“I Feel Good”: Case studies of learner diaries in state primary schools

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Secuencias formulaicas en leyendas y canciones: enseñanza-aprendizaje de inglés como Lengua Extranjera en escuelas primarias y secundarias (PIN J040, FADeL)

- Longitudinal teaching experiences based on a song and a legend/myth in:
  - four **primary state schools** (8 courses) **in 2023,**
  - one primary private school (2 courses) in 2024,
  - and three secondary state schools (6 courses) in 2026.
- Data collection instruments: tests, **learner diaries**, **teacher journals** & spontaneous written production tasks.

Formulaic language

Formulaic Language (...) may comprise **strings** of letters, words, sounds or other elements, contiguous or non-contiguous, of any length, size, frequency, degree of **compositionality**, literality/figurativeness, abstractedness and complexity, not necessarily assumed to be stored, retrieved or processed whole, but necessarily enjoy a degree of **conventionality** or **familiarity** among (typical) speakers of a **language community** or groups, and that hold a strong relationship in communicating meaning (Siyanova-Chanturia & Pellicer-Sánchez, 2019: 5).

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Theoretical Framework

- EFL FS learning through an explicit teaching experience using materials designed by the research team around one song and one legend.
- Focus on form and its techniques (input enhancement and multiple encounters)
- Previous experiences in university learners and adolescents: Alharthi (2015); Alhassan & Wood (2015); Jones & Haywood (2004); Lewis (2009); Mohammadi & Es-hagi (2018); Pellicer-Sánchez (2017); Peters & Pauwels (2015)

Few longitudinal studies examining primary school learners' FS acquisition processes from their own perspective

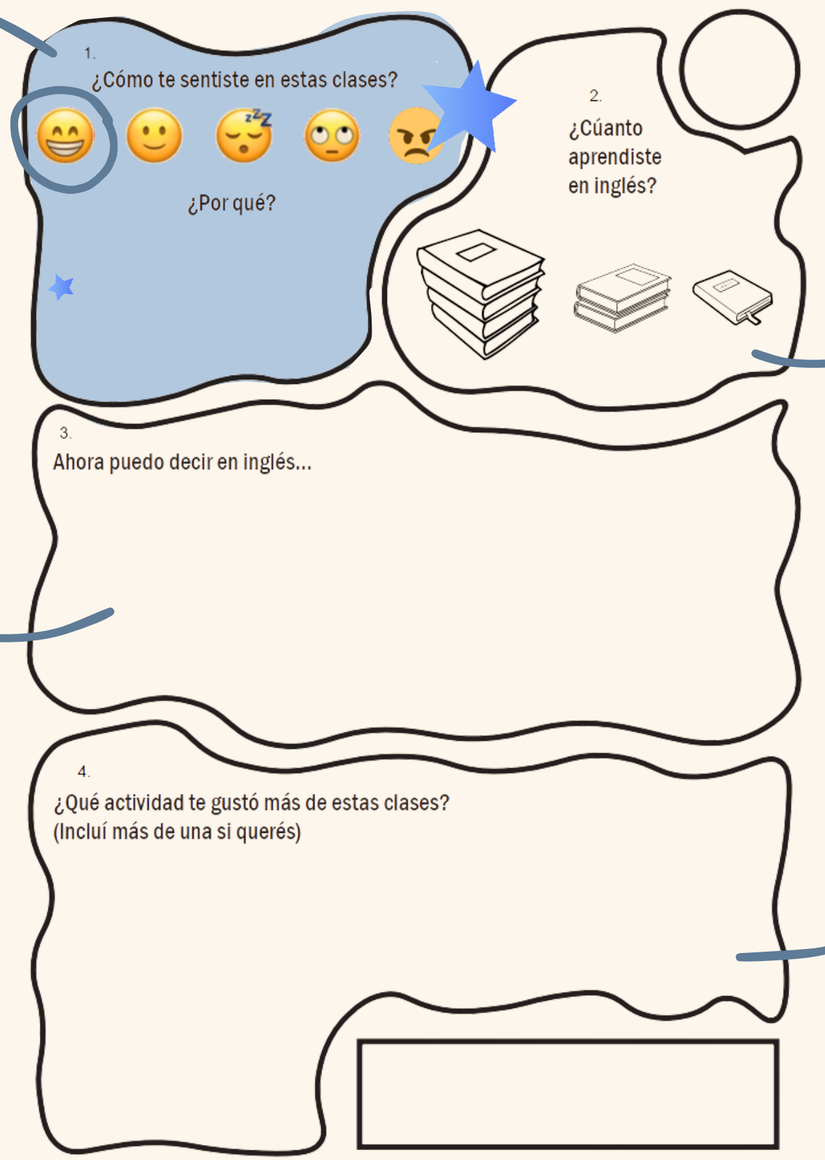
Diary studies in L2 learning

- A year-long study into metacognitive scaffolding through learning diaries in **university** learners (Villalonga-Gómez et al., 2023).
- Longitudinal research on formulaic language use in **adults' diaries during an L2 immersion experience** (Köylü et al., 2025).
- A **twelve-year-old** EFL learner's gradual use of **constructions** in stories based on pictures throughout a year (Mellow, 2008 in Ellis, 2012).



Description of diaries

1. **Information about their emotional state**



2. Their perception of how much they had learned

3. What learners felt they could now say in English

4. Their impressions of the activities in the classroom materials.

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Our previous studies into FS learning through diaries



- Primary students' perceptions of their learning of FFSS across courses and schools.

(Vázquez, 2023;

Zinkgraf, Fernández Ferrari & Vázquez, 2024a; 2024b;

Zinkgraf & Fernández Ferrari, 2025)

- Diaries as an instrument to capture primary state school realities beyond the FL learning lesson.

(Zinkgraf, Fernández Ferrari, García Álvarez & Luna, 2025)

- Attendance, motivation, L1 and L2 literacy, and other factors' impact on FS learning.

(Vázquez, 2024)

Journals

1.-What did you do this week? How far did you get with your lesson plan?

2.What worked? What didn't?

3.-How did you feel?

4.-How did the children respond?

5.Any problems or difficulties?

Also analysed in

- Fernández, García Álvarez, & Tacconi (2024) - a preliminary analysis of the journals by the teacher at School N°222;
- Scilipoti, Tacconi, Trevisán & Sobrino (2026, Fadelcon) - a comparison between state and private school teachers' journals.

Aims of this presentation

- Not to analyse the amount of FS learning.
- To describe two courses' EFL reality based on learners' diaries and their teacher's journal in one primary state school.
- To present an intertwined narrative of the experience of teaching and learning formulaic language in terms of their emotions.

Context description

- **Details about the institution:**
  - Two courses at Primary School N° 222, “Base Naval Puerto Belgrano”
  - Located in Allen, Río Negro
  - “De jornada extendida”
- **Data collected:**
  - Sixth- and seventh-graders’ personal diaries
  - Teacher’s journal

Participants and diary entries

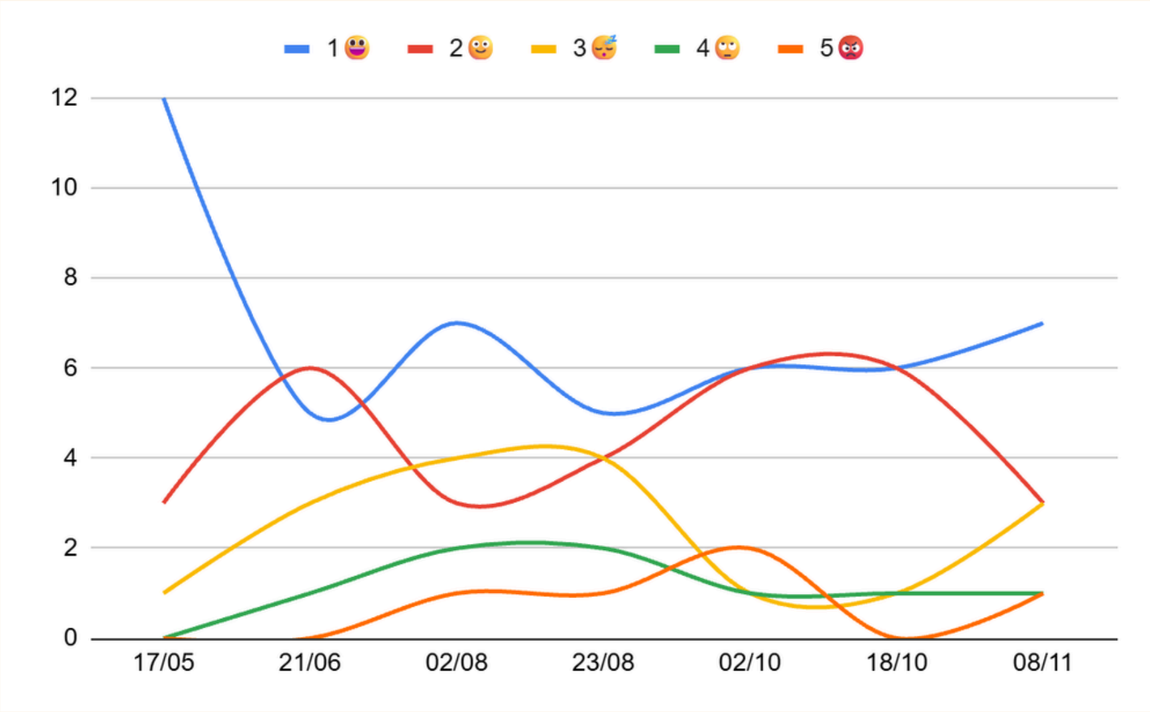
	222A	222B
Total number of entries in diaries	109	56
Number of Ss at the beginning and at the end	23 - 18	20 - 5
Number of entries at the beginning and at the end	16 - 15	11- 5
Discarded data	5	10

Results: How do you feel?

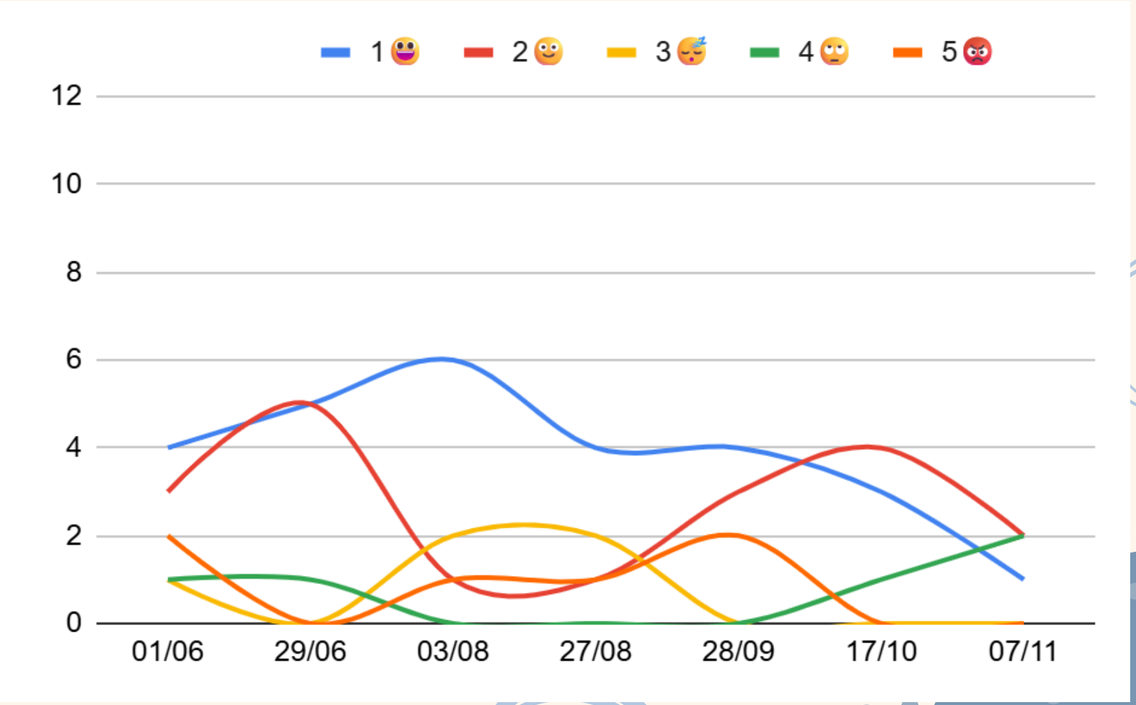
😀	Super happy
🙂	Happy
😴	Sleepy
🙄	Bored
😡	Angry

Feelings across entries per course

222A



222B



Results: Why? Categories of analysis

Teacher

VIA_10 **la seño nos trata bien** y porque me gusta lo que estamos haciendo
VIA_20 **porque la seño nos trata re bien** y porque aprendo mucho

Learning English

VIA_17 porque **me gusta aprender ingles, me siento feliz cada vez que aprendo algo nuevo**
VIA_20 **porque aprendo ingles, la paso bien y me siento elegante hablando ingles**
VIB_03 **porque quiero ver Youtube en Inglés**

Boredom

VIB_02 es **aburrido** y **me cambiaron de aula** no puedo estar allá y **ya nada es lo mismo**
VIA_01 porque estoy **aburrida y cansada**

Extracurricular activities

VIA_09 porque el sabado **rindo danza y tengo que presentar un baile sola y tengo miedo** de equivocarme
VIA_12 **entreno** y el sabado **juego la final**

Reflection

VIA_16 porque q**uiero estar mejor en la escuela**
VIB_07 **no me gusta venir**

Lack of sleep and tiredness

VIA_09 tengo **mucho sueño porque anoche hice tarea a la noche**
VIB_01 porque me **duele el cuello**

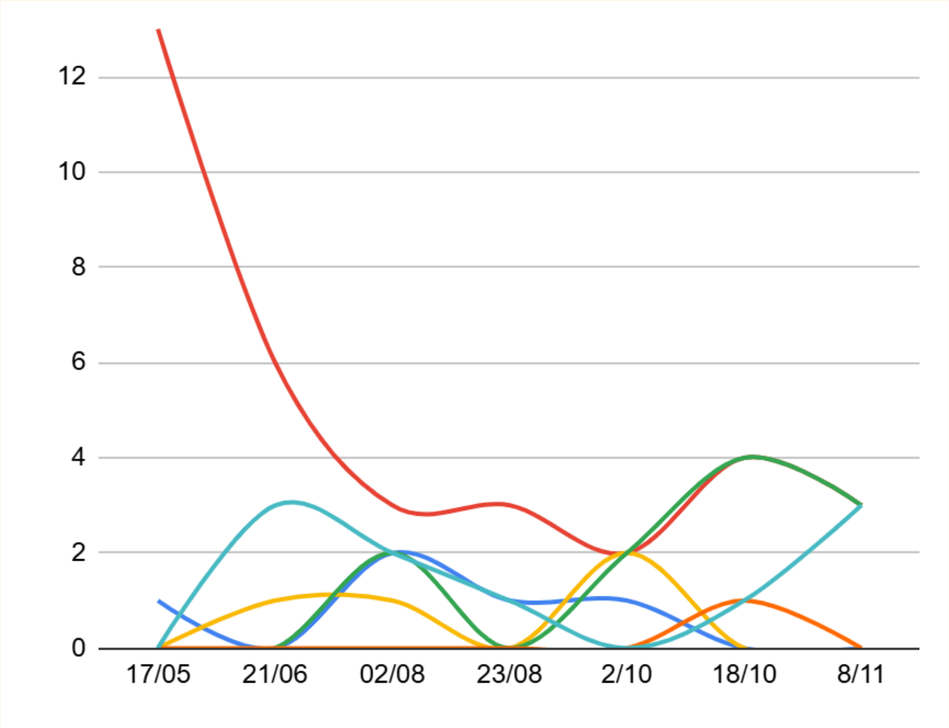
VIB_10 porque si
VIA_07 no sé
VIA_17 i don-t know
VIA_19 not reason

VIB_12 porque mi mejor amigo **me dobló el brazo**
VIB_12 porque **me están escupiendo**
VIA_08 pude escribir la fecha pero me siento **triste porque mi amiga se fue a sexto segunda**

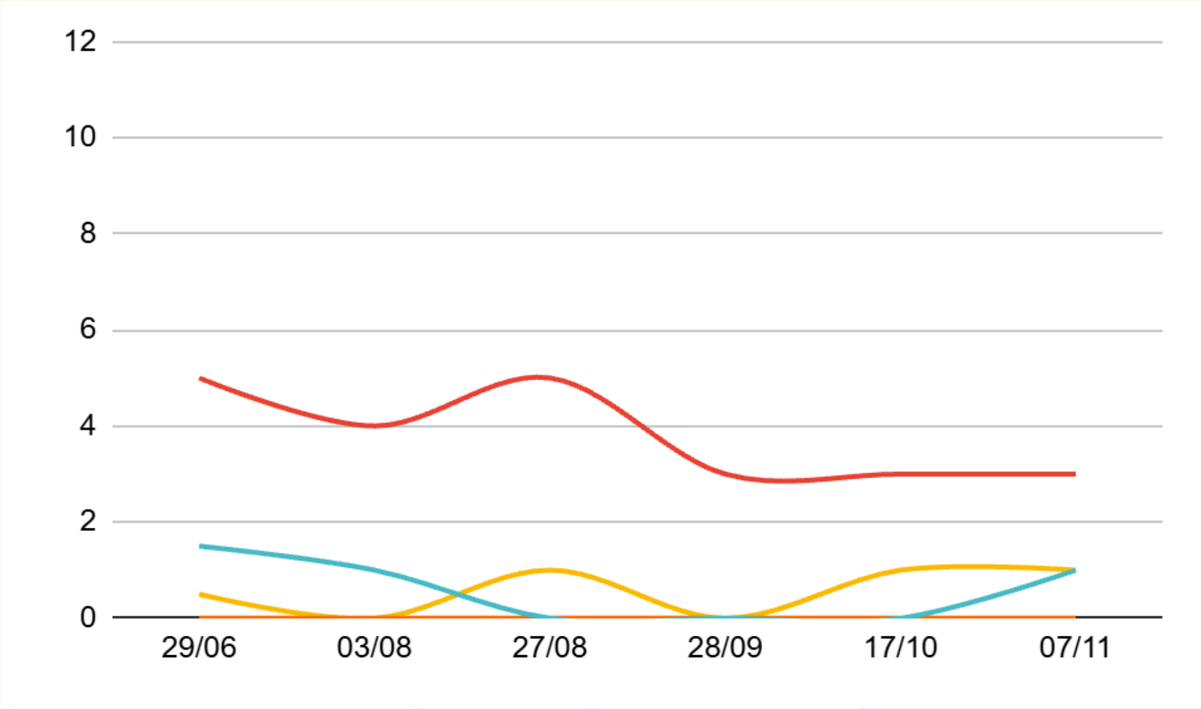
Analysis of categories across diary entries

- Teacher
- Learning English
- Boredom
- Extracurricular activities
- Reflection
- Lack of sleep and tiredness

222A



222B



Results: teacher journals

- A teacher who adapts to multiple difficulties.
- Two courses under pressure.
- Students' positive interaction with the material & lessons.
- Enthusiasm, challenge and pride:
  - "*Muy positivo el trabajo, reconocieron re bien travel far. Les gusta, y les resultó fácil dicen. yo ví que los desafió y les gustó. Les gusta eso, me encanta*"(2/10 al 6/10);
  - "*no te puedo explicar el hermoso placer que se siente cuando los chicos estaban buscando las frases" (14/11)*
- Where the two sources meet: the emotional curves.

Combined results

- Sts' diaries: In August, there is an apparent fall in feelings of happiness in 222B (dropouts and absences).
- Teacher's record: situations of violence, which demand an interruption of the experience.
- Teacher's positive perception of Ls' reactions to the materials and their learning.
- "Porque podemos aprender otro idioma y eso me hace feliz".
- Intrinsic and extrinsic factors in (FS) teaching and learning in a state primary school (motivation, rest, boredom, attendance): positive and negative feelings.
- Word of caution: these are the answers they were willing to share in their diaries. This is the experience of two courses in one particular school context. No generalizations but still interesting.

Conclusions

- Effective formulaic language learning.
- A positive attitude toward FS learning and the approach implemented.
- The affective factor in learning a foreign language (diaries and teacher’s journal).
- Other extrinsic and intrinsic factors playing a role.

How much more could they learn if they could be controlled?

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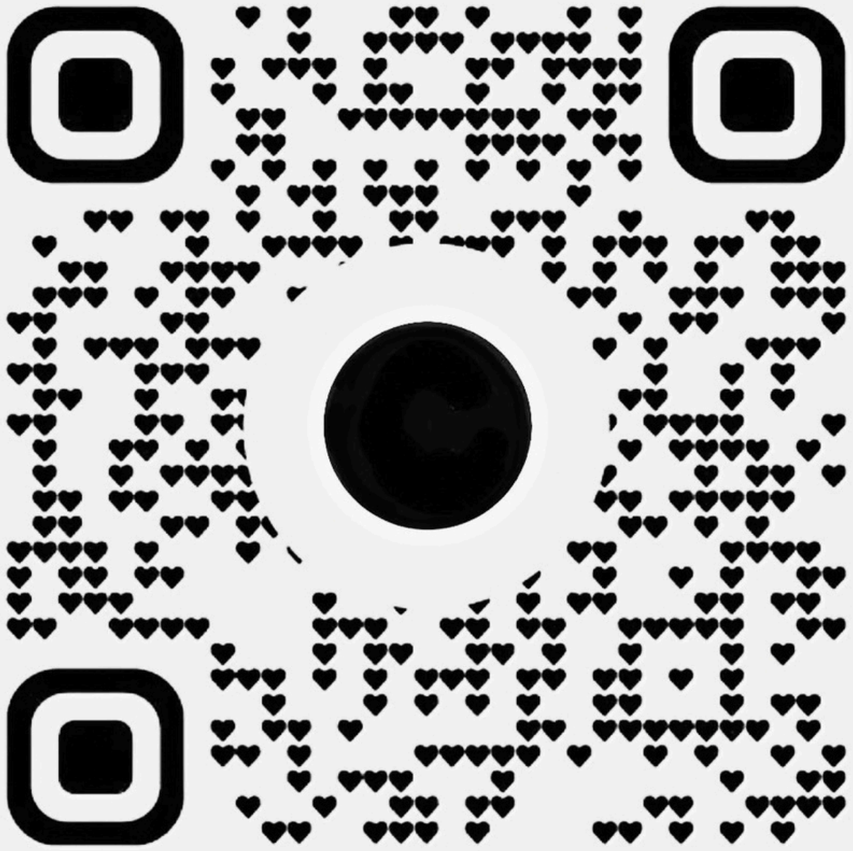
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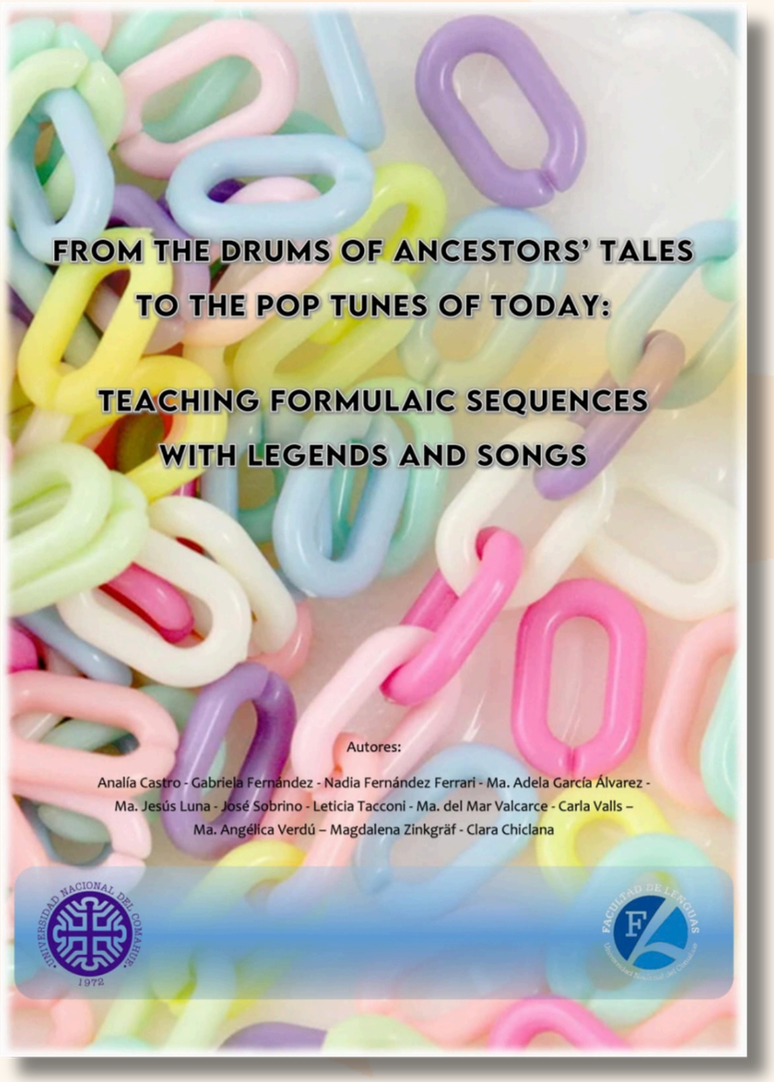
Thank you

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OUR MATERIALS





OUR SOCIAL MEDIA

SECUENCIASFORMULAICASENINGLES