STUDY GUIDE

Early Literacy and English Phonics

Degree in Infant Teacher Training
English Language Specialization
C.U. Cardenal Cisneros
Universidad de Alcalá

Academic Course 2025/26
4th Course– 1st Term

STUDY GUIDE

Subject:	**Early Literacy and English Phonics**
Code:	**510050**
Degree:	**Degree in Infant Teacher Training** **English Language Specialization**
Department:	**Teaching Specific Sciences**

Character:	**Optional**
Credits:	**6**
Course and term:	**4th course – 1st term**
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Language.	**English**

1. PRESENTATION

Since bilingual education became popular in Spain, the learning of **English as a Foreign Language** has evolved from being a subject in the school curriculum to be considered a real communication tool to create meaning in most content areas. This shift must be considered in the training of Infant Education teachers.

Thus, the subject **Early Literacy and English Phonics** is offered in this Degree due to the **fast-growing social demand** to teach English to increasingly younger learners, which consequently requires Infant teachers to be well prepared in English language, and in how to implement English in the Infant Education classroom. On the other hand, having a solid basis in the English language is a must for any university student in the 21st century. This is why Infant Education students need training in its specific teaching for young learners aged 3 to 5 years. Therefore, the subject offers a valuable and meaningful set of knowledge, competences, and methodological resources especially oriented to the teaching of **Phonetics** and **Phonics** in combination with **Early Literacy Teaching** in the Infant Education content area of **English as a Foreign Language for Infant Education**, which will constitute indispensable tools for the student to develop his/her future professional competences suitably.

This optional subject aims at providing students to know how to develop their own pronunciation of English and how to deal with the teaching of Early Literacy in the English language by means of Phonics, following a **Content and Language Integrated Learning**[1] **approach**, and promoting the use of **English as the tool to communicate** in the classroom.

Therefore, lessons will be conducted **entirely in English**, seeking always to stimulate student participation in class providing them with both maximum exposure to the English language and opportunities to practise their own productive output.

Regarding the level of English students will acquire, they will be asked to work at a **B2+ level** (CEFR[2]).

When creating any academic work, it is important to discuss with faculty about the permitted use of artificial intelligence (AI) tools. If it is not expressly stated in the guide or instructions of the specific activity or practice, it is understood that AI should not be used in any case. It is reminded that

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[1] From now onwards, Content and Language Integrated Learning will be referred to as CLIL

[2] Following the Council of Europe, CEFR stands for Common European Framework of Reference for Languages. See more in http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/linguistic/cadre1_en.asp

the improper use of these technologies, such as the generation of work without express authorization, may constitute academic fraud. Therefore, reviewing university regulations regarding the use of AI is strongly recommended to always act responsibly and transparently in the learning process by consulting faculty regarding any doubts in this regard.

Prerequisites and Recommendations

It is required for students to:

- Be **officially enrolled** in the subject.
- Have a minimum of **B2 level of English.**
- **Work on developing at least a B2.2 language competence level** in the English language, as this is a 4th year subject.
- Be **committed to improving their level of English** using all the possibilities offered both inside and outside the classroom.
- Have an **active and participative attitude** during the lessons, willing to work cooperatively in class.
- Work effectively **individually and in groups**.

2. COMPETENCES

Generic Competences

At the end of this study programme, students will be able to:

1. Adquirir y comprender los conocimientos necesarios de las distintas áreas de estudio que conforman el título de tal forma que capaciten para la profesión de Maestro en Educación Infantil. (CCC4)

2. Saber aplicar esos conocimientos al trabajo de una forma profesional, demostrando el dominio de las competencias mediante la elaboración y defensa de argumentos y resolución de problemas en dichas áreas de estudio. (CCC5)

3. Ser capaces de transmitir información, ideas, problemas y soluciones al personal especializado y vinculado con su formación, así como a personas cuya vinculación sea indirecta. (CCC7)

4. Adquirir las habilidades de aprendizaje necesarias para ampliar sus estudios con autonomía. (CCC8)

5. Promover y facilitar los aprendizajes en la primera infancia, desde una perspectiva globalizadora e integradora de las diferentes dimensiones cognitiva, emocional, psicomotora y volitiva. (DC2)

6. Conocer la evolución del lenguaje en la primera infancia, saber identificar posibles disfunciones y velar por su correcta evolución. Abordar con eficiencia situaciones de aprendizaje de lenguas en contextos multiculturales y multilingües. Expresarse oralmente y por escrito y dominar el uso de diferentes técnicas de expresión. (DC6)

Specific Competences:

At the end of the process, students will be able to:

1. Acquire a good communicative competence (B2+ CEFR). (SC1)

2. Have an extensive training in the field of Foreign Language teaching at very early stages, both theoretical and practical. (SC2)

3. Use the knowledge and procedures which contribute to full autonomy in relation to professional practices and lifelong training. (SC3)

4. Know the learning process of literacy and its teaching. (SC6)

3. CONTENTS

➢ **Part 1: Literacy Teaching in the Infant Classroom**

Defining Literacy Teaching and Early Literacy. The importance of Early Literacy teaching in Infant Education.

➢ **Part 2: English Phonics in the Infant Classroom**

Defining Phonics and Jollyphonics. Phonics and phonemic awareness. Explicit vs. implicit Phonics instruction. Teaching Word Study/Reading to young learners. Types of Phonics instruction: Synthetic, Analytical and Analogy phonics. The importance of Phonics in Infant Education.

➢ **Part 3: English Phonetics and Phonology for Infant Teachers**

Defining Phonetics and Phonology. The articulators. Segmental features: the English vowel system, and consonants and clusters in English. Supra-segmental features: stress, rhythm and intonation.

➢ **Part 4: Combining English Phonics and Literacy Teaching in Infant Education**

The Whole Language approach. Embedded Phonics. Learning to use Phonics in the Infant Classroom. How to plan and deliver a lesson combining Phonics and Literacy Teaching.

Modules	Credits/hours
1. Literacy Teaching in the Infant Classroom	1 ECTS /25h
2. English Phonics in the Infant Classroom	1 ECTS /25h

3. English Phonetics and Phonology for Infant Teachers	1.5 ECTS / 37.5h
4. Combining English Phonics and Literacy Teaching in Infant Education	2.5 ECTS /62.5h

4. TEACHING-LEARNING METHODOLOGY. FORMATIVE ACTIVITIES

The teaching-learning methodology will be based on **the CLIL Approach**, which aim is creating an **active, participative and communicative atmosphere**, involving students actively in high-order thinking processes. Thus, students will be improving their competence in the English language at the same time they learn the content area. In addition, students will also be helped to reflect on the work done, enabling them to transfer their learning experience to their teaching practice.

Lessons will be structured throughout the term in three different ways:

1. **Theoretical lessons** or lectures (30 hours) will rely on the teacher's explanations and the necessary resources, as well as on activities such as communication-based work (pair or group discussions), information searching, question answering based on different texts, and others, all aimed at consolidating the theoretical contents. The work here will mainly be done individually and in small- to medium-sized groups.

2. **Practical lessons** (15 hours) will consist of activities such as problem solving, analysis and discussion of documents or other materials, film viewing and commenting, resource creation or adaptation, and the use of Information and Communication Technologies for different purposes. They will also include co-operative learning activities, debates, research projects, oral defence of written assignments, or implementation of teaching-learning activities. During these sessions the work will be done individually, in pairs and small- to medium-sized groups.

3. **Seminars** (3 hours) will consist of case studies, cooperative group work, tutorial sessions, or oral presentations of projects. The work will be done both on an individual basis and in the groupings previously fixed.

Apart from the above detailed **48** hours of lesson attendance, the student must also complete **102** hours of independent work at home, which will include finishing activities from class, preparing presentations, reading articles, doing some research, organising information, and revising the subject contents. Students could also attend tutorial hours to have their doubts and questions answered by the teacher.

4.1. ECTS distribution

Total Amount of Hours: 150	
Number of hours of classroom attendance: 50	**30 hours of theoretical classes** **15 hours of practical classes**

	3 hours of seminars
	2 hours of assessment tasks
Number of hours of independent learning on the student's side: 102	100 hours of autonomous working time

4.2. Methodological strategies, materials and didactic resources

Methodological strategies will be based on the **CLIL approach**, thus working on the **4 Cs: Cognition, Communication, Content and Culture**. Activities will be student-centred and based on cooperative and collaborative learning. The analysis and evaluation of didactic materials and case studies will be complemented with self-assessment and peer assessment of student-produced materials and lesson simulations. The teacher will act as guide and facilitator and foster student reflection and creativity.

Teaching methods will encompass didactic projects, micro-teaching tasks, problem-solving activities and cooperative learning. Organisational modes will involve more theoretical classes guided by lectures, practical sessions, seminars and autonomous work (102 hours).

Students will handle a variety of materials which will be available on http://edu.cardenalcisneros.es as well as published material.

This subject does not use a course book, but will take advantage of published books, journals and articles as well as school textbooks. Besides, students are advised to buy both bilingual and monolingual dictionaries, either in printed version or in electronic format.

5. ASSESSMENT

To pass the course it is essential for the student to have reached all the competences contained in this guide through the various instruments provided for measurement. **The student must perform all assessment tasks set out in this guide as a requirement to pass** the subject both in the continuous or final evaluation process, in the first or re-sit assessment processes.

In the following tables you can find the **specific competences** the subject deals with, the **assessment criteria** set and the **appraisal criteria** the teacher will apply to measure these outcomes and, finally, the **assessment system**, divided into the **tools** which will be used. This table may serve as a guideline to know how the competences will be assessed.

Specific competence	Acquire good B2+ (CEFR) communicative competence. (SC1)
Assessment criteria	Acquisition of a communicative competence equivalent to B2+
Appraisal criteria	Demonstrating appropriate, accurate and fluent English at a minimum B2+ level.

Specific	Have an extensive training in the field of Foreign Language teaching

competence	at very early stages, both theoretical and practical. (SC2)
Assessment criteria	Production of effective activities which go around English Phonics and Early Literacy.
Appraisal criteria	Creation of effective activities dealing with English Phonics and Early Literacy. Creation of effective materials and didactic resources dealing with the teaching of English Phonics and Early Literacy.

Specific competence	Use the knowledge and procedures which contribute to full autonomy in relation to professional practices and lifelong training. (SC3)
Assessment criteria	Choice of appropriate materials and resources according to the teaching-learning context set. Integration of previously acquired knowledge, such as classroom management techniques. Ability to work in groups effectively. Ability to manage own time in independent work effectively.
Appraisal criteria	Appropriate selection of materials and resources according to the teaching-learning context set. Development of cross-curricular skills which help them link new knowledge with previous knowledge.

Specific competence	Know the learning process of literacy and its teaching. (SC6)
Assessment criteria	Control of the teaching-learning processes involved in acquiring a language and the theories related to acquisition and development of speaking and writing. Mastery of techniques and resources to promote reading and writing.
Appraisal criteria	Design, implementation, justification and reflection on teaching/learning plans to improve children's communicative competence in a foreign language (English).

Appraisal criteria	**DEFINITION**	**%**
Demonstrating appropriate, accurate and fluent English at a minimum B2+ level.	Shows a communicative competence which fulfills the requirements set for B2+	30
Creation of effective activities dealing with English Phonics and Early Literacy.	Designs and implements effective activities working with or around English Phonics and Early Literacy.	15
Creation of effective materials and didactic resources dealing with the teaching of English Phonics and Early Literacy.	Designs effective materials and didactic resources working with or around the teaching of English Phonics and Early Literacy.	10
Appropriate selection of materials and resources according to the teaching-learning context set.	Selects materials and resources according to the teaching-learning context set and is able to produce a justification to support this choice.	10
Development of cross-curricular skills which help them link new	Shows awareness of his/her learning as a whole, and is able to link prior knowledge to new	10

knowledge with previous knowledge	knowledge acquired	
Design, implementation, justification and reflection on teaching/learning plans to improve children's communicative competence in a foreign language (English).	The students will be able to design and implement teaching-learning units directed to the English Infant Classroom, and reflect on its structure, usefulness and effectiveness.	25

Los resultados de aprendizaje recogidos en la memoria de verificación del título de Maestro de Educación Infantil correspondientes a esta asignatura son:

Resultado de aprendizaje	Codificación
Obtención del Nivel B2 del Marco de Referencia Común Europeo.	RAEx1
Adquisición de una amplia formación teórica y práctica sobre la enseñanza de las lenguas extranjeras en edades tempranas.	RAEx2
Capacidad de utilizar de forma autónoma los conocimientos y los procedimientos en relación con las prácticas profesionales y con la Formación Continua.	RAEx3

Report Criteria

Although **attendance will not be marked,** students who are unable to attend more than 80% and submit works in the continuous assessment within the submission deadline set should choose **final assessment.** If students submit more than 2 assignments in the continuous assessment evaluation, they cannot opt for the final assessment, even if this happens during the first two weeks.

All assignments must be passed with a minimum grade of 5 to be able to pass the subject. Late submissions without a prior informed and appropriately justified reason will not be accepted, and will result on failing the assignment and so, the subject.

The student must perform all assessment tasks set out in this guide as a requirement to pass the subject both in the continuous or final evaluation process in the first or resit assessment processes.

Final **assessment** will be articulated according to the current legislation established by the University of Alcalá. These regulations establish, among others, the following criteria:
-   This subject has an ordinary exam in January/February and an extraordinary exam in May.
-   If a student cannot follow the continuous assessment proposed for the ordinary exam, he/she should ask for a final assessment exam to the lecturer in charge of the subject **during the two first class weeks**. This proposal will be approved or rejected by the Head Department.

- The extraordinary exam is set for those students who have not passed the ordinary exam (either ordinary or final).
- The characteristics for the continuous and final assessment are explained in this study guide.
- To access more information on the assessment regulations, you should visit:

  https://www.uah.es/export/shared/es/conoce-la-uah/organizacion-y-gobierno/.galleries/Secretaria-General/Normativa-Evaluacion-Aprendizajes.pdf

Each of the assessment tasks in this subject is linked to the attainment of linguistic and communicative goals in the foreign language (English) which correspond to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages descriptors (B2+). If the attainment of these goals is not demonstrated, the assessment task will be considered not to have been passed.

Continuous and Final assessment – first call (ordinary and extraordinary)

All students will be asked to **engage in micro-teaching activities.** These will simulate teaching-learning situations students will need to cope with in the future. They will also complete **written activities and projects,** including a test dealing with the most significant aspects of the subject. Finally, there will be **oral tasks** as well.

Students whose request for **final assessment has been approved** should complete these assignments by **using digital tools** the lecturer will indicate. They may also be required to **record videos** to supply for their impossibility to carry out oral presentations in class.

Regarding the **extraordinary call** for this subject, the lecturer will take into account those assignments marked with a passing grade in the first call and will indicate the students which assessment tools and competences need to be worked and how.

Appraisal criteria	Written tasks / projects	Micro-teaching	Oral Tasks	%
Demonstrating appropriate, accurate and fluent English at a B2+ level.	X	X	X	30
Creation of effective activities dealing with English Phonics and Early Literacy.	X	X		10
Creation of effective materials and didactic resources dealing with the teaching of English Phonics and Early Literacy.		X		10
Appropriate selection of materials and resources according to the teaching-learning context set.		X	X	10
Development of cross-curricular skills which help them link new knowledge with previous knowledge.	X	X		10
Design, implementation, justification and reflection on	X	X		30

teaching/learning plans to improve children's communicative competence in a foreign language (English).					
TOTAL		**40%**	**40%**	**20%**	**100%**

During all assessment tasks, the guidelines established in the University of Alcalá Coexistence Regulations must be followed, as well as the possible implications of irregularities committed during those tasks, including the consequences for committing academic fraud, according to the Disciplinary Regulations for Students of the University of Alcalá

The teaching-learning methodology and the evaluation process will be adjusted when necessary, with the guidance of the CUCC Guidance Service and/or the Unit for Attention to Diversity of the UAH, to apply curricular adaptations to students with specific needs, upon delivery of documentation certifying said needs.

6. BIBLIOGRAPHY

Basic bibliography

The following references will constitute the basic bibliography for the course, and more specific textbooks or journal articles will be provided throughout the term for each of the units of the syllabus.

Blevins, W. (2006). *Phonics from A to Z. A Practical Guide*. Scholastic Professional Books.
> A reference book for classroom teachers, pre-service teachers, teacher educators and staff developers. This comprehensive resource provides the phonics background students will need and highly practical strategies and lessons to apply. It includes activities for developing phonemic awareness, alphabet recognition and understanding of phonics, as well as games, sample lessons, and teaching strategies for the sounds of English.

Cameron, L. (2001). *Teaching Languages to Young Learners*. Cambridge University Press.
> A comprehensive handbook which covers many topics, including learning theories about how young learners learn foreign languages, principles and frameworks, how to deal with spoken language, literacy in the foreign language, etc., both in a theoretical and practical way.

Gower. R.; Philips, D. and Walters, S. (2005). *Teaching Practice. A Handbook for Teachers in Training*. Macmillan.
> It provides fundamental information on how to organise your lessons, both from the physical and methodological points of view. It also provides guidance on the teaching of skills in the EFL classroom.

Hedge, T. (2000). *Teaching and Learning in the Language Classroom*. Oxford University Press.
> This book is a source of information, ideas, and insights into teaching. It involves teachers in their own professional development by encouraging them to reflect on their practice, and aims to develop insights into issues, problems, and possibilities in ELT methodology. It is also useful   as a general reference for the classroom teacher.

Jollife, W., Waugh, D. & Gill, A. (2019). Teaching Systematic Synthetic Phonics in Primary Schools (3rd edition). SAGE Publications.
> This book is a source of theoretical and practical information to understand how to work in phonics teaching and why.

Jones, D. (2005). *Cambridge English Pronouncing Dictionary* (17th ed)*. Cambridge University Press.

> This is not only a pronouncing dictionary, but also a guide to pronunciation in English. It includes thousands of pronunciations that are not usually included in general dictionaries, such as places or words from science and technology. It also provides several panels explaining terminology related to phonetics.

Kelly, G. (2000). *How to Teach Pronunciation*. Pearson Education

> A comprehensive, learner-friendly handbook for learners of English Phonetics. It includes many teaching tips for fresh teachers.

Macdonald, H. (2017). *PronPack 1: Pronunciation Workouts*. Hancock Macdonald ELT.

> This book helps teacher focus on English pronunciation in class through games and practical activities. In this first book of the series, it focuses on the sound system and some suprasegmental features.

Macdonald, H. (2017). *PronPack 2: Pronunciation Puzzzles*. Hancock Macdonald ELT.

> This book helps teacher focus on English pronunciation in class through games and practical activities. In this second book of the series, it focuses on challenging game-like activities to work in pairs or small groups.

Moon, J. (2000). *Children Learning English*. Macmillan.

> A comprehensive handbook for teachers of English to young learners. It covers both theory and practice, focusing on how children learn English and how teachers can help them learn effectively.

Pinter, A. (2006). *Teaching young language learners*. Oxford University Press.

> This book discusses and brings together research relevant to children and language learning and principles in practice teaching. It deals with learning theories, explains how children learn their first language and acquire additional languages, helps to deal with oral and written English, and explains what is learning to learn.

Scrivener, J. (2011). *Learning Teaching: The Essential Guide to English Language Teaching* (3rd ed). Macmillan.

> It is a guide to explain the basic principles at work in a language classroom and shows how to plan lessons. It also includes a very useful and easy-to-read chapter on English Phonology. It is focused on providing techniques and strategies for all levels (not specifically children).

Electronic resources

There is an enormous amount of Internet resources to teach English to children, among them, these will be widely used:

a. New South Wales Department of Education and Training. Literacy and Phonics. https://my.vanderbilt.edu/specialeducationinduction/files/2011/09/1-Literacy-teaching-guide-phonics.pdf
b. DLTK KIDS: Website with multiple materials and resources for the FL classroom. https://www.dltk-kids.com/
c. ESL KIDS STUFF: Scientific articles about English teaching. https://www.eslkidstuff.com/Articles.htm
d. Teachers TV: educational videos, reflective thinking about teaching. http://www.teachers.tv/

e. ABC Teach: English Teaching Materials. https://www.abcteach.com/
f. MES English: English Teaching Materials. https://www.mes-english.com/
g. Enchanted Learning: English teaching materials. https://www.enchantedlearning.com/
h. Magic Keys: Phonics and English teaching Materials. http://www.magickeys.com/
i. Kiz Phonics: Phonics teaching materials. https://www.kizphonics.com/
j. A to Z Phonics: Phonics teaching resources. http://www.atozphonics.com/teaching-phonics.html
k. Super Simple Learning: Phonics games. https://supersimple.com/content-topic/alphabet-spelling/
l. PBS Learning Media: Phonics games, stories and songs. https://www.pbslearningmedia.org/collection/btl07-ex/
m. ESL KIDS LAB: Phonics games, stories and songs. http://www.eslkidslab.com/phonics/index.html
n. Pre-K Pages: Literacy and Phonics lesson plans. https://www.pre-kpages.com/category/literacy/
o. The Measure Mom: phonics games, materials and lesson plans. https://www.themeasuredmom.com/