UNIVERSIDAD NACIONAL DE LOJA

ÁREA DE LA EDUCACIÓN, EL ARTE Y LA COMUNICACIÓN

ENGLISH LANGUAGE CAREER

TITLE

THE USE OF FLASHCARDS AS DIDACTIC MATERIAL TO IMPROVE THE ENGLISH VOCABULARY AMONG 7TH YEAR STUDENTS OF BASIC EDUCATION, IN PARALLEL "A" AT "TENIENTE HUGO ORTIZ" SCHOOL, DURING THE SCHOOL YEAR 2013-2014

Thesis required for obtaining the Bachelor's degree in Sciences of Education, English Language Major

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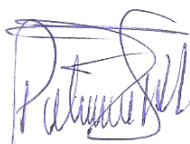
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2015

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CERTIFIES:

That the research work entitled: **THE USE OF FLASHCARDS AS DIDACTIC MATERIAL TO IMPROVE THE ENGLISH VOCABULARY AMONG 7TH YEAR STUDENTS OF BASIC EDUCATION, IN PARALLEL "A" AT "TENIENTE HUGO ORTIZ" SCHOOL, DURING THE SCHOOL YEAR 2013-2014;** developed by the undergraduate student **Pablo Leonardo Hidalgo Carrión**, has been thoroughly revised in all its parts, with pertinence and scientific rigor. Moreover, the research reports have been progressively reviewed and returned to the researcher with the corresponding observations and suggestions, in order to guarantee the research work quality. Therefore, it is authorized its presentation for further submission, grading and both private and public defense.

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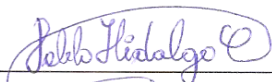
Cédula: 1104368558

Fecha: noviembre de 2015

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

DEDICATION

I dedicate my thesis work to my family. A special feeling of gratitude to my loved mother, Cecilia Carrión, for being the mainstay in my life, for all her efforts and sacrifices, which made possible the professional triumph achieved. To my siblings Nathaly and Fernando Hidalgo, who have never left my side, I extend a special dedication.

I also dedicate this work to my grandparents whose words of encouragement and tenacity, have motivated me throughout my life. For them I dedicate my love, obedience, and respect.

Pablo Leonardo

MATRIX GEOGRAPHIC SCOPE

				Ámbito geográfico							
ÁMBITO GEOGRÁFICO DE LA INVESTIGACIÓN											
BIBLIOTECA: ÁREA DE LA EDUCACIÓN, EL ARTE Y LA COMUNICACIÓN											
Tipo de documento	Autor/ Nombre del documento	Fuente	Fecha/ año	Nacional	Regional	Provincial	Cantonal	Parroquial	Barrios comunidad	Otras Desagregaciones	Notas Observaciones
TESIS	Pablo Leonardo Hidalgo Carrión THE USE OF FLASHCARDS AS DIDACTIC MATERIAL TO IMPROVE THE ENGLISH VOCABULARY AMONG 7TH YEAR STUDENTS OF BASIC EDUCATION, IN PARALLEL "A" AT "TENIENTE HUGO ORTIZ" SCHOOL, DURING THE SCHOOL YEAR 2013-2014	UNL	2015	Ecuador	Zona 7	Loja	Loja	El Valle	El Valle	CD	Licenciado en Ciencias de la Educación , mención: Idioma Inglés

GOEGRAPHIC MAP AND SKETCHES

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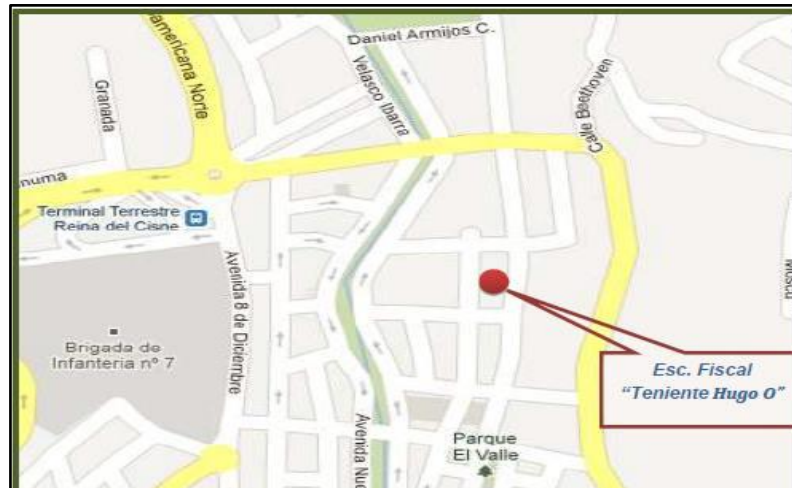
THESIS SCHEME

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b. RESUMEN

Este estudio descriptivo investigó el uso de tarjetas como material didáctico para mejorar el vocabulario Inglés con estudiantes de séptimo grado en la escuela "Teniente Hugo Ortiz". Un plan de intervención con siete sesiones se llevó a cabo para mejorarla. Pruebas y cuestionarios fueron diseñados y utilizados para medir el progreso y percepción de la utilización de tarjetas de vocabulario de los veintiséis alumnos. Un instrumento adicional, como un diario de campo fue utilizado en cada sesión para ver el crecimiento de los estudiantes. Los resultados indicaron que las tarjetas facilitaron de manera significativa el mejoramiento del vocabulario que se reflejó en el incremento notable de las notas del post-test y el progreso de los estudiantes durante la intervención. Las respuestas recibidas de los cuestionarios confirmaron también la actitud positiva para trabajar con tarjetas. Se concluye que este estudio ayudó a los estudiantes a mejorar su vocabulario, al investigador de compartir sus habilidades de enseñanza y la comunidad para tener un candidato a maestro bien preparado.

ABSTRACT

This descriptive study had the purpose to improve the English vocabulary with the use of flashcards as didactic material with seventh grade students at "Teniente Hugo Ortíz" school. An intervention plan with seven sessions was carried out to improve it. Two instruments such as pre-post tests and pre-post questionnaires were designed and used to measure the twenty six students' progress and perception of the use of flashcards. An additional instrument like a field diary was used every session to see the students' growth. The results indicated that the flashcards facilitated meaningfully the improvement of vocabulary which was reflected in the noticeable increment of the post-test scores and students' progress during the intervention. The answers received from the questionnaires also confirmed the positive attitude toward working with flashcards. It is concluded that this study helped the students to improve their vocabulary, the researcher to sharpen his teaching skills and the community to have a well-prepared candidate teacher.

c. INTRODUCTION

This action research work was focused on the use of flashcards as didactic material to improve the English vocabulary with children from eleven to twelve years old in a public school of the city of Loja. These students received English classes once a week without the support of resources and activities that motivate and facilitate the learning of the vocabulary. The current study explored a strategy to facilitate the improvement of the vocabulary learning. The application of the investigation point out to answer the question: How do flashcards as part of the classroom activities solve the limitation of the vocabulary learning.

It's important to start by saying that this kind of research has never been developed before at Universidad Nacional de Loja, but fortunately it has been adopted now in this institution. Despite the fact that this research is consider as informal, it is very helpful in the educational field since it provide the researcher a great opportunity to gain experience in teaching and propose a possible solution in order to solve the problem that students face in the classroom; in addition it is an interesting and innovative way for teachers in which they collaborate each other to improve practice in order to bring a positive change to their students. For all these reasons this action research will provide to the english teacher and researcher a great way to improve their teaching skills and give to the community excellent professionals.

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The current study worked with a sample of 26 students of seventh grade "A" of basic education in a public school. The action research work counted with an intervention plan of seven lessons, it involved pre and post-tests, pre and post questionnaires and a field diary during the intervention. This intervention was planned based on the students' cognitive process to build up their knowledge. The seven lessons were reinforced with activities that enable students to recognize and master new words; the activities also allow students to remember and understand them.

The main purpose of this study was to improve the vocabulary through the use flashcards. To achieve this goal the researcher investigated the theoretical references about vocabulary and flashcards. Then, he diagnosed the issues that limited the vocabulary learning. After that he designed an intervention plan using flashcards, then he applied the intervention plan in order to solve the limitations in the learning of the vocabulary. Finally, the researcher reflected upon the effect that the flashcards had on the learning of the english vocabulary.

During all the process of the intervention plan, the researcher had to face some limitations. Some of them were the classroom size that was very small for 26 students; it makes a little uncomfortable the classroom environment. Another limitation was the time because it was very short

and sometimes the researcher missed all the hour due the civic moment at this time. Moreover interruptions caused from neighbor classes difficult the development of this research. However, not all was bad since the researcher counted with the necessary support from the teacher, the director, and the excellent group of students whom always were willing to work without problems. Finally, the flashcards were well received for the students since the first class they were very cooperative and enthusiastic toward working with them.

The development of this action research was very helpful for the students because they change their classroom routine and had the chance to learn through a good strategy in which they get more interested in the English classes. Additionally, with the use of flashcards the students learned much vocabulary, they enjoyed all the classes and they looked always motivated by the colorful flashcards. Moreover by using flashcards the english teacher had the opportunity to improve her strategies for teaching english vocabulary and permitted to the researcher sharpen his teaching skills.

The presentation of this written report is organized in sections. The literature review section describes the variables: Vocabulary and Flashcards. Most of the vocabulary literature is based on information provided by important authors like Homby (1948), Janeth Grischy (2014),

Cross (1991) and contributions of works of similar researches. The materials and methods section detail the design of the investigation, action research, the methods that help this study and the fine points that were considered in the study.

In the results section is presented the data obtained from the research. These data is shown through tables and figures with the corresponding analysis. On the other hand, in the discussion are described the most relevant findings and the benefits that this kind of research provides to the researcher, students and the community. Finally, the last sections are the conclusion and the recommendations which revealed that flashcards worked very well and also students reduce their vocabulary limitations meaningfully. In addition, in the last part the researcher is able to do some suggestions based on the conclusions established.

d. LITERATURE REVIEW

VOCABULARY

Vocabulary is one of the important elements in teaching English. This statement is supported by Hatch (1995), she says, "Vocabulary is the foundation to build languages, which plays a fundamental role in communication". It describes that by mastering vocabulary; people can express their ideas and understand the other basic competence well. Students of Elementary School study Basic English. They study about simple words or things in their surroundings, it is aimed that students are able to understand simple English used in daily context. However, it is difficult to master the other competences without understanding the vocabulary, because vocabulary is the basic competence that must be reached by students in order to get other competencies like reading, writing, listening, and speaking.

DEFINITION OF VOCABULARY

Hornby (1948) states that Vocabulary is a total number of words which (with roles for combining them make up a language). It means that vocabulary covers knowing the meanings of words and their uses in context. According to Ur (1998) vocabulary is the words teachers teach in

the foreign language; it means vocabulary is written or spoken unit of language as symbol of idea in foreign language for the learners. Moreover, Hatch E. (1995) and Brown, (1995) state that vocabulary refers to a list or set of words for a particular language or a list or set of words that individual speaker of a language might use. It means that vocabulary as the words of certain language which are used by language speaker in using language.

KINDS OF VOCABULARY

According to Tahir (2013), there are two kinds of vocabulary:

- Active Vocabulary
- Passive vocabulary

The Active Vocabulary of a person consists of those words that he or she use correctly in his or her own speech and writing. He or she fully understands the meaning of those words. It is also called working or functional vocabulary.

The Passive Vocabulary of a person consists of those words which he recognizes when he encounters them in print or in the speech of others. He can make out the meanings of those words. It is also called recognition vocabulary. Passive vocabulary is always larger than the active vocabulary.

BASIC ASPECTS OF VOCABULARY

Harmer (1991) "If language structures make up the skeleton of language, then it is vocabulary that provides the vital organs and the flesh" (Harmer, The practice of English Language Teaching, 1991). Therefore, no matter how brilliantly one masters his/her English grammar, without the knowledge of vocabulary it is useless because words are the basis that creates the speech (Scrivener, 1998).

In the past vocabulary was underestimated and it was perceived only as a medium needed for teaching grammar but nowadays vocabulary has become more acknowledged by methodologists (Harmer, The Practice of English Language Teaching, 1991). However, vocabulary is seen as something less important than grammar and we do not focus on it as much as we should especially at schools.

THE IMPORTANCE OF VOCABULARY

Shoebottom (1996-2014) states that Vocabulary is much more than grammar; it is the key to children understanding what she hears and reads in school; and to communicating successfully with other people. For this reason it is very important for them quickly build up a large store of words. Research studies have shown the strong links between having an extensive vocabulary and achieving school success.

According to the point of view of Janet Grischy (2014) the vocabulary makes up the words of a given language, and language is the main way humans communicate. People with substantial vocabularies convey their meanings better than those with small vocabularies. Persons who know the right words can say precisely what they mean so that others will understand them clearly. Also, persons with a large vocabulary appear intelligent to their friends, their teachers and others. Finally, someone who has cultivated an extensive vocabulary will find it easier to understand what others are saying and easier to respond to them appropriately. She identified some fields in which vocabulary plays an important role. Those are the following:

- **Communication**

Language is not all there is to communication, but when people cannot see or hear each other their vocabularies are almost all they have. A large vocabulary makes communication rich and interesting. A small vocabulary can make communication limited and insipid. The same author says that written speech has to make up for clues people get from watching expressions and listening to tone of voice. Therefore, anyone who has to communicate in writing needs a vocabulary that is more expressive than everyday speech. That is why the rules for writing are so persnickety, and one reason why people need effectual vocabularies.

- **Precision**

A substantial vocabulary lets someone write or speak precisely. A six year old is a child. The word "child" is a formal term of description. People say "child" when they are speaking seriously or in imposing circumstances. For informal speech, the best word might be "kid." (Kid first meant baby goat and was an unacceptable way to describe a child.) Someone older, but not considered completely mature, is a youth. In a court of law, someone who is not legally an adult is a minor. A kid who misbehaves is a brat.

English has many words to describe a child's age, gender and deportment. The larger someone's vocabulary, the more precisely they can describe a particular child. Most of the time, people select from a collection of words with meanings that are similar but not exactly the same. To call someone a child is descriptive. To call the child a brat is mean. To call the child a hooligan is horrendous.

- **Intelligence**

People who know many words seem (and often are) smarter than those who do not. Someone who describes a sculpture as full of exquisite proportion and evoking universal human themes sounds smarter than someone who says the sculpture "is nice." The more descriptive person

may not be smarter, or know more about sculpture, but they seem smarter because of their vocabulary.

If intelligence is only a thing that IQ tests measure, then anyone can raise their intelligence by increasing their stock of words. With a higher IQ score they may well feel entitled to feel superior, because they seem so much smarter than they were. They had better not act supercilious though, or they will meet with antipathy.

- **Understanding**

The main value of vocabulary is that it helps people to understand one another. Well-spoken individuals can make them clear and can also more clearly understand what someone else is trying to say. Clear communication helps people get along.

TEACHING VOCABULARY

"A word is a microcosm of human consciousness" (Vygotsky)

Much has also been written about the strategies teachers can use to help learners to develop their knowledge of vocabulary (e.g. Gairns y Redman 1986; Schmitt y Mc.Carthy 1997). Strategies commonly discussed are:

- Using objects: teachers can use real objects to introduce new vocabulary. This can help learners because they not only hear the word but also receive visual reinforcement (Hunt, 1998).

- Mime, expression and gestures: many words (e.g. angry, happy) lend themselves to being taught through movement and gestures.

- Guessing from context: learners will always meet words which are new to them, so it is important for them to know how to work out their meaning from the context.

- Translation: the teacher explains the meaning of the new words using the learners' mother tongue.

- Illustrations and pictures: most concrete vocabulary can be taught using illustrations and pictures made by teachers or found in stories and other resources.

- Contrasts: this technique involves explaining a word by contrasting it with an antonym, very often an antonym which is known to the learners.

Apart from these specific strategies, two general approaches for teaching Vocabulary can be mentioned here. The first is incidental learning, where it is hoped that learners will pick up new vocabulary through exposure and without conscious explanation by the teacher. The second approach recognizes that some vocabulary needs explicit instruction.

HOW TO TEACH VOCABULARY?

According to Cross (1991: 11-13) the procedure of teaching vocabulary can be divided into three stages:

- **Presentation.** In this stage, the teachers can use various techniques which are recommended in the previous discussion. However, the teachers have to be careful in selecting the techniques that they used in teaching activity;
- **Practice.** In the second stage, the teacher give exercises to the students in order to practice the subject items being learnt, making completion, matching, words classification, etc. those are several types of exercise that can be used by the teacher in this stage;
- **Production.** In this stage the students are expected to apply the newly learn vocabulary through the speaking activities or writing activities

TECHNIQUES TO TEACH VOCABULARY

Mehta (2009) points out that it is noteworthy to mention here that vocabulary items are imparted mostly by translation: either a list of words with their translation at the beginning of the lesson or the translation of the content having new words or glossaries at the very end. This is an erroneous practice as it leads to a state of confusion for the learners. On

the teaching skills of vocabulary items, Frisby (1957) commented that "While the teacher is not, himself, concerned with the actual selection of vocabulary for text book purposes since practically all the books we use are based on limited vocabularies, it is important that he/she (the teacher) should know the principles, which underlie vocabulary selection". Thus it signifies that a language teacher should be innovative and proficient in the application of methodologies pertaining to teaching vocabulary items in a classroom situation.

Following are the main methodologies for teaching vocabulary items in an English language classroom according to Frisby (1957).

Listening Carefully. - Careful listening to the words may be a good option in teaching vocabulary items in a heterogenic classroom. "Let the students hear the word in isolation and in a sentence. If the sounds of the word have been mastered, the students will hear it correctly with two or three repetitions." Slow pronunciation without distortion will help. Breaking the word into parts and building up to the whole word will also be helpful.

Pronouncing the Word. - Pronouncing the word enables the students to remember it longer and identify it more readily when they hear or see it.

Methods of Grasping the Meaning. - The teacher should try to get the meaning to the class without using translation. This is not preferable on

the ground that translation may or may not provide the meaning of the word accurately and precisely. It is advocated as it enables the class to go without grasping the meaning of a word that they have learned to pronounce rather than to depend upon the translation.

WHAT ARE FLASHCARDS?

According to Cross (1991:119), flashcard is a simple picture on a piece of card or paper, which is probably the most widely used visual aids in language teaching. It means that flashcard is one of media which can help the teacher to teaching English easily. Flash cards in teaching vocabulary are very simple visual aids and the teacher can make the students more active during the teaching learning process.

College(2013) affirms that flashcards are one of the best methods to use for studying and memorizing information. You can use flash cards to learn just about any information for any class, such as vocabulary, mathematical equations and formulas, terms and definitions or main ideas and topics.

DEFINITION OF FLASHCARD

Haycraff (1978: 102-106) states that flashcards are cards on which words and/or pictures are printed or drawn. According to Dictionary (1995:

94), flashcard is a card with the word or words and sometimes a picture down it. Based on discussed above, it can be taken a general view that flashcards are cards with a word or words, number, or a picture on it for use in the classroom by teacher and students that help to learn and memorize new words.

According to Victoria Street   Flashcards can be a very useful strategy for recalling information that will further trigger your memory. The same author states that Flashcards hold just a small amount of information—and this small amount, like a fact, formula, picture, or symbol— Helps to prompt other/related pieces of information. The cards activate other things you know about the topic they cue you to remember something. They are quick, easy to make, and can even be fun!

KINDS OF FLASHCARDS

Haycraff (1978: 102-106) states two types of flashcards. They are word flashcards and picture flashcards. Word flashcards are cards on which words have been printed. When practicing word order, the teacher can use a number of cards representing all the words in a sentence.

The flashcards can be fixed to the board, or given to a student, and arranged correctly either by the class a whole or individual students. The word flashcards also can be used to practice structure. Then, picture

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flashcards are useful for presenting, practicing and revising vocabulary or as prompts for other activities – for example, to illustrate the characters in a dialogue, to help students improvise. Picture flashcards can be used as prompts for simple substitution drills. Picture flashcards are also useful for identifying verbs on action.

ADVANTAGES OF USING FLASHCARDS

Haycraft (1978:102) and Cross (1991:120) remarks that there are some advantages of using flashcards in language teaching.

- Flashcards can be used for associating vocabulary.
- Flashcards are motivating and eye-catching.
- Flashcards can be used for any level students.
- Flashcards can be taken almost everywhere and studied when are has free moment.
- Flashcards can be arranged to create logical grouping of the target words.
- Flashcards are cost effective.
- Flashcards provide visual link between L1 and the target language.
- Flashcards also can be used for practicing structure and word order or for a variety of games.

Therefore flashcards have many advantages; they are in motivating and stimulating the students. Teachers can use them at any time and in any situation when they want to teach.

MORE ADVANTAGES

Flashcards are effective memory-aid tools that can help students learn new material quickly. Although it may be tempting to associate flash-card learning with younger children who may be learning the basics of arithmetic, an article published on the Indiana University-Purdue University, Fort Wayne website notes that the use of flash cards can be effective in college disciplines like psychology.

- **Economic Advantages**

Flash cards can be one of the least expensive ways to study material. There is no need to go out and buy a set of fancy illustrated cards. Instead, create flash cards with simple 3 x 5-inch index cards, which can be utilized with or without lines depending upon the type of information needed (Lewis, 2010).

- **Portability**

Flash cards provide students with a portable learning tool. Rather than having to carry around a book or notebook, flash cards allow students the opportunity to take as many cards as are needed (Lewis, 2010).

- **Efficiency**

The portability of flash cards can improve efficiency in learning new material. By taking the cards everywhere, students can make effective use of their time when they would otherwise not be studying, such as using them while walking on the treadmill (Lewis, 2010).

- **Condensing Material**

One mistake students sometimes make when studying for college classes is trying to learn too much material at one time. This can make the learning process cumbersome and can be overwhelming. Flash cards eliminate extraneous material as they can focus on only the most important elements of what students need to learn (Lewis, 2010).

- **Versatility**

Utilize flash cards for virtually any subject. They make perfect learning tools for memorizing vocabulary for the study of foreign languages, English vocabulary, math formulas, dates and events for history classes, psychology terms and even more advanced topics, like medical terminology (Lewis, 2010).

- **Variety**

Since the order can be shuffled, flash cards prevent students from simply memorizing the order of the answers in long-list items. Reverse the flash cards so the answers can be seen first and students must surmise what the original questions were (Lewis, 2010).

ACTIVITIES TO USE WITH FLASHCARDS

Flashcards can be used in many ways to introduce and practice vocabulary, as well as consolidate, recycle and extend children's language.

The following are ways to use flashcards according to Soberón (2012):

- **Flash:** Show each flashcard to the children in turn very quickly by holding it at the sides between your thumb, index and second finger and "flashing" it or turning it round very quickly. Children look and guess what it is. Re-cast and introduce the word in English as appropriate.

- **Slowly, slowly:** Choose the flashcards you are going to use and have ready a plain piece of card the same size. Hold up each flashcard in turn covered completely by the card at first. Pull down the card to slowly reveal

the picture and encourage children to guess what it is. Children call out the name once they can see enough to recognize the picture.

- **Point to:** Stick a set of flashcards on the walls round the classroom. Hold up each one and get the children to say the names as you do this. Give instructions for example: Point the spider! Children listen, look round the classroom and point to the correct flashcard as fast as they can.

- **Mime the flashcard:** Hold up flashcards in turn and say the names. Children do a mime in response for example they can pretend to eat a particular food (if they are using food flashcards), imitate a particular animal (animal flashcards) or put on clothes (clothes flashcards). Then do mimes of different flashcards yourself or invite individual or pairs of children to take turns to do this. Children watch and call out the names.

- **What's missing?** Stick a set of flashcards on the blackboard. Hold up each one and get the children to say the names as you do this. Then say "close your eyes" and demonstrate meaning. When children have their eyes closed, quickly remove one of the flashcards from the blackboard. Children open their eyes and call out the name of the missing flashcard.

- **Magic eyes:** Stick a set of no more than six flashcards in a row on the blackboard. Say the names and get the children to repeat them two or

three times. Then remove the flashcards one by one. Point to where they were and children repeat the names as if they were still there.

- **Flashcard instructions:** Stick a set of flashcards on the walls around the classroom. Divide the class into groups. Then, give each group instructions in turn for example: Group 1: Walk to the elephant, group two: Jump to the lion and children respond.

- **Repeat if it's true:** Stick a set of flashcards on the blackboard. Point out one of the flashcards and say the name, if you have said the correct name, children repeat it, if not they stay silent. This activity can be made more challenging if you say sentences for example; it is a red tomato.

- **Lip Reading:** Stick a set of flashcards on the blackboard. Choose one flashcard and mouth the word silently to the class, children lip read what you are saying and respond by saying the word out loud.

- **Guess the flashcard:** Stick a set of flashcards on the blackboard. Secretly choose one and encourage children to guess which it is asking you questions for example: Is it red? No, it is not. Is it blue? Yes, it is. Invite individual children to the front of the class in turn and get them to secretly choose a flashcard while the others guess in the same way.

- **What is it?** Stick six-eight flashcards from different units on the blackboard. Elicit or remind children of the names. Choose one and give clues for example: It is a small animal. It is got eight legs. It runs. I am scared of it. What is it? Children listen and identify the correct flashcard: (It is the) spider.

- **Kim's game:** Stick eight-ten flashcards form different lexical sets on the blackboard. Elicit or remind children of the names. Give the children one minute to look in silence and try to memorize the flashcards before removing them from the board. Children work in pairs and write a list of the flashcards they can remember. Check the answers by eliciting answers from the whole class and writing a list on the blackboard.

- **Flashcard groups:** Divide the class into groups or three or four. Give each group of flashcards and explain that this is the name of their group. Give instructions for example: apples: touch your nose! Carrots: put your hands on your head! Children listen and follow the instructions for their group.

- **Flashcard charade:** Divide the class into groups of three or four. Give each group a flashcard, making sure that other groups do not see. Explain that children must think of a way to mime their flashcard. Give them a minute or two to prepare this. Each group then takes turns to do their mimes to the rest of the class and guess each other's flashcards.

- **Stand up:** Divide the class in two teams. Stick four-six flashcards on the left of the blackboard for one team and four-six flashcards on the right of the blackboard for the other team. Say he words in random order. Children listen and stand up as fast as they can if the word belongs to their team.

- **Flashcard letters:** Divide the class into groups of five or six. Give each group a flashcard (making sure other groups do not see) and explain that children must take the letters to spell the name of the picture with their bodies. Give them a few minutes to prepare this and encourage them to check spelling if necessary. Each group then takes turns to make the letters of their words with their bodies and to guess each other's words.

- **Who's got the flashcard?** Have a music Cd ready for this activity. Children stand close together in a circle with their hands behind their backs. Choose one child to stand in the middle of the circle. Show the flashcards you are going to use first and elicit or remind children of the name. Explain that when you play the music, children should pass the flashcard round the circle behind their backs, when the music stops, they should stop passing it round. The child in the center has three chances to find out who has got the flashcard by asking questions for example: have you got the sweater? Yes, I have/ No I have not. If he or she finds the child with the flashcard, that child has the next turn. The game continues in the same way using a different flashcard each time.

- **Ball game:** Have a soft ball ready for this activity. Stick eight-ten flashcards on the blackboard. Children stand in a circle. Hold up the ball, say one, two, three and name one of the flashcards on the blackboard for example: grasshopper! as you throw the ball to a child in the circle. The child who catches the ball repeats the procedure and names another flashcard. The game continues in the same way until all the flashcards on the blackboard have been named.

- **Flashcard chain:** Have a set of flashcards ready. Stand or sit in a circle with the children. Pass the first flashcard to the child on your left and ask a question for example: Do you like carrots? Yes, (I do)/ No (I do not). After answering, the child then asks the question and passes the flashcard to the next child and so on round the circle. When the flashcard is three children away from you in the circle, introduce another one by asking the child on your left a question in the same way.

- **Threes:** Sit in a circle with the children and divide them into two teams. Lay three of the flashcards out in front of you and elicit or remind children of the names. Then turn the flashcards over so that the pictures are hidden. Change the positions of the flashcards on the floor so that the children can no longer easily identify them. Invite a child from one of the teams to name one of the three flashcards. This child then tries to find this flashcard by choosing one of them and turning it over to reveal the picture.

If it is not the flashcard they named, the three flashcards are turned over and moved around again and a child from the other team has a turn in the same way. If it is the flashcard they named, they keep it for their team, you then need to introduce another flashcard to make up the three in the game. The game continues in the same way with the children on each team taking turns to name and turn over the flashcards. The team with most flashcards at the end of the game is the winners.

- **Flashcard bingo:** Use ten-fifteen flashcards for this activity, stick the flashcards on the blackboard. Children draw a grid with six squares and write the name of one flashcard in each square (encourage them to check spelling to do this as necessary). When children are ready, remove the flashcards form the blackboard and shuffle them. Hold up the flashcards one by one and say the names. Children listen and write a cross on the word if it is in their grid. The first child to write a cross on all six words in their grid calls Bingo is the winner.

- **Flashcard whispers:** Children stand in two lines facing the blackboard. Secretly show the last child standing in each line a flashcard. This child then whispers the name of this flashcard to next child and so on up the line. The child at the front runs to the blackboard and draws or writes the word. They the go to the back of the line. Repeat the procedure several times.

- **Odd one out:** Stick three or four flashcards in a row on the blackboard for example: butterfly, beetle, spider or apple, carrot, pizza, tomato. Children look and identify the odd one out and say why, for example: spider. It is got eight legs/ pizza. It is not from plant. Repeat the procedure several

- **Flashcard story:** Give out flashcards you are going to include in the story to the children in pairs. Invent a very simple story using a puppet or coursebook character or a child in the class. An example of one using color flashcards is as follows: One day Jack paints a picture (use mime to convey meaning) He paints with red, he paints with blues and purple, etc. (naming all the colors). Jenny says, "What a wonderful picture" Jack is very happy. Scruffy the dog is very happy too. He wags his tail like this and oh dear, he spills all the paint. Now Scruffy is red and purple and… (Name all the colors again). Children listen and hold up the colour flashcard they have got when they hear the corresponding word in the story.

- **Jumbled words and flashcards:** Stick flashcards and word cards on the blackboard in jumbled order. Invite individual children out to the blackboard in turn and get them to draw lines to join the flashcards and words.

- **Match the flashcards and words:** Stick flashcards on the blackboard. Give out word cards to individual children. Children take turns to come out to the blackboard and stick their words by the correct flashcard (alternatively, you can stick the word cards on the blackboard and give the flashcards out to the children).

- **Stop:** Stick a flashcard on the blackboard and elicit or remind children of the name. Hold up word cards one by one. Children read the words silently until you hold up the word card which matches the flashcard. They then call "Stop" and read the word out loud. Repeat the procedure with different flashcards.

- **Team game:** Have ready two sets of word cards for the same flashcards for this game. Divide the class into two teams. Stick flashcards (as many as there are children in each team) on the blackboard or on the walls around the classroom. Give one word card to each child in both teams. When you call out the name of one of the flashcards, the child in each team who has the corresponding word card gets up and goes to touch the flashcard and hold up their word card as fast as they can. The child who gets there first each time wins a point for their team.

- **Blackboard pelmanism:** Use eight-ten flashcards and word cards for this activity. Stick the flashcards in jumbled order on one side of the

blackboard, facing inwards so that children cannot see the pictures, and number them. Do the same with the word cards on the other side of the blackboard. Invite one child to choose a flashcard for example: Number two, please! and, as you turn it round to show the picture, to say what it is for example: it is a hat. Then invite the same child to choose a word card in the same way. If the flashcard and word card chosen by the child match, remove them from the blackboard. If not, turn them both round so that they are in exactly the same position but facing inwards again. The game proceeds with different children taking turns to choose a flashcard and word card in the same way, trying to match them from memory until they are all removed from the blackboard.

- **Classify the words:** Draw two or three large circles on the blackboard and write the topic words at the top of each one for example: animals, food, clothes. Children take turns to come to the front of the class, either individually or in pairs, read a word card that you give them and stick it in the correct circle.

WHY USE FLASHCARDS?

Gelfgren (2008) expresses that different students learn in different ways, and it is relevant to make use of visual teaching methods since studies show most of students learn through visual ways. Flashcards are a

clear and colorful way to teach vocabulary in a funny way, and they can have a positive effect on the visual learning process of the students.

The author suggests that flashcards can be used for any subject, for example elementary or more advanced language training (vocabulary and grammar), mathematics, biology and geography.

Flashcards are easy-to-use and handy resources for teachers and they can be used on any class level. They are excellent for presenting vocabulary, drilling and repetition. For many students, using flashcards is a fun way to learn new vocabulary and grammar.

WHEN AND WHERE USE FLASHCARDS

Gelfgren (2008) states that flashcards work well in individual, pair and group work. Students can ask each other questions and help using flashcards. They can use pictures to learn new vocabulary and expressions, then move on to simple pictures and word cards, and finally to exercises and activities using flashcards.

Flashcards are a quick and easy way to make use of visual means to help students learn and drill vocabulary. Both children and adults profit from flashcards in their learning process. Flashcards can be dealt out to children who finish their assignments earlier, or to be used in groups.

Children who can read can use flashcards with pictures and flashcards with words and combine them.

AREAS OF APPLICATION

Gelfgren (2008) presents ideas and examples on how the flashcards can be used in fourteen different areas of classroom instruction. The games can be combined with an example work-sheet and can then be applied in many other areas. Use your imagination and get an extra "bounce" in the lessons. The teacher can include specific vocabulary in several different kinds of exercises, until the students master them.

- **LEXICON**

Flashcards are invaluable for teachers who teach small children, school children and adults (Gelfgren, 2008). Combine flashcards with words and flashcards with pictures and you have hundreds of different games and exercises done for your lessons. The varying methods allow students to stay focused instead of getting bored with repetitive drilling activities.

- **THE ALPHABET**

The alphabet is an important learning area for pre-school children and for adult students whose first language does not have the Latin alphabet or Latin symbols. Use different methods with pictures, words, or only with

letters or phonetic letters to find the most appropriate way for your students to learn them (Gelfgren, 2008).

- **PRONUNCIATION**

Pronunciation cards are very useful because students can practice words and pronunciation in several ways while learning to communicate effortlessly (Gelfgren, 2008).

- **GRAMMAR**

Teaching grammar does not always have to be about theory, translations, written exercises and fill in the gaps exercises. By using grammar flashcard games, you can combine grammar theory while doing the exercises orally and the students learn to communicate at the same time. This is a modern technique that has become more common during language training lessons for adults, where students often are more concerned about their communication skills than their written skills (Gelfgren, 2008).

- **DISCUSSION**

An important part of everyday life and communication is being able to ask questions, give answers, express opinions and provide descriptions.

The discussion cards are used to spark conversations, such as how to get acquainted with each other or talk about news and current events. Your students learn to use their imagination to form long sentences and engage in conversation. It will be easier for students to learn new words that are connected to specific topics when introduced to them on flashcards with keywords and/or pictures, and to pick up a topic of discussions with the help of keywords. Debate cards can be used in classes with older students to liven up the conversation by dividing students in groups of pros and cons (Gelfgren, 2008).

- **QUIZ CARDS**

Instead of only written tests, quiz cards can be used to vary the methods used to test students' skills, making the test itself into a fun game. Quizzes that are suitable for your students can be compiled on various subjects and themes and for different levels. For students at lower levels, quizzes may also include multiple choice questions.

Instead of simply testing the students' knowledge, try using the cards in this way! It can give your students a different perspective and stimulate discussion around a theme. Individuals have the ability to learn while listening to the other students' comments about the theme (Gelfgren, 2008)

- **ROLE PLAY**

You can encourage the students to learn in a fun way with the help of role-play cards. The students can use their existing vocabulary and learn new words in a foreign language. Role-play cards can also provide support in developing imagination and improvisation. These flashcards can be informative; improve communication skills, and they can be used as a supplement when teaching the cultural aspect of the language, such as manners and customer service in different countries (Gelfgren, 2008).

- **FLASHCARDS WITH ASSOCIATIONS, SYNONYMS AND OPPOSITES**

Teachers can use flashcards with associations, synonyms and opposites to enrich the students' vocabulary. These games develop both vocabulary and language fluency. In these games, students are encouraged to independently develop their vocabulary – it is faster and more stimulating than having the teacher explain the word (Gelfgren, 2008).

- **LANGUAGE COMPREHENSION**

Flashcards can be valuable in activities related to language comprehension and listening, but this requires a little more preparation by

the teacher. Keywords are good to remember, and they should be used to strengthen the immediate language understanding in an auditory task (Gelfgren, 2008).

- **FLASHCARDS – DIFFERENCES**

These flashcards include activities with the purpose of learning the myriad of language differences that exist between native speakers of the same language coming from different countries (for example U.S English and British English, Standard Swedish and Finnish Swedish) (Gelfgren, 2008).

- **FLASHCARDS WITH NUMBERS, MONEY AND TIME**

It is important for everyone to know the numbers, the ordinals, dates and the time. It can be difficult for adults learning a new language and for young children to master these. The various exercises and games with these cards make learning fun.

- **FLASHCARDS IN FOREIGN LANGUAGES**

Language teachers may come to realize that flashcards with pictures and flashcards with words are priceless when new vocabulary is

presented. In the case of immersion, this is the easiest and fastest learning method. If you use both the students' first language and target language, bilingual flashcards can be very helpful (Gelfgren, 2008).

e. MATERIALS AND METHODS

MATERIALS

This research work was accomplished with the help of three main resources. The Human resources that participated during the different stages were the target population, the cooperating English school teacher, the thesis advisor and the researcher. In this research the target population was the students of seventh grade "A" of "Teniente Hugo Ortiz" public school. The cooperating teacher helped provide general information about these target students and the thesis advisor supervised the development of the stages of the study. The researcher worked enthusiastically in order to learn from the various human resources and also played an active role in this research work.

A personal computer, internet, removable memory stick, and multimedia were some of the technological resources used. Office supplies such as handouts, flashcards, videos, textbooks and bibliography were important material components as well.

DESIGN OF THE RESEARCH

The spiral model of action research proposed by Kemmis and McTaggart (2000) was followed in this study. Action research is a general

name for research done by undergraduate and postgraduate students. Action research has the potential to make a substantial impact on the process of teaching and learning. Thus, it is a methodological technique that connects research to practice. It involves a self-reflective cycle of identifying a situation or problem, planning a change, acting and observing the processes and consequences, and then re-planning, and so forth; that is why action research was applied to this study. It has assisted the researcher of this thesis to follow the first cycle of the Kemmis and McTaggart's spiral. This process facilitated his reflections of his teaching and improved his students' situation.

METHODS

Action Research was adopted as the research design of the study and was integrated within the development of the academic course. This study aimed to describe the data resulting from the application of an intervention plan. The following general methods were applied along the descriptive research:

The Scientific method assisted the study of the use of flashcards applied in the development of improving the learning of the english vocabulary. It helped in the observations done before and during the intervention, and it also assisted during the anticipation of the possible

solution. This particular method helped support data collection in order to make relevant predictions and further analysis.

The Descriptive method enabled the researcher to describe the different stages of the study and the kind of resources used. It served to explain and analyze the object of the investigation.

The analytic-synthetic method was used to analyze the obtained results through two questionnaires, two tests and a research diary. It was adopted also to interpret the data, develop the logical analysis and draw conclusions.

The statistic method made possible the quantitative statistical analysis of data derived from the test and questionnaires as well as the qualitative text analysis of the data received from the teacher's diary.

TECHNIQUES AND INSTRUMENTS

TECHNIQUES

Specific techniques were adopted along each stage of the research process, from the formation of the theoretical framework to the discussion of results. In forming the Theoretical Framework and Literature Review,

extensive reading was conducted and the use of outlines and index cards helped facilitate learning and focus the information. Technology offered valuable help in the process of creating bibliographical sources and citations. APA style was assumed as the formal system for format organization and citation.

DATA COLLECTION INSTRUMENTS

In order to get valuable data during the intervention, the researcher used the following instruments to gather the information

- Two researcher's-made tests of four multiple choices questions (annex 1, page 123-125)

- Two Questionnaires of five closed and multiple choice questions (annex 2, page 126-127)

- A set of eight field diaries (annex 3, page 128)

PROCEDURE

The study started with the observations of the English classes of the students of seventh grade "A" in order to identify the issues the students were facing. Some observation sheets were fill out to record the activities and the work students did in the classes. The analysis of observations

helped to form the problem statement and create a possible solution, in order to support the questions raised during the observations a theoretical framework was developed

An intervention plan (pages 111-116), organized in seven lessons was designed with the help of the literature framework. Then, the intervention plan was applied from April to May. During this stage quantitative and qualitative data was collected using the instruments mentioned above.

The questions of the test were grouped according to the Blooms cognitive approach to assessments. It means that it was considered what students need to perform in order to answer the questions correctly.

After collecting the data it was tabulated and translated into tables. Means for each test section were calculated to have a better overall view of performance of the group/class in each test $\quad \text{x} = \frac{\Sigma \text{x}}{\text{n}}$.

The Pearson Correlation coefficient $r = \frac{\text{n}(\Sigma XY) - (\Sigma X)(\Sigma Y)}{\sqrt{[\text{n}(\Sigma x^2) - (\Sigma x)^2][\text{n}(\Sigma y^2) - (\Sigma y)^2]}} =$ was used to find out the relationship between the learning outcomes before and after the intervention plan. It is one of the best means for evaluating the strength of a relationship between pre and posttests (x and y). Both variables were expressed in terms of quantitative scores and the

statistical analysis was used to determine whether there was a significant change in achievement from the base line data to the posttest results. Observation data was also obtained by periodical monitoring of the evaluation of the language skill by means of a researcher-designed diary.

The discussion of the outcomes was completed with the triangulation of the findings and the literature that supports this study. The conclusions were drawn considering the initial inquiries. Finally, the thesis was written and disseminated.

POPULATION

The students of seventh grade "A" of basic education were chosen as sampling to develop this research work. The participants of this study were twenty six children including boys and girls which are between eleven and twelve years old. The students receive one hour of English per week with a certified teacher.

f. RESULTS

In this section the data received from questionnaires and tests are presented in   tables and graphs. An interpretation is done after each table and graph.

Table 1

Pre-Test Data

Student's Code	R			U	Total
	$\frac{Q.1}{2}$	$\frac{Q.2}{2}$	$\frac{Q.3}{4}$	$\frac{Q.4}{2}$	$\frac{10}{10}$
THO001	0,8	1,5	1,5	1,2	5
THO002	1,2	0,5	1,5	0,8	4
THO003	0,4	2	2,5	0,4	5,3
THO004	0,4	1	2	0,8	4,2
THO005	0,8	1	2	0,8	4,6
THO006	0,8	2	2	0,4	5,2
THO007	0	1	2	0,4	3,4
THO008	0	1	1,5	0,4	2,9
THO009	0	0,5	2	1,2	3,7
THO010	0.8	2	2,5	1,2	6,5
THO011	0,4	0,5	1,5	1,2	3,6
THO012	0,4	2	2	0,4	4,8
THO013	0,8	1	1,5	0,8	4,1
THO014	0,5	1	0,5	0,4	2,4
THO015	0,8	1	2	0,4	4,2
THO016	0,8	1	2,5	0,4	4,7
THO017	0,8	1	3	0	4,8
THO018	0,8	1	2	0,4	4,2
THO019	0,8	2	2,5	1,2	6,5
THO020	0,8	1	2	1,2	5
THO021	0,8	2	1,5	0,8	5,1
THO022	0	2	2	0,4	4,4
THO023	0,4	2	2	0	4,4
THO024	0,4	0,5	2	0,4	3,3
THO025	0,4	1	1,5	1,2	4,1
THO026	0,4	1,5	2,5	1,2	5,6
MEAN	0,8	1,2	1,9	0,6	4,5

Note. Q= question; R= remembering; U= understanding; questions are grouped according to the cognitive process, the ability to apply knowledge (Bloom's cognitive behavior theory); THO= Teniente Hugo Ortíz (school name)

Figure 1

Pre Test Data
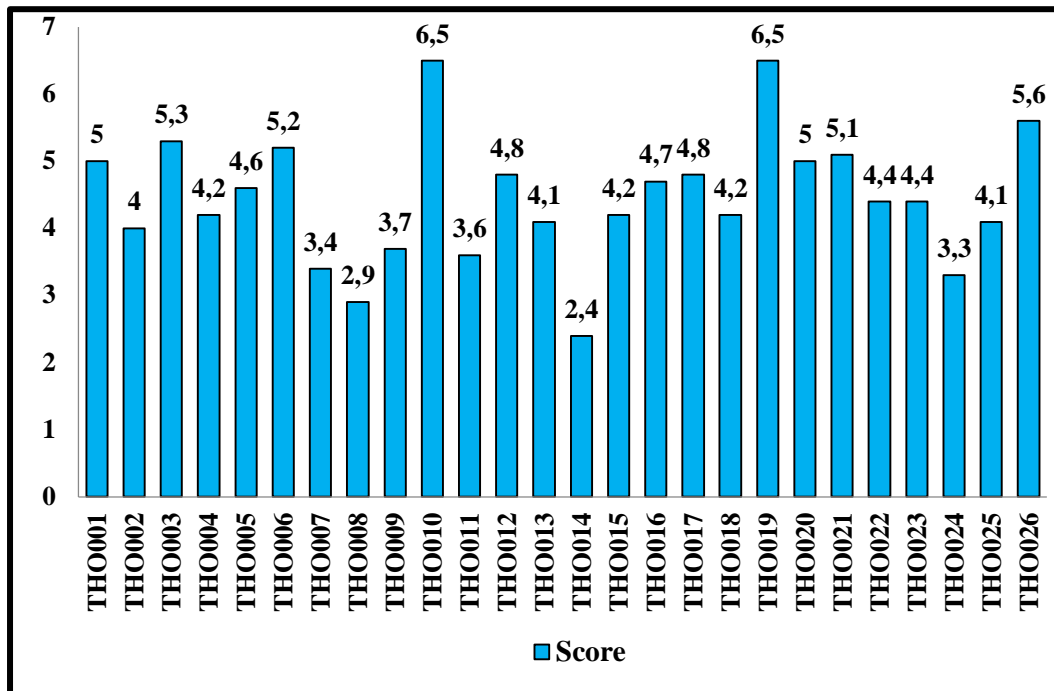
Source: Students of seventh grade "A" of "Teniente Hugo Ortiz" school.
Researcher: Pablo Leonardo Hidalgo Carrión.

According to the data obtained in the pre-test only two students got a considerable score (6, 5), therefore, the majority of students (twenty four) did not get a good performance. It was exposed by the mean acquired from the entire group that was 4.5. This is confirmed that the English vocabulary proficiency was very low before starting the intervention plan. It is evident the questions which children face more difficulties were those related to understand the vocabulary in context. However, in question two the students were able to identify some words of the vocabulary without much difficulty, since they got more than half of the score (1.2/2).

Table 2

Post-test data

Student's code	R			U	Total
	Q.1	Q.2	Q.3	Q.4	10
	2	2	4	2	10
THO001	2	2	4	1,2	9,2
THO002	2	2	4	1,2	9,2
THO003	2	2	3,5	2	9,5
THO004	2	2	3	2	9
THO005	2	2	4	1,2	9,2
THO006	2	2	3,5	2	9,5
THO007	2	2	3,5	2	9,5
THO008	1,6	2	3,5	1,2	8,3
THO009	2	2	3,5	1,2	8,7
THO010	2	2	4	2	10
THO011	2	2	2,5	2	8,5
THO012	2	1	3	1,2	7,2
THO013	1,2	1	3,5	2	7,7
THO014	1,6	2	4	2	9,6
THO015	1,6	2	4	2	9,6
THO016	1,2	2	3,5	2	8,7
THO017	1,2	2	3,5	1,2	7,9
THO018	1,6	2	3,5	2	9,1
THO019	2	2	4	2	10
THO020	2	1	3,5	2	8,5
THO021	2	2	4	2	10
THO022	2	2	4	1,2	9,2
THO023	2	1	4	1,2	8,2
THO024	2	2	3,5	1,2	8,7
THO025	1,6	2	3,5	2	9,1
THO026	2	2	3,5	1,2	8,7
MEAN	1,8	1,9	3,7	1,8	9,2

Note. Q= question; R= remembering; U= understanding; questions are grouped according to the cognitive process, the ability to apply knowledge (Bloom's cognitive behavior theory); THO= Teniente Hugo Ortíz (school name)

Figure 2

The Post Test
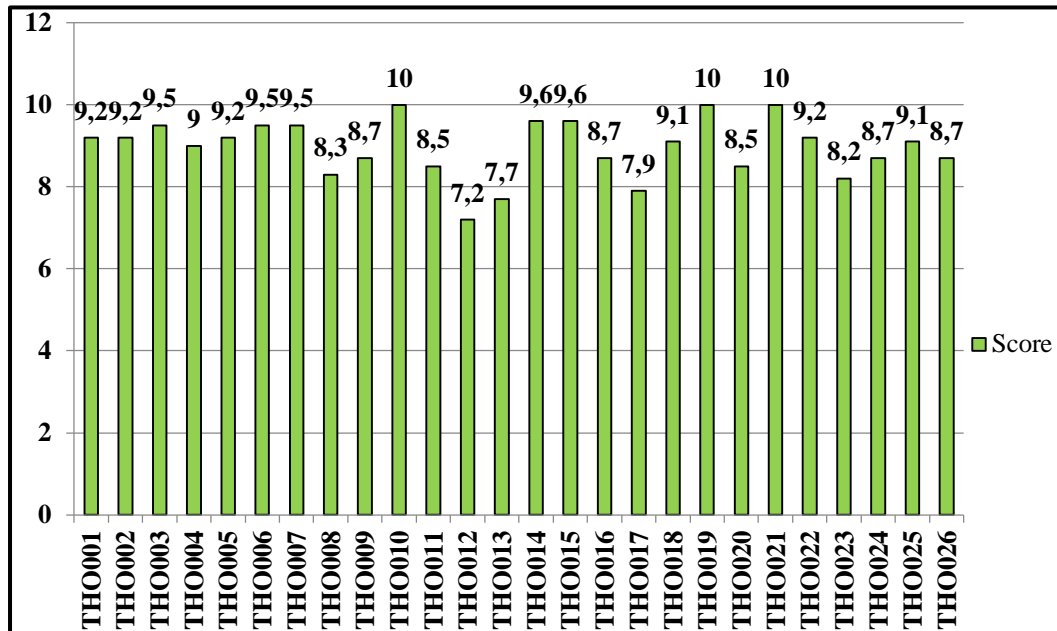
Regarding to the information given by the post-test, after applying the intervention plan there was a radical change in the student's vocabulary achievement. It was reflected by the mean obtained (9, 2). The most satisfactory for the researcher was that children were capable to solve the limitations they had in understanding the vocabulary in context. Thus, the researcher proved that the use of flashcards in the classroom is very helpful due to learners perceived it as an interesting mean to learn new words; as a result, children are more involved and interested in the vocabulary learning process.

Table 3

Comparing Tests Results

Student's code	Pre test X	Post test Y	Xy	X^2	Y^2
THO001	5	9,2	46	25	84,6
THO002	4	9,2	36,8	16	84,6
THO003	5,3	9,5	50.3	28,1	90,2
THO004	4,2	9	37,8	17,6	81
THO005	4,6	9,2	42,3	21,2	84,6
THO006	5,2	9,5	49,4	27	90,2
THO007	3,4	9,5	32,3	11,7	90,2
THO008	2,9	8,3	24,1	8,41	68,9
THO009	3,7	8,7	32,2	13,7	75,7
THO010	6,5	10	65	42,2	100
THO011	3,6	8,5	30,6	13	72,2
THO012	4,8	7,2	34,6	23	51,9
THO013	4,1	7,7	31,6	16,9	59,3
THO014	2,4	9,6	23	5,8	92
THO015	4,2	9,6	40,3	17,6	92
THO016	4,7	8,7	40,9	22	75,7
THO017	4,8	7,9	38	23	62,4
THO018	4,2	9,1	38,2	17,6	82,8
THO019	6,5	10	65	42,2	100
TH0020	5	8,5	42,5	25	72,2
TH0021	5,1	10	51	26	100
THO022	4,4	9,2	40,4	19,3	84,6
THO023	4,4	8,2	36	19,3	67,2
THO024	3,3	8,7	28,9	10,9	75,7
THO025	4,1	9,1	37,3	16,9	82,9
THO026	5,6	8,7	48,8	31,3	75,7
$\sum$	$\sum x= 116$	$\sum y= 232,8$	$\sum xy= 1046$	$\sum x^2 = 540,71$	$\sum y^2 = 2096,6$

Note. X= pretest; Y= posttest, PRJ=Pompilio Reinoso Jaramillo (school name) $\sum$=sum of all the variables.

Figure 3

Comparing Test Results
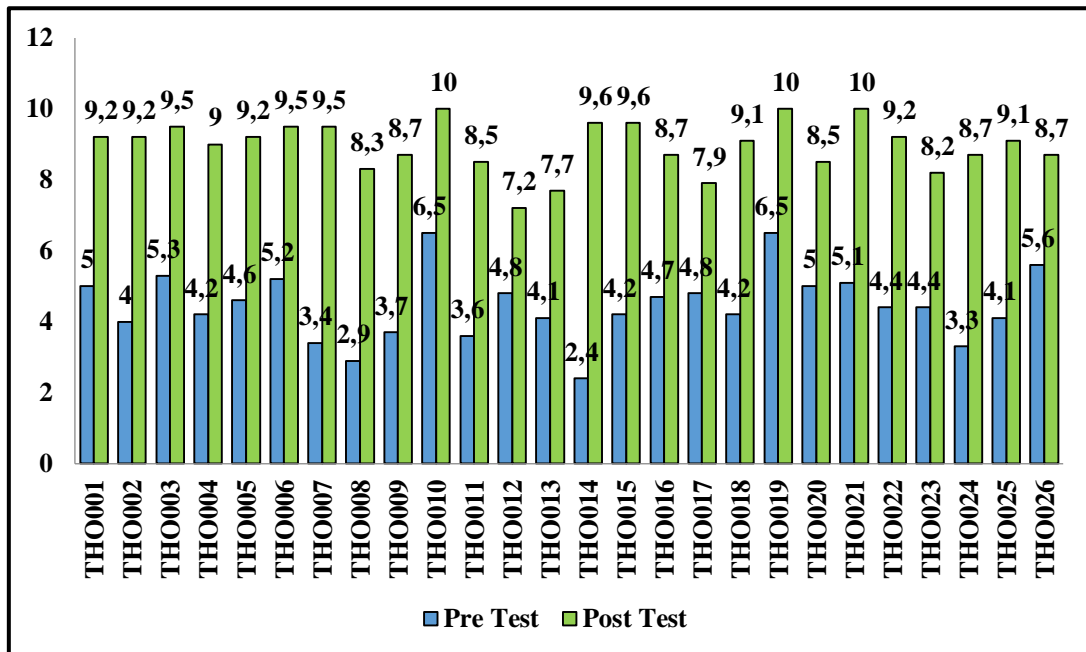
THE PEARSON CORRELATION COEFICIENT

$$r = \frac{n(\Sigma XY)-(\Sigma X)(\Sigma Y)}{\sqrt{[n(\Sigma x^2)-(\Sigma x)^2][n(\Sigma y^2)-(\Sigma y)^2]}}$$

$$r = \frac{26(1046) - (116)(232,8)}{\sqrt{[26\,(540,71) - (134,56)][26(2096,6) - 54195.84}}$$

$$r = \frac{27196 - 27004.8}{\sqrt{[602.46][315.76]}}$$

$$r = \frac{191.2}{\sqrt{190232.7696}}$$

$$r = \frac{191.2}{436,1568177}$$

$$r = 0,4$$

At the end of the intervention, the students were asked to answer the same questions with the purpose to determine the effectiveness that flashcards had on the student's vocabulary achievement. Satisfactorily, all the children improved meaningfully their scores from the pre-test (4, 5) to the post-test (9, 2). In addition, students overcame the difficulties they had at the beginning of the intervention because at the end they were able to identify the vocabulary and use it without problem. This means that the strategy applied throughout this action research work played an important role in the learner's vocabulary achievement. On the other hand, to evaluate the relationship between the pre and post-tests was used the r (Pearson Correlation Coeficient). As a result there was a positive correlation between the two variables, it is revealed by the correlation obtained (0, 4).

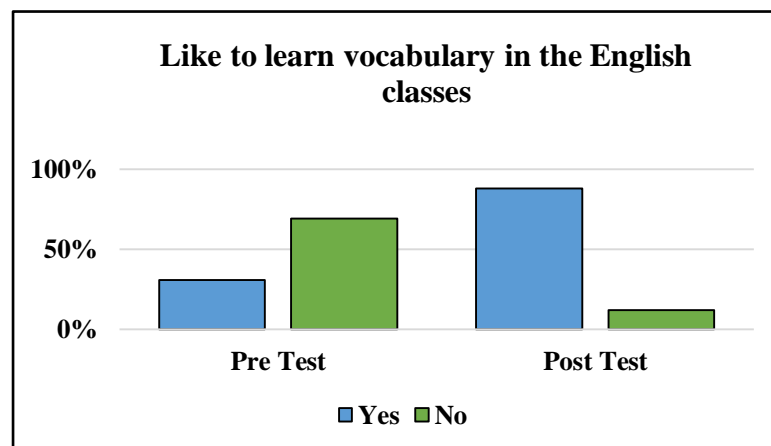# COMPARISON OF STUDENTS' PERCEPTION OF THE PRE AND POST QUESTIONNAIRE

Question 1

Do you like to learn vocabulary in the English classes?

Table 4

Like to learn vocabulary in the English classes

Variable	Pre-q		Post- q	
	f	%	f	%
Yes	8	31	23	88
No	18	69	3	12

Figure 4

Source: Students of seventh grade "A" of "Teniente Hugo Ortiz" school.
Researcher: Pablo Leonardo Hidalgo Carrión.

As regards to the outcomes received by the pre-questionnaire before applying the intervention plan almost the majority of students (69%), did not like learn vocabulary in the English classes; while a small group of students (31%), indicated that they like to learn vocabulary in the English classes. Nevertheless, after applying flashcards as a teaching aid the students changed their perception about vocabulary. It is showed after applying the intervention the majority of students (88%), really liked learning vocabulary because flashcards raised their interest in the language due they are motivating and eye-catching.

According to the perspective of Cross (1991) flashcards help significantly to teachers to teach English easily, at the same time they make the students be more active during the teaching process. Therefore, flashcards confirmed are a powerful teaching tool.
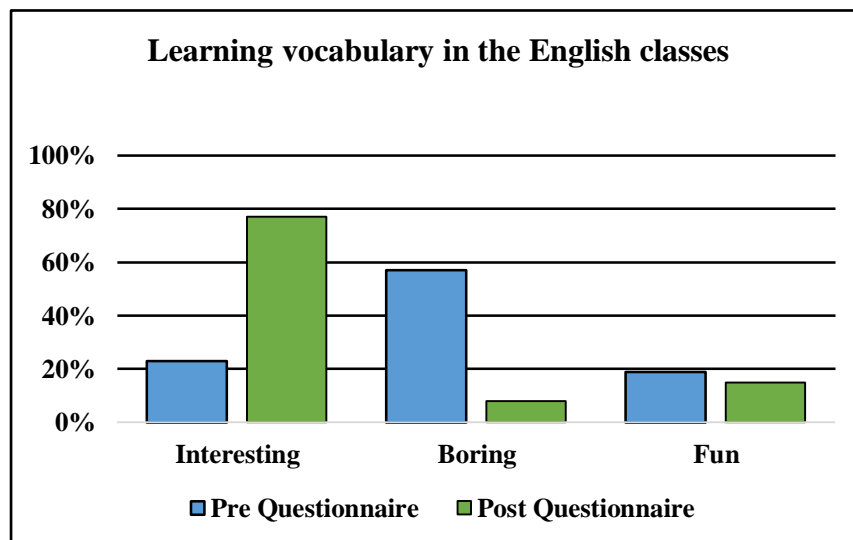
Question 2

In the English classes, the vocabulary learning is?

Table 5

Learning vocabulary in the English classes

Variable	Pre-q		Post- q	
	f	%	F	%
Interesting	6	23	20	77
Boring	15	57	2	8
Fun	5	19	4	15

Figure 5

Source: Students of seventh grade "A" of "Teniente Hugo Ortiz" school.
Researcher: Pablo Leonardo Hidalgo Carrión.

According to the data collected from the pre questionnaire almost a quarter of students (23%), affirmed that learning vocabulary in the English classes was interesting; while more than half of students (57%) indicated that learning vocabulary was boring, it means that students were not motivated due to the traditional way of teaching of the teacher. However, the post questionnaire stated that the perception of the students changed totally after working with flashcards since the majority of the learners (77%), affirmed that after the intervention learning vocabulary was interesting; also a small group of students (15%) revealed that it was fun. For that reason using flashcards to teach vocabulary is a suitable way to teach it because they are excellent for presenting vocabulary, and helping learners memorizing vocabulary more easily.

In addition, Gelfgren (2008) expresses that flashcards are a clear and colorful way to teach vocabulary in a funny way since they give students interesting and challenging vocabulary practice.
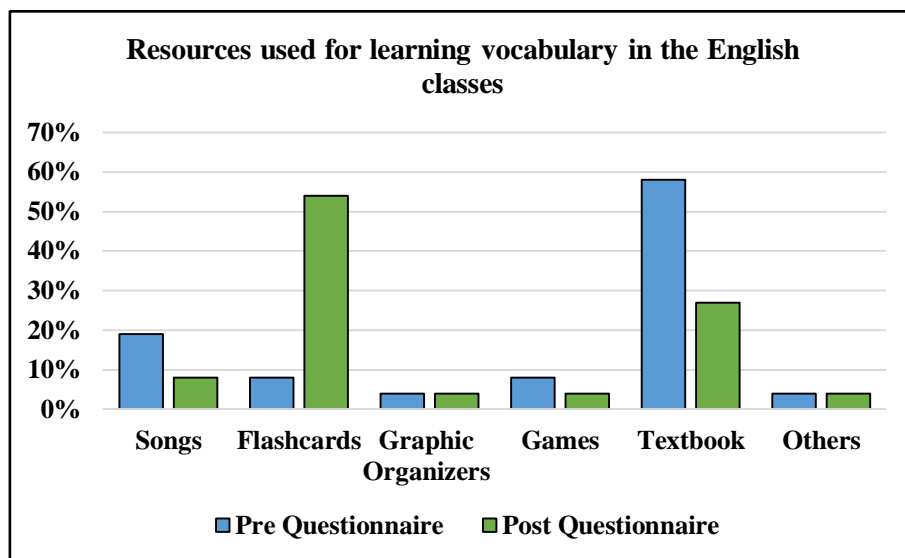
Question 3

What resources do you use to learn vocabulary in the English classes?

Table 6

Resources used for learning vocabulary in the English classes

Resources	Pre-q		Post- q	
	f	%	F	%
Songs	5	19.2	2	7.7
Flashcards	2	7.7	14	53.9
Graphic organizers	1	3.8	1	3.8
Games	2	7.7	1	3.8
Textbook	15	57.7	7	27
Others	1	3.8	1	3.8

Figure 6

Source: Students of seventh grade "A" of "Teniente Hugo Ortiz" school.
Researcher: Pablo Leonardo Hidalgo Carrión.

The data given by the pre questionnaire in this question stated that the main resource used for teaching vocabulary in the English class before the intervention was the textbook, it was revealed by more than half of students (57%), moreover, only a minority of students (7,7%), affirmed that teacher used to teach with flashcards. But once applied the intervention plan, the main resource chosen by an important population (53, 9%) was flashcards; and a small group of students (27%) established they used the textbook for learning vocabulary.   It means that the use of flashcards reduced the use of the textbook in a noticeable way.

Using flashcards permit children to be able to understand the vocabulary without the need of translating it. According to Soberón (2012) flashcards can be used in many different ways to introduce and practice vocabulary, as well as consolidate, recycle and extend children's language.

Question 4

How often does the teacher use flashcards to teach vocabulary?

Table 7

Frequency of resources used for teaching vocabulary

	Pre-q						Post- q					
	Always		Sometimes		Never		Always		Sometimes		Never	
Activities	F	%	f	%	f	%	F	%	f	%	F	%
Songs	0	0	12	46	14	54	0	0	3	12	23	88
Flashcards	0	0	2	8	24	92	18	69	8	31	0	0
graphic organizers	1	4	6	23	19	73	1	4	10	38	15	58
Games	1	4	17	65	8	31	1	4	8	31	17	65
Textbook	23	88	3	12	0	0	9	35	15	58	2	8
Others	9	35	9	35	8	30	5	19	13	50	8	31

Figure 7
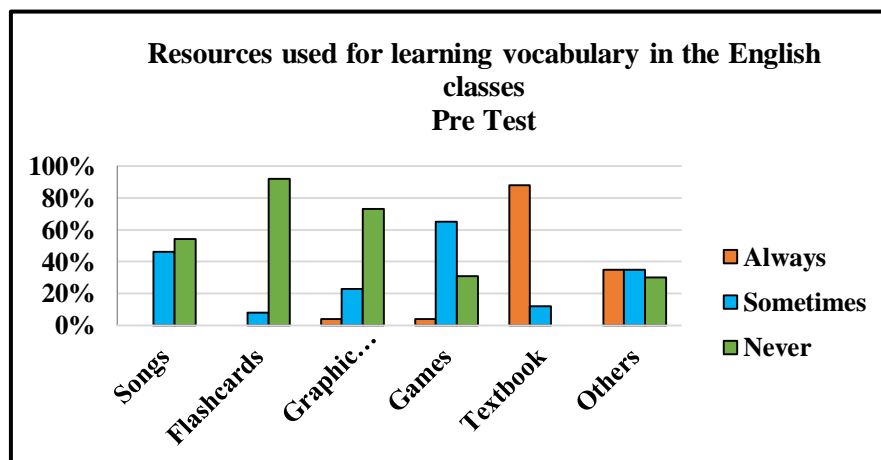
Source: Students of seventh grade "A" of "Teniente Hugo Ortiz" school.
Researcher: Pablo Leonardo Hidalgo Carrión.

Resources used for learning vocabulary in the English classes
Post Test
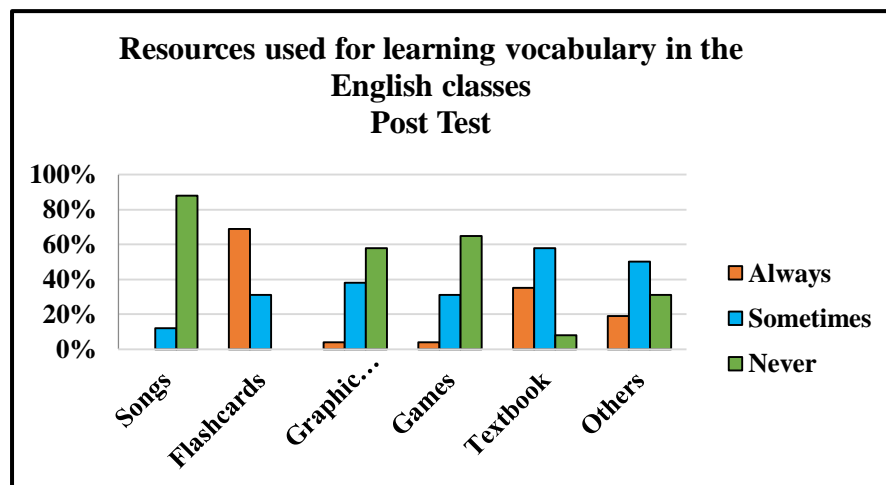
Source: Students of seventh grade "A" of "Teniente Hugo Ortiz" school.
Researcher: Pablo Leonardo Hidalgo Carrión.

According to the answers showed by the pre questionnaire, almost the whole group of students (92%), affirmed that they have never worked with flashcards; additionally the majority of students (88%), revealed that they always learned vocabulary through the textbook. However, these answers changed after the intervention because more than half of the students (69%), answered that flashcards were used as main resource for teaching English vocabulary; followed by a small group of students (35%), whom affirmed that the textbook was also used.

It is important that teachers use some different types of teaching aids to explain the meaning of new words in order to attract student's attention and improve their performance. Gelfgren (2008), states that one of the advantages of using flashcards is that they work well in individual, pair and group work.
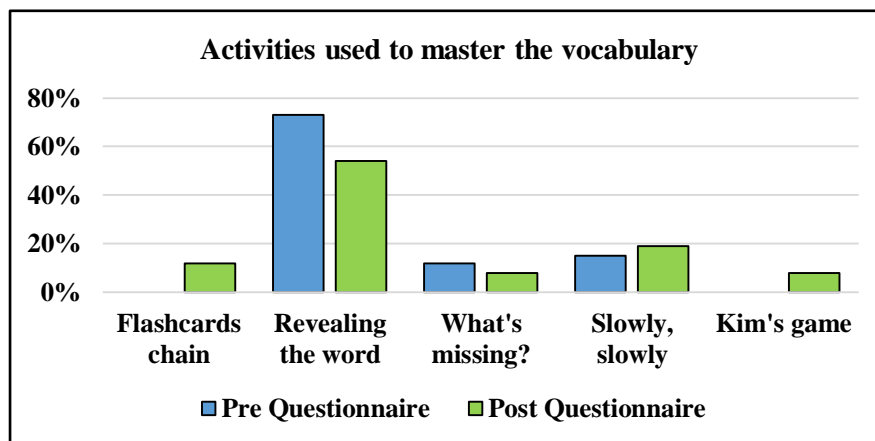
Question 5

What activities do you do to master the vocabulary?

Table 8

Activities used to master the vocabulary

Activities	Pre-q		Post- q	
	f	%	F	%
Flashcards chain	0	0	3	12
Revealing the word	19	73	14	54
What's missing?	3	12	2	8
Slowly, slowly	4	15	5	19
Kim's game	0	0	2	8

Figure 8

Source: Students of seventh grade "A" of "Teniente Hugo Ortiz" school.
Researcher: Pablo Leonardo Hidalgo Carrión.

According to the data this question noticeably showed that the activity more used before applying the intervention was revealing the word, chosen by the majority of the students (73%). However, after working with

flashcards the students were exposed to a combination of activities. Thus, more than half of students (54%), chosen revealing the word, as an activity used to master the vocabulary; followed by a small group of students (19%), that selected slowly; and what's missing; and also Kim's game was chosen by few students (8%).

Students need to be exposed to a variety of activities when they master the vocabulary with the purpose to enable them to retain, and understand the new words. Haycraft (1978) and Cross (1991) affirm that flashcards can be used for any level of students, and teachers can use them at any time and in any situation.

g. DISCUSSION

The present action research work was carried out with twenty six students of seventh grade "A" of basic education. It was focus on the use of flashcards as didactic material to improve the English vocabulary which had a noticeable effect in the students´ achievement of vocabulary.   The outcomes set by the pre and post-test revealed the progress that students got during the development of this research. In addition, the data collected by the questionnaires and the field diary pointed out the change of the perception toward working with flashcards. Therefore, the researcher can state that the strategy applied in this research work facilitated the student's vocabulary learning, at the same time they had the opportunity to overcome the limitations they had been faced before.

The findings obtained from the pre and post-test point a relevant growth on the student's vocabulary proficiency. It was reflected by the change stated from the beginning to the end of the intervention, in which before the intervention the students had a lot of difficulties in recognizing the vocabulary items and in understanding the vocabulary in context. It was proved from the mean obtained that was 4, 4. However, after applying the Intervention plan the same students overcome these complications obtaining a mean of 9, 2 form the whole group. It proves that teaching through flashcards helps meaningfully in the vocabulary learning.

College(2013) affirms that flashcards are one of the best methods to use for studying and memorizing vocabulary.

Another considerable change during the development of this work was the perception of the students toward working with flashcards. The findings obtained by the pre-questionnaire revealed that (69 %) of the students that represent a great majority, did not like to learn vocabulary in the English classes because they perceived them as boring. It is demonstrated on table four. It is clear that these answers are related to the lack of didactic material in the classes because the teacher only used the textbook to introduce new vocabulary; it can be seen on table seven. However, in the data obtained by the post questionnaire the student's perception changed positively. From the first to the last session of the intervention, the students were very motivated to work with this new strategy. These findings were consistent with Haycraft (1978:102) and Cross (1991:120), who found that flashcards have a great power in motivating and stimulating the students.

Moreover, the researcher used a field diary to notice the perception and progress of learners during all sessions. During the first class, the students were willing to work since they liked the size and the colorful pictures about action verbs. Fortunately, flashcards were well received for all students, who always were excited to work the different activities in which they have to guess the word looking at the picture, and in other

complete the missing letters. All this challenge activities foster in students the interest to learn new words.

Finally, this action research work gave to the researcher a big opportunity to get a nice experience. It was achieved the main goal that was improving the student's vocabulary. It also helped the researcher master some skills in planning lessons, elaborating tests, observing students' progress, and organizing better his classes. For all these reasons it is important to mention that Action research is an interesting and innovative way for teachers in which they have the chance to collaborate with one another to improve their professional practice. Teachers need to be conscious that they have to expose to students to a variety of activities in which they become more participative, this way, teachers engage children in the learning process. To sum up, the researcher can state that this kind of research is a great way to look for solutions for the different problems that students face in the classrooms.

h. CONCLUSIONS

After analyzed the data obtained by the instruments applied to the population of this action-research work, the researcher can make the following conclusions:

- The issues that limited the vocabulary learning of seventh year students were the lack of interest and the strategies used to teach English. The results received from the questionnaire states that the vocabulary was taught using only the textbook and the board. The pretest revealed that they had more difficulties on identifying it, and using the vocabulary in context.

- The seven sessions designed in the intervention plan were addressed to face the issues the students had in learning vocabulary. They were planned based on the students' cognitive process to build up their knowledge. Each lesson was prepared considering this approach, helped with the use of flashcard as a strategy. The seven lessons were reinforced with activities that enable students to master new words, remembering and understanding them.

- Two kinds of flashcards were used during the intervention to improve the vocabulary of the seventh year students. The researcher used

them alternately word and pictures cards depending on the lesson. At the beginning the researcher used picture flashcards to introduce the vocabulary for the first time. Then he used word flashcards to elaborate the knowledge about the topics taught.

- The use of flashcards as part of the classroom activities reduced the students' limitations meaningfully. It was demonstrated in the students' collaboration to participate in each lesson and the progress they reached performing their tasks. The change of the scores from the pre and posttests is relevant evidence that demonstrates the positive impact that the games had in this intervention.

- To put it briefly, the findings of the present action research showed that the use of flashcards determined positively the improvement of the vocabulary and made the students more relaxed and cooperative.

i. RECOMENDATIONS

The following recommendations can be done according to the conclusions drawn.

- English teachers should use innovative strategies that help students to understand the new vocabulary more easily. Teachers need to adopt the use flashcards in their classes with the aim of get the student's interests immediately since they are very colorful and fun.

- Teacher should incorporate at least ten lessons for teaching vocabulary since it plays an important role to learn a new language. Teachers should include didactic material like flashcards in the lessons because these help students to retain new words easily and in this way they face the difficulties they have in recognize and use the new vocabulary in context.

- Teachers should use different kinds of flashcards like picture and word flashcards to familiarize students with the new vocabulary. They have to choose the most colorful but being careful about the appropriate size of them neither too large nor to small and also they need to be clearly related to the topic taught.

- Teachers need to be aware about the importance of including flashcards in the classroom since they foster in students the cooperation and the participation and also they have the opportunity to improve their English proficiency meaningfully using a funny strategy.

- Teachers should use flashcards in their classes because it has been proved that they reduce the limitations of students meaningfully. Teachers must use them not only to improve the student's scores but also to change the student's mind about learning a foreign language.

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k. ANNEXES

UNIVERSIDAD NACIONAL DE LOJA

ÁREA DE LA EDUCACIÓN, EL ARTE Y LA COMUNICACIÓN

ENGLISH LANGUAGE CAREER

THEME

THE USE OF FLASHCARDS AS DIDACTIC MATERIAL TO IMPROVE THE ENGLISH VOCABULARY AMONG 7TH YEAR STUDENTS OF BASIC EDUCATION, IN PARALLEL "A" AT "TENIENTE HUGO ORTIZ" SCHOOL, DURING THE SCHOOL YEAR 2013-2014

Thesis project required for obtaining the Bachelor's degree in Sciences of Education, English Language Major

AUTHOR:

Pablo Leonardo Hidalgo Carrión

LOJA – ECUADOR

2014

a. THEME

THE USE OF FLASHCARDS AS DIDACTIC MATERIAL TO IMPROVE THE ENGLISH VOCABULARY AMONG 7TH YEAR STUDENTS OF BASIC EDUCATION, IN PARALLEL "A" AT "TENIENTE HUGO ORTIZ" SCHOOL, DURING THE SCHOOL YEAR 2013-2014"

b. PROBLEM

2.1 BACKGROUND

The research work will be developed at "Teniente Hugo Ortiz" school. The institution is located at El Valle neighborhood, which belongs to city of Loja. It was created in 1981. This institution has offered its services along 32 years providing a good environment between the staff and the students.

At the beginning the school started to work with only 4 teachers and 97 students, but nowadays the staff and the students have increased. In the present time the school has 20 teachers including the Principal and 420 students, boys and girls from first to seventh grade of Basic Education. The institution has only one certified English teacher.

It is important to point out the "Teniente Hugo Ortiz" public school is not working in its own building, now it is working in the building of "Ciudad de Loja" public school because its building is being remodeled.

2.2 CURRENT SITUATION OF THE RESEARCH PROBLEM

The research work will be focused on the use of flashcards as didactic material to teach English due to the fact that it plays an important role in the teaching English Learning Process.

The selected class to develop the present action research work is the seventh year of Basic Education; it is a group of 26 students, they are 11 to 12 years old. They receive English classes one time per week, each lesson lasts forty-five minutes.

The researcher has observed the English classes and noticed that the lack of the use of didactic material in this case the use of flashcards affects to the English language learning, without the use of the appropriate material would be impossible to carry out the teaching learning-process because the students getting bored and loss the interest in learning the language.

Unfortunately in the English classes, the teacher does not motivate the students through a warm up. In addition she spends much time in only one activity and as if this were not enough she does not use any kind of didactic material. She is focus only in the activities of the book.

These routines in the English classes not only affect the language learning but also the student's motivation; therefore the researcher considers that the use of the didactic material in the English lessons will give excellent findings and also will help students to enjoy and learn the English language.

2.3 RESEARCH PROBLEM

How does the use of flashcards improve the English vocabulary among seventh year students of Basic Education, in parallel "A" at "Teniente Hugo Ortiz" school, during the school year 2013-2014?

2.4 DELIMITATION OF THE RESEARCH

a) TEMPORAL

This research will be carried out at "Teniente Hugo Ortiz" school, in the city of Loja, School Year 2013-2014.

b) SPATIAL:

The "Teniente Hugo Ortiz" is located at El Valle neighborhood, which belongs to Loja canton.

c) OBSERVATION UNITS

- The researcher, Pablo Hidalgo
- Students of 7th year of Basic Education parallel "A".

d) SUBPROBLEMS

- What kind of theoretical references about English Vocabulary and flashcards are effective to help the seventh year students in parallel "A" at "Teniente Hugo Ortíz" school, during the school year 2013-2014?

- What are the issues that limit the vocabulary learning of the seventh year students in parallel "A" at "Teniente Hugo Ortíz" school, during the school year 2013-2014?

- What are the important phases of the intervention plan that address the current issues of the vocabulary learning with flashcards of the seventh year students in parallel "A" at "Teniente Hugo Ortíz" school, during the school year 2013-2014?

- Which flashcards are implemented to improve the vocabulary learning of the seventh year students in parallel "A" at "Teniente Hugo Ortíz" school, during the school year 2013-2014?

- How do flashcards as part of the classroom activities solve the limitation of the vocabulary learning of the seventh year students in parallel "A" at "Teniente Hugo Ortíz" school, during the school year 2013-2014?

c. JUSTIFICATION

The researcher has chosen to use flashcards as didactic material for teaching English vocabulary among 7th year students of Basic Education, in parallel "A" at "Teniente Hugo Ortiz" school. This is because flashcards are helpful to achieve fluency and acquire a significant vocabulary. This work will help the researcher to gain experience in the teaching practice. It also will enable him to accomplish the bachelor's degree.

This research work is relevant because it might provide to students an interactive way for learning English vocabulary didactically. Flashcards are the best tools for memorizing vocabulary because teacher gets the attention of students immediately through colorful visual images that make a real impact on learners and thus students are more motivated for learning the language, in addition, teacher can use them at different stages of the class.

The present work will be useful to the researcher because it is going to help the researcher to gain much experience into the educational field and, it is a very important point because nowadays is essential to have professional experience, it has a great importance.

It is elemental to perform this research work because it is a vital requisite that will permit to the researcher to get his Bachelor's Degree in Sciences

of Education, English Language Specialization and also the accreditation of the subject. The researcher is able to develop this research because he has enough theoretical knowledge and the necessary resources to carry out it.

In conclusion, this work is very important because it will give students the opportunity to learn though an interactive way, it will provide the researcher the opportunity to gain experience in teaching; and let the researcher to get his degree and the accreditation of the course.

d. OBJECTIVES

4.1 GENERAL

- To improve the English vocabulary through the use of flashcards among 7th year students in parallel "A" at "Teniente Hugo Ortiz" school, during the school year 2013-2014.

4.2 SPECIFICS

- To investigate the theoretical references about vocabulary learning in the English language and the flashcards as a strategy to help seventh year students of Basic Education, in parallel "A at "Teniente Hugo Ortiz" school, during the school year 2013-2014.

- To diagnose the issues that limit the vocabulary learning with seventh year students of Basic Education, in parallel "A" at "Teniente Hugo Ortiz" school, during the school year 2013-2014.

- To design an intervention plan with the use of flashcards to increase the vocabulary learning of seventh year students of Basic Education, in parallel "A" at "Teniente Hugo Ortiz" school, during the school year 2013-2014.

- To apply the intervention plan as part of the classroom activities in order to solve the limitations in the learning of the vocabulary of

seventh year students of Basic Education, in parallel "A" at "Teniente Hugo Ortiz" school, during the school year 2013-2014.

- To reflect upon the effect that the flashcards had on grade students' vocabulary, in parallel "A" at "Teniente Hugo Ortiz" school, during the school year 2013-2014.

e. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

5.1 VOCABULARY

Vocabulary is one of the important elements in teaching English. This statement is supported by Hatch (1995), she says, "Vocabulary is the foundation to build languages, which plays a fundamental role in communication". It describes that by mastering vocabulary; people can express their ideas and understand the other basic competence well. Students of Elementary School study Basic English. They study about simple words or things in their surroundings, it is aimed that students are able to understand simple English used in daily context. However, it is difficult to master the other competences without understanding the vocabulary, because vocabulary is the basic competence that must be reached by students in order to get other competencies like reading, writing, listening, and speaking.

5.1.1 DEFINITION OF VOCABULARY

Hornby (1948) states that Vocabulary is a total number of words which (with roles for combining them make up a language). It means that vocabulary covers knowing the meanings of words and their uses in context. According to Ur (1998) vocabulary is the words teachers teach in

the foreign language; it means vocabulary is written or spoken unit of language as symbol of idea in foreign language for the learners. Moreover, Hatch E. (1995) and Brown, (1995) state that vocabulary refers to a list or set of words for a particular language or a list or set of words that individual speaker of a language might use. It means that vocabulary as the words of certain language which are used by language speaker in using language.

5.1.2 KINDS OF VOCABULARY

According to Tahir (2013), there are two kinds of vocabulary:

- Active Vocabulary
- Passive vocabulary

The Active Vocabulary of a person consists of those words that he or she use correctly in his or her own speech and writing. He or she fully understands the meaning of those words. It is also called working or functional vocabulary.

The Passive Vocabulary of a person consists of those words which he recognizes when he encounters them in print or in the speech of others. He can make out the meanings of those words. It is also called recognition

vocabulary. Passive vocabulary is always larger than the active vocabulary.

5.1.3 BASIC ASPECTS OF VOCABULARY

Harmer (1991) "If language structures make up the skeleton of language, then it is vocabulary that provides the vital organs and the flesh" (Harmer, The practice of English Language Teaching, 1991). Therefore, no matter how brilliantly one masters his/her English grammar, without the knowledge of vocabulary it is useless because words are the basis that creates the speech (Scrivener, 1998).

In the past vocabulary was underestimated and it was perceived only as a medium needed for teaching grammar but nowadays vocabulary has become more acknowledged by methodologists (Harmer, The Practice of English Language Teaching, 1991). However, vocabulary is seen as something less important than grammar and we do not focus on it as much as we should especially at schools.

5.1.4 THE IMPORTANCE OF VOCABULARY

Shoebottom (1996-2014) states that Vocabulary is much more than grammar is the key to children understanding what she hears and reads in

school; and to communicating successfully with other people. For this reason it is very important for them quickly build up a large store of words. Research studies have shown the strong links between having an extensive vocabulary and achieving school success.

According to the point of view of Janet Grischy (2014) the vocabulary makes up the words of a given language, and language is the main way humans communicate. People with substantial vocabularies convey their meanings better than those with small vocabularies. Persons who know the right words can say precisely what they mean so that others will understand them clearly. Also, persons with a large vocabulary appear intelligent to their friends, their teachers and others. Finally, someone who has cultivated an extensive vocabulary will find it easier to understand what others are saying and easier to respond to them appropriately. She identified some fields in which vocabulary plays an important role. Those are the following:

Communication

Language is not all there is to communication, but when people cannot see or hear each other their vocabularies are almost all they have. A large vocabulary makes communication rich and interesting. A small vocabulary can make communication limited and insipid.

The same author says that written speech has to make up for clues people get from watching expressions and listening to tone of voice. Therefore, anyone who has to communicate in writing needs a vocabulary that is more expressive than everyday speech. That is why the rules for writing are so persnickety, and one reason why people need effectual vocabularies.

- **Precision**

A substantial vocabulary lets someone write or speak precisely. A six year old is a child. The word "child" is a formal term of description. People say "child" when they are speaking seriously or in imposing circumstances.

For informal speech, the best word might be "kid." (Kid first meant baby goat and was an unacceptable way to describe a child.) Someone older, but not considered completely mature, is a youth. In a court of law, someone who is not legally an adult is a minor. A kid who misbehaves is a brat.

English has many words to describe a child's age, gender and deportment. The larger someone's vocabulary, the more precisely they can describe a particular child. Most of the time, people select from a collection of words with meanings that are similar but not exactly the same. To call someone a

child is descriptive. To call the child a brat is mean. To call the child a hooligan is horrendous.

- **Intelligence**

People who know many words seem (and often are) smarter than those who do not. Someone who describes a sculpture as full of exquisite proportion and evoking universal human themes sounds smarter than someone who says the sculpture "is nice." The more descriptive person may not be smarter, or know more about sculpture, but they seem smarter because of their vocabulary.

If intelligence is only a thing that IQ tests measure, then anyone can raise their intelligence by increasing their stock of words. With a higher IQ score they may well feel entitled to feel superior, because they seem so much smarter than they were. They had better not act supercilious though, or they will meet with antipathy.

- **Understanding**

The main value of vocabulary is that it helps people to understand one another. Well-spoken individuals can make them clear and can also more clearly understand what someone else is trying to say. Clear communication helps people get along.

5.1.5 TEACHING VOCABULARY

"A word is a microcosm of human consciousness" (Vygotsky)

Much has also been written about the strategies teachers can use to help learners to develop their knowledge of vocabulary (e.g. Gairns y Redman 1986; Schmitt y Mc.Carthy 1997). Strategies commonly discussed are:

- Using objects: teachers can use real objects to introduce new vocabulary. This can help learners because they not only hear the word but also receive visual reinforcement (Hunt, 1998).
- Mime, expression and gestures: many words (e.g. angry, happy) lend themselves to being taught through movement and gestures.
- Guessing from context: learners will always meet words which are new to them, so it is important for them to know how to work out their meaning from the context.
- Translation: the teacher explains the meaning of the new words using the learners' mother tongue.
- Illustrations and pictures: most concrete vocabulary can be taught using illustrations and pictures made by teachers or found in stories and other resources.
- Contrasts: this technique involves explaining a word by contrasting it with an antonym, very often an antonym which is known to the learners.

Apart from these specific strategies, two general approaches for teaching Vocabulary can be mentioned here. The first is incidental learning, where it is hoped that learners will pick up new vocabulary through exposure and without conscious explanation by the teacher. The second approach recognizes that some vocabulary needs explicit instruction.

5.1.6 HOW TO TEACH VOCABULARY?

According to Cross (1991: 11-13) the procedure of teaching vocabulary can be divided into three stages:

- **Presentation.** In this stage, the teachers can use various techniques which are recommended in the previous discussion. However, the teachers have to be careful in selecting the techniques that they used in teaching activity;

- **Practice.** In the second stage, the teacher give exercises to the students in order to practice the subject items being learnt, making completion, matching, words classification, etc. those are several types of exercise that can be used by the teacher in this stage;

- **Production.** In this stage the students are expected to apply the newly learn vocabulary through the speaking activities or writing activities

5.1.7 TECHNIQUES TO TEACH VOCABULARY

Mehta (2009) points out that it is noteworthy to mention here that vocabulary items are imparted mostly by translation: either a list of words with their translation at the beginning of the lesson or the translation of the content having new words or glossaries at the very end. This is an erroneous practice as it leads to a state of confusion for the learners. On the teaching skills of vocabulary items, Frisby (1957) commented that "While the teacher is not, himself, concerned with the actual selection of vocabulary for text book purposes since practically all the books we use are based on limited vocabularies, it is important that he/she (the teacher) should know the principles, which underlie vocabulary selection". Thus it signifies that a language teacher should be innovative and proficient in the application of methodologies pertaining to teaching vocabulary items in a classroom situation.

Following are the main methodologies for teaching vocabulary items in an English language classroom according to Frisby (1957).

- **Listening Carefully. -** Careful listening to the words may be a good option in teaching vocabulary items in a heterogenic classroom. "Let the students hear the word in isolation and in a sentence. If the sounds of the word have been mastered, the students will hear it correctly with

two or three repetitions." Slow pronunciation without distortion will help. Breaking the word into parts and building up to the whole word will also be helpful.

- **Pronouncing the Word. -** Pronouncing the word enables the students to remember it longer and identify it more readily when they hear or see it.

- **Methods of Grasping the Meaning. -** The teacher should try to get the meaning to the class without using translation. This is not preferable on the ground that translation may or may not provide the meaning of the word accurately and precisely. It is advocated as it enables the class to go without grasping the meaning of a word that they have learned to pronounce rather than to depend upon the translation.

5.2 WHAT ARE FLASHCARDS?

According to Cross (1991:119), flashcard is a simple picture on a piece of card or paper, which is probably the most widely used visual aids in language teaching. It means that flashcard is one of media which can help the teacher to teaching English easily. Flash cards in teaching vocabulary are very simple visual aids and the teacher can make the students more active during the teaching learning process.

College(2013) affirms that fflashcards are one of the best methods to use for studying and memorizing information. You can use flash cards to learn just about any information for any class, such as vocabulary, mathematical equations and formulas, terms and definitions or main ideas and topics.

5.2.1 DEFINITION OF FLASHCARD

Haycraff (1978: 102-106) states that flashcards are cards on which words and/or pictures are printed or drawn. According to Dictionary (1995: 94), flashcard is a card with the word or words and sometimes a picture down it. Based on discussed above, it can be taken a general view that flashcards are cards with a word or words, number, or a picture on it for use in the classroom by teacher and students that help to learn and memorize new words.

According to Victoria Street   Flashcards can be a very useful strategy for recalling information that will further trigger your memory. The same author states that Flashcards hold just a small amount of information—and this small amount, like a fact, formula, picture, or symbol— Helps to prompt other/related pieces of information. The cards activate other things you know about the topic they cue you to remember something. They are quick, easy to make, and can even be fun!

5.2.2 KINDS OF FLASHCARDS

Haycraff (1978: 102-106) states two types of flashcards. They are word flashcards and picture flashcards. Word flashcards are cards on which words have been printed. When practicing word order, the teacher can use a number of cards representing all the words in a sentence.

The flashcards can be fixed to the board, or given to a student, and arranged correctly either by the class a whole or individual students. The word flashcards also can be used to practice structure. Then, picture flashcards are useful for presenting, practicing and revising vocabulary or as prompts for other activities – for example, to illustrate the characters in a dialogue, to help students improvise. Picture flashcards can be used as prompts for simple substitution drills. Picture flashcards are also useful for identifying verbs on action.

5.2.3 ADVANTAGES OF USING FLASHCARDS

Haycraft (1978:102) and Cross (1991:120) remarks that there are some advantages of using flashcards in language teaching.

- Flashcards can be used for associating vocabulary.
- Flashcards are motivating and eye-catching.
- Flashcards can be used for any level students.

- Flashcards can be taken almost everywhere and studied when are has free moment.

- Flashcards can be arranged to create logical grouping of the target words.

- Flashcards are cost effective.

- Flashcards provide visual link between L1 and the target language.

- Flashcards also can be used for practicing structure and word order or for a variety of games.

Therefore flashcards have many advantages; they are in motivating and stimulating the students. Teachers can use them at any time and in any situation when they want to teach

MORE ADVANTAGES

Flash cards are effective memory-aid tools that can help students learn new material quickly. Although it may be tempting to associate flash-card learning with younger children who may be learning the basics of arithmetic, an article published on the Indiana University-Purdue University, Fort Wayne website notes that the use of flash cards can be effective in college disciplines like psychology.

- **Economic Advantages**

Flash cards can be one of the least expensive ways to study material. There is no need to go out and buy a set of fancy illustrated cards. Instead, create flash cards with simple 3 x 5-inch index cards, which can be utilized with or without lines depending upon the type of information needed (Lewis, 2010).

- **Portability**

Flash cards provide students with a portable learning tool. Rather than having to carry around a book or notebook, flash cards allow students the opportunity to take as many cards as are needed (Lewis, 2010).

- **Efficiency**

The portability of flash cards can improve efficiency in learning new material. By taking the cards everywhere, students can make effective use of their time when they would otherwise not be studying, such as using them while walking on the treadmill (Lewis, 2010).

- **Condensing Material**

One mistake students sometimes make when studying for college classes is trying to learn too much material at one time. This can make the learning process cumbersome and can be overwhelming. Flash cards eliminate extraneous material as they can focus on only the most important elements of what students need to learn (Lewis, 2010).

- **Versatility**

Utilize flash cards for virtually any subject. They make perfect learning tools for memorizing vocabulary for the study of foreign languages, English vocabulary, math formulas, dates and events for history classes, psychology terms and even more advanced topics, like medical terminology (Lewis, 2010).

- **Variety**

Since the order can be shuffled, flash cards prevent students from simply memorizing the order of the answers in long-list items. Reverse the flash cards so the answers can be seen first and students must surmise what the original questions were (Lewis, 2010).

5.2.4 ACTIVITIES TO USE WITH FLASHCARDS

Flashcards can be used in many ways to introduce and practice vocabulary,   as well as consolidate, recycle and extend children's language.

The following are ways to use flashcards according to Soberón (2012:)

- **Flash!**

Show each flashcard to the children in turn very quickly by holding it at the sides between your thumb, index and second finger and "flashing" it or turning it round very quickly. Children look and guess what it is. Re-cast and introduce the word in English as appropriate.

- **Slowly, slowly!**

Choose the flashcards you are going to use and have ready a plain piece of card the same size. Hold up each flashcard in turn covered completely by the card at first. Pull down the card to slowly reveal the picture and encourage children to guess what it is. Children call out the name once they can see enough to recognize the picture.

- **Point to...!**

Stick a set of flashcards on the walls round the classroom. Hold up each one and get the children to say the names as you do this. Give instructions for example: Point the spider! Children listen, look round the classroom and point to the correct flashcard as fast as they can.

- **Mime the flashcard**

Hold up flashcards in turn and say the names. Children do a mime in response for example they can pretend to eat a particular food (if they are using food flashcards), imitate a particular animal (animal flashcards) or put on clothes (clothes flashcards). Then do mimes of different flashcards yourself or invite individual or pairs of children to take turns to do this. Children watch and call out the names.

- **What's missing?**

Stick a set of flashcards on the blackboard. Hold up each one and get the children to say the names as you do this. Then say "close your eyes" and demonstrate meaning. When children have their eyes closed, quickly remove one of the flashcards from the blackboard. Children open their eyes and call out the name of the missing flashcard.

- **Magic eyes**

Stick a set of no more than six flashcards in a row on the blackboard. Say the names and get the children to repeat them two or three times. Then remove the flashcards one by one. Point to where they were and children repeat the names as if they were still there.

- **Flashcard instructions**

Stick a set of flashcards on the walls around the classroom. Divide the class into groups. Give each group instructions in turn for example: Group 1. Walk to the elephant. Group two. Jump to the lion and children respond.

- **Repeat if it's true**

Stick a set of flashcards on the blackboard. Point out one of the flashcards and say the name, if you have said the correct name, children repeat it, if not they stay silent. This activity can be made more challenging if you say sentences for example; it is a red tomato.

- **Lip reading**

Stick a set of flashcards on the blackboard. Choose one flashcard and mouth the word silently to the class, children lip read what you are saying and respond by saying the word out loud.

- **Guess the flashcard!**

Stick a set of flashcards on the blackboard. Secretly choose one and encourage children to guess which it is asking you questions for example: Is it red? No, it is not. Is it blue? Yes, it is. Invite individual children to the front of the class in turn and get them to secretly choose a flashcard while the others guess in the same way.

- **What is it?**

Stick six-eight flashcards from different units on the blackboard. Elicit or remind children of the names. Choose one and give clues for example: It is a small animal. It is got eight legs. It runs. I am scared of it. What is it? Children listen and identify the correct flashcard: (It is the) spider.

- **Kim's game**

Stick eight-ten flashcards form different lexical sets on the blackboard. Elicit or remind children of the names. Give the children one minute to look in silence and try to memorize the flashcards before removing them from the board. Children work in pairs and write a list of the flashcards they can remember. Check the answers by eliciting answers from the whole class and writing a list on the blackboard.

- **Flashcard groups**

Divide the class into groups or three or four. Give each group of flashcards and explain that this is the name of their group. Give instructions for example: apples, touch your nose! Carrots, put your hands on your head! Children listen and follow the instructions for their group.

- **Flashcard charade**

Divide the class into groups of three or four. Give each group a flashcard, making sure that other groups do not see. Explain that children must think of a way to mime their flashcard. Give them a minute or two to prepare this. Each group then takes turns to do their mimes to the rest of the class and guess each other's flashcards.

- **Stand up!**

Divide the class in two teams. Stick four-six flashcards on the left of the blackboard for one team and four-six flashcards on the right of the blackboard for the other team. Say he words in random order. Children listen and stand up as fast as they can if the word belongs to their team.

- **Flashcard letters**

Divide the class into groups of five or six. Give each group a flashcard (making sure other groups do not see) and explain that children must take the letters to spell the name of the picture with their bodies. Give them a few minutes to prepare this and encourage them to check spelling if necessary. Each group then takes turns to make the letters of their words with their bodies and to guess each other's words.

- **Who's got the flashcard?**

Have a music Cd ready for this activity. Children stand close together in a circle with their hands behind their backs. Choose one child to stand in the middle of the circle. Show the flashcards you are going to use first and elicit or remind children of the name. Explain that when you play the music, children should pass the flashcard round the circle behind their backs, when the music stops, they should stop passing it round. The child in the center has three chances to find out who has got the flashcard by asking questions for example: have you got the sweater? Yes, I have/ No I have not. If he or she finds the child with the flashcard, that child has the next turn. The game continues in the same way using a different flashcard each time.

- **Ball game**

Have a soft ball ready for this activity. Stick eight-ten flashcards on the blackboard. Children stand in a circle. Hold up the ball, say one, two, three and name one of the flashcards on the blackboard for example: grasshopper! as you throw the ball to a child in the circle. The child who catches the ball repeats the procedure and names another flashcard. The game continues in the same way until all the flashcards on the blackboard have been named.

- **Flashcard chain**

Have a set of flashcards ready. Stand or sit in a circle with the children. Pass the first flashcard to the child on your left and ask a question for example: Do you like carrots? Yes, (I do)/ No (I do not). After answering, the child then asks the question and passes the flashcard to the next child and so on round the circle. When the flashcard is three children away from you in the circle, introduce another one by asking the child on your left a question in the same way.

- **Threes!**

Sit in a circle with the children and divide them into two teams. Lay three of the flashcards out in front of you and elicit or remind children of the names.

Then turn the flashcards over so that the pictures are hidden. Change the positions of the flashcards on the floor so that the children can no longer easily identify them. Invite a child from one of the teams to name one of the three flashcards. This child then tries to find this flashcard by choosing one of them and turning it over to reveal the picture. If it is not the flashcard they named, the three flashcards are turned over and moved around again and a child from the other team has a turn in the same way. If it is the flashcard they named, they keep it for their team, you then need to introduce another flashcard to make up the three in the game. The game continues in the same way with the children on each team taking turns to name and turn over the flashcards. The team with most flashcards at the end of the game is the winners.

- **Flashcard bingo**

Use ten-fifteen flashcards for this activity, stick the flashcards on the blackboard. Children draw a grid with six squares and write the name of one flashcard in each square (encourage them to check spelling to do this as necessary). When children are ready, remove the flashcards form the blackboard and shuffle them. Hold up the flashcards one by one and say the names. Children listen and write a cross on the word if it is in their grid. The first child to write a cross on all six words in their grid calls Bingo! is the winner.

- **Flashcard whispers**

Children stand in two lines facing the blackboard. Secretly show the last child standing in each line a flashcard. This child then whispers the name of this flashcard to next child and so on up the line. The child at the front runs to the blackboard and draws or writes the word. They the go to the back of the line. Repeat the procedure several times.

- **Odd one out**

Stick three or four flashcards in a row on the blackboard for example: butterfly, beetle, spider or apple, carrot, pizza, tomato. Children look and identify the odd one out and say why, for example: spider. It is got eight legs/ pizza. It is not from plant. Repeat the procedure several

- **Flashcard story**

Give out flashcards you are going to include in the story to the children in pairs. Invent a very simple story using a puppet or course book character or a child in the class. An example of one using color flashcards is as follows:

One day Jack paints a picture (use mime to convey meaning) He paints with red, he paints with blues and purple, etc. (naming all the colors).

Jenny says, "What a wonderful picture" Jack is very happy. Scruffy the dog is very happy too. He wags his tail like this and oh dear, he spills all the paint. Now Scruffy is red and purple and… (Naming all the colors again). Children listen and hold up the colour flashcard they have got when they hear the corresponding word in the story.

- **Jumbled words and flashcards**

Stick flashcards and word cards on the blackboard in jumbled order. Invite individual children out to the blackboard in turn and get them to draw lines to join the flashcards and words.

- **Match the flashcards and words**

Stick flashcards on the blackboard. Give out word cards to individual children. Children take turns to come out to the blackboard and stick their words by the correct flashcard (alternatively, you can stick the word cards on the blackboard and give the flashcards out to the children).

- **Stop!**

Stick a flashcard on the blackboard and elicit or remind children of the name. Hold up word cards one by one. Children read the words silently

until you hold up the word card which matches the flashcard. They then call "Stop" and read the word out loud. Repeat the procedure with different flashcards.

- **Team game**

Have ready two sets of word cards for the same flashcards for this game. Divide the class into two teams. Stick flashcards (as many as there are children in each team) on the blackboard or on the walls around the classroom. Give one word card to each child in both teams. When you call out the name of one of the flashcards, the child in each team who has the corresponding word card gets up and goes to touch the flashcard and hold up their word card as fast as they can. The child who gets there first each time wins a point for their team.

- **Blackboard pelmanism**

Use eight-ten flashcards and word cards for this activity. Stick the flashcards in jumbled order on one side of the blackboard, facing inwards so that children cannot see the pictures, and number them. Do the same with the word cards on the other side of the blackboard. Invite one child to choose a flashcard for example: Number two, please! and, as you turn it round to show the picture, to say what it is for example: it is a hat. Then

invite the same child to choose a word card in the same way. If the flashcard and word card chosen by the child match, remove them from the blackboard. If not, turn them both round so that they are in exactly the same position but facing inwards again. The game proceeds with different children taking turns to choose a flashcard and word card in the same way, trying to match them from memory until they are all removed from the blackboard.

- **Classify the words**

Draw two or three large circles on the blackboard and write the topic words at the top of each one for example: animals, food, clothes. Children take turns to come to the front of the class, either individually or in pairs, read a word card that you give them and stick it in the correct circle.

5.2.5 WHY USE FLASHCARDS?

Gelfgren (2008) expresses that different students learn in different ways, and it is relevant to make use of visual teaching methods since studies show most of students learn through visual ways. Flashcards are a clear and colorful way to teach vocabulary in a funny way, and they can have a positive effect on the visual learning process of the students.

The author suggests that flashcards can be used for any subject, for example elementary or more advanced language training (vocabulary and grammar), mathematics, biology and geography.

Flashcards are easy-to-use and handy resources for teachers and they can be used on any class level. They are excellent for presenting vocabulary, drilling and repetition. For many students, using flashcards is a fun way to learn new vocabulary and grammar.

5.2.6 WHEN AND WHERE USE FLASHCARDS

Gelfgren (2008) states that flashcards work well in individual, pair and group work. Students can ask each other questions and help using flashcards. They can use pictures to learn new vocabulary and expressions, then move on to simple pictures and word cards, and finally to exercises and activities using flashcards.

Flashcards are a quick and easy way to make use of visual means to help students learn and drill vocabulary. Both children and adults profit from flashcards in their learning process.

Flashcards can be dealt out to children who finish their assignments earlier, or to be used in groups. Children who can read can use flashcards with pictures and flashcards with words and combine them.

5.2.7 AREAS OF APPLICATION

Gelfgren (2008) presents ideas and examples on how the flashcards can be used in fourteen different areas of classroom instruction. The games can be combined with an example work-sheet and can then be applied in many other areas. Use your imagination and get an extra "bounce" in the lessons. The teacher can include specific vocabulary in several different kinds of exercises, until the students master them.

- **LEXICON**

Flashcards are invaluable for teachers who teach small children, school children and adults (Gelfgren, 2008). Combine flashcards with words and flashcards with pictures and you have hundreds of different games and exercises done for your lessons. The varying methods allow students to stay focused instead of getting bored with repetitive drilling activities.

- **THE ALPHABET**

The alphabet is an important learning area for pre-school children and for adult students whose first language does not have the Latin alphabet or Latin symbols. Use different methods with pictures, words, or only with letters or phonetic letters to find the most appropriate way for your students to learn them (Gelfgren, 2008).

- **PRONUNCIATION**

Pronunciation cards are very useful because students can practice words and pronunciation in several ways while learning to communicate effortlessly (Gelfgren, 2008).

- **GRAMMAR**

Teaching grammar does not always have to be about theory, translations, written exercises and fill in the gaps exercises. By using grammar flashcard games, you can combine grammar theory while doing the exercises orally and the students learn to communicate at the same time. This is a modern technique that has become more common during language training lessons for adults, where students often are more concerned about their communication skills than their written skills (Gelfgren, 2008).

- **DISCUSSION**

An important part of everyday life and communication is being able to ask questions, give answers, express opinions and provide descriptions. The discussion cards are used to spark conversations, such as how to get acquainted with each other or talk about news and current events. Your

students learn to use their imagination to form long sentences and engage in conversation. It will be easier for students to learn new words that are connected to specific topics when introduced to them on flashcards with keywords and/or pictures, and to pick up a topic of discussions with the help of keywords. Debate cards can be used in classes with older students to liven up the conversation by dividing students in groups of pros and cons (Gelfgren, 2008).

- **QUIZ CARDS**

Instead of only written tests, quiz cards can be used to vary the methods used to test students' skills, making the test itself into a fun game. Quizzes that are suitable for your students can be compiled on various subjects and themes and for different levels. For students at lower levels, quizzes may also include multiple choice questions.

Instead of simply testing the students' knowledge, try using the cards in this way! It can give your students a different perspective and stimulate discussion around a theme. Individuals have the ability to learn while listening to the other students' comments about the theme (Gelfgren, 2008)

- **ROLE PLAY**

You can encourage the students to learn in a fun way with the help of role-play cards. The students can use their existing vocabulary and learn new words in a foreign language. Role-play cards can also provide support in developing imagination and improvisation. These flashcards can be informative; improve communication skills, and they can be used as a supplement when teaching the cultural aspect of the language, such as manners and customer service in different countries (Gelfgren, 2008).

- **FLASHCARDS WITH ASSOCIATIONS, SYNONYMS AND OPPOSITES**

Teachers can use flashcards with associations, synonyms and opposites to enrich the students' vocabulary. These games develop both vocabulary and language fluency. In these games, students are encouraged to independently develop their vocabulary – it is faster and more stimulating than having the teacher explain the word (Gelfgren, 2008).

- **LANGUAGE COMPREHENSION**

Flashcards can be valuable in activities related to language comprehension and listening, but this requires a little more preparation by

the teacher. Keywords are good to remember, and they should be used to strengthen the immediate language understanding in an auditory task (Gelfgren, 2008).

- **FLASHCARDS – DIFFERENCES**

These flashcards include activities with the purpose of learning the myriad of language differences that exist between native speakers of the same language coming from different countries (for example U.S English and British English, Standard Swedish and Finnish Swedish) (Gelfgren, 2008).

- **FLASHCARDS WITH NUMBERS, MONEY AND TIME**

It is important for everyone to know the numbers, the ordinals, dates and the time. It can be difficult for adults learning a new language and for young children to master these. The various exercises and games with these cards make learning fun.

- **FLASHCARDS IN FOREIGN LANGUAGES**

Language teachers may come to realize that flashcards with pictures and flashcards with words are priceless when new vocabulary is presented. In the case of immersion, this is the easiest and fastest learning method. If you use both the students' first language and target language, bilingual flashcards can be very helpful (Gelfgren, 2008).

f. METHODOLOGY

6.1 DESIGN OF THE RESEARCH

Action research has become more popular as a mode of research among practitioners. It includes the process of actively participating in a change situation at the same time as conducting research. Action research can be undertaken by undergraduate and postgraduate students, assisted or guided by professional researchers, with the aim of improving their strategies, practices and knowledge of the surroundings within which they practice.

This study is an applied educational research work since it is a practical action research that will allow the practitioner to study aspects of practice with the introduction of a variety of flashcards with the purpose to improve the Learning of the English Vocabulary and see the reflections of her intervention.

6.2 METHODS, TECHNIQUES AND INTRUMENTS

6.2.1 METHODS

This study will make a description of the data resulting from the application of an intervention plan. The following general methods will be applied along the descriptive research:

The Scientific method will facilitate the study of the songs applied to increase the vocabulary learning. It will help in the observations done before and during the intervention. This one will also assist during the prediction of the possible solution; it will assist with gathering data to make relevant predictions and the analysis of it.

The Descriptive method will enable to describe the different stages of the study and the kind of resources used by the researcher. It will serve to explain and analyze the object of the investigation.

The analytic-synthetic method will be used to analyze the obtained results through the questioners and test. It will be used also to make the interpretation of the data, theological analysis and draw up the conclusions.

The statistic method will be used to make the quantitative statistical analysis of the data received from the questionnaires and the qualitative text analysis of the data received from the observations, and teacher's diary.

This work will use the research spiral cycles proposed by Kemmis (2000) since the process is likely to be more fluid, open and responsive. It includes planning, acting and observing, and reflecting suggests.

Action research is an inquiry, undertaken with rigor and understanding in order to constantly refine practice; the emerging evidence-based outcomes will then contribute to the researching practitioner's continuing professional development (Koshy, 2005).

Action research is a process of study done by systematically collecting data on one's everyday practice and analyzing it in order to draw conclusions about how future practice should be.

It involves a self-reflective cycle of identifying a situation or problem, planning a change, acting and observing the processes and consequences, and then re-planning, and so forth. It offers a valuable opportunity for teachers or practitioners to be involved in the research to collect first-hand information (McNiff, 2003); (Weeks, 1998).

Action research will be applied in this study because it will enable the practitioner or researcher of this project to follow the steps in the spiral that helped her reflect upon her teaching and improve her students' situation. The researcher intends to see if the plan would work well or if any necessary modification or amendment would be needed to improve her students' language learning.

6.2.2 TECHNIQUES AND INSTRUMENTS

Data collection

A research diary will be used to take notes for keeping a record of what happens in each class and two sets of structures questionnaires and tests will be used to collect data in this study. Quantitative data will come from the questionnaires and tests and qualitative data will come from the diary. All the data will be triangulated to confirm validity.

Questionnaires

Two sets of face-to-face tests will be used. A pre-questionnaire of seven closed and multiple questions will be used to collect students' answers about the learning of vocabulary at the beginning and at the end of the intervention. This will allow the students to provide a wide range of responses. The post- questionnaire will be used to collect students' progress about the vocabulary learned during the intervention. All tests will be conducted in class so that researcher give a clear explanation to students and clarify all queries raised. In addition, one hundred percent return rate should be ensured.

Tests

Two sets of face-to-face tests will be used. A pre-test of four multiple choices questions will be used to collect students' answers about the level of student's vocabulary at the beginning and at the end of the intervention. This will allow the students to provide a wide range of responses. The same post-test will be used to collect students' progress about the vocabulary learned during the intervention. All tests will be conducted in class so that researcher give a clear explanation to students and clarify all queries raised. In addition, one hundred percent return rate should be ensured.

Observation

The researcher will carefully observe students 'performance during lessons. She will use a diary to notice what has happened in class that helps them investigate, analyze and reflect upon their findings when the project comes to an end.

Field diary

The researcher will use a diary to record what happens in each lesson. It will help to write up the findings during the intervention, significant events during the observation, or any particular situations that happen.

6.3 PROCEDURES

The action research work process will include the following stages:

The intervention plan will start and end with questionnaires of interviews. Two semi-structured interviews will be conducted. Two questionnaires will be applied; one at the beginning of the study to collect data on students. A variety of activities will be introduced to increase student's vocabulary and of through the use of funny songs. A checklist will be used as instrument to help the researcher to observe students 'performance during classes. Afterwards, the researcher will use a diary to write up what happens in each class.

Finally, the second questionnaire will be applied to check the overall students' progress after the intervention plan. The students' progress before and after the intervention will be compared and analyze to draw the conclusions about the action research work.

After the intervention the researcher will analyze the data collected. Then, she will draw the conclusions of the intervention. Finally, the report of her intervention will be disseminated among the teachers, the partners and the school.

6.3.1 Tabulation

The tabulation of data will be done with the data collected in the two questionnaires conducted. A logical analysis will be done with the information received.

6.3.2 Organization

The researcher will organize to work with the information received in all the strategies applied to compare and analyze the impact of the intervention. A report of the intervention will be disseminated with the findings and ideas among the teachers, the partners and the school.

6.3.3 Description

The description of the data collected and graphics will be described considering the information pre and post intervention. The description of each questionnaire's data will be completed to facilitate the interpretation of the information shown; and also do the logical analysis of the data received.

6.4 Population Sample

The students from seventh year of Basic Education parallel "A" are chosen as sampling to develop the action research work. The participants of the

study are 26 students between boys and girls. They are between eleven and twelve years old. The students receive one hour of English per week with a certified teacher, for this reason the most of them have a very low level of English**.**

6.5. INTERVENTION AND OBSERVATION

INTERVENTION PLAN

Intervention: 7 lessons

	Objectives	Activities	Procedure	Resources/instruments	Observation notes
GENERAL PROJECT OBJECTIVE: To improve the English vocabulary through the use of flashcards among seventh year students in parallel "A" at "Teniente Hugo Ortiz" school, during the school year 2013-2014.					
week one	**Lesson 1** - To take a pre-test about students' knowledge of vocabulary. - To answer a pre questionnaire about the vocabulary learning.	- Answering the pre-test and pre questionnaire	- The researcher gives to students the test and questionnaire. - The researcher explains the questions one by one. - The researcher clarifies any doubt about the test and questionnaire. - Students answer the test and questionnaire.	- Pen - Questionnaires, Tests - Tests - Eraser	

week two	**Lesson 2** - To identify the new vocabulary about action words using picture flashcards.	- Recognizing the action verbs (read, dance, wash, play, work, listen) in a handout.	- Teacher introduces the new vocabulary (read, dance, wash, play, work, listen) using pictures flashcards. - Teacher gives to students the handouts with the vocabulary. - Teacher explains the meaning of the new words. - Teacher says the action verbs and students repeat them. - Teacher asks to students to repeat the new words. - Students practice the pronunciation of the new vocabulary. - Students work in another activity in which the teacher covers completely the picture flashcard with a plain piece of card the same size and pull it down, then she slowly reveals the picture and encourage students to guess what it	- Pictures flashcards (read, dance, wash, play, work, listen). - Piece of card - Board - Eraser - Handouts	
	Lesson 3 - To spell the action words learned using	- Spelling the action words	- Teacher and students make a review about the vocabulary learned (teacher	- Picture flashcards - Board	

Week three	picture flashcards.	with an acrostic.	shows the picture flashcards and students say what word it is and individually students write each letter using a different color pencil) - Students copy the words using different colors in their notebooks. - Students practice the pronunciation. - Teacher introduces and explains in what consists the acrostic. - Teacher asks to students to work in pairs. - Students choose three words and write an acrostic for that word. - Students share their acrostics with the class.	- Eraser - Color pencils - Markers - Notebooks	

Week four	**Lesson 4** - To identify the new vocabulary about action words using picture flashcards.	- Recognizing the action verbs (watch, cook, jump, call, walk, clean) in a handout.	- Teacher introduces the new vocabulary (watch, cook, jump, call, walk, clean) using pictures flashcards. - Teacher gives to students the handouts with the vocabulary. - Teacher explains the meaning of the new words. - Teacher says the action verbs and students repeat them. - Teacher ask to students to repeat the new words. - Students practice the pronunciation of the new vocabulary. - Teacher gives to students an extra sheet of paper with the vocabulary but with missing vowels. - Students work individually and have to complete the words with the missing vowels.	- Picture flashcards - Board - Handouts - Sheets of paper. - Markers	

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Week five	**Lesson 5** - To master the vocabulary words learned before.	- Filling the blanks with the vocabulary words using some word flashcards.	- Teacher displays some word flashcards on the board with some missing letters. - Students take turns and go to the board to fill in the blanks with the missing letters. - Teacher shows the word flashcards to make a final revision of the vocabulary. - Students repeat the words aloud. - Students work with other activity in which they make a circle. Teacher throws the ball to one student and he or she names all the flashcards showed.	- Word flashcards - Board - Eraser - Ball - Markers
Week six	**Lesson 6** - To review the all the vocabulary learned.	- Recognizing all the action verbs in a word search.	- Teacher asks to students to go to the board and write the words studied. - Students say the meaning of the words. - Teacher says the correct pronunciation of the words and students repeat them. - Students write the vocabulary with its meaning in their notebooks. - Teacher asks to students to work in pairs.	- Board - Markers - Word search - Notebooks

		- Teacher gives to students a word search in which they have to find all the words.		
Lesson 7 - To assess whether the intervention had any effect on the students' vocabulary.	- Answering the post test and the post questionnaire	- Researcher gives to students the test and questionnaire. - Researcher explains the questions one by one. - Researcher clarifies any doubt about the test and questionnaire. - Students answer the test and questionnaire.	- Questionnaires - Tests - Copies - Pencil - Eraser - Pen	

g. TIMELINE

PHASES	ACTIVITIES	2014											2015											
		Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May.	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May.	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
Project	Appointment of the teacher advisor	■																						
	Project approval	■																						
	Appointment of thesis director		■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■												
Intervention of action	Application of the instruments		■																					
	Act observe			■	■																				
Thesis process	Data organization and tabulation					■																		
	Interpreting and Reflecting						■																		
	Writing up and reporting						■																		
	Presenting the thesis report							■																	
	Thesis revision							■	■	■	■														
	Thesis presentation											■													
	Thesis apporval													■	■	■	■	■							
	Submission of the folder																			■	■	■			
	Private review																							■	
	Corrections																							■	
	Public presentation and incorporation																								■

h. BUDGET AND FINANCING

1. RESOURCES:

Human

- The researcher, Pablo Leonardo Hidalgo Carrion

- The 7th year students of Basic education, in parallel "A"

Material

- Picture Flashcards

- Books

Technical

- Computer

- Internet

2. BUDGET

Resources	Cost
Internet	$30.00
Printed of the project	$10.00
Print of reports	$15.00
Printed of final report and thesis	$150.00
Others	$ 50.00
Total	$ 255.00

3. FINANCING

All expenses related to the present research will be assumed entirely by the researcher conducting the investigation.

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ANNEX 2

PRE AND POST TEST

As an undergraduate of the English Language career, the researcher is doing an action research work about the "use of Flashcards". This study will help you to improve your vocabulary of the English Language learning. For that reason; I ask you politely to answer the next questions in a real and responsible way.

1) CIRCLE THE WORD THAT DOES NOT BELONG

- DOG   LISTEN   READ
- CLEAN   BOOK   DANCE
- WORK   WATCH   BOY
- COOK   GREEN   WALK

2) MATCH THE PICTURE WITH THE CORRECT VERB.

WASH   **DANCE**   **PLAY**   **WATCH**

3) LOOK AT THE PICTURE. CIRCLE THE CORRECT WORD TO COMPLETE THE SENTENCE.

1.

The children (JUMP) (COOK) in the park.

2.

I (WALK) (PLAY) to the school every day.

3.

My father (WORKS) (WATCHES) at the bank.

4.

I (READ)   (LISTEN TO) interesting books.

5.

They   (PLAY) (CALL) FOOTBALL.

6.

My   mother   (COOKS) (DANCES)   a delicious Fish.

7. We (WATCH) (WASH) TV.

8. My sister (CLEANS) (WALKS) the bedroom.

4) COMPLETE THE SENTENCES. USE THE WORDS IN THE BOX.

Watch	Walk	Listen to
	Read	Dance

1. I .... Salsa

2. I .... with my feet

3. I .... with my ears

4. I .... with my eyes

5. I .... a book

ANNEX 3

PRE AND POST QUESTIONNAIRE

As an undergraduate of the English Language career, the researcher is doing an action research work about the "use of Flashcards". This study will help you to improve your vocabulary of the English Language learning. For that reason; I ask you politely to answer the next questions in a real and responsible way.

1. **DO YOU LIKE TO LEARN VOCABULARY IN THE ENGLISH CLASSES?**

   YES   (   )   NO (   )

2. **IN THE ENGLISH CLASSES, THE VOCABULARY LEARNING IS?**

   INTERESTING   (   )
   FUNNY   (   )
   BORING   (   )

3. **WHAT RESOURCES DO YOU USE TO LEARN VOCABULARY IN THE ENGLISH CLASSES?**

   SONGS   (   )
   FLASHCARDS   (   )
   GRAPHIC ORGANIZERS   (   )
   GAMES   (   )
   TEXTBOOK   (   )

OTHERS　　　　　　　　　　(　)

4. HOW OFTEN DOES THE TEACHER USE FLASHCARDS TO TEACH VOCABULARY?

	ALWAYS	SOMETIMES	NEVER
Songs	( )	( )	( )
Flashcards	( )	( )	( )
Graphic organizer	( )	( )	( )
Games	( )	( )	( )
Textbook	( )	( )	( )
Others	( )	( )	( )

5. WHAT ACTIVITIES DO YOU DO TO MASTER THE VOCABULARY?

Flashcard chain	( )
Revealing the work	( )
What is missing?	( )
Slowly, slowly	( )
Kim's game	( )

ANNEX 4

UNIVERSIDAD NACIONAL DE LOJA

ÁREA DE LA EDUCACIÓN, EL ARTE Y LA COMUNICACIÓN

ENGLISH LANGUAGE CAREER

RESEARCHER FIELD DIARY

Lesson					
Activity					
Objective:					
Materials:					
Timing					
Procedure					
Grouping					
Did students like it?	yes		For a while		Not really
Were they bored?	yes		No		
Did they make an effort?					
Comments					

MATRIX

Theme: The use of flashcards as didactic material to improve the English vocabulary among 7th year students of basic education, in parallel "A" at "Teniente Hugo Ortiz" school.

Problem	Objectives	Theoretical Frame	Methodological Design (Action research)	Instruments
Main (Research) problem: **How does the use of flashcards improve the English vocabulary among seventh year students of Basic Education, in parallel "A" at "Teniente Hugo Ortíz" school, during the school year 2013-2014?**	**General** To improve the English vocabulary through the use of flashcards among 7th year students in parallel "A" at "Teniente Hugo Ortiz" school, during the school year 2013-2014.	**Vocabulary** - Vocabulary - Definition of vocabulary - Kinds of vocabulary - Basic aspects of vocabulary -The importance of vocabulary - Teaching Vocabulary - How to teach vocabulary?	**Preliminary investigation** -Observing the English classes -Stating the background of problem -Describing current situation -Locating and reviewing the literature	Questionnaires Tests Diary

Sub-problems	Specifics	- Techniques to teach vocabulary?	-Creating a methodological framework for research	
• **What kind of theoretical references about English Vocabulary and flashcards are effective to help the seventh year students in parallel "A" at "Teniente Hugo Ortíz" school, during the school year 2013-2014?** • **What are the issues that limit the vocabulary learning of the seventh year students in parallel "A" at "Teniente Hugo Ortíz" school, during the school year 2013-2014?** • **What are the important phases of the intervention plan that address the current**	• To investigate the theoretical references about vocabulary learning in the English language and the flashcards as a strategy to help seventh year students of Basic Education, in parallel "A at "Teniente Hugo Ortiz" school, during the school year 2013-2014. • To diagnose the issues that limit the vocabulary learning with seventh year students of Basic Education, in parallel "A" at "Teniente Hugo	**Flashcards** - What are flashcards? - Definition of flashcards - Kinds of flashcards - Advantages of using flashcards -Activities to use with flashcards - Why use flashcards? - When and where can you use flashcards? - - Areas of application	-Preparing an intervention plan **Intervention and Observation** **-**Applying, observing and monitoring students' performance according to the intervention plan **Presentation of research findings** **-**Reflecting, analyzing and answering the proposed inquiries -Organizing the final report	

issues of the vocabulary learning with flashcards of the seventh year students in parallel "A" at "Teniente Hugo Ortíz" school, during the school year 2013-2014? • **Which flashcards are implemented to improve the vocabulary learning of the seventh year students in parallel "A" at "Teniente Hugo Ortíz" school, during the school year 2013-2014?** • **How do flashcards as part of the classroom activities solve the limitation of the vocabulary learning of the seventh year**	Ortiz" school, during the school year 2013-2014. • To design an intervention plan with the use of flashcards to increase the vocabulary learning of seventh year students of Basic Education, in parallel "A" at "Teniente Hugo Ortiz" school, during the school year 2013-2014. • To apply the intervention plan as part of the classroom activities in order to solve the limitations in the learning of the vocabulary of seventh			

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students in parallel "A" at "Teniente Hugo Ortíz" school, during the school year 2013-2014?	year students of Basic Education, in parallel "A" at "Teniente Hugo Ortiz" school, during the school year 2013-2014. • To reflect upon the effect that the flashcards had on grade students' vocabulary, in parallel "A" at "Teniente Hugo Ortiz" school, during the school year 2013-2014.			

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