community, in order to do a brain storm on the board.	<i>e.g.</i> <i>T – Sts</i> <i>Sts - T</i>	<i>e.g.</i> <i>Speaking</i>	<i>e.g.</i> <i>10 min.</i>

Teaching procedures (lesson core):			
1. The teacher will split the class in two teams A-B, one of them will have written the vocabulary list. And the other group will have the flash cards that correspond to the word list. Bookstore Supermarket Police office Post office Police station Restaurant Movie theater Students from team A, will go to the front and speak up the place. And a student from team B will go to the front if he has the correct image. After they finish they will swap places.	T – Sts Sts – Material Sts – Sts	Speaking Listening	20 min
2. Fill the blanks with the vocabulary learned In pairs the students will filled the blanks of the following vocabulary: B__nk M__eum Sch__l Li__rar__ B__oks__ore Su__erm__rket Pol__ce__ffice __ostof__ice P__licesta__ion R____taur__nt	Sts – material Sts - Sts	Writing	10 min
3. Think about your neighborhood, write a list of the places that you remember and then draw the one you like the most..	St- material	Writing	10 mins

<p>Assessment: The teacher will ask questions in order to know if the students achieved the goal, for example:</p> <p>The place where we eat is ? The place where you pray is ? Where are we now ?</p>			
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<p>Closure: <i>The teacher will assign a piece of homework.</i> <i>From a magazine, cut out the following places and sticki it next to the word.</i></p> <p><i>Hospital</i> <i>School</i> <i>Church</i> <i>Library</i> <i>Police station</i> <i>Post Office</i></p>			
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