Learning with *Don Quixote* for Children: the Presence of the Knight in Interactive Classrooms

Aprendiendo con *Don Quijote* para niños: la presencia del hidalgo en aulas interactivas

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ABSTRACT: As a masterpiece, *Don Quixote* has become an iconic figure, owing to well-known episodes such as the tilting at windmills, which young readers already discover in editions of this classic for children. The present article provides an overview and assessment of the ways in which Spanish children have access to the text in an increasingly technological learning environment and how ICTs play a very important role in the ongoing popularity of Cervantes' novel in the 21st century, as well as in the development of a form of education that goes beyond mere literacy by means of the approach to this text.

RESUMEN: En su condición de obra maestra, *Don Quijote* se ha convertido en una figura icónica, gracias a pasajes fácilmente reconocibles como la lucha contra los molinos, un episodio que los jóvenes lectores descubren ya en las ediciones para niños. Este artículo proporciona una visión y evaluación panorámica de las maneras en las que los niños españoles tienen acceso al texto en un entorno de aprendizaje cada vez más tecnológico, y de cómo las TIC juegan un importante papel en la continuada popularidad de la novela de Cervantes en el siglo XXI, así como en el desarrollo de una educación que va más allá de la mera competencia lectora a través del acercamiento a este texto.

KEYWORDS: Don Quixote for children, ICTs, learning activities, competency approach, digital competencies

PALABRAS CLAVE: Don Quijote para niños, TIC, actividades de aprendizaje, enfoque competencial, competencias digitales

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1. Introduction

This year we celebrate the fourth centenary of the publication of the second part of *The Renowned Adventures of Don Quixote*, the celebrated continuation of Miguel de Cervantes' literary classic. The impact of Cervantes' novel in the history of literature inside and outside of Spanish borders is difficult to measure, and many are the authors who pay homage to the knight in their own works. Relevant examples would be Henry Fielding, Maria Edgeworth, or Gustave Flaubert just to mention a few. However, the appeal of Cervantes' novel does not belong exclusively to adult readers. In fact, many renowned authors came under the influence of Don Quixote at an early age. Thus, Flaubert claimed that he knew the text by heart before he even learnt to read[1], while Hester Lynch Thrale, William Wordsworth, or Joseph Conrad, among others, came in contact with the novel when they were but young readers.[2] Wordsworth admitted enjoying it as a summer reading and the colourful editions targeted at children to be found all over Europe from the eighteenth century onwards confirm this idea of the novel as a classic also for children (Lucía Megías et al., 2007). In fact, Cevantes himself had something to say at this respect when in the second part of his novel he has Sansón Carrasco expound the popularity of the first half of his work:

> …es tan clara, que no hay cosa que dificultar en ella: los niños la manosean, los mozos la leen, los hombres la entienden y los viejos la celebran; y finalmente, es tan trillada y tan leída y tan sabida de todo género de gentes, que apenas han visto un rocín flaco, cuando dicen: "Allí va Rocinante". (2001: 652-53)

Cervantes already indicates the iconic nature of his knight and even his horse, while he also emphasizes the universal appeal of the first part of his novel.

However, *Don Quixote* is more than just entertainment for children. That is, they do more than just fiddle or play with it as the quotation suggests. According to the poet Arthur Symons, as a boy he not only perused the novel, but his passion for reading was also awakened by it. Others, such as Thrale, used the text to learn Spanish as a teenager. Both examples prove that *Don Quixote* could be used as a pedagogical text to improve linguistic competencies or, more importantly, to develop a literary education that goes beyond mere reading competence. In fact, part of the appeal the text has for children could lie

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[1] Letter to Louise Colet, dated 1852. Flaubert writes: "Je retrouve toutes mes origins dans le livre que je savais par coeur avant de savoir lire, Don Quichotte."
[2] All references are found in UK RED, the Reading Experience Database: <http://www.open.ac.uk/Arts/reading/UK/index.php>.

precisely in the depths of a novel that combines fantasy and verisimilitude, which amazes and teaches important life lessons at the same time (Spitzer, 1962: 113-15). This particular charm of the Spanish knight has been kept alive in the numerous editions for children published throughout the centuries, some of which were specifically written to be used in the classroom.[3]

In recent times, ICTs have contributed to help new generations of young readers to approach the text in an attractive way, highlighting what the text itself already had of magical and appealing. In addition to the fascination of the novel itself, the employment of different forms of Web 2.0 technologies has the potential of creating learning atmospheres which are attractive to young learners (Saeed, Yang & Sinnappan, 2009) and of placing learners at the centre, engaging them "actively in the learning process, promoting discovery and experiential learning, problem solving skills, etc." (Ala-Mutka et el., 2008: n.p.). Moreover, ICTs for learning "bring forward at the same time skills related to advanced digital competence, such as online collaboration with confident and critical use of the digital tools" (2008: n.p.). In this sense, in our current educational context it is essential to develop not only literacy, but digital literacy, as defined by the European Commission in one of their annual reports on lifelong learning:

> Digital literacy consists of the ability to access digital media and ICT, to understand and critically evaluate different aspects of digital media and media contents and to communicate effectively in a variety of contexts. Digital competence, as defined in the EC Recommendation on Key Competences (EC, 2006) involves the confident and critical use of ICT for employment, learning, self-development and participation in society. This broad definition of digital competence provides the necessary context (i.e. the knowledge, skills and attitudes) for working, living and learning in the knowledge society. (Ala-Mutka et al., 2008: n.p.)

This report emphasises the need to teach this form of literacy as early as possible, in fact, as early as primary education "through learning to use digital tools confidently, critically and creatively" (2008: n.p.).

The concept of creativity is fundamental. When children are involved in learning activities and are not mere recipients of passively-imbued knowledge, they tend to engage in deeper reflection and acquire that knowledge in a more significant way. This, for instance, is the basis of relevant educational holistic approaches, as are the competency approach, or even CLIL (Content and

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[3] On the matter of Don Quixote as an institutionalized text for children, see, for example, the article by Nieves Martín Roguero (2007),"El uso del Quijote en el aula. Revisión histórica de ediciones escolares y paratextos didácticos." *Revista OCNOS* 3: pp. 77-90.

Language Integrated Learning). These approaches emphasize that teaching should have a hands-on attitude towards learning, and that, even if you employ a literary text in order to work on the language itself, it should go beyond mere grammar or vocabulary in isolation, and rather integrate the learning of relevant skills or competency-oriented content, while still preserving more theoretical concepts or knowledge. As Bloom's famous taxonomy states, there are several learning domains that need to be taken into account: cognitive (learning), affective (attitudes) and psychomotor (skills) –the same areas the European Council described for digital literacy.[4] Therefore, in any learning episode children should acquire more than certain knowledge; ideally, they should also develop skills and attitudes. All these domains can be addressed using literary texts, as fiction is said to be able to potentially develop critical self-awareness by engaging students' cognitive and affective dimensions, for instance (Zacharias, 2005). In this sense, different pedagogical resources enable children and adolescents to reflect on the meaning of some of Don Quixote's life lessons on friendship, honour or love, or on the important issues Cervantes addresses in his novel, such as justice or freedom, which are relevant for readers at any age. This relates to the well-explored idea that literature has the potential to enhance tolerance for diversity and empathy (Corbett, 2010: 6-7), and to become a change agent since good literature contributes to the emotional development of the student by nurturing interpersonal and even intercultural attitudes (Ghosn, 2002).

These ideas, then, can serve as basis for the analysis of the various initiatives and resources here contained, which seek to engage students of different ages with interactive activities or games based on some of the most popular adventures or passages to be found in Cervantes' text. With this aim in mind, the present article provides an overview of some of the means by which Spanish children have access to the text in an increasingly technological learning environment and how ICTs are playing a very important role in the ongoing popularity of Cervantes' novel in the 21st century, as well as in the development of a form of education that goes beyond mere literacy. It hopes to assess the different resources available for teachers, parents and students, highlighting those that move beyond the mere abridgment of the text.

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[4] Within the cognitive domain, there are six essential concepts such as remembering, understanding, applying, analysing, evaluating and creating. As for the affective or psychomotor domains, we could define it with concepts such as valuing, organizing or internalizing values, as well as perception, response, manipulation, or articulation, respectively.

2. Playing with Don Quixote: Didactic Approaches and Classroom Activities

It is easy to find ludic activities online that are targeted at children and that propose approaching the novel as an entertaining activity. Even Wikipedia, in its spin-off Wikipeke, has a site where anybody can read a summary of the adventures of the knight and download printable activities, namely, colour-in drawings. However, when looking for more educational sites there are also a number of choices which offer good examples for teachers to create their own resources or to use the ones available for didactic purposes in their classrooms.

2.1. Institutional websites

Many interesting resources are to be found as part of institutional websites, for example, the regional governments of Castile and Leon, Canarias or Andalusia have developed different activities through which children at different stages of primary or secondary education can engage with the text. While Canarias has uploaded a useful PDF named "El Quijote en el mundo. Propuesta didáctica y cuadernos de actividades" [Don Quixote around the World. Didactic Proposal and Activity Booklets], a guide with didactic suggestions and a booklet with activities for children at any educational level, Andalucia and Castile have developed interactive websites that offer a more appealing alternative for students. These sites allow listening to, reading or downloading the text, and include many games and activities to review language contents or to test children's knowledge on the book or the life of Cervantes.

Andalusia hosts a project developed by the high school AZ-ZAIT from Jaén, which was created in order to celebrate the centenary of the first part of the novel. Entitled "Aproximación didáctica al Quijote" [Didactic approach to Don Quixote], it strongly focuses on introducing activities that concentrate on language and reading comprehension and on providing resources for a Spanish classroom. The developers state that their objectives were the following: to create a site for students to read, study and understand the novel; to develop and spread resources that improve the reading and the comprehension of Cervantes' masterpiece; to enhance the reading habits of students and their families, with the involvement of the educational community; and, finally, to incorporate new technologies into teaching (2005: web). As can be derived from this enumeration, their objectives went beyond the content in the syllabus, by involving the family and improving the reading habits of the students, hence developing better attitudes, and by developing what we could term "21st-century skills", such as digital competency through the use of ICTs.

However, the technological skills required at not very advanced. The interface is very basic (almost too simple). Under the title "Inicio" [start] any student might find different headings that lead to short texts with an analysis of the topics in the books, with an explanation of the technology present in the novel (e.g. how windmills work), or of historical facts that provide a wider context for the reading. Many of these are supported with quotations from the novel, as can be seen in the following example:

Figure 1. Didactic Approach to Don Quixote

The novel becomes thus a vehicle in order to acquire more knowledge about several subjects in the curriculum.

While providing an appropriate context for the events and data in the novel, students merely read the information that is given to them and do not need to process or analyse it in any way, at least not online. Of course, teachers could use it as a basis for further work in the classroom, but the didactic potential is not explored or suggested.

The second part of the site is devoted to activities that have been created using *Hot Potatoes* and other open software resources, which accounts for their simplicity and somewhat unappealing presentation. It includes multiple-choice and multiple-matching activities, crosswords, etc., and they all provide feedback for the student.
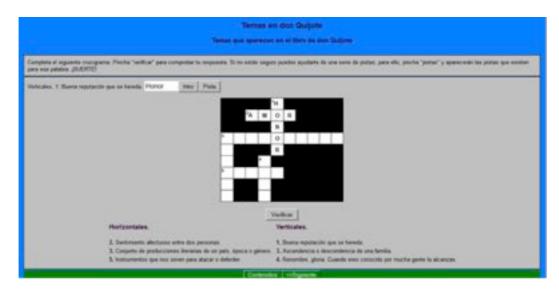
Figure 2. Didactic Approach to Don Quixote

The results are clearly useful in the context of a Spanish language and literature class, as an alternative for a more traditional or face-to-face approach to explaining the text. In this sense, the site acts as a repository for interesting information and activities which students could do individually, at home or in the classroom, always with the aim of simply reviewing what they know about the text after its perusal or of reviewing some basic technological skills in the use of the site or the performance of the activities. The difficulty of some of the texts and tasks, as well as the lack of more ludic or attractive activities, makes it an adequate resource for older children.

Castile's website, on the other hand, includes a more ludic set of resources and a more engaging interface <http://www.educa.jcyl.es/educacyl/cm/gallery/Recursos%20Infinity/tematicas/ webquijote/index.html>. Divided into different sections, the homepage addresses the users with expressions that Don Quixote himself would have used ("vuestras mercedes"), immersing children in the novel's atmosphere. The site includes a downloadable version of the novel, a recipe book, games, online activities –and others which can also be downloaded and printed to be used in the classroom–, information on Cervantes and his work, an e-comic and videos, as well as the possibility of submitting an alternative ending to the novel, or pictures on any aspect of it. It is a truly interactive and attractive site.

To start with, children can learn more about the author and the novel itself under the heading "The novel", while the section entitled "Characters" provides an overview of relevant people in the story. The third section, "The inn", gives information on what such a place was and the kind of food people in Don Quixote's time would eat. It includes an interesting recipe book with desserts and typical dishes, as well as Don Quixote's own idea of a "Fierabras cake." This,

of course, is an allusion to the knight whose magic potion he makes Sancho try with hilarious consequences. Children who have read the novel in its abridged version or have worked on it with the site would understand the reference, while it is also a good opportunity to retell the story to young listeners. The following section, "Depending on the point of view", enables children to perceive the different perspectives of the knight and the squire on different matters. Children are asked: are they windmills or giants, inns or castles, beautiful ladies or plain peasants? What do the characters see? The children can then choose one character or the other and see these elements through their eyes. The final question, "Who are you, Don Quixote or Sancho?", adds to this exercise of empathy that is fundamental to understand Don Quixote's madness or Sancho's wisdom, which are essential elements of the novel that are not addressed in the vast majority of resources for children.

Moving on to the dictionary, children can look for difficult words that appear in the novel, but, more interestingly, they can also consult a dictionary of "quixotic words" or "quijotadas". By selecting one of the knight's picturesque sayings they can read an explanation of the fantastic names of characters or places that Don Quixote created with his imagination. The dictionary also includes an interactive crossword game with definitions and words extracted from those provided before, as well as a word search in which children need to play against the clock. These games have a very attractive interface, the instructions are clear and are a pleasure to use.

Figure 3. Don Quixote of La Mancha, Castile and Leon

Figure 4. Create your own ending

Figure 5. The Great Game

The last section, entitled "Comic," enables readers to peruse online books and puzzles. These books or comics tell popular and attractive stories, destined to engage the attention of children: the knighting, the adventure of the windmills or the fight against sheep. Puzzles include three different topics: the windmills, Don Quixote's books and Dulcinea. There are three levels of difficulty, so they are suitable for different ages. Children need to select a piece and drag it to its place in order to see the picture the title refers to, hence developing psychomotor skills as well.

Besides these individual games, the website introduces "The great game of Don Quixote". In this case, it allows up to four players, which encourages building values concerned with fair play and healthy competition. Each round allows the player five minutes to answer three questions on four different topics. Each question increases in difficulty and in points, and each time you play some questions change. Round one includes questions on the author, the novel, the characters and the quixotic naming of people. Round two concerns imaginary characters, animals in the novel, vocabulary and places. The last round includes a surprise question that you cannot see beforehand or choose, but that belongs to any of the topics addressed in the whole site (e.g. recipes). Consequently, children need to explore every resource and game in order to be able to win the game. In addition, while all games in the site provide motivational feedback and can be played as many times as the child wants, the "great game" is endearing in how the knight cheers after right answers and puts a hand over his eyes when the player fails. It is evident that the creators have taken into account the affective component when designing this resource.

All in all, it is one of the best resources available online, not only because it provides teachers with good ideas and materials for their classrooms, but also because it treats children as intelligent beings who can explore the text in depth and address more complex issues. Children can learn and have a good time, while they also develop attitudinal and psychomotor skills.

2.2. EDUCASTUR and INTEF

Within the context of EDUCASTUR, the educational website of the region of Asturias, one finds the NEA, which stands for "Navegador Educacional de Asturias" [Educational Browser of Asturias], an interactive site where children at preschool and primary school level can log in and find many activities focused on the different subjects or fields that are part of their curriculum. Together with the restricted area of the site, which requires to log in, NEA also offers a series of open resources which include activities to learn about the history and scenery of Asturias, plants and animals, environmental and health issues, or even a platform full of resources for teachers and students called "Internet en el aula" [Internet in the classroom]. Among these pedagogical means, there exists one devoted to *Don Quixote*.

Entitled "El caballero Don Quijote: la aventura de los molinos" [Don Quixote the Knight: the Adventure of the Windmills], it was developed in 2005 as part of the celebration of the centenary of the first part of the novel. It focuses on one episode only, the tilting at windmills, in order to enable young children to approach it. The choice, according to its creators Néstor Alonso and Fernando

Posada, is based on the fact that it is probably the best known adventure in the whole book (2005: web). This is probably true, as the first allusion we have to Cervantes' knight outside Spain is a reference to the tilting of windmills, and this as early as 1607 (Avalle-Arce, 1989: 58-9). Moreover, most editions of this classic for children include this episode which comes to prove that it must have been popular among young readers, and that it still is. Therefore, the creators are safe in their assumption that children will like it, and maybe even relate to it as a familiar episode.

The language has been adapted while still maintaining the characteristic tone and discourse of the knight and his squire. The multimedia animation is very appealing and engaging. The design is reminiscent of a stage and it is very user-friendly. There is a voice in off (which you can turn off and hear with or without subtitles) that retells the story while the children turn the virtual pages, as if they were being read a story. Don Quixote and Sancho also speak for us. In addition, this resource includes a brief account of Cervantes' life and work, as well as links to other important literary and cultural resources. Finally, it provides many interactive games so as to facilitate learning, the ultimate goal of this resource (Alonso and Posada, 2005: web).

Figure 6. NEA

What is noteworthy about this resource is that is preserves the spirit of the original text: it allows the children to see an image of the original frontispiece and it creates the dichotomy between the wise and funny Sancho and the mad Don Quixote, emphasizing their friendship and respect for one another. Therefore, it is more than the story children learn: they also become aware of some of the important values of the story. In addition, this resource offers a wide range of games, suitable for preschoolers and older children. What is more important, even those that seem pure entertainment provide some insight into

the character of the knight and the nature of the novel. Such is the case of the one entitled "Dulcinea" in which the children must move Don Quixote through a maze to get to his beloved one before one of the giants of the story does. This game clearly versions the popular Pacman, but the setting allows the players to relate to the knight's heroism. There are also versions of other popular games, such as memory ("Buscando parejas") or hangman ("Descubre la palabra"). Together with these games, the site includes others in which children need to review what they have learnt about the story or the author by means of several multiple-choice questions ("La aventura" or "Cervantes"). As part of their encouragement of learning, these games provide feedback at the end and allow children to play the game as many times as they want.
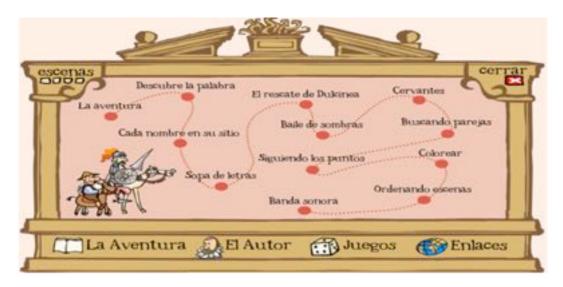

Figure 7. NEA

In general, it is an attractive, engaging and useful resource that attempts successfully to bring the values of the novel (heroism, friendship) to children as well as to develop memory or understanding. What is more, it is truly interactive and requires children to develop psychomotor skills, together with ICT skills in the use of the site and the games.

Equally pleasing was the site developed by INTEF [National Institute for Educational Technology and Teacher Training] <http://educalab.es/recursos/historico/ficha?recurso=227>. Developed by María Piedad Avello Fernández, Eugenio Álvarez Fernández, and Soraya Anaís de Andújar Andrés, it includes a didactic guide and is aimed at children between the ages of 6 and 8. The interactive resource itself was divided into four parts, each one corresponding to four well-known adventures: the introduction of Don Quixote, his knighting, the tilting at windmills and the ride on Clavileño. All these moments are also recurrent in editions of the classic for children since the 18th

century and have become iconic in Western culture. After exploring the events in the book, children could perform a series of activities in order to review linguistic or mathematical contents by means of examples taken from the novel. Thus, there were trivia games or puzzles:

Figure 8. INTEF

The focus seemed to be on developing psychomotor skills, while reviewing basic content of the curriculum at the same time, thus providing a strong emphasis on knowledge. Although not deeply engaging students with the text, it did aim to develop a positive attitude to the novel, while doing the same with language or mathematics. Unfortunately, most interactive videos and activities, hosted by the Andalusian government, do no longer seem to be working. Only one of the merely playful resources, "Find the differences", still does. As usual, it is a pity that educational resources should be allowed to go to waste after they have been designed and implemented.

3. Rewriting *Don Quixote*

Internet provides excellent examples of didactic rewritings or creative projects based on Cervantes' immortal text. We could mention, for instance, "La aventura de los molinos" [The Adventure of the Windmills], which was created in 2015 as part of the resources available at CEDEC [the National Centre for Curricular Development]. Based on original work by Adela Fernández, Marimar Pérez and Irene González, it is an OER (Open Educational Resource) created with eXeLearning under Creative Commons and framed within the Project EDIA, a collaborative effort which provides teachers with downloadable resources that encourage learning through projects in primary and secondary education in several subjects included in the curriculum. The one devoted to Cervantes is

aimed at primary school children. Other OERs for younger students also include, for example, "ARTEmaticaMENTE," which combines art and maths, or "Todo se mueve" [Everything is moving], in which children are required to build toys.

Figure 9. EDIA Project

In this didactic sequence, the authors offer a step-by-step guide for teachers and students. The creators' objective is clearly stated: that students learn more about the novel, its characters and its author by means of tasks that require different forms of collaboration, together with individual work from the student. Each section requires both independent and group work to perform two tasks. The first one is more thorough and always related directly to the novel. The second one involves creating an artifact or developing a creative activity in order to share with other what the students have learnt (Fernández, Pérez & González, 2015: web). In a final stage, they create their own windmills, therefore not only working on the areas of language, literature, but also enhancing their artistic and psychomotor skills. In addition, the project also devotes a section to assessment, which is an essential part of any educational project. Authors have created and included an assessment grid for teachers, as well as a self-assessment one for students. The latter is phrased in "I can" sentences related to how they have been able to read and memorise certain passages, transmit their ideas, respect other people's turn to speak or their opinions, work with others to prepare an oral presentation. In consequence, it focuses on what they are able to achieve, on competencies and skills rather than concepts they know.

Overall, it is very comprehensive and useful site that enables students to access the resources online (videos, images, guidelines, grids), although,

unfortunately, they cannot perform the activities the same way. It then acts more as a repository than an interactive tool. Nevertheless, it still provides teachers with an interesting model of a hands-on project that could be attractive for teachers and students alike.

Figure 10. The Adventure of the Windmills

One of the most interesting sites is the web provided by the very recent collaborative project "El Quijote y Cervantes con las TIC" [Don Quixote and Cervantes with ICTs]:

Figure 11. Don Quixote and Cervantes with ICTs

This project was launched in 2015 as part of the generalized events that aimed to commemorate the centenary of the second part of the novel. It is an effort framed within a broader one entitled "LibrosSigloXXI" [21st-Century Books]

in which teachers intend to create interactive books with ICTs and all the resources available in Web 2.0 environments for preschoolers, as well as for primary and secondary classrooms. In particular, they use OurScrapBook, an open software resource that enables them to produce books dealing with subjects such as music or P.E, side by side with others devoted to Federico García Lorca, Gloria Fuertes o Juan Ramón Jiménez. They draw from previous experiences to create this one, which revolves around Cervantes and his masterpiece.

Figure 12. 21st-Century Books

Figure 13. Don Quixote with ICTs

This project includes on their website a blog where different schools upload the activities they perform related to the novel or reading. In it, one can also find the e-book created with ICTs in which a wide number of schools have participated, creating different chapters, each one unique but all of them

developed by or with students. Some include drawings, rewritings of chapters, or even interactive activities, such as puzzles or short e-books that focus on a particular adventure of the knight, for example, the episode of the lions. Other books are not created using pre-existing images, but are written and illustrated by children. The reader can turn the pages with a click and enjoy their retelling of some of the best known stories. Other resources achieve to involve the families, promoting an emotional attachment to the project.

Figure 14. Interactive book and activities by Lourdes Giraldo and her school

Therefore, this e-book enables teachers and students to browse the different activities, perform them or replicate them using the same ICTs that these schools have employed in their individual projects. In addition, the creators have uploaded a tutorial video in which other teachers can learn to use OurScrapBook in order to put together their own interactive books. According to the developers, the contents of this project integrate a number of curricular activities that promote the development of different cognitive competencies -in the areas of linguistics, music or art-, together with enhancing an attitudinal and reflexive approach, while they also provide the abilities to search for, obtain and communicate information creatively and to use the different Web 2.0 tools available (2015: web). It then hopes to cover Bloom's taxonomy, as well as digital competencies.

Besides these collaborative projects, one can find individual attempts that display how ICTs can be employed by teachers at all educational levels in order to bring the text closer to students, not only as a class reading but also as a text that they are required to explore and rewrite. One such example would be the blog created by a primary school teacher, Cati Aparicio <http://catiperezaparicio.wix.com/donquijotedelamancha>. Much has been said

about the potential of blogs to build a community (Kerawalla et al., 2008), to teach values to students (Borham et al., 2013), to offer an opportunity for reflection or to help understand the relational and contextual basis of the construction of knowledge (Ferdig & Tramell, 2004). In this context, it seems a particularly useful instrument in order to take teaching beyond the mere content of the novel, and to address the other domains involved in learning.

Created using WIX.com and designed for third and fourth graders, students were asked to write four of the best known chapters in a language that other young readers like themselves could understand and enjoy. These are chapters I, II, III and VII, which include such popular episodes as the knighting of Don Quixote, and, of course, the omnipresent tilting at windmills. These chapters were uploaded and accompanied by pictures, little descriptions of the characters, a glossary, and poems and riddles inspired by *Don Quixote*. Using the texts rewritten by students as basis, the teacher then suggests several entertaining and pedagogical activities for students (and even parents). All of them include a form of web search which also engages students with the resources available on the Internet and enables them to develop their 21-st century skills in different ways. Finally, the blog allows viewers to see those same activities, together with some more, as performed by Aparicio's students.

Figure 15. Blog

This resource, then, is not interactive for the visitor, but it presents ways in which to develop higher cognitive skills with regard to the reading of Cervantes' novel, given that children engage actively with the text. They must understand it fully in order to rewrite it, as well as to enact some of its scenes. Knowledge is not fed passively, but with the hands-on approach that teaching methodologies

should promote. Students become biographers, historians, and actors, and the fact that the blog is open for other classmates, for their families and friends, adds to the value of the resource as a motivational tool to be used with young children. Therefore, the teacher who used these activities could address the affective domain by asking students to step into the characters' shoes and by including their loved ones in the process of learning. Finally, this appealing blog proves that teachers do not need expensive or very technical resources so as to create engaging activities that use the tools available on the Web.

4. Conclusion: learning from *Don Quixote*

As Spitzer argued, one of the reasons why *Don Quixote* is an immortal novel which appeals to young minds is that is provides instances of profound wisdom, of life lessons that all readers can relate to at one point in their lives. This given wisdom has been explored in several activities aimed at children or adolescents: the resources mentioned before sought to engage students into reflecting on values such as friendship or the understanding of others. Of course, the novel is so rich that there are many other issues that could be explored by means of pedagogical tools such as these. In fact, there are already several relevant examples available online. Maybe one of the most inspiring is "Tengo una pregunta" [I have a question] <http://blog.educalab.es/leer.es/web_quijote/index.html>. Implemented on Book Day 2010 and supported by the then Minister of Education, Ángel Gabilondo, it consisted on a recorded reading of excerpts from the text which answered questions on various subjects: the need to study hard, social inequalities, social prejudices, injustice and torture, immigration or justice. Those questions and their responses are still available online, together with a didactic guide that suggests possible applications for this resource in the classroom. Both questions and answers were developed and read by teachers and students from a public high school in Madrid, hence showing how adolescents were involved in the process of thoroughly understanding the novel so as to later become creative agents. In addition, it displays the attitudinal involvement of students, who have highlighted important topics for them and have engaged with Cervantes' message as something relevant nowadays.

Figure 16. I have a question

Other online initiatives are even destined to engage Spanish as a Foreign Language (SFL) teachers with the text, so they can later exploit all its didactic possibilities in class. Projects such as "El Quijote en el aula" [Don Quixote in the classroom], developed by the Cervantes Institute, have as objective the enhancement of linguistic and non-linguistic competencies <http://cvc.cervantes.es/ensenanza/quijote_aula/>. They focus on cultural, discursive and literary competencies and they provide insightful online activities for teachers, which they could later transfer to adolescents.

Figure 17. Don Quixote in the classroom

As these last instances evince, the educational possibilities of Cervantes' novel are innumerable. Being an example of the finest literature ever written, a classic, it can appeal to adults and children alike. It can serve the purpose of teaching grammar, literacy, science, or history. It can enable students to ponder important issues in contemporary society; it can help them gain awareness of and tolerance towards the values of others. And, when aided by new technologies, it can engage audiences that live in a 3.0 world and contribute to the acquisition or enhancement of those digital competencies that are essential nowadays.

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