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The usage of realia and flashcards as techniques when teaching vocabulary in students at 4to Año EGB, class A, at Unidad Educativa "Once de Noviembre" from Guano city, Chimborazo province in the academic period September 2021 – July 2022.

Research work for obtaining the bachelor's degree as:

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"The usage of realia and flashcards as techniques when teaching vocabulary in students at 4to Año EGB, class A, at Unidad Educativa "Once de Noviembre" from Guano city, Chimborazo province in the academic period September 2021 – July 2022**"**

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Riobamba, 21 de Febrero de 2022

Mgs. Adriana Carolina Lara
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The undersigned, nominated professors to the Committee for the evaluation of the research work "The usage of realia and flashcards as techniques when teaching vocabulary in students at 4to Año EGB, class A, at Unidad Educativa "Once de Noviembre" from Guano city, Chimborazo province in the academic period September 2021 – July 2022", presented by Marcia Jaqueline Lema Chimbo, with identity card number 0604952374, under the guidance of Mgs. Adriana Carolina Lara Velarde; We certify and recommend the APPROVAL of this wrok for degree purposes. Previously, the research work has been evaluated and the author's dissertation has been listened to; having nothing else to observe.

In accordance with the applicable regulations, we signed in Riobamba,
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TUTORA

DEDICATORY

This work is dedicated with much love to my entire family, especially to my beloved husband for his unconditional support and for sowing a seed of love, responsibility and showing that moral and spiritual values are very important in life, and with them serve to God and to those most in need.

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My special thanks to God for life and health, thanks to all my family for unconditionally supporting me in this work, especially my husband Henry, my beautiful children David and Isaí and my parents for their love and understanding, thanks to my beautiful university for allowing me to acquire knowledge and train as a good person, to my teachers for providing their teachings that will help me in my daily life as a person and as a professional. Thank you all for believing in me and being present in my daily life.

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RESUMEN

Esta investigación, en respuesta a las limitaciones de vocabulario de los estudiantes que cursan el 4to Año EGB, clase A, de la Unidad Educativa "Once de Noviembre", propuso el uso de *realia* y *flashcards* como estrategias para superar esta problemática. *Realia* se refiere a objetos de la vida real que los profesores llevan a clase con el propósito de mejorar la comprensión de los estudiantes sobre otras culturas y situaciones de la vida real; así como fortalecer las asociaciones de los estudiantes entre palabras para objetos comunes y los objetos mismos. Las *flashcards* son un recurso muy sencillo y versátil que incluye información gráfica por un lado y datos semánticos por el otro. Las tarjetas didácticas son increíblemente efectivas con los estudiantes visuales; La investigación ha demostrado que la mayoría de los estudiantes tienen este tipo de inteligencia. Para este objetivo, se propuso determinar la efectividad de *realia* y *flashcards* en la mejora del vocabulario. En este contexto, el estudio se enmarcó en el enfoque mixto. Además, se ajustaba al tipo de investigación científica cuasi-experimental ya que pretendía determinar la correlación entre *realia* y *flashcards* en la mejora del vocabulario en inglés. Su dinámica determinó ser una investigación de campo donde se utilizó un pre y post test para determinar la efectividad de las estrategias propuestas y una entrevista semi-estructurada para apreciar las percepciones de la población respecto a la propuesta. Los resultados evidenciaron que los recursos propuestos son muy efectivos para la enseñanza y aprendizaje del léxico inglés y al mismo tiempo se percibió que la herramienta didáctica preferida por los estudiantes es *realia*. Por esta razón, se recomienda al docente incrementar el uso de estos recursos, ya que parecen ser de interés para los estudiantes y se ha demostrado su eficacia, y proponer temas, actividades y contenidos en función de los antecedentes de los estudiantes. Esto puede facilitar el aprendizaje, la práctica y la interiorización de vocabulario.

Palabras clave: *Flashcards, Realia,* Enseñanza y Aprendizaje del Léxico Inglés, Vocabulario en Inglés.

ABSTRACT

This research, in response to the vocabulary limitations of students coursing the 4to Año EGB, class A, of the Unidad Educativa "Once de Noviembre", proposed the usage of realia and flashcards as strategies to overcome this problematic. Realia refers to real-life objects that teachers take to the class with the purpose of improving students' understanding of other cultures and real-life situations; as well as strengthen students' associations between words for common objects and the objects themselves. Flashcards are very simple and versatile resource including graphic information in one side and semantic data in the other. Flashcards are incredibly effective with visual learners; research has showed that most of students have this type of intelligence. For this target the study aimed to determine the effectiveness of realia and flashcards in the improvement of vocabulary. In this respect, the study framed itself in the mixed approach. Furthermore, it fit to the quasi-experimental type of scientific research since it pretended to determine the co-relationship between realia and flashcards in the English vocabulary improvement. Its dynamic determined to be field research where pre and posttest was used to determine the effectiveness of the strategies proposed and a semi structured interview to appreciate the population perceptions regarding the proposal. The results evidenced that the proposed resources are very effective for the teaching and learning of English lexis and at the same time it was noticed that the preferred didactic tool for students is realia. For this reason, it is recommended for the teacher to increase the usage of these resources due to they appeared to be of students' interests and their effectiveness has been proved and, propose topics, activities, and contents based on students' background. It may facilitate vocabulary learning, practice, and internalization.

Keywords: Flashcards, Realia, Teaching and Learning of English lexis, English Vocabulary

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CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Problem Statement

The dynamic and demands, of the globalized and digitalized era we are living in, have influenced in how communication is seen worldwide. The importance of learning foreign languages, particularly English is reflected in most of the areas of human interaction. This language, the current *Lingua Franca*, is the principal means of politics and business communications; it is the main language used to present the latest advances in science, technology, medicine, and others. English, without a doubt, is fundamental for people to success not just professionally but personally.

In these terms, being communicatively competent in English is not anymore, a luxury but a surviving require. People need to be able to express their feelings, interests, ideologies, political preferences, religious affinities, and other multiple communicational thematic. For this, it is extremely important to know a wide variety of vocabulary. It enables people to build strong relationships through communication. The lack of vocabulary, in terms of, knowledge of words and their meanings, can hinder both written and verbal communication or make them poorly understood.

These communication disruptions have been identified in students at 4to EGB class "A" of the Unidad Educativa "Once de Noviembre" located in the city of Guano in the province of Chimborazo. It was noticed that students cannot maintain even a basic conversation about their personal life. The problem increases when they are asked to talk about thematic such as: sports, religion, culture, traditions, art, history, leisure activities, etc. From some informal conversations, students have stated that their principal limitation for communicating in English is their poor knowledge of this language words.

For facing the problematic identified, it was proposed the usage of realia and flashcards, both recognized for their effectiveness to work on lexis. Realia refers to the use of real-life objects to teach English words. Flashcards are multipurpose resource that include graphic information in one side and semantic data in the other. In this framework, it was developed some realia and flashcards-based activities to improve the population's vocabulary knowledge.

For the characteristics of the study, it frames itself in the mixed approach. Furthermore, it fits to the quasi-experimental type of scientific research since it pretended to determine the co-relationship between realia and flashcards in the English vocabulary improvement. Its dynamic determined to be field research where pre and posttest were used to determine the effectiveness of the strategies proposed and a semi structured interview to appreciate the population perceptions regarding the proposal.

1.2. Problem Formulation

How effective are realia and flashcards to improve the vocabulary knowledge of students coursing the 4to Año EGB, class "A" at Unidad Educativa "Once de Noviembre" from the city of Guano, Chimborazo province, in the academic period September 2021 – July 2022?

1.3. Justification

The principal challenge when teaching and learning a foreign language, English in the case of this study, is to accomplish the communicative competence. In means, being able to communicate people's feelings, interests, ideologies, political preferences, religious affinities, and other multiple communicational thematic. This fact demands of language learners the knowledge of a vast amount on vocabulary since it enables people to build strong relationships through communication. The lack of vocabulary, in terms of, knowledge of words and their meanings, can hinder both written and verbal communication or make them poorly understood.

A communicational problem such as the one described was identified in students at 4to EGB class "A" of the Unidad Educativa "Once de Noviembre". It was noticed that these students were not able maintain even the most basic conversation about their personal life. In this scenario, for facing the problematic beforementioned, the usage of realia and flashcards was proposed; both recognized for their effectiveness to work on lexis. Realia for its attractiveness and realia for the subjective connections with students' inner identity, culture, context.

The study attempted to contribute to the improvement of students' vocabulary knowledge and then evidence the effectiveness of flashcards and realia for the declared purposes. In this regard, it would be stated that the principal beneficiaries of the study were

students and the English Teaching who participated in the study. Students since they have increased in an extent their vocabulary acquaintance and then, the teacher due to after the study, she will have at her disposal two more strategies to work with and a new approach about the teaching of lexis.

It is important to mention that this study was possible thanks to the eagerness of the participating institutions. Their authorities and faculty. Furthermore, the vast bibliographic and technological resources facilitated the epistemological and empirical approach of the study phenomenon. Finally, it may be affirmed that the characteristics of the study as well as the results and conclusions accomplished with this research would contribute to future studies, factor that evidence its social and educational significance.

1.4. Objetives:

1.5. General

To determine the effectiveness of realia and flashcards in the improvement of vocabulary knowledge of students coursing the 4to Año EGB, class A, at Unidad Educativa "Once de Noviembre" from Guano city, Chimborazo province in the academic period September 2021 – July 2022.

1.6. Specific

To diagnose the current vocabulary level of the study population and the communication topics they have more complications.

To apply some activities based on realia and flashcards to introduce, practice, and reinforce vocabulary regarding the topics which students have more limitations.

To evaluate the effectiveness of the strategies carried out and determine their level of influence on students' vocabulary knowledge.

To appreciate the students' perceptions regarding the strategies proposed.

<h1 style="text-align:center">CHAPTER II.</h1>

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1. Research Background

After the World War II and in the context of the Cold War the United States of America gained momentum and started its powerful dominance over the world. This triggered multiple geopolitical phenomenon that represented the adoption of political, economic, and educational models sponsored by the new hegemony. The USA power and influence were rapidly encrusted in the public policy of national governments worldwide. This resulted in the adoption of English as the new Lingua Franca (Taguchi & Ishihara, 2018). Thus, the formal study of this language was included in different curricula globally. Ecuador was not the exception.

From 1992, as stated by Auquilla and Fernández (2017), English has been the foreign language officially recognized in Ecuador. By the means of the Curriculum Reform and Development for the Learning of English (CRADLE), in the framework of a treaty signed by the Ecuadorian Educational Ministry and the British Council, it was established the compulsory for secondary students to learn English (Calle et al., 2019). From that time, in the country, tree curricular reforms (1992, 2012, 2016) have been proposed, and all of them focused on making of learners, communicatively competent.

In this context, the communicative approach has constituted the fundamentals over which the curricula in Ecuador have been constructed. In the last curriculum design which is, principally, constructed under the principals of the Common European Framework of References for Language Teaching and Learning (CEFR), different Active Methodologies such as: CLIL, CBI, CALL, PBL, PS, and other have been considered, with the purpose of providing to the students the necessary tools for authentic communication. It is, being able to express their thought, feeling, facts, desires, history, etc., without considering time, space, and interlocutors a problem to successfully deal with the communication encounter (Ureña, 2014).

This scenario has demanded teachers to re-think their practices as well as the didactic-pedagogical principals (Calderón, 2015). In this concern, multiple research projects have been implemented to identify the most suitable strategies to accomplish the targets stablished in the curriculum. Many of them, coincide with the approach stated in this study.

Realia and Flashcards are priceless to increase students' vocabulary and in consequence students' communication capabilities.

Examples of the studies mentioned are: ¨Flashcards and vocabulary learning¨ by Helen Nicole Heredia Gallegos. The author assures that Flashcards promote students' critical thinking and the development of a new sort of tools to learn English as a second language. Another example is ¨Analysis of realia as strategy to improve English vocabulary at 3rd grade of General Basic Education at Unidad Educativa Cristiana "Nazareno", in Riobamba city, Chimborazo province, during de academic year 2018-2019¨ by Byron Eduardo Obando Flores. In this study, it is concluded that Realia is a strategy which plays an important role in foreign languages learning and a good strategy for new vocabulary acquisition.

Some other studies carried out worldwide and which will constitute the epistemological basis of this research are: Using augmented reality flashcards to learn vocabulary in early childhood education, by Chen & Chan (2019); The use of flashcards in improving vocabulary mastery of students with disability, by Habibi, N. (2017); Flashcards as A Media in Teaching English Vocabulary, by Aba (2019); Using Realia to Improve English Vocabulary at Primary Level, by Irfan, et al. (2021); Teaching vocabulary by using realia (real-object) media, by Irawan (2017); "The use of realia to improve students' vocabulary mastery at first grade", by Andini, Sutarsyah, & Sudirman (2019); The use of realia to increase seventh grade students' vocabulary learning, by Vivas Ortiz & Rodríguez Cruz (2021).

2.2. Theoretical Foundation

The nature of the study required considering different teaching and learning approaches, methodologies, strategies, didactic resources for teaching English as a foreign language. Therefore, the starting point was understanding the principal approach for language teaching and learning.

The Communicative Approach for Language teaching

The communicative approach, as conceived by the British Council (2021), is based on the idea that for successfully learning a language this process must come through having to communicate real meaning. It means, when learners are involved in real communication encounters, their natural strategies for language acquisition will be used, and this will allow

them to learn to use the language. It is focused on real-world due to students, in this way, are encouraged to use the language productively (through speaking and writing) and receptively (through listening and reading) inside and outside the classroom since, language activities and techniques are designed to engage learners in the authentic, functional use of language for meaningful purposes. Real life situations (Ministerio de Educación, 2012).

This approach started in the 70s and appeared as an alternative to the then ubiquitous systems-oriented approaches, such as the Audiolingual method, Direct method, Total Physical Response, and others, that could not enable students to communicate. The Communicative Approach aimed at developing the learner's competence to communicate in the target language (communicative competence), with an enhanced focus on real-life situations (Richards & Rodgers, 2001).

The natural approach

The Natural Approach is a language learning theory developed by Stephen Krashen in the late 70s. The theory states that people learn a foreign or second language in the same way as they do with their mother tongue. This approach sees communication competence progressing throughout tree stages: Aural comprehension, early speech production, speech activities based on natural or real-life topics. Thus, it is supposed that learners are encouraged to speech production which permanently is progressing, since teachers always are providing them meaningful input.

In the communication acts, students can use either their mother or target language. But, as instruction advances, students are involved in more complex activities where students are challenged to create their own language codes. This, in the basis that meaningful interaction does not follow structures or systematic logics. Communication just occurs (Wahyuningsih, (2018).

Communicative Competence

The communicative competence refers to a person's capability to communicate in real-life circumstances. Furthermore, it refers to both the tacit knowledge of a language and the ability to use it effectively. As explained by xxxxxxxx, this competence involves four components: Grammatical or linguistic competence which includes knowledge on phonology, orthography, vocabulary, word formation and sentence formation;

Sociolinguistic competence that consists in the knowledge of sociocultural rules of use. In addition, it deals with the use of appropriate grammatical forms for different communicative functions in different sociolinguistic contexts; Discourse competence is related to the students' understanding and producing texts in the modes of listening, speaking, reading, and writing. In other terms, it must do cohesion (the grammatical and lexical linking within a text or sentence that holds a text together and gives it meaning) and coherence (the state or situation in which all the parts or ideas fit together well so that they form a united whole) in different types of texts; Strategic competence that consist in the student's ability to strategically use linguistic resources to keep communication on.

Communicative Methodologies

These methodologies are understood as an approach incorporating a national-functional syllabus expressed not in terms of language items, but in terms of what is communicated through language (Thayniath, 2017). Among the most recognized methods under this approach are: Communicative Language Teaching, Content and Language Integrated Learning, Context Based Instruction, Project Based Learning, Problem Solving.

Communicative Language Teaching

This teaching of second and foreign languages method, supports the idea of communication skills are constructed trough meaningful interaction, it means, building students communication abilities constitute the principal target of learning a language. CLT appears as a response to traditional methods and as an extension or development of the Notional-Functional Syllabus. Besides, it is a learner-centered method in which students are given the principal role in the academic process. Thus, they are expected to participate in the communication process actively. Emphasis is given to cooperative activities since they facilitate meaningful interaction where language is put in action in real life situations.

Content and Language Integrated Learning

Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) is a method in which students are immersed in academic encounters where a subject scientific knowledge and a second language (in the case of this study English) are learned at the same time. CLIL integrate the

language and content to be successful in the professional and personal areas; and success is determined when both the subject matter and language is learned.

The fundamentals of CLIL include global statements such as "all teachers are teachers of language" and cross-curricular bilingual teaching in statements from the Content and Language Integrated Project (CLIP). Thus, its benefits may be seen in terms of cultural awareness, internationalization, language competence, preparation for both study and working life, and increased motivation (The Bullock Report - A Language for Life, 1975).

Under the principals considered to the construction of the National Curriculum Guidelines, CLIL is considered as an approach that makes possible the integration of language teaching contents with culture and cognitive facts; thus, by the means of CLIL it is pretended to contribute to the integral development of students in the country (Ministerio de Educación, 2012).

Content Based Instruction

The British council (2021) CBI coincide in many characteristics and fundamentals with project work, task-based learning, and a holistic approach to language instruction. The focus of CBI is on topics or subject matter, in other words, on the scientific knowledge of a determined area. Pragmatically, CBI consists in offering students thematic of curricular areas, using as the means of interaction and instruction the target langue, in this case English. This could be a topic that interests students from a serious science subject to their favorite series, star, or film. As stated before, students learn about this subject using the language they are trying to learn, this helps them to increase their knowledge in the language and develop or improve their linguistic skills. For some theorists such as Simbolon (2019), this is thought to be a more natural way of developing language capabilities.

Computer Assisted Language Learning

Computer Assisted Language Learning (CALL) is a term used for understanding the range of processes and activities where, within the academy computers are used; in the context involving this study, in the teaching and learning of English as a foreign language. CALL reaches its momentum thanks to the confluence of the latest technology which opened new opportunities and approaches in language theories.

CALL has broken the traditional borders in terms of time and space. Today, time is not a limitation, knowledge is available for people in the time they need without limitations and restrictions. Space is not a limitation anymore, students can get in contact with people around the world increasing their opportunities to improve their communication capabilities, by the means of integrating academic communities where experts, native and non-native users of language participate.

Furthermore, the dynamic how information is presented thanks to technology is another priceless advantage. Multiple formats, diverse approaches, availability of information, makes of CALL a very useful methodology that must be considered at the time of teaching foreign languages, and even more English, since it is the language of science, technology, and innovations (Abdel Latif, 2021).

Project Based Learning

Project Based Learning (PBL) is a teaching method in which students are challenged to work cooperatively to look for suitable responses or solutions to a problematic. By the means of PBL students gain knowledge and skills since they must investigate and respond to an authentic, engaging, and complex question, problem, or challenge from real life.

PBL does not have to be understood as an activity where students just "do a project", it is a more complex activity where students learn and develop social skills, collaborative working, decision making, leadership, responsibility, empathy, and other multiple capabilities that will be useful for them not only in their professional performance but in their daily life communication and interaction acts.

PBL is also known as "experiential learning" or "discovery learning," In this context, it could be understood that shares spirit of instrumentalism; the author identifies some characteristics: PBL focuses on a big and open-ended question, challenge, or problem for the student to research and respond to and/or solve; brings what students should academically know, understand, and be able to do into the equation; is inquiry-based, stimulates intrinsic curiosity, and generates questions as it helps students seek answers; Uses 21st-century skills such as critical thinking, communication, collaboration, and creativity, among others; builds student choice into the process; provides opportunities for feedback and revision of the plan and the project, just like in real life; requires students to present their

problems, research process, methods, and results, just as scientific research or real-world projects must stand before peer review and constructive criticism (Ovadiuk, 2015).

Problem Solving

Problem Solving (PS) is a teaching method where teachers challenge students to work on the conscious, planned, and purposeful effort to identify an explanation or solution to educational problems identified in class. Students are required to find a scientific or technological response to the proposed problematic in these terms they are encouraged to research and pragmatically identify options. Eminently, PS is a learner-centered method, in this sense, students are demanded to actively participate and teachers to reduce their interventions. In the area of foreign languages, PS opens the possibility for students and teachers to practice the language in real life situations and from scientific and empirical approaches.

For successfully apply all the mentioned methodologies, it is necessary for students to build their vocabulary competence, in other words, have in their availability the necessary vocabulary to be able to express and justify their ideas in real life communication encounters.

Vocabulary

In the teaching and learning process of foreign languages, learning vocabulary, or acquiring those necessary words for communicating students' thoughts is one of the most important micro-skills to develop. It does not mean that other micro-skills such as grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation are not important; but, with no vocabulary, is far more difficult to communicate than with no grammar.

Vocabulary is a set of familiar words in a language. It serves as a useful and fundamental tool for communication and acquiring knowledge. Usually, vocabulary is presented within specific areas of knowledge or interaction rituals. But, particularly in English, it must be learned, practiced, and understood through context. Therefore, when teaching this micro-skill, it is necessary for teachers to use the most suitable strategies to not only learn its semantic meaning but also it's pragmatic (González-Fernández & Schmitt; 2017).

Two of these widely recognized strategies for teaching vocabulary are Flashcards and Realia.

Flashcards

Flashcards are multipurpose resource that include graphic information in one side and semantic data in the other. Considering teachers creativity, they can be used for different purposes like testing and improving memory through practiced information retrieval. Flashcards are two-sided didactic resources that include the prompt on one side and the information about the prompt on the other. There is no restrictions on their usage or design; by its means whatever kind of vocabulary can be introduced, practiced, and evaluated.

More than a formal teaching resource, using flashcards can be a very effective self-testing approach. Furthermore, flashcards result on metacognitive processes that students and teachers are involved in since they are challenged to think about which information to have on one side and the related description on the other. This also frees up some memory, since students have a physical stack of cards with the information instead of trying to store individual facts, names, or terms in their mind (Chen & Chan, 2019).

Usefulness of flashcards are also reflected in their possibility to be used as part of spaced practice; this repetition process helps students figure out what information they can remember easily and what needs additional rehearsal. For some theorists like, Habibi, N. (2017), fostering the use of flashcards also promote self-learning, making of students co-responsible of their, language acquisition in general and vocabulary improvement in specific.

How do I use Flashcards?

Traditionally, flashcards have been used for memorization individual or family of words, but it is not as simple, since these academic resources challenges students and teachers to design and make meaning of information presented in them. It is important to highlight that for flashcards to be successfully used, repetition is the key; with repetition, students can remember more and more, start with the use of words in functionally considering time, space, and context variants. Therefore, it could be assumed that vocabulary starts being included in students' long memory.

Making Flashcards

The most recommendable but not mandatory way of making flashcards follow five basic steps: 1) Buy or construct your cards. 2) Choose the category of information for your

deck (group of related or family words) of flashcards. 3) Select the most important information within that category. 4) Personalize the cards to make them unique and meaningful to YOU. 5) Include images that activate your memory; if necessary, add cues to facilitate the remembering of the vocabulary, its memorizations, and practice.

Memorizing Individual Cards

Like the making process, practice is also a very simple but priceless phase. Look at the prompt on the flashcard, and explain the related information listed on the back, say the information out loud, and then flip over the card to see if you were correct.

If correct, continue with the next card. Be responsible in this activity since the only one that would result fooled is yourself. If you could not remember without looking, you did not know it. If you cannot deal with the card, never mind, continue with another but place it in a specific pile where those words requiring more rehearsal must be put the.

Check, practice, or evaluate vocabulary as often as possible. The more students practice, the more they will memorize and internalize words. Determine the non-frequent vocabulary to put it aside; it is not a good idea spending time in words students will probably never use. But it is important to mention that it does not mean, not practicing this vocabulary, communication is a very complex social dynamic that you never know when you will need some new words (Habibi, 2017).

Making Meaning

Evaluate yourself. After, carry out a reflexive process to assure the meaning of words, a good strategy for this is responding to questions like what else is this word related to? Why is this word important? How would I apply this information in real life situations?

Categorize cards. Always words have something in common with others. This help students to remember vocabulary in relationship with other terms considering context and situations. Make graphic organizers with cards. Explain all the connections between individual cards and between groups of cards.

Practice and evaluate vocabulary in groups. Get together with peers from class during curricular and extracurricular classes, test each other using them. This is also a good

opportunity to re-thing or reformulate students' conception on words with the influence of their mates' interpretations (Aba, 2019).

Realia

Realia refers to the use of real-life objects to teach English words. For Irfan et al. (2021), the main advantage of using realia when teaching foreign languages is that learning experiences come to be more memorable for the learner. For instance, if teachers are going to work on vocabulary related with fruits and vegetables, it can be much more affective, meaningful, and remarkable for students if they can touch, smell, and see the real objects at the same time as learning the new word. Besides, as real objects are perceptible for everybody, it can be used with any kind of students, any kind of learning style or any kind of multiple intelligence.

Another example would be, if functional language for asking or giving information about transportation schedules, will be introduced; teachers could use a fictional timetable, or, if possible, a real one from the local bus station or from internet. This challenge students to use and be exposed to more language and practice it in real life situations and contexts (British Council, 2021).

Why to use realia?

The usage of realia for ESL or EFL can make the studying experience more outstanding and create associations between objects and vocabulary or other language issues. This makes possible to sassily retain words in students' short and long memory retention. For regular classes, it offers a kinesthetic element for students who learn better with action and visual activities. For online or virtual classes, such as those we are experiencing due to the Covid-19 pandemic, it provides a visual and audiovisual aid to engage students in learning. Additionally, realia is more dynamic, meaningful, and attractive than a written word or flashcard used to teach the same vocabulary (Irawan, 2017).

Realia-based Activities

For Andini, et al., (2019), there are multiple ways to use realia in the teaching and learning process of foreign languages. Some examples of the stated are presented as follows:

Recreate the realia

Students love arts and crafts and getting them to make their own version of a newspaper, bus ticket, or other realia is a great way to solidify the lesson. This idea is very flexible, so that it can be proposed for individual activities or cooperative lessons or projects.

Scavenger hunt

Teachers can hold a scavenger hunt both inside and outside the classroom to review vocabulary regarding some subjects or topics. By using the scavenger hunt, ask students to find real objects that represent the called-out word. This activity gets students actively moving, and usually is a good opportunity to foster scaffolding principles among students.

Following directions

This way to use realia consists in giving students directions to carry out with the objects. For example, if teaching prepositions, have learners take out the items from their pencil bags, and give directions to put it in a determined place. It is a great way to make students active participants in the lesson.

Ask students to bring in their own realia

Asking students to bring their own real objects have lots of advantages. It can help teachers know their students thoroughly and if students have the freedom to choose their realia, they will select those that are meaningful for them. A good extra idea is making students justify their choosing, this also will challenge them to use and be exposed to more language and of course use it in real life situations.

CHAPTER III.

METHODOLOGY

3.1.   Approach

For the characteristics of the study, it frames itself in the mixed approach. In this kind of scientific studies, as stated by Maarouf (2019), researchers gather and analyze both quantitative and qualitative information within the same research problem. In these terms, it was determined, by the means of quantitative data, the students' vocabulary level before and after the application of realia and Flashcards, and then, using qualitative techniques the perspectives of the participants, about the proposal, were gathered. Thus, the research problem was approached from its complexity.

3.2.   Research Modality

Its dynamic determined to be field research due to it aimed to observe, interact, and understand the study phenomenon as it occurs in a natural environment (López, 207). Furthermore, the study fit to the quasi-experimental type of scientific research. This is an empirical interventional study used to estimate the causal impact of an intervention on target population without random assignment (Janssen& Kollar, 2021). Under this conception, this study pretended to determine the co-relationship between realia and flashcards in the English vocabulary improvement. Besides, through pre and posttests it was determined the effectiveness of the strategies proposed and a semi structured interview to appreciate the population perceptions regarding the proposal.

3.3.   Research Level

The study level is determined by its nature. Thus, this research is descriptive and correlational. Descriptive since it attempted to depict the study phenomenon and the population's perceptions regarding the effectiveness of the intervention strategies (Atmowardoyo, 2018). Correlational, due to it assessed the influence of realia and flashcards in the development of vocabulary (Şentürk & Zeybek, 2019).

3.4. Population

This study population was constituted by 20 students coursing the 4to Año EGB "A" at Unidad Educativa "Once de Noviembre" located in the city of Guano, Chimborazo province. The population was selected principally for the complications these students have for communicating their thoughts, interests, desires, etcetera. And, after some empirical testing, it was determined that the principal cause for this problematic is the lack of vocabulary. Furthermore, the preprofesional practice carried out in this institution by the researcher, was another reason for selecting population.

3.5. Sample

Due to the population is small, taking a sample was not necessary. The study was carried out with all the participants.

3.6. Data collection techniques and Instruments

For the diagnosis and evaluation phases (first and third specific objectives), some vocabulary tests developed by the Virtual Platform "English Club" (https://www.englishclub.com/esl-quizzes/kids/) were used. Thus, students' level regarding vocabulary proficiency, before and after the application of realia and flashcards, were determined.

For the second specific objective different chunks of vocabulary were developed in flashcards and others presented by the means of realia. This process was applied for 10 classes and then, evaluation was carried out.

Finally, for eliciting students' perceptions about the effectiveness and usefulness of the strategies, a semi-structured interview was applied. Useful information for thoroughly understand the research problem was obtained through the mentioned data collection techniques.

3.7. Analysis and Interpretations techniques

For the analysis and interpretation of the quantitative data the "Comparison of Means" technique was used. In a general sense, this technique encompasses the comparison of the values of a continuous variable according to the values of a variable (students'

vocabulary level) that can be summarized in two or more categories and that we would include within the tests (pretest and posttest) for independent data, as well as the comparison of the values of a continuous variable evaluated at two or more moments in time (before and after the application of flashcards and realia).

In the case of the qualitative data, the 'Triangulation" techniques were used which helped to correlate the empirical information with the theoretical contributions of different authors. These two techniques helped to cover the study from its complexity assuring its thorough understanding and rigor.

CHAPTER IV.

RESULTS AND DISCUSION

4.1. Pretest and Posttest results

Results regarding the usage of Flashcards

Pre and post tests were applied for determining with the former the current level of students regarding vocabulary and the second to determine the effectiveness of flashcards and realia in the learning of lexis. It is important to manifest that the proposal was applied along ten classes from which in five of them, flashcards were used and, in the rest, realia. The vocabulary-topics considered for the intervention were sports, family, school supplies, weather, animals, and food. The results are presented as follows:

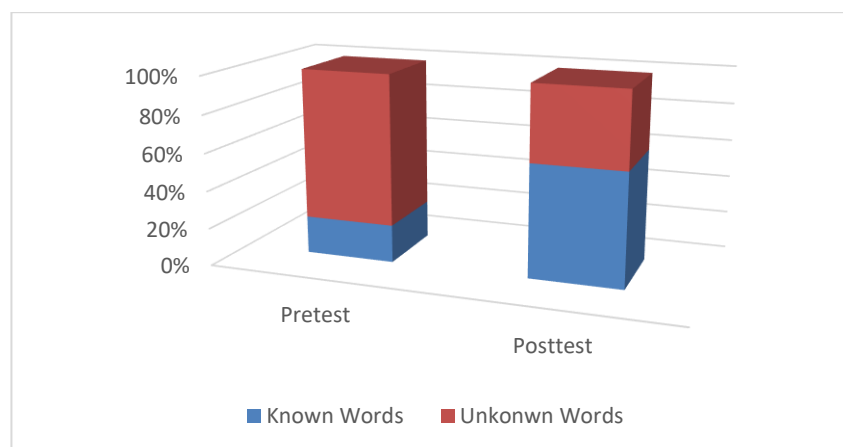**Table 1**

Stents' knowledge regarding sports

Test	Included words	Mean of words	Percentage	Difference
Pretest	10	2	20%	4
Posttest	10	6	60%	

Note. This table evidence the level of students' sports vocabulary before and after the application of flashcards.

As expressed in the table 1, in both the pre and posttest, ten words about sports were included from which in the former there is a mean of 2 words. After the application the mean increases in a 40% as expressed in the figure 1. It is important to manifest that the words which were not learned are related to sports that are not practiced in our context (badminton, hockey, diving, rugby), assuming this fact as a probable cause for their not internalization.

Figure 1

Stents' improvement regarding sports vocabulary

Table 2

Stents' knowledge regarding Family

Test	Included words	Mean of words	Percentage	Difference
Pretest	10	6	60%	4
Posttest	10	10	100%	

Note. This table evidence the level of students' family vocabulary before and after the application of flashcards.

In the table 2, it is reflected a better reality in contrast to what happened in the first chunk of vocabulary. First, students were more familiarized with vocabulary related to family, from the 100% of proposed words they recognized the 60%. After the application of flashcards and increment of 40% is appreciated. In this kind of lexis, flashcards contributed to learn all the words having and efficiency of 100% as evidenced in Figure 2. The words not asserted in the pretest were uncle, aunt, nephew, and niece.

Figure 2

Stents' improvement regarding family vocabulary

Note. This figure reflects the improvement in the level of students' vocabulary before and after the application of flashcards

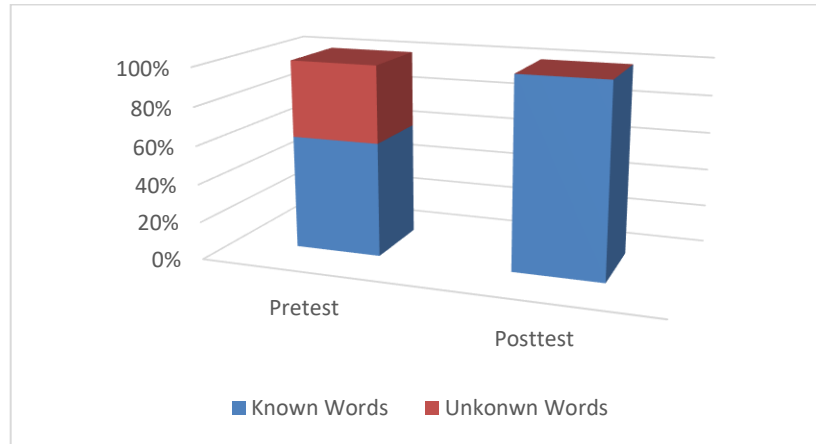The third vocabulary thematic covered by the means of flashcards was school supplies. In this case the words proposed in the tests were: pencil, pen, pencil case, eraser, sharpener, glue, markers, colors, backpack, paper, scissor, book, notebook, diary, computer, folder, dictionary, ruler, liquid paper, and puncher. Twenty words in total. The table 3 and figure 3 show the results in this respect.

Table 3

Stents' knowledge regarding school supplies

Test	Included words	Mean of words	Percentage	Difference
Pretest	20	9	45%	7
Posttest	20	16	80%	

Note. This table evidence the level of students' school supplies vocabulary before and after the application of flashcards.

The following figure expose an improvement of a 35% in the knowledge of school supplies vocabulary. The words not learned are backpack, scissors, puncher, and liquid paper.

Figure 3

Stents' improvement regarding school supplies vocabulary
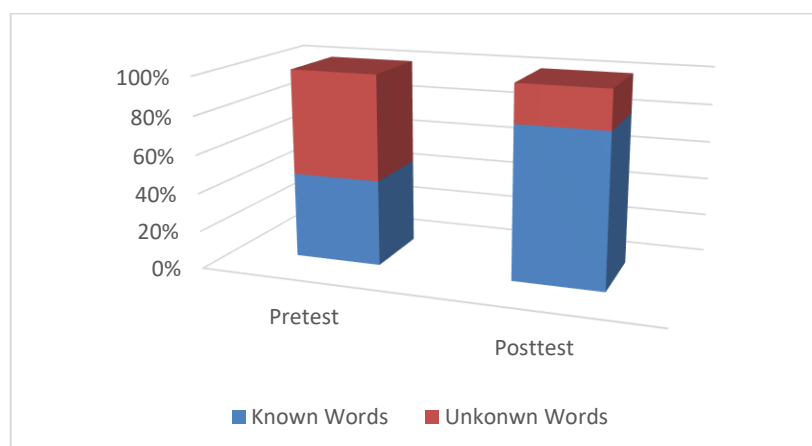
Note. This figure reflects the improvement in the level of students' vocabulary before and after the application of flashcards

For accomplishing these favorable results, the suggestions given by Aba (2019) were followed. The author proposes the stages in the usage of flashcards. First, evaluate yourself. After, carry out a reflexive process to assure the meaning of words, a good strategy for this is responding to questions like What else is this word related to? Why is this word important? How would I apply this information in real life situations? The second step consists in Categorizing cards. Always words have something in common with others. This help students to remember vocabulary in relationship with other terms considering context and situations. Make graphic organizers with cards. Explain all the connections between individual cards and between groups of cards. Finally, it was time to practice and evaluate vocabulary in groups. Get together with peers from class during curricular and extracurricular classes, test each other using them. This is also a good opportunity to re-thing or reformulate students' conception on words with the influence of their mates' interpretations.

Results regarding the usage of realia

For teaching vocabulary by the means of realia, the topics chosen were weather, animals, and food. This considering that the educational institution is in the rural sector of the city of Guano. This condition facilitated the covering of the topics since all the necessary resources can be found around. For this part of the study, the vocabulary considered was

exclusively related to what is available in the context. Regarding weather the words considered were rainy, sunny, cloudy, foggy, windy, chilly, rainbow, warm, lightning, and thunder.

Table 4

*Stents' knowledge regarding school weather*

Test	Included words	Mean of words	Percentage	Difference
Pretest	10	2	20%	8
Posttest	10	10	100%	

Note. This table evidence the level of students' weather vocabulary before and after the application of realia.

What is exposed in figure 4 evidence the usefulness of realia. There is an increasing of the 80%.

Figure 4

Stents' improvement regarding weather vocabulary
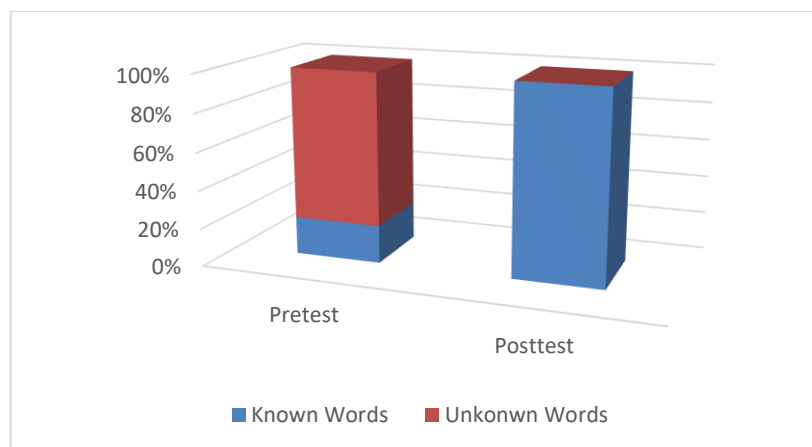
Note. This figure reflects the improvement in the level of students' vocabulary before and after the application of realia.

From the very beginning, what is stated by Irawan (2017) regarding realia was proved. The author affirms that the usage of realia for ESL or EFL can make the studying experience more outstanding and create associations between objects and vocabulary or other language issues. This makes possible to sassily retain words in students' short and long memory retention. For regular classes, it offers a kinesthetic element for students who learn better with action and visual activities. For online or virtual classes, such as those we are experiencing due to the Covid-19 pandemic, it provides a visual and audiovisual aid to

engage students in learning. Additionally, realia are more dynamic, meaningful, and attractive than a written word or flashcard used to teach the same vocabulary.

Table 5
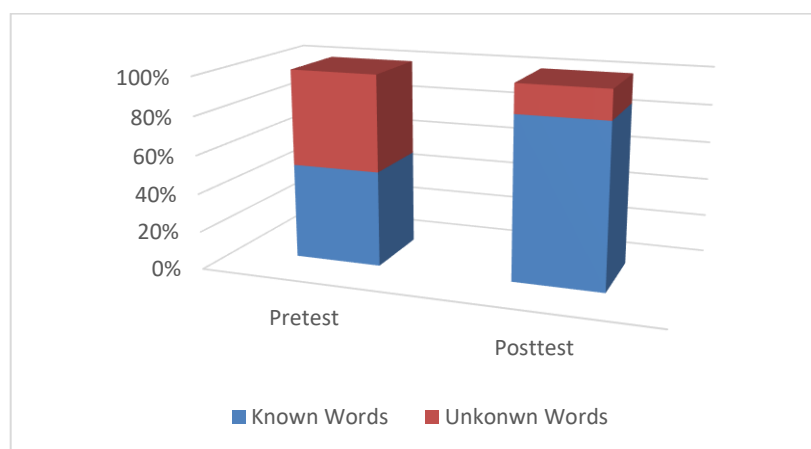
Stents' knowledge regarding animals

Test	Included words	Mean of words	Percentage	Difference
Pretest	20	10	50%	7
Posttest	20	17	85%	

Note. This table evidence the level of students' animals vocabulary before and after the application of realia.

Animals seem to be the most know topic for students, from the 20 proposed words initially they knew the 50%, after being worked through realia, this percentage is incremented up to 85%. The words not internalized were those related to baby animals calf, piglet, kitten.

Figure 5

Stents' improvement regarding animal vocabulary

Note. This figure reflects the improvement in the level of students' vocabulary before and after the application of realia.

The last chuck of vocabulary was related with food, in this case the thematic was led to include words related to ingredients of traditional food. They are listed as follows: potatoes, corn, beans, carrots, onion, pea, leek, lettuce, pumpkin, cauliflower, radish, tomato, celery, beet, blackberry, lemon, chilly, strawberry, cabbage, and broccoli.

Table 6

Stents' knowledge regarding food

Test	Included words	Mean of words	Percentage	Difference
Pretest	20	4	20%	14
Posttest	20	18	90%	

Note. This table evidence the level of students' food vocabulary before and after the application of realia.

Even though, lexis related to food was the least know, this was also the kind of words that mostly seemed to be improved. 14 new words in the topic, an equivalent of the 70% as exposed in Figure 6. It is important that for this topic, a small project was proposed too. It consisted in making students record a short video talking about the taught items making a relation with the traditional dishes the are included; of course, they combined Spanish and English for this activity.

Figure 6

Stents' improvement regarding animal vocabulary
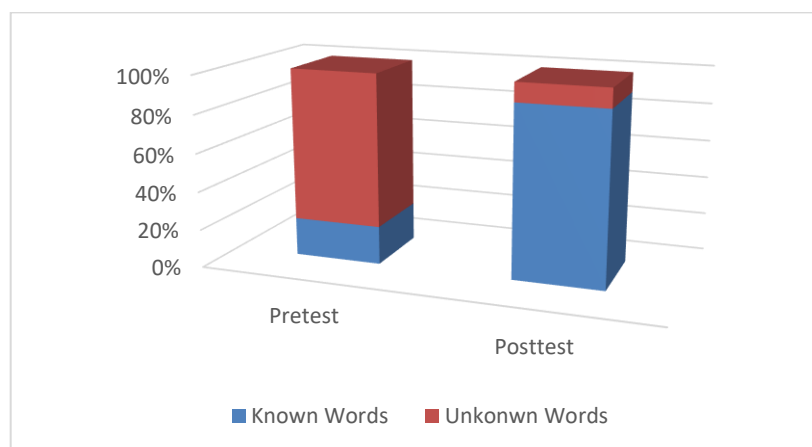
Note. This figure reflects the improvement in the level of students' vocabulary before and after the application of realia.

The realia-based-strategies used were "Following directions" to work on weather. In the case of animals, the strategy was "Scavenger hunt" and for food, it was "Ask students to bring in their own realia". All of them in the basis of what if proposed by Andini, et al., (2019).

Results from the interview to students

From the researcher view, it was necessary to discover what students think about the proposal. It means, regarding the usage of flashcards and realia for teaching English vocabulary. In this respect five questions were proposed for the students. Due to their level, the interview was carried out in Spanish.

The first inquiry was focused on knowing if the English teachers has or ha not already used these resources. Interesting facts were posted. *"Los dibujos sí ha utilizado pero de vez en nunca"* INT-S-14. What is stated by this student may evidence that probably flashcards were not properly used. Regarding realia the INT-S-3 mentioned *"Me acuerdo que una vez la teacher nos enseño las frutas con eso, las frutas"*. These facts show that effectively the English teacher has already used these issues; and of course, she knows about them. But probably, she should investigate a little deeper about their usage since students are not being benefitted as expected, and they feel so. *"Sí ha utilizado, pero usted lo hace más bonito"* INT-S-8.

The second questions aimed to identify how they felt while flashcards and realia were used. *"Estuvo chévere trabajar con los dibujos de las palabras, fue como competir con mis compañeros a ver quien se aprende más rápido"* INT-S-25. *"Cuando creamos nuestras propias cartas fue fácil recordar las palábras, porque tenía todas a mi lado y las podía buscar siempre que necesitaba"* INT-S-2. What was expressed by students is in concordance to what is stated by Abdel Latif (2021). Flashcards keep knowledge at the reach of your hand; besides, the multiple utilities make of this resource a clear ally of teachers.

In the case of realia, they seem more exited. *"Todo pareció un juego, como ese que se llama 'Simón dice'; correr a ver como esta el clima, me parecio chévere"* INT-S-15. *"Preguntarle a mi mamá como se hace esa comida y también ir al patio a ver a los animalitos y ponerles nombres, estuvo de película"* INT-S-10. Without a doubt, realia resulted more attractive for the.

This was discovered when they were asked about their preferences. Flashcards or realia. All of them chose realia. This election can be justified with what Irfan et al. (2021) affirm. The main advantage of using realia when teaching foreign languages is that learning experiences come to be more memorable for the learner. For instance, if teachers are going to work on vocabulary related with fruits and vegetables, it can be much more affective,

meaningful, and remarkable for students if they can touch, smell, and see the real objects at the same time as learning the new word. Besides, as real objects are perceptible for everybody, it can be used with any kind of students, any kind of learning style or any kind of multiple intelligence.

A fourth interrogative was formulated to identify their predisposition to continue using these resources. *"A mi si me gustaría que la teacher use estas cosas"* INT-S-1. *"Claro teacher, esta bonito trabajar así, no solo con el libro o repitiendo las palabras en el cuaderno"* INT-S-3. *"Sí sería bueno que siempre nos enseñen así, ahí esta más facil aprenderse las palabras en inglés"* INT-S-2. With these responses, it is possible to assure that the usage of realia for ESL or EFL can make the studying experience more outstanding and create associations between objects and vocabulary or other language issues, as stated by Irawan (2017).

Finally, suggestions for a better application of these resources were asked. Principally, these students recommend the integration of flashcards and realia with other resources and activities. *"El el cellular también hay juegos con las cartas que utilizó, sería bueno que también nos hagan trabajar ahí"* INT-S-5. *"Deberíamos jugar mientras aprendemos"* INT-S-7. *"Con las canciones tambien seria chévere trabajar, a mi primo que estudia en Riobamba una vez le hicieron vestirse como doctor… bonito estuvo eso"* INT-S-22. What is proposed by these kids, prove the vast utility of these two didactic resources. As stated by the interviewees, they can be integrated with technology, adopt characteristics of gamification, and be included in communicational activities such as role playing or small educational projects.

4.2. Discussion

The results clearly evidence the usefulness of the resources proposed, the manifest improvement, in the vocabulary level of the students who participated in the study, prove it. Some interesting fact also derived from this study. For instance, it was evidenced that, if vocabulary that, is not related to students' background, is proposed; it will be more difficult for them to assimilate this lexis. It happened when proposing sports that are not practiced in our country. On the contrary, when these words can be easily associated to students' culture, religion, social facts, or others; the result is completely different. It was evidenced in all the activities carried out through realia.

The most attractive resource for students is realia. This election can be justified with what Irfan et al. (2021) affirm. The main advantage of using realia when teaching foreign languages is that learning experiences come to be more memorable for the learner. For instance, if teachers are going to work on vocabulary related with fruits and vegetables, it can be much more affective, meaningful, and remarkable for students if they can touch, smell, and see the real objects at the same time as learning the new word. Besides, as real objects are perceptible for everybody, it can be used with any kind of students, any kind of learning style or any kind of multiple intelligence.

The vast variety of activities where flashcards and realia can be integrated prove their effectiveness. As stated by the interviewees, they can be integrated with technology, adopt characteristics of gamification, and be included in communicational activities such as role playing or small educational projects. The most meaningful contributions of the proposal probably will be evidenced in the future. When students are capable to communicate their feeling, interests, necessities, etcetera. In this regard, English teachers shúld be coinscious that being communicatively competent in English is not anymore, a luxury but a surviving require. People need to be able to express their feelings, interests, ideologies, political preferences, religious affinities, and other multiple communicational thematic. For this, it is extremely important to know a wide variety of vocabulary. It enables people to build strong relationships through communication. The lack of vocabulary, in terms of, knowledge of words and their meanings, can hinder both written and verbal communication or make them poorly understood.

CHAPTER V.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

(Constituye el cierre y síntesis de la investigación, sus resultados y alcance de los objetivos expuestos; considere las recomendaciones si aplican)

4.1. Conclusions

The knowledge regarding vocabulary of students is limited in all the chonks of words proposed. The lexis identified in the diagnosis is mainly the typical words exposed in texts or workbooks.

The flexibility of the resources used in this study facilitated the development, construction, and proposal of activities considering students' needs and interests.

The flashcards and realia based-activities resulted effective for the learning, practice, and internalization of vocabulary.

Students like both, flashcards and realia. They are eager to continue using these resources but the one they like the best is realia.

4.2. Recommendations

Vocabulary regarding students' reality should be taught. It would facilitated the learning since students can relate words with their inner facts.

Flashcards and realia should be used in combination with other didactic-pedagogical strategies such as projects, games, technological, etcetera.

It is recommendable for teachers to increase the usage of these resources due to they appeared to be of students' interests and their effectiveness has been proved.

The teacher should propose topics, activities, and contents based on students' background. It may facilitate vocabulary learning, practice, and internalization.

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ANNEXES

Flashcards

Family

Sports

School

Realia

Food

Animals

Weather