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ÁREA DE LA EDUCACIÓN, EL ARTE Y LA  
COMUNICACIÓN

ENGLISH LANGUAGE DEPARTMENT

## TITLE

THE USE OF FLASH CARDS TO IMPROVE THE ENGLISH  
LANGUAGE VOCABULARY OF THE STUDENTS OF  
THIRD YEAR OF BASIC EDUCATION AT "24 DE MAYO"  
SCHOOL, ACADEMIC PERIOD 2013- 2014

Thesis required for obtain the  
Bachelor's Degree in Science of  
Education, English Language Major.

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## CERTIFICACIÓN

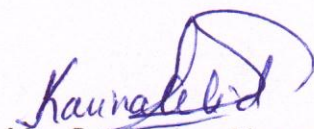
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**DOCENTE DEL DEPARTAMENTO DE IDIOMA INGLÉS DE LA  
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*The author*

## **DEDICACION**

First, I want to dedicate this research work to God for the wonderful life He has brought me and for the beautiful and nice people that I have found along my way in this world.

Then, I dedicate this work to all my family, in special to my parents, my grandmother and my siblings, whose support, help and encouragement has, help me to achieve this outstanding step in my professional development.

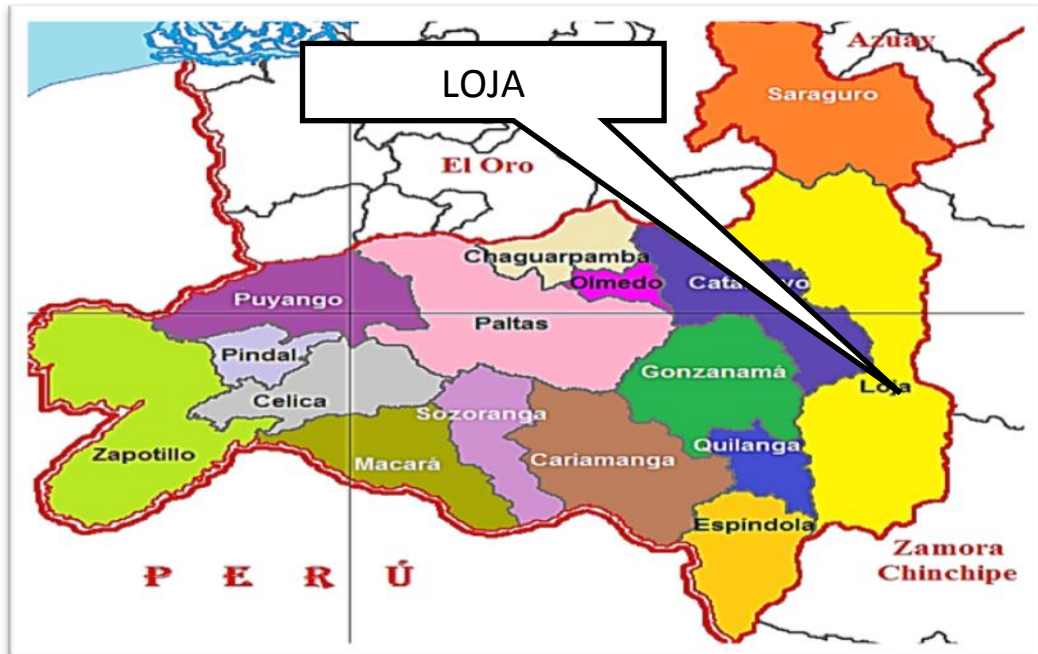
Finally, I want to bestow this research work with all my heart to my guardian angel who is always watching me over, protecting me and supporting me every moment of my life.

***YADIRA ELIZABETH***

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## CROQUIS





## THESIS SCHEME

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**a. TITLE**

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## **b. RESUMEN**

Este estudio de investigación acción tuvo como principal propósito usar flash cards para mejorar el vocabulario del idioma Inglés de los estudiantes del 3<sup>er</sup> Año de Educación Básica en la escuela “24 de Mayo” de la ciudad de Loja, 21 alumnos fue la población total que participó en este trabajo de investigación. Para alcanzar el principal objetivo propuesto, un plan de intervención fue diseñado para llevar a cabo la implementación de las flash cards en la enseñanza del vocabulario, y luego éste fue aplicado a través de nueve sesiones. Además, tests y cuestionarios fueron usados antes y después de la intervención como instrumentos para recolectar la información necesaria acerca del conocimiento del vocabulario y la percepción que los estudiantes tenían acerca del uso de flash cards al principio. Los resultados demuestran que el uso de flash cards ayudó a los estudiantes a mejorar su vocabulario, porque los datos obtenidos del post-test muestran un nivel más alto de conocimiento; y de la misma manera, los resultados de los post-cuestionarios indican que la percepción de los estudiantes con respecto a las flash cards es más positiva.

En conclusión el uso flash cards fue una guía didáctica compuesta por una serie de ejercicios los cuales contribuyeron con el desarrollo del léxico del inglés con diversas actividades, dinámicas, interactivas, grupales y motivadoras promoviendo la aplicación de este método, dirigido a un aprendizaje permanente de los estudiantes.

## **ABSTRACT**

This action-research study assessed the use of flashcards to improve the English language vocabulary of 3rd year Basic-Education students at the " 24 de Mayo" of Loja city, a total of twenty one students participated in this research work. To achieve the main objective, an intervention plan was designed to carry out the implementation of flashcards in teaching of vocabulary, and then it was applied through nine sessions. In addition, tests and questionnaires were used both before and after the intervention as tools to collect the necessary information about the knowledge of vocabulary and the perception that students had about using flash cards. The results demonstrate that the use of flash cards help students to improve their vocabulary, because the data obtained from the post-test showed a high level of knowledge; and in the same way, the results of the post-questionnaires indicate that the perception of the students regarding the flashcards is more positive.

In conclusion, the use of flashcards is a didactic guide that consist of a series of exercises, which contributed to the development the English vocabulary with various activities, dynamic, interactive, group, promoting motivating and application of the method to allow a permanent learning.

### **c. INTRODUCTION**

This study was focused on the use of flashcards to improve the vocabulary learning with children from eight to nine years old in a public school. These students received English classes twice a week without the support of resources and activities that motivate and facilitate the learning of it. The current study investigated the research and the strategy to facilitate the improvement of the vocabulary learning

In order to get better solution to the stated issues, the author established the following objectives: First, to analyze the theoretical references that support this action research; second, to determine the main issue that limits the learning of English-language vocabulary; third, to design and apply an intervention plan that uses flashcards as a main strategy to improve vocabulary; and finally, to reflect upon the effect that flashcards have on students at “24 de Mayo” school.

The development of this research work involved the entire students of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Year for is a total of 21 students. In addition, an intervention plan with nine sessions was designed, with the application of pre-test and pre-questionnaires in order to evaluate the level of vocabulary that students have and their perception about the use of flashcards. Similarly, a post-test and a post-questionnaire were applied at the end of the intervention

plan in order to assess the improvement of the vocabulary and the perception that students had about the use of flashcards. During the intervention, all sessions were planned based on the students' cognitive process to build up their knowledge. These sessions practiced activities that enable students to master new words by recognizing and memorizing them.

The written report of this action research is organized into different stages. First, the summary in which the most essential description of the research works is synthesized. Then, the introduction presents a global view of the purpose of this research. After that, the review of the literature provides a thorough summary about the consulted theoretical resources. Next, the section on materials and methods describes the methodology used to obtain and process the information, which is then represented and analyzed in the Results section. This is followed by a discussion of the results, and after that the Conclusions and Recommendations determined by the results gotten in the research work. Finally, this report concludes with the Bibliography.

#### **d. LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **VOCABULARY**

#### **DEFINITION**

According to Stahl (1999), a person's vocabulary is the set of 1 within a language which are familiar to that person. A vocabulary usually develops with age, and serves as a useful and fundamental tool for communication and the acquisition of knowledge. Acquiring an extensive vocabulary is one of the greatest challenges to learning a second language.

Vocabulary is commonly defined as "all the words known and used by a particular person. Knowing a word, however, does not simply involve the ability to recognize or use it. Instead, there are several factors that are used to measure word knowledge.

#### **IMPORTANCE OF VOCABULARY**

It seems almost impossible to overstate the power of words; indeed they have changed and will continue to change the course of world history.

Perhaps the greatest tool we can give students for success, not only in education but also in life, is a large, vocabulary and the skills necessary for using those words. Our ability to function in today's complex social and

economic worlds is greatly affected by our language skills and word knowledge. Pikulski & Templeton (1996).

In addition to the importance of vocabulary for success in life though a large vocabulary is more specifically predictive and reflective of high levels of reading achievement. The Report of the National Reading Panel (2000), for example, concluded, “The importance of vocabulary knowledge has long been appreciated”. Although the dependence of both general achievement and reading achievement on vocabulary growth has been clearly established for decades, those findings do not appear to have been put into practice. In a recent text, Beck et al. (2002) draw the research-based conclusion: “All the available evidence indicates that there is little emphasis on the acquisition of vocabulary in school curricula.”

### **THE NEED TO IMPROVE VOCABULARY INSTRUCTION**

An important distinction to make is the difference between **active** or **productive** vocabulary which is the vocabulary we want students to be able to use when they speak and write and **passive** or **receptive** vocabulary which is the vocabulary we want them to be able to recognize and understand but not necessarily produce. Students often feel frustrated that they can understand more than they can produce, but an explanation of the differences between active and passive knowledge as a normal part of learning can be reassuring. When giving vocabulary assignments,



passive- which items should be included. Students can then discuss which items they need to learn solely “for understanding” and which they need to learn extensively so that they can use them. (But be sure that in practice or testing activities, students are required to remember and use only the active vocabulary productively.)

Additionally, McCarten (2001) argues that even at the elementary level, it is important to incorporate not just single words in vocabulary lessons, but also larger “chunks” such as collocations, phrases, expressions, whole sentences, as well as strategic vocabulary. By building a bank of expressions as well as individual words, students can assemble the language they need to communicate more fluently.

### **TYPES OF VOCABULARY**

According to Wollacott (2013), there are four main types of vocabulary: Reading, writing, listening and speaking. A person’s vocabulary develops with age and learning.

Wollacott states that the types of vocabulary can be divided, as with grammatical classes, into adjectives, nouns, and verbs. They can also be divided, as with the various fields of semantics, into categories as diverse as emotions, colors, animals and human body parts. When dealing with

categories of vocabulary, the four types, of reading, and writing, listening and speaking are the most commonly used.

A person's knowledge of words is divided into two broad types of vocabulary: the active and the passive. An active piece of vocabulary is a word a person uses and a passive is one that a person understands, but does not use. There are several degrees of knowledge, ranging from no understanding of a word to full knowledge of a word's meaning, forms and how to use it. Wollacott classifies the types of vocabulary as follows:

- **Reading Vocabulary**

A reading vocabulary is a passive one, and includes the words understood by the reader while reading a piece of written text. The reader is able to recognize the form of the letters and how they correspond to one another, and how their sum is understood. This also includes understanding a word's spelling, meaning and the exact meaning in its context.

- **Listening Vocabulary**

Listening is also a passive type of vocabulary, whose the listener is able to link the words being spoken to their meaning. This level of understanding is aided by word context, intonation and, if there is visual contact with the speaker, by gestures and facial expressions.

Listening is, like reading, an interpretational form of vocabulary.

- **Writing Vocabulary**

Writing is the active-vocabulary equivalent to reading. With reading, it forms the core skills necessary for literacy. The writer demonstrates his or her knowledge of a word in terms of its meaning, as well how to spell it and use it correctly.

- **Speaking Vocabulary**

Wollacott (2013) said that speaking is one of the types of vocabulary that demonstrates a person's true knowledge of words. It is an active demonstration that can also rely on other elements such as facial expressions, intonation, pitch and gestures to help understand meaning. Knowledge of a word is demonstrated by proper usage and pronunciation.

### **HOW VOCABULARY IS REMEMBERED?**

Thornbury (2002) says that, unlike the learning of grammar, which is essentially a rule-based system, vocabulary knowledge depends largely on the accumulation individual items.

Success generally depends on the use of memory, and during the process of teaching and learning vocabulary, an important question arises: How does memory work? Research into the workings of memory distinguish between the following systems

- short– term store

- working memory
- long– term memory

### **Short - term store**

Short-term store is the brain capacity to hold a limited number of items of information for periods of time up to a few seconds. It is the kind of memory involved in the repetition of a word previously modeled by a teacher. However, successful vocabulary learning involves more than holding words for a few seconds. To integrate vocabulary into long - term memory, words need to be subjected to different kinds of operations.

### **Working memory**

Working memory involves focusing on words long enough to perform operations on them. It means that information is manipulated via the senses from external sources and/or can be downloaded from the long-term memory.

Material remains in working memory for about twenty seconds. The existence of articulator loop enables the processing of new material, working like audiotape going round a round again. It allows short- term memory to be kept refreshed. The ability to hold a word in working memory is a good predictor of language-learning aptitude. High ability to

hold words in working memory predicts a smooth process of learning foreign languages.

### **Long –term memory**

Long-term memory can be seen a type of filing system. Unlike working memory, which has a limited capacity and no permanent content, this memory has an enormous capacity and its contents are durable over time.

However, to ensure moving new materials into permanent long-term memory, a number of principles must be followed.

- Repetition – Repetition of encounters with a word is very important, useful and effective. If the word is met several times over space interval during reading activities, students improve their chances of remembering it permanently
- Retrieval – Retrieval is another kind of repetition. Activities which require retrieval, such as using new items in written tasks, improve students' ability to recall vocabulary in the future.
- Spacing - Spacing is useful to split memory work over a period of time rather than grouping it together in a single block.
- Pacing – Pacing is used to respect different learning styles and pace. Students should be given the opportunity to do memory work individually.

- Use - Putting words to use, preferably in interesting ways, is the best methods of ensuring they are added to long – term memory. This is the so-called “Use it or lose it” principle.
- Cognitive depth - The more decisions students make about a word and the more cognitively-demanding these decisions are, the more effectively the word is remembered.
- Personal organizing - Personalization significantly increases the probability that students will remember new items. It is achieved mainly through conversation and role-playing activities.
- Imaging – Easily visualized words are more memorable than those that do not evoke any image. Even abstract words can be associated with some mental image.
- Mnemonics – Mnemonics are tricks to help retrieve items or rules that are stored in memory. The best kinds of mnemonics are visuals and keyword techniques.
- Motivation - Strong motivation itself does not ensure that words will be remembered. Even unmotivated students remember words if they have to face appropriate tasks.
- Attention - It is not possible to improve vocabulary without a certain level of conscious attention.

## **FLASHCARDS**

According to the British Council (2004), a flashcard is learning and that

contains a small amount of information and held up for students to see.

Flash cards are simple and versatile as well as resources, yet are often underexploited. The purpose and use of flash cards, a selection, of activities, are discussed in the following section.

### **Why use flash cards?**

Howard Gardner's multiple-intelligence theory informs teachers that there are many types of learners within any given class, and that teachers should appeal to every learner type throughout the course. It is particularly important to appeal to visual stimuli, as a very high proportion of learners have this type of intelligence. Indeed flash cards can be very effective with visual learners. Many of the activities outlined below will also appeal to kinesthetic learners.

For children at a reading level, flashcards can be used in conjunction with word cards, which simply display a written word. However, word cards should be introduced well after the pictorial cards so as not to interfere with correct pronunciation. Flashcards are a useful resource to have and can be incorporated into every stage of the class. They are a great way to present, practice and recycle vocabulary, can be given out to early-finishers to use in small group.

### **Where to get flash cards?**

- Buy them - Some course books provide a supplementary pack of

flash cards. Additionally, they can be bought in sets.

- Make them yourself - If you don't have access to professionally-produced flash cards, they can be easy made instead. Some methods include using pictures from magazines, drawing simple pictures or copying from the Internet or clip art. The most important element is that they all be of the same size and or cards that are not see through. If possible, it is advisable to laminate the sets to ensure that they last for years. The advantage of creating customized flashcards is that you can specialize them to meet specific needs. A set may be used in conjunction with a storybook or graded reader, or even to accompany project work.
- Students make them. After introducing a new lexical set or using realia or the course book, ask students to produce a set of flash cards for the class. Give each one an item to draw, and mount the images on cards to make the set.

#### **4.1.1 CLASSIFICATION OF FLASHCARDS**

According to David A. Hill (1990) classroom images fall into three 'size' categories:

- “Large (20x30 cm): useful for whole-class work”
- “Medium (10x15 cm): useful for group-work”



- “Small (5x5 cm): useful for games and other group-work activities”

This classification applies to picture flashcards as well, but Hill’s classification divides them into two groups only. The first group covers “Big flashcards” (about 15x20cm or larger), typically used by the teacher for whole-class activities such as presenting new language, controlled practice or as prompts for speaking activities. Conversely the second group covers “small picture flash cards” (smaller than about 15x20cm), usually used by students working individually or for games and activities in pairs or groups. According Hill (1990)

### **Big picture flashcards**

Big-picture flashcards are helpful tools for presenting and drilling forms of new words, since they draw learners’ attention and make boring activities more enjoyable. These resources accomplish a key objective for teaching new language –catching students’ full attention, and raising their interest and motivation for the presented subject. At the same time, flashcards (as well as other forms of pictures and visual aids in general) enable students to immediately link the meaning of words with real-world images.

When using flashcards in presentation, it is easy to involve learners actively and combine the presentation with controlled practice. The presentation of vocabulary with flashcards can be done in lots of various

ways, for example while telling a story or introducing a set of vocabulary for a particular topic.

Wright (1990) lists several possibilities for illustrating the meaning of a new word or a piece of language through pictures. A single picture can accomplish this objective, but the use of additional images will reinforce the most vital aspects of the words meaning and correct usage. This purpose can be realized by displaying several different pictures with one identical feature should suffice for this purpose. For example, to teach the phrase 'to be horrified', the teacher can show three pictures of people horrified by different things.

Wright & Haleem (1996) argue that "big" flashcards are suitable for vocabulary practice and testing. In order to engage students' attention, picture should be revealed in an interesting way and used in conjunction with appropriate activities one example is: 'Flashing picture', where the teacher flashes cards quickly and students guess or describe what they saw. Another example is 'The slow picture reveals'. Wright & Haleem (1996)

### **Small picture flashcards**

A many of variations of flashcards are typically applied in pairs or small groups of students during communicative activities find One-side-only

cards, both-sided cards sets of pairs (antonyms or synonyms, a picture and the corresponding word or phrase) and sets of cards connected by meaning also serve a meaningful role in reviewing and practicing vocabulary.

A flexible application of flashcards offers teachers and their student's diverse possibilities. Flashcards can be used in a number of activities and games such as 'domino' or various forms of word matching activities. Moreover, they are appropriate for a wide range of sorting or ordering activities, such as creating a story. Flashcards can also be used for games based on asking questions or creation of a set. Additionally, they are helpful with individual practice of vocabulary, as students can look at a picture and guess the meaning written on the other side.

#### **4.1.2 HOW TO USE FLASHCARDS?**

According to Read C. & Soberón A, flashcards can be used in many ways to introduce and practice vocabulary, as well as consolidate, recycle and extend children's language. Here are some useful ideas for the classroom.

##### **Flash!**

Quickly display each flashcard to students by holding it between your thumb, index and second finger and "flashing" it quickly. Students look and guess what it is. Repeat and introduce the word in English as appropriate.

### **Slowly, slowly!**

Choose a set of flashcards, and cover each individual card by a blank piece of paper. Pull down the card to slowly reveal the picture, and encourage students to guess what it is. Students call out the word once they can see enough to recognize the picture.

### **Point to...!**

Stick a set of flashcards on the classroom walls. Identify each one and ask students to say the names as you do this. Give instructions such as 'Point to the spider! Point to the butterfly!'

### **Mime the flashcard**

Hold up flashcards in turn and say the words. Students do a mime in response, such as pretending to eat a particular food imitating a particular animal, or putting on clothes. Afterwards, do mimes of different flashcards yourself or invite individual or pairs of students to take turns doing this. Clothes students watch and call out the words.

### **What's missing?**

Place a set of flashcards on the blackboard. Identify each one while you ask students to say the words. (Then say 'Close your eyes' and demonstrate meaning). While students have their eyes closed, quickly remove one of the flashcards from the blackboard. Students then open their eyes and determine the missing flashcard.

### **Magic eyes**

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

### **Flashcard instructions**

Stick a set of flashcards on the walls around the classroom, and divide the class into groups. Give each group instructions in turn e.g. *Group 1. Walk to the elephant. Group two. Jump to the lion* and children respond.

### **Repeat if it's true**

Place a set of flashcards on the blackboard. Point to one of the flashcards and say the word. If you have said the correct name, ask students to repeat it. If not, they stay silent. This activity can be made more challenging by incorporating sentences, such as *it's a red tomato*.

### **Lip-reading**

Place a set of flashcards on the blackboard. Choose one flashcard and mouth the word silently to the class. Students lip-read what you are saying and repeat the word out loud.

### **Guess the flashcard!**

Place a set of flashcards on the blackboard. Select one and encourage students to guess which it is by asking questions e.g. *Is it red? No, it isn't. /*

*Is it blue? Yes, it is.* Invite individual students to the front of the class to repeat the game while his or her classmates guess in the same way.

### **What is it?**

Place 6-8 flashcards from different units on the blackboard, and remind students of the words. Choose one and give clues e.g. *It's a small animal.*

*It's got eight legs. It runs. I'm scared of it. What is it?* Students listen and identify the correct flashcard: *(It's the) spider.*

### **Kim's game**

Place 8-10 flashcards from different lexical sets on the blackboard, and remind students of the words. Give students one minute to look in silence and memorize the flashcards before removing them from the board.

Students then work in pairs to create a list of the flashcards they can remember.

Check accuracy by eliciting answers from the whole class and writing a list on the blackboard.

### **Flashcard groups**

Divide the class into groups of three or four, and give each group a flashcard. Give instructions, such as *Apples, touch your nose! Carrots put your hands on your head!* Students listen and follow the instructions for their group.

### **Flashcard charade**

Divide the class into groups of three or four. Give each group a flashcard, and make sure that the other groups don't see. Explain that each group must think of a way to mime their flashcard and give them a minute or two to prepare this. Each group then takes turns doing their mimes for the rest of the class, and the students guess each other's flashcards.

### **Stand up!**

Divide the class in two teams. Place 4-6 flashcards on the left of the blackboard for one team and 4-6 flashcards on the right of the blackboard for the other team. Say the words in random order. Students 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 students must make the letters of the word on the card with their bodies. Give the groups 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 guess each other's words.

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

As students stand close together in a circle with their hands behind their backs, choose one student to stand in the middle of the group. Show the first flashcard reminds students of the word. While you play music, students pass the flashcard behind their backs around the circle. When the music stops, the card stops as well. The student in the middle has three chances to determine who's got the flashcard by asking different kind of questions.

### **Ball game**

Place 8-10 flashcards on the blackboard. Children stand in a circle. Hold up a ball, say *One, two, three...* and name one of the flashcards on the blackboard as you throw the ball to a child in the circle. The student who catches the ball repeats the procedure and names another flashcard. The game continues until all the flashcards on the blackboard have been selected.

### **Flashcard chain**

Prepare a set of flashcards, and stand or sit in a circle with the student. Pass each flashcard around the circle and ask a question (e.g. *Do you like carrots? Yes, (I do) / No, (I don't)*). After answering, the student then asks the question and passes the flashcard to the next student, and so on round the circle.



When the flashcard is three students from completing the circle, introduce another by asking the first student a question in the same way.

### **Threes!**

Sit in a circle with the student and divide them into two teams. Lay three of the flashcards out and remind student of the names.

Turn the flashcards over so that the pictures are hidden, and change the positions of the flashcards on the floor. Invite a student from one of the teams to name one of the three flashcards. And then choose this flashcard from amongst the three. If the student chooses incorrectly, the three flashcards are turned over and a student from the other team has a change to complete the task. If it is the correct flashcard, that team earns a point. Another flashcard is then introduced, and the game continues in the same way until all the flashcards have been used.

The teams with the most flashcards at the end of the game are the winners.

### **Flashcard bingo**

Place 10-15 flashcards on the blackboard for this activity.

Students draw a grid with six squares and write a word from one flashcard in each square (encourage them to check spelling to do this as necessary).

When students are ready, remove the flashcards from the blackboard and shuffle them. Hold up the flashcards one by one and say the words.

Students listen and cross off the word if it is in their grid. The first student to cross off all six words on his or her grid calls *Bingo!* And is the winner.

### **Flashcard whispers**

Students stand in two lines facing the blackboard; secretly show the last student in each line a flashcard. This student then whispers the word from this flashcard to the next student and so on up the line. The student at the front runs to the blackboard and draws or writes the word. They then go to the back of the line, and the procedure is repeated several times.

### **Odd one out**

Place three or four flashcards in a row on the blackboard, such as butterfly, beetle, spider, grasshopper or apple, carrot, pizza, tomato. Students identify the odd one out and explain why. "*Spider. It's got eight legs*". / "*Pizza. It isn't from a plant*". Repeat the procedure several times.

### **Flashcard story**

Pass out a set of flashcards to students in pairs. Invent a very simple story using a puppet or course-book character or a child in the class.

### **Jumbled words and flashcards**

Place flashcards and word cards on the blackboard in a mixed order. Invite individual students to the blackboard in and ask them to draw lines between matching flashcards and words.

### **Match the flashcards and words**

Place flashcards on the blackboard and give out word cards to individual students.

Students take turns to come up to the blackboard and place their words by the correct flashcard. (Alternatively, place the word cards on the blackboard and give the flashcards to the students).

### **Stop!**

Place a flashcard on the blackboard and remind students of the word.

Hold up word cards one by one. Students read the words silently until the word card that matches the flashcard is held up. They then call 'Stop!' and read the word out loud. Repeat the procedure with different flashcards.

### **Team game**

Prepare two sets of word cards for matching set of flashcards.

Divide the class into two teams, and place flashcards (as many as there are students in each team) on the blackboard or on the walls around the classroom. Give one word card to each student in both teams.

When you call out the word from one of the flashcards, the child in each team who has the corresponding word card stands next to the flashcard placed around the room. The students who accomplished this first wins a point for his or her team.

### **Blackboard pelmanism**

Place 8-10 flashcards in jumbled order and facing in words on one side of the blackboard, and number them. Do the same with the corresponding word cards on the other side of the blackboard. Invite one student to choose a flashcard and, as you turn it around to show the picture, say what it is.

Then invite the same student to choose a word card in the same way. If the flashcard and word card chosen by the student match, remove them from the blackboard. If not, turn both around so that they are in exactly the same position but facing inwards again.

The game proceeds with different students 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. Students take turns to come to the front of the class, either individually or in pairs. They then read a word card that you give them and stick it in the correct circle.

### **ACTIVITIES THAT CAN BE DONE WITH FLASHCARDS**

According to Joanna Budden (2007), activities that can be done with flashcards have been divided into the following categories: Memory, drilling, identification and TPR activities.

#### **Memory Activities**

- Memory Tester
- Place a selection of flash cards on the floor in a circle.
- Students have one minute to memorize the cards.

In groups, students have two minutes to write as many of the words as they can remember.

#### **Drilling Activities**

- Invisible Flash cards
- Place 9 flashcards on the board and draw a grid around them.
- Use a pen or a pointer to drill the 9 words. Always point to the flash card you are drilling.

- Gradually remove the flashcards but continue to drill and point to the grid where the flash card was.
- When the first card is removed and you point to the blank space, encourage children to say the word of the removed flash card.
- Students continue as if the flash cards were still there. They seem to be amazed that they can remember the pictures.
- Depending on the age group, put the flashcards back in the correct place on the grid, asking the students where they go. Alternatively ask students to come up and write the word in the correct place on the grid.

### **Identification Activities**

- Reveal the word
- Cover the flashcard or word card with a piece of card and slowly reveal it.
- Students guess which one it is.
- Once the card is shown, drill the word together as a group using different intonation and silly voices to keep it fun. Vary the volume, as you whisper and shout the words. Students will automatically copy your voice.
- Alternatively, flip the card over very quickly so the children just get a quick glimpse.
- Repeat until the class has guessed the word.

### **TPR activities**

- Point or race to the flash cards
- Place flash cards around the class.
- Say one of them and ask students to point or race to it.
- Students can then give the instructions to classmates.

## **e. MATERIALS AND METHODS**

### **DESIGN**

The spiral model of action research proposed by Kemmis and McTaggart (2000) was followed in this study. Action research is the general name for research done by undergraduate and postgraduate students. Which 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, re-planning, and so forth; this particular methodology is why action research was applied to this study. This thesis initiated with the first cycle of Kemmis and McTaggart's spiral. This process both facilitated subsequent reflections of teaching and improved the subject situation.

### **CONTEXT**

The "24 de Mayo" public school was selected as the location for this research project, and it is the school where the researcher currently works as a part of her teaching practicum. Therefore, the researcher has substantial insight into the pedagogy of English education within the school. The "24 de Mayo" school is located in the "Pucacocha" neighborhood of the city of Loja and it is organized according to Ecuadorian-School-System requirements for a basic-education school.



Students attending this urban public school live in a social environment that reflects developing communities throughout Latin American countries such as Ecuador.

English education is not compulsory within the curriculum in Ecuadorian public elementary schools as it is for middle and high schools. The existence of English education within the curriculum of the, "24 de Mayo school" is optional, and this reality is reflected by the limited class periods only two per week which are devoted to teaching it. It has only an English teacher on the faculty in addition to English instruction received from teacher trainees of the Universidad Nacional de Loja.

## **PARTICIPANTS**

"Twenty-one students (twelve females and nine male members of the third year of Basic Education who are eight to nine years old) participated in this action research. The English class is taught two periods each week, and the textbook ("Enterprise 3") is provided by the Ministry of Education. The resources that this institution utilizes for foreign-language education are a CD player, a few posters and flashcards, and a mini-laboratory with four computers and internet access."

## **METHODS, TECHNIQUES, INSTRUMENTS AND MATERIALS**

This section includes a description of the research design content, participants, methods and techniques used during the research stages, as well as the data-collection instruments and resources. The procedure implemented in the study is also described in this section.

### **METHODS**

The following general methods were applied during the descriptive research:

The *Scientific method* instructed the study of the flash cards applied in the development of English-language vocabulary. It helped with the observations made before and during the intervention, and it also assisted with the anticipation of the possible solution. This particular method helped support data collection in order to make relevant predictions and aid in 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 questionnaires and tests. Additionally it was adopted to interpret the data, develop logical analysis, and draw conclusions.

The *statistic method* made possible the quantitative statistical analysis of data obtained from both the test and the quantitative and qualitative text analysis of the questionnaires at the beginning and end of the intervention plan.

## **TECHNIQUES AND INSTRUMENTS**

The instruments that were used to gather information and data during this research study were:

- Two questionnaires that were applied at the beginning and at the end of the intervention plan, used to gather information about the perception that students had about the use of flashcards.
- Two tests, one applied at the beginning and another at the end of the intervention plan, in given to identify students' knowledge of the vocabulary.

## **MATERIALS**

This research work was accomplished with the assistance of three main resources: The Human Resources that participated during the different stages; the cooperating English school teacher; and the researcher's thesis advisor. In this study, the target population was the Third-Year students at the "24 de Mayo" 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 to both learn from the various human resources and also play an active role in the research work.

A personal computer, printer, 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.

## **PROCEDURE**

The study initiated with the observations of Third-Year English classes at the “24 de Mayo” school in order to identify the difficulties that students were facing. The analysis of observations helped to form the problem statement and suggest a possible solution. Additionally a theoretical framework was developed in order to support the questions raised during the observations.

An intervention plan was organized in lessons and designed with the help of the literature framework. During the application stage of this plan, quantitative and qualitative data were collected using the instruments mentioned above.

The data were tabulated and analyzed after collection and; the discussion of the outcomes was completed with a triangulation of the findings and the literature supporting this study. The conclusions were then drawn as a response to the initial inquiries. Finally, the thesis was written and disseminated.

## f. RESULTS

### QUANTITATIVE DATA

The following tables show the results obtained from the Pre-Test and Post-Test that was applied to students of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Year of Basic Education at “24 de Mayo” school. The tests were administered to assess students’ vocabulary before and after the application of the flashcards intervention plan. Each table presents a graph that clearly shows the results, followed by a logical analysis of the data in order to explain the results.

**TABLE 1**

**TITLE: PRE-TEST RESULTS.**

CRITERIA	REMEMBERING				UNDERSTANDING	TOTAL
QUESTIONS	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q5	Q4	
VALUE EACH QUESTION	2/2	2/2	2/2	2/2	2/2	10.00
STUDENTS' CODE						
M1	2.00	0.50	2.00	0.70	0.20	<b>5.40</b>
M2	2.00	0.50	0.10	0.50	0.00	<b>3.10</b>
M3	2.00	0.40	2.00	0.50	0.00	<b>4.90</b>
M4	2.00	0.20	2.00	1.00	0.50	<b>5.70</b>
M5	0.70	0.00	2.00	0.50	0.00	<b>3.20</b>
M6	2.00	0.40	1.50	1.00	0.00	<b>4.90</b>
M7	1.00	1.00	0.00	0.10	0.00	<b>2.10</b>
M8	0.50	0.10	1.50	0.50	0.00	<b>2.60</b>
M9	1.70	0.10	2.00	1.00	0.20	<b>5.00</b>
M10	2.00	0.50	2.00	2.00	0.00	<b>6.50</b>
M11	2.00	1.50	2.00	1.60	1.00	<b>8.10</b>
M12	2.00	0.60	2.00	1.50	0.00	<b>6.10</b>
M13	2.00	0.50	2.00	0.50	0.00	<b>5.00</b>
M14	2.00	1.50	2.00	0.50	0.20	<b>6.20</b>
M15	1.00	0.00	2.00	1.00	0.00	<b>4.00</b>
M16	2.00	0.50	2.00	0.70	0.20	<b>5.40</b>
M17	1.70	0.50	2.00	1.00	0.00	<b>5.20</b>
M18	2.00	1.00	2.00	0.50	0.40	<b>5.90</b>
M19	1.50	0.50	2.00	1.30	0.20	<b>5.50</b>
M20	2.00	0.30	0.50	0.10	0.50	<b>3.40</b>
M21	2.00	0.60	1.50	1.60	1.20	<b>6.90</b>
<b>MEAN</b>	<b>1.71</b>	<b>0.54</b>	<b>1.66</b>	<b>0.87</b>	<b>0.22</b>	<b>5.00</b>

Note. Q=questions; M=24 de Mayo (school name)

## **Analysis**

The first question of the Pre-test was intended to measure students' knowledge about vocabulary related to fruits. The results of this question indicate that most students did not have difficulty identifying the fruits.

In the second question, students had vocabulary related to geometrical shapes and colors. The results are very low, that most students had problems with the spelling of the words given.

The results of the third question indicate that most students identified the geometrical shapes that they were instructed to draw. Only a few students had difficulty with this question.

The fourth question instructed student's to describe some fruits through colors and the adjectives (big and small). The results show that students were confused and chose the wrong description.

Finally, the fifth question assessed student familiarity with vocabulary related to colors and fruits. The results demonstrate that students had difficulties listening and identifying the correct picture.

According to these results, it is evident that the students of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Year of Basic Education at the "24 de Mayo" school had a poor knowledge of English-language vocabulary prior to the implementation of the intervention plan.

a) TABLA 2

**TITLE: POST-TEST RESULTS**

**POST TEST**

<b>CRITERIA</b>	<b>REMEMBERING</b>			<b>UNDERSTANDING</b>		<b>TOTAL</b>
<b>QUESTIONS</b>	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q5	Q4	
<b>VALUE EACH QUESTION</b>	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00	10.00
<b>STUDENTS' CODE</b>						
M1	2.00	2.00	1.50	1.60	2.00	9.10
M2	2.00	2.00	2.00	1.60	1.20	8.80
M3	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00	10.00
M4	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00	1.20	9.20
M5	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00	0.80	8.80
M6	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00	10.00
M7	0.80	2.00	1.60	1.40	1.60	7.40
M8	2.00	2.00	2.00	1.60	2.00	9.60
M9	2.00	2.00	2.00	1.60	1.60	9.20
M10	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00	10.00
M11	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00	10.00
M12	2.00	2.00	2.00	1.60	2.00	9.60
M13	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00	10.00
M14	2.00	2.00	2.00	1.40	0.40	7.80
M15	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00	1.60	9.60
M16	2.00	2.00	2.00	1.60	1.60	9.20
M17	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00	1.60	9.60
M18	2.00	2.00	2.00	1.60	2.00	9.60
M19	2.00	2.00	2.00	1.60	2.00	9.60
M20	2.00	2.00	2.00	1.60	1.60	9.20
M21	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00	10.00
<b>MEAN</b>	<b>1.94</b>	<b>2.00</b>	<b>1.96</b>	<b>1.77</b>	<b>1.68</b>	<b>9.35</b>

*Note. Q=questions; M=24 de Mayo (school name)*

**Analysis**

At the completion of the intervention plan, a post-test was applied. The results of this test indicate that there was an improvement in students' vocabulary, because the average of each question is higher than the pre-test. An example is the results from question which indicates that students only had a little difficulty identifying the correct adjectives for fruits. These



results suggest that the use of flashcards helped students improve their English-language vocabulary in a significant way. It is important to note though, that the teacher has to develop suitable activities that encourage students to practice the vocabulary in different ways.

### COMPARING PRE-TESTS RESULTS

**TABLE 3**

The following chart shows the results **and the comparison between the pre-and post-est. The “Pearson Product-Moment Correlation”** was used to carry out this comparison, which helped to determine the correlation between the pre-and post-tests.

X= Pre-test scores

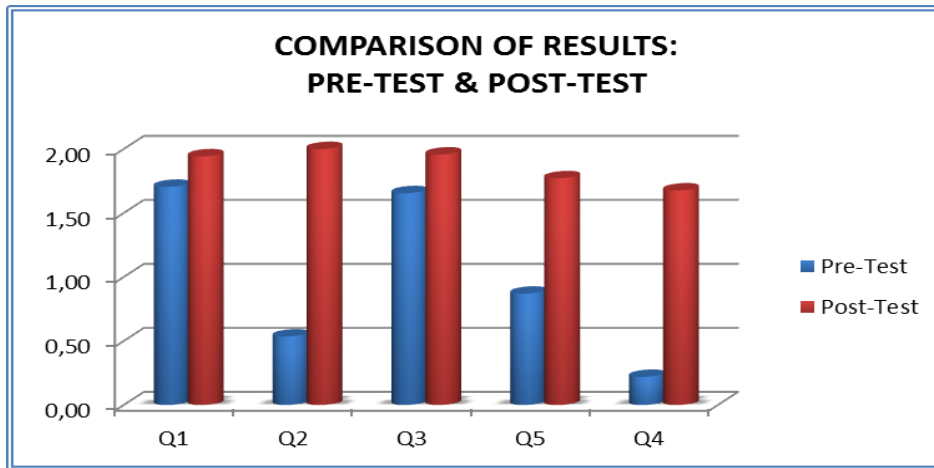
Y= Post-test scores

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

STUDENTS' CODE	PRE-TEST (X)	POST-TEST (Y)	XY	X <sup>2</sup>	Y <sup>2</sup>
M1	5.40	9.10	49.14	29.16	82.81
M2	3.10	8.80	27.28	9.61	77.44
M3	4.90	10.00	49.00	24.01	100.00
M4	5.70	9.20	52.44	32.49	84.64
M5	3.20	8.80	28.16	10.24	77.44
M6	4.90	10.00	49.00	24.01	100.00
M7	2.10	7.40	15.54	4.41	54.76
M8	2.60	9.60	24.96	6.76	92.16
M9	5.00	9.20	46.00	25.00	84.64
M10	6.50	10.00	65.00	42.25	100.00
M11	8.10	10.00	81.00	65.61	100.00
M12	6.10	9.60	58.56	37.21	92.16
M13	5.00	10.00	50.00	25.00	100.00
M14	6.20	7.80	48.36	38.44	60.84
M15	4.00	9.60	38.40	16.00	92.16
M16	5.40	9.20	49.68	29.16	84.64
M17	5.20	9.60	49.92	27.04	92.16
M18	5.90	9.60	56.64	34.81	92.16
M19	5.50	9.60	52.80	30.25	92.16
M20	3.40	9.20	31.28	11.56	84.64
M21	6.90	10.00	69.00	47.61	100.00
<b>SUM</b>	<b>105.10</b>	<b>196.30</b>	<b>992.16</b>	<b>570.63</b>	<b>1844.81</b>
	<b>Σ X</b>	<b>Σ Y</b>	<b>Σ XY</b>	<b>Σ X<sup>2</sup></b>	<b>Σ Y<sup>2</sup></b>

Note. Q=questions; Σ=Sum; M=24 de Mayo (school name)

**a. Figure**



**Analysis**

It can be seen in the graph, the results of the post-test are higher than those of the pre-test. This suggests that the use of flashcards did indeed improve the English-language vocabulary of the students of 3<sup>rd</sup> Year of Basic Education at the “24 de Mayo” school”. The most significant improvement was made in the second, fourth and fifth questions, where students had difficulty spelling certain words, identifying the correct adjective for describing fruits, and listening to and identifying fruits and colors.

The Product Correlation provided a value of 0,000136 as the coefficient of correlation between the variables under study, it point out that there was a slight correlation between both variables; even though it can be seen clearly from posttest. It can be inferred from the results that the use of flashcards helped to improve the English language vocabulary of the

students in a meaningful way; another important fact that has to be taken into account is that students been exposed to this strategy before Intervention plan.

### QUALITATIVE DATA

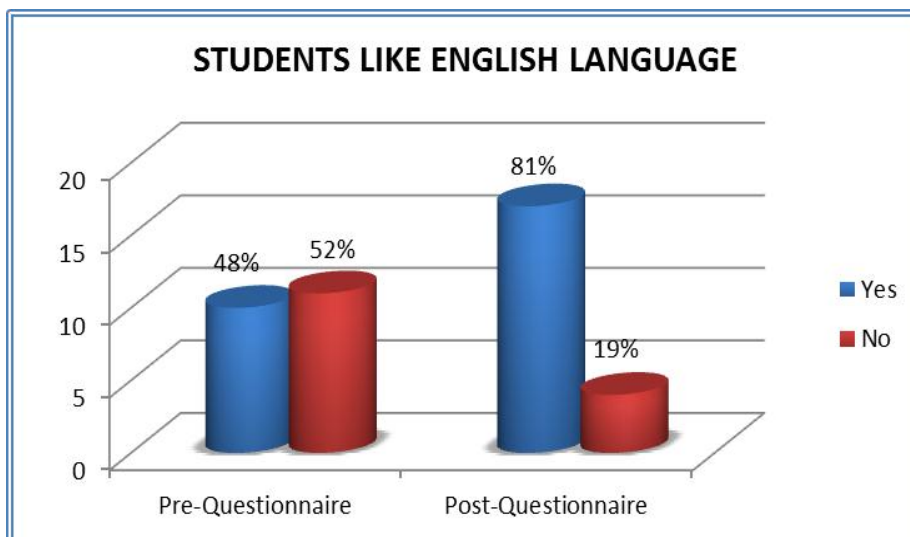
a. TABLE 4

QUESTION 1: Do you like English language?

TITLE: STUDENTS LIKE ENGLISH LANGUAGE	Pre-Questionnaire		Post-Questionnaire	
	f	%	f	%
Yes	10	48	17	81
No	11	52	4	19
<b>Total</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>100</b>

Note. f=frequency.

b. Figure



### Analysis

The results obtained in the pre-questionnaire in question one indicate that a little more than half of students did not like the English language.

However, in the post-questionnaire few students answered that they did not like it. These results demonstrate that the activities carried out with the flashcards and the methodologies used in the English classroom during the intervention plan were successful. You have already written this! The use of flashcards helps to make class more enjoyable, and students will like the English subject. According to David A. Hill (1990)

**TABLE 5**

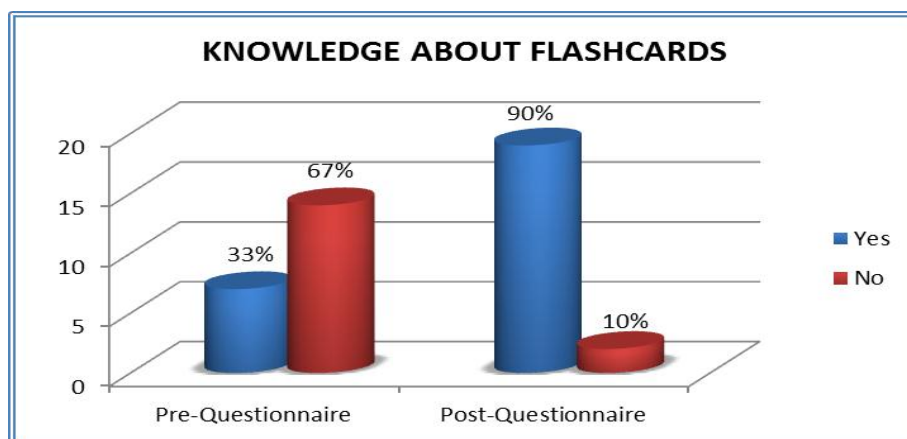
**QUESTION 2: Do you know what flashcards are?**

TITLE 2: KNOWLEDGE ABOUT FLASHCARDS	Pre-Questionnaire		Post-Questionnaire	
	f	%	f	%
Yes	7	33	19	90
No	14	67	2	10
<b>Total</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>100</b>

Note. f=frequency.

c.

**Figure**



**Analysis**

The results obtained in the pre-questionnaire demonstrate that more than half of the students did not know what flashcards were, while the results of

the post-questionnaire show that almost everybody recognizes the flashcards. Teachers do not typically use flashcards to teach vocabulary, and students consequently do not know about this resource because they have not used it in their classes. On the other hand, the results of the post-questionnaire show that the students do know what flashcards are, because they were utilized in the intervention plan.

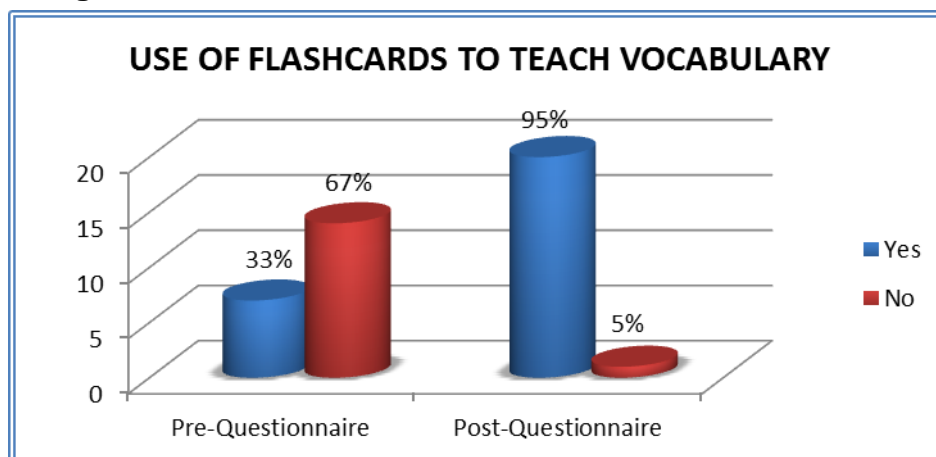
**TABLE 6**

**QUESTION 3: Does your teacher use flash cards to teach you vocabulary?**

TITLE 3: USE OF FLASHCARDS TO TEACH VOCABULARY	Pre-Questionnaire		Post-Questionnaire	
	f	%	f	%
Yes	7	33	20	95
No	14	67	1	5
<b>Total</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>100</b>

*Note. f=frequency.*

**d. Figure**



**Analysis**

As can be observed in the graph, more than half of the students indicated in the pre-questionnaire that flashcards are not used in the English class

to learn vocabulary. However, in the post-questionnaire most students said that the researcher used flashcards to improve their vocabulary.

Flashcards are a valuable and versatile tool to help students develop their English-language vocabulary. As argued by Hill (1990), they can be used to present new language, control practice or introduce prompts for speaking activities. Additionally they can be used to engage students' attention, and raise their interest and motivation in the presented subject.

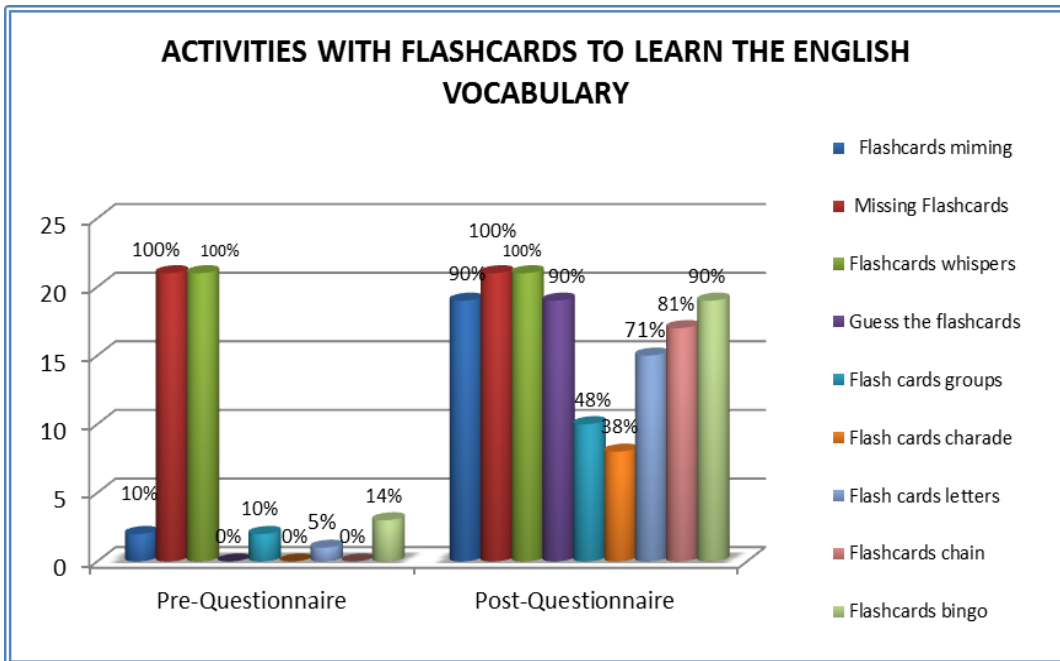
**TABLE 7**

**QUESTION 4: Which of the following activities with flash cards does your teacher apply in class to help you to learn the English vocabulary?**

TITLE4:ACTIVITIES WITH FLASHCARDS TO LEARN THE ENGLISH VOCABULARY	Pre- Questionnaire		Post- Questionnaire	
	F	%	f	%
Flashcards miming	2	10	19	90
Missing Flashcards	21	100	21	100
Flashcards whispers	21	100	21	100
Guess the flashcards	0	0	19	90
Flash cards groups	2	10	10	48
Flash cards charade	0	0	8	38
Flash cards letters	1	5	15	71
Flashcards chain	0	0	17	81
Flashcards bingo	3	14	19	90

*Note. f=frequency.*

e. Figure



**Analysis**

The results in this table show that only two activities were significantly developed: (*missing flashcards and flashcards whispers*) although, a few students did mention *flashcards miming, flash cards group and flashcards bingo*. On the other hand, the results of the post-questionnaire indicate that the researcher carried out all the activities proposed. In fact, only the activities *flashcards groups and flashcards charade* receives a medium percentage.

It is important to note that all the flashcards activities that the researcher developed did help students improve their vocabulary. Some of the activities were related to the development of memory, while others

developed students' creativity in writing, or aided in the practicing of pronunciation development of reading skill. Other activities were also used for group or pair work, or to help students learn English-language vocabulary through enjoyable games.

According to Howard Gardner, there are many types of learners within any given class. Therefore, teachers should apply different kinds of activities to help students improve their vocabulary. Flashcards can be bright and colorful to make a significant impact on both visual and kinesthetic learners. In addition, according to the British Council (2004), flashcards are a useful resource to have and can be incorporated for different purposes into every stage of the class. In accordance with Read C. & Soberón A, flashcards can be used in many ways to introduce ok practice vocabulary, as well as consolidate, recycle and extend children's language.

**TABLE 8**

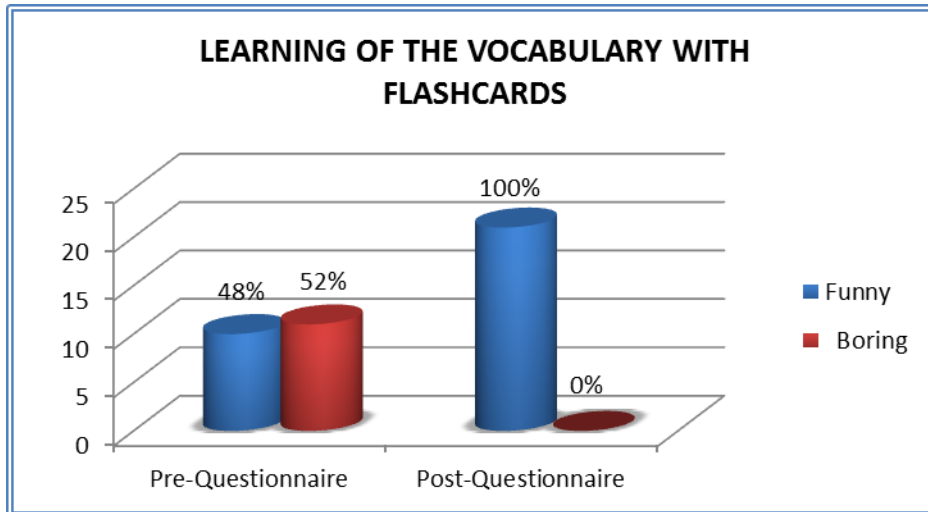
**QUESTION 5: Do you consider that learning English vocabulary with flash cards is funny or boring?**

TITLE: LEARNING OF THE VOCABULARY WITH FLASHCARDS	Pre- Questionnaire		Post- Questionnaire	
	f	%	f	%
Funny	10	48	21	100
Boring	11	52	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>100</b>

*Note. f=frequency.*



f. **Figure**



### **Analysis**

These results show that in the pre-questionnaire almost half of the students considered learning vocabulary with flashcards to be boring. However after the intervention plan all of the student's felt that it was fun to learn vocabulary with the use of flashcards. Students had an inaccurate perception of the use of flashcards to learn vocabulary, before the intervention plan, which might be because their teacher did not use this resource to encourage familiarity with the English language vocabulary. After utilizing flashcards in the development of the classes, though student's discovered they noticed that learning vocabulary with this resource is fun.

As suggested by David Hill (1990), flashcards are useful tools for developing interactive communicative activities and carrying out a wide

range of games that engage students' attention and make boring activities more enjoyable. In addition, the use of flashcards with picturesque images, words or symbols motivates students to acquire the vocabulary more easily.

## QUESTION 6

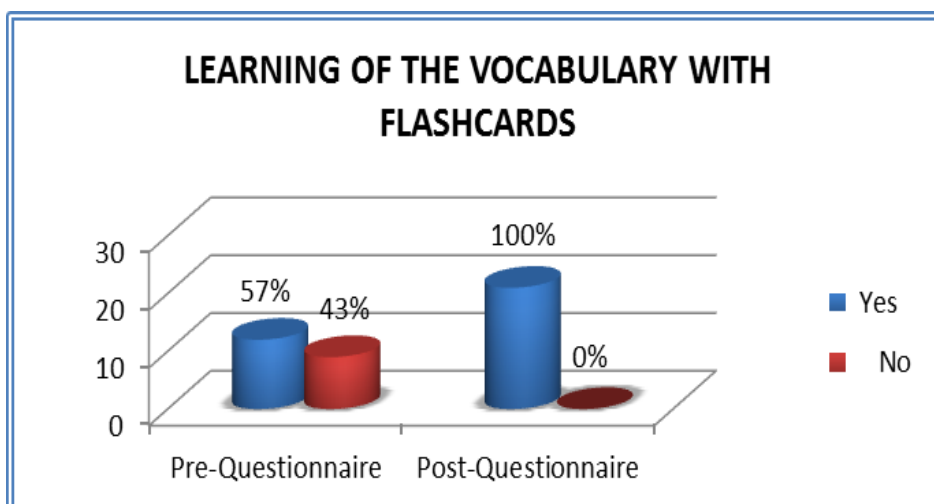
**TABLE 9**

**TITLE: Do you think that use of flashcards help you to improve your vocabulary**

THE USE OF FLASHCARDS HELP TO IMPROVE YOUR VOCABULARY	Pre-Questionnaire		Post-Questionnaire	
	F	%	f	%
Yes	12	57	21	100
No	9	43	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>100</b>

*Note. f=frequency.*

### g.Figure



## **Analysis**

The results in the pre-questionnaire indicate that a little more than half of the students thought that flashcards helped them learn English vocabulary. However in the post-questionnaire, all of the student's stated that flashcards did indeed help them learn vocabulary. It is important to note that at the beginning of the intervention plan the students were not familiar with flashcards because their teacher had not used this didactic resource. For this reason, they were not sure if the flashcards would be useful. On the other hand, after the intervention plan, the students consider that flashcards can in fact help in the acquisition of English-language vocabulary.

In summary, flashcards are a very helpful resource that support the learning of English-language vocabulary. According to Wollacot (2013), unlike the learning of grammar, which is essentially a rule-based system, vocabulary knowledge is largely a question of accumulating individual items. Therefore, resources like flashcards help learners memorize and learn the words presented.

## **g. DISCUSSION**

The results of the questionnaire given to the students both before and after the intervention plan, demonstrate that there was a meaningful change in the students' perception about flashcards. In response to the first question of the pre-questionnaire, almost half of students mention that they like the English language, but in the post-questionnaire most of the learners mention they like it. In response to the second and third questions, of the pre-questionnaire a few students said that they knew what flashcards were and that teachers used them, but at the end almost all students recognized the flashcards and recognized that they have been used during the intervention plan. In the fourth question, the results of the pre-questionnaire demonstrate that only two activities had been conducted with the use of flashcards, while the results of the post-questionnaire indicate that all of them were used. Finally, in the fifth and sixth questions, of the pre-questionnaire almost half of the students stated that flashcards were a fun and helpful way to improve vocabulary, but at the end, all of them agreed that flashcards are fun and helpful.

Based on the results indicated above, it can be argued that the strategy used during the intervention plan was effective. It not only helped improve the familiarity with English-language vocabulary but also change students' perception of the use of flashcards and of the English language.

These satisfactory results demonstrate that action research is a positive and helpful researching resource that teachers can implement to discover solutions to problems in English-language education. Additionally the important outcome realizes and the strategy applied during this action research could be incorporated by other teachers to help learners improve their vocabulary.

## **h. CONCLUSIONS**

After the application of this intervention plan and the analysis of the results of the pre- and post-tests and questionnaires, the following conclusions have been drawn:

✚ The issue that limited the development of ok English-language vocabulary of Third Year of Basic Education students at “24 de Mayo” school was the lack of suitable resources like flashcards. The results obtained from the pre-questionnaire reveal that this resource was not used for the teaching of vocabulary.

✚ The seven sessions of the intervention plan were designed to solve the problems that students had regarding the development of English-language vocabulary. They were planned based on the students’ cognitive process in order to build up their knowledge. Each lesson was prepared in regards to this approach, and incorporated the use of flashcards as a strategy to learn vocabulary. These seven lessons were reinforced with activities that enabled students to recognize and memorize new vocabulary.

✚ Two kind of flashcards were used to improve the English language vocabulary during the intervention plan: *big picture flashcards*, which were

useful to present and drill forms of new words, and *small picture flashcards*, which were used to develop a variety of communicative activities in pairs and small groups of students. Both big and small picture cards help illustrate the meaning of new words and engage students' attention.

## **i. RECOMMENDATIONS**

✚ The teachers and administration of the “24 de Mayo” school should research and diagnose the issues that limit not only the learning of new vocabulary but also the development of the skills and components of the English language.

✚ Teachers and administration of the educational institutions should implement remedial intervention plans in order to deal with different issues that affect the learning of the English language. The implementation of these plans can be aided by the undergraduate students of the Universidad Nacional de Loja.

✚ Teachers should use different kind of resources like flashcards, and should introduce a variety of activities in order to motivate students and help them improve their vocabulary in an enjoyable way.



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k. ANNEXES



**UNIVERSIDAD NACIONAL DE LOJA**  
**AREA DE LA EDUCACIÓN, EL ARTE Y LA COMUNICACIÓN**  
**ENGLISH LANGUAGE DEPARTMENT**

**PROJECT**

**THEME**

**THE USE OF FLASH CARDS TO IMPROVE THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE VOCABULARY OF THE STUDENTS OF THIRD YEAR OF BASIC EDUCATION AT "24 DE MAYO" SCHOOL, ACADEMIC PERIOD 2013- 2014.**

Thesis project previous to obtain the Bachelor's degree in Sciences of Education, English Language Specialization

**AUTHOR:**

Yadira Elizabeth Sozoranga Martinez

**LOJA-ECUADOR**

**2014**

**a.     THEME**

THE USE OF FLASH CARDS TO IMPROVE THE VOCABULARY OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE OF THE STUDENTS OF THIRD YEAR OF BASIC EDUCATION AT “24 DE MAYO” SCHOOL, ACADEMIC PERIOD 2013- 2014

## **b. PROBLEM STATEMENT**

### **2.1 BACKGROUND**

This research work will be developed at “24 de Mayo” school which was created in 1975 by Dr. Eduardo Morales, who has been its main authority since the foundation of this institution until now. It is located in “Pucacocha” neighborhood in the city of Loja. This school offers from the Beginner Level to the Seventh Year of Basic Education.

Nowadays, this school is conformed twelve teachers, and it is important to mention that only one of them is an English teacher. On the other hand, the amount of students that are educated in this institution are two hundred twenty.

In order to carry out this research work, the researcher has considered taking into account the Third Year of Basic Education, which involves twenty-one students who are between 7 and 8 years old.

### **2.2 CURRENT SITUATION OF THE RESEARCH PROBLEM**

Nowadays, the teaching-learning process of the English language faces several problems in the educational institutions in our country; these troubles are usually related to the way of teaching, the lack of didactic resources or learning difficulties.

One of the difficulties in the learning of the English language is the fact that students do not have a good vocabulary background that allows them to have an effective communication, spoken or written. Therefore, in order to determine the incidence on the learning of the English language vocabulary, the researcher carried out an observation to the group of students chosen to develop the present action research; this observation allowed finding out that the students of the Third Year of Basic Education have a very low level of vocabulary which does not permit them to have a good communication among them and with the teacher.

The observation permitted to know that the causes for the problem found are several; one of these causes that do not allow the improving of the English language vocabulary are the fact that teachers do not use attractive didactic resources such as posters, flashcards, wall charts, word cards, etc.; and another identified cause was that the teacher uses traditional teaching methods and she does not apply suitable strategies and activities to get students learn the vocabulary in an enjoyable and effective way.

Besides, the students have become passive agents because they are not motivated to participate in class; and both, teacher and students usually use their mother tongue to communicate in class.

### **2.3 RESEARCH PROBLEM**

How does the use of flash cards improve the English language vocabulary of the students of Third Year of Basic Education at “24 de Mayo” school during the academic period 2013-2014?

## **2.4 DELIMITATION OF THE RESEARCH**

### **a) Temporal**

This research will be done during the academic period 2013-2014.

### **b) Spatial**

The “24 de Mayo” school will be the educative institution in which this project will be carried out.

### **c) Observation Units**

- The researcher
- Students of the Third Year of Basic Education at “24 de Mayo” school.

### **d) Sub Problems**

- What kind of theoretical references about flash cards are effective to improve the English Language vocabulary of the students of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Year of Basic Education at the “24 de Mayo” school” during the academic period 2013-2014?
- What are the issues that limit the learning of the English language vocabulary of the students of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Year of Basic Education at the “24 de Mayo” school” during the academic period 2013-2014?
- What are important phases of the intervention plan that address the current issues of the learning of the English language vocabulary of the students



of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Year of Basic Education at the “24 de Mayo” school” during the academic period 2013-2014?

- Which flash cards are implemented to improve the learning of the English language vocabulary of the students of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Year of Basic Education at the “24 de Mayo” school” during the academic period 2013-2014?
- How do flash cards as part of the classroom activities improve the English language vocabulary of the students of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Year of Basic Education at the “24 de Mayo” school” during the academic period 2013-2014?

### **c. JUSTIFICATION**

Nowadays, English is an international language and one of the most popular and most useful; people around the world need English in diverse human activities, such as: business, education, technology, medicine, etc. Therefore, the necessity of learning this language has been increased, that is why it has been compulsory to include the teaching of the English language in the Ecuadorian Educational System.

One of the main factors that has an incidence on the use of English language for communicative purposes is the fact of being able to manage a rich and wide vocabulary, for this reason, educators should look for new and attractive ways and resources for teaching vocabulary efficiently; one of this ways could be the use of flashcards. Flash cards are considered one of the most appropriate ways to provide vocabulary because they can be utilized practically in any lesson and at every level of learning. Indeed, flash cards are relevant for the beginner and elementary level as these phases the students are engaged in developing their language, therefore their vocabulary.

For the facts mentioned above, the researcher has considered relevant to carry out this research work entitled: "The use of flash cards to improve the English language vocabulary of the students of Third Year of Basic Education at "24 de Mayo" school, academic period 2013- 2014; this research is also significant because it is focused on the use a didactic material in order to overcome one of the difficulties of the English language that students have to face which is the

learning of vocabulary. The researcher is focused on doing this research work that can be used to solve a problem embraced in the developing of the English language.

In the educational context the present research work will help students to improve their vocabulary because the researcher will use different types of flash cards through the application of suitable strategies and activities.

Indeed, the researcher will attempt to use a set of flash cards and activities related to different kind of topics regarded the textbook that is utilized by the students to improve the students' vocabulary.

Finally, the development of this research work is a requirement for the researcher in order to get the Bachelor's Degree in Science of Education, English Language Specialization as established in the regulations of the Education, Art and Communication Area of the National University of Loja.

#### **d. OBJECTIVES**

##### **4.1 GENERAL**

To use flashcards to improve the English language vocabulary of the students of 3rd Year of Basic Education at the “24 de Mayo” school during the academic period 2013-2014.

##### **4.2 SPECIFICS**

- To investigate the theoretical references about English language vocabulary and flash cards to help the students of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Year of Basic Education at the “24 de Mayo” school” during the academic period 2013-2014.
- To diagnose the issues that limit the vocabulary learning among the students of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Year of Basic Education at the “24 de Mayo” school” during the academic period 2013-2014.
- To design an intervention plan with the use of flashcards in order to improve the vocabulary of the students of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Year of Basic Education at the “24 de Mayo” school” during the academic period 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 among the students of

the 3<sup>rd</sup> Year of Basic Education at the “24 de Mayo” school” during the academic period 2013-2014.

- To reflect upon the effect that the flashcards had on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade students’ vocabulary at the “24 de Mayo” school” during the academic period 2013-2014.

## **e. THEORETICAL FRAME**

### **5.1 VOCABULARY**

#### **5.1.1 DEFINITION**

According to Ur (2012) vocabulary can be defined, roughly, as the words in the language. However, it may include items that are more than a single word: for example, post office and mother-in-law. There are also longer multi-word expressions such as *call it a day*, *in any case*, *how are you?* Which express a single concept and are stored in the memory as a whole 'chunk'. A useful convention is to cover all such cases by talking about vocabulary 'items' rather than words.

The term vocabulary is also something taken to include grammatical items: Pronouns such as *she*, *someone*, or determiners such as *the*, *that*, *any*. These are contrasted with lexical items (nouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs). Grammatical items do not have much meaning on their selves, but are used to show the relationship with other words within meaningful utterances. They are 'closed set' (it is unlikely that the language will acquire a new pronoun or another demonstrative to add to this/that), whereas lexical items are an 'open set': items are constantly.

#### **5.1.2 IMPORTANCE OF VOCABULARY**

It seems almost impossible to overstate the power of words; they literally have changed and will continue to change the course of world history.

Perhaps the greatest tools we can give students for succeeding, not only in their education but more generally in life, is a large, rich vocabulary and the skills for using those words. Our ability to function in today's complex social and economic worlds is mightily affected by our language skills and word knowledge (Pikulski, J., Templeton, & Shane, 1996).

In addition to the vital importance of vocabulary for success in life, a large vocabulary is more specifically predictive and reflective of high levels of reading achievement. The Report of the National Reading Panel (2000), for example, concluded, "The importance of vocabulary knowledge has long been appreciated"; while the dependence of both general achievement and reading achievement on vocabulary growth has been clearly established for decades, those findings do not appear to have been put into practice. In a recent text, Beck et al. (2002) draw the research-based conclusion: "All the available evidence indicates that there is little emphasis on the acquisition of vocabulary in school curricula."

### **5.1.3 THE NEED TO IMPROVE VOCABULARY INSTRUCTION**

In a classic classroom observational study, Durkin (1979) found that in the 4,469 minutes of reading instruction that were observed, a mere nineteen minutes were devoted to vocabulary instruction and that virtually no vocabulary development instruction took place during content instruction such as social studies.

The effects of the lack of attention to vocabulary instruction, however, may not manifest themselves in the earliest grades where tests of reading achievement tend to contain passages that have simple content and common vocabulary. While most students who succeed in reading in the early grades continue to achieve well, some do not. *The Report of the Rand Reading Study Group* (2002) concluded, “Research has shown that many children who read at the third grade level in grade 3 will not automatically become proficient comprehenders in later grades.” Indeed, a commonly reported phenomenon in reading test results is for achievement to be good through second or third grade and to falter thereafter.

This drop off in achievement seems very likely due to weaknesses in language development and background knowledge, which are increasingly required for reading comprehension beyond the early grades and for reading informational and content-area texts.

The most recently released study of international reading achievement provides some strong evidence that the weakness in U.S. student performance is not the result of decoding problems or inability to comprehend narrative texts. Instead, it seems to be due to weakness in ability to comprehend.

#### **5.1.4 WHAT DO WE NEED TO TEACH ABOUT VOCABULARY?**

According to McCarten (2011), learning vocabulary is a challenge for learners, partly because of the size of the task, and partly because of the variety of vocabulary types to be learned, including single words, phrases, collocations, and



strategic vocabulary, as well as grammatical patterning, idioms, and fixed expressions. He did a list the different things learners need to know about a word before we can say that they have learned it. These include:

- The meaning(s) of the word
- Its spoken and written forms
- What “word parts” it has (e.g., any prefix, suffix, and “root” form)
- Its grammatical behavior (e.g., its word class, typical grammatical patterns it occurs in)
- Its collocations
- Its register
- What associations it has (e.g., words that are similar or opposite in meaning)
- What connotations it has

To these we could add whether a word has a strategic use and if it has any special uses that are different in registers such as conversation or academic writing. So we can already see how important it is to use a corpus in order to give our learners all the right information they might need to master a word or phrase.

It would be unrealistic to teach everything there is to know about a word the first time it is presented to students – and any such attempt would make for some very tedious lessons. Obviously we need to make choices about how much we teach on a first presentation. For example with the word *like*, in addition to its sound and spelling we might choose to teach only one of its meanings (to enjoy,

find something to be pleasant), with one grammatical pattern (*I like* + singular or plural noun) and some associated vocabulary (*I like football/cartoons; I can't stand game shows*). At a later date we can add other meanings such as to be similar to (*I have a car like that*) or add more grammatical patterns such as *like* + *to* + verb (*I like to play tennis*).

We can also take each type of knowledge from the list above and make students aware of its importance and usefulness in building up their knowledge of a word. For example, we can focus occasionally on how to express opposite or similar meanings for a set of vocabulary we are teaching, show students what is useful to learn about the forms of nouns or verbs, or how prefixes and suffixes can help build vocabulary knowledge quickly. Giving students practice in manipulating these different areas of knowledge teaches useful learning strategies they can apply to learning other vocabulary. We should also encourage students to look at learning the various meanings of an item of vocabulary as a gradual, incremental process, and show them how they can come back to a word they have previously “learned” to add more information about it, such as other meanings, or how to create an opposite meaning using a prefix.

Another issue to consider is which vocabulary we want students to be able to use when they speak and write (their **active** or **productive** vocabulary) and which we want them to be able to recognize and understand but not necessarily produce (their **passive** or **receptive** vocabulary). Students often feel frustrated that they can understand more than they can produce, but explaining this issue of active versus passive knowledge as a normal part of learning can be reassuring. When

you assign vocabulary lists to learn, why not include some passive vocabulary items and discuss with students which items they need to learn “for understanding” and which they need to learn really well so that they can use them. (But be sure that in practice or testing activities, students are required to remember and use only the active vocabulary productively.)

Additionally, even from the elementary level, it is important to include in vocabulary lessons not just single words, but also larger “chunks” such as collocations, phrases, or expressions, even whole sentences, as well as strategic vocabulary. By building up a stock of expressions as well as individual words, students can assemble the language they need to communicate more fluently.

CITATION Jea01 \l 12298 (McCarten, 2001)

### **5.1.5 TYPES OF VOCABULARY**

According to Wollacott (2013), there are four main types of vocabulary. These are reading, writing, listening and speaking vocabularies. A person’s vocabulary develops with age and learning.

Wollacott considers that the types of vocabulary can be divided, as with grammatical classes, into adjectives, nouns and verbs. They could also be divided, as with the different fields of semantics, into categories as diverse as emotions, colors, animals and human body parts. When dealing with the types of vocabulary, the four types, including reading and writing are the most commonly used.

A person's knowledge of words is divided into two broad types of vocabulary: the active and the passive. An active piece of vocabulary is a word a person uses and a passive one is one that a person understands, but does not use. There are several degrees of knowledge ranging from no understanding of a word to the full knowledge of the word's meaning, forms and how to use it. Wollacott classifies the types of vocabulary as follows:

- **Reading Vocabulary**

A reading vocabulary is a passive one. This means it is the words understood by the reader when he or she is reading a piece of written text. The person is able to recognize the form of the letters and how they correspond to one another, and how their sum is understood. This also includes understanding a word's spelling, meaning and the exact meaning in its context.

- **Listening Vocabulary**

Listening is also a passive type of vocabulary. The listener is able to link the words being spoken to their meaning. This level of understanding is aided by word context, intonation and, if there is visual contact with the speaker, by gestures and facial expressions. Listening is, like reading, an interpretational form of vocabulary.

- **Writing Vocabulary**

Writing is the active vocabulary equivalent to reading. With reading, it forms the core skills needed for someone to be literate. The writer demonstrates his or her

knowledge of a word in terms of its meaning and how to spell it and use it correctly.

- **Speaking Vocabulary**

Speaking is one of the types of vocabulary that demonstrates a person's knowledge of words. It is an active demonstration that can also rely on other elements such as facial expressions, intonation, pitch and gestures to help others understand its meaning. Knowledge of a word is demonstrated by its good usage and pronunciation (Wollacott, 2013).

#### **5.1.6 HOW VOCABULARY IS REMEMBERED?**

Unlike the learning of grammar, which is essentially a rule based system, vocabulary knowledge is largely a question of accumulating individual items.

The general rule seems to be a question of memory. And during the process of teaching and learning vocabulary an important problem occurs: How does memory work? Researchers into the workings of memory distinguish between the following systems (Thornbury, 2002)

- short– term store
- working memory
- long– term memory

#### **Short - term store**

Short-term store is the brain capacity to hold a limited number of items of information for periods of time up to a few seconds. It is the kind of memory that

is involved in repeating a word that you have just heard the teacher modeling. But successful vocabulary learning involves more than holding words for a few seconds. To integrate words into long - term memory they need to be subjected to different kinds of operations.

### **Working memory**

Working memory means focusing on word long enough to perform operations on them. It means the information is manipulated via the senses from external sources and/or can be downloaded from the long- term memory.

Material remains in working memory for about twenty seconds. The existence of articulator loop enables this new material processing. It works a bit like audiotape going round a round again. It assures the short- term store to be kept refreshed. The ability to hold a word in working memory is a good predictor of language learning aptitude. The better ability to hold words in working memory the smoother the process of learning foreign languages is.

### **Long –term memory**

Long-term memory can be seen as kind of filling system. Unlike working memory, which has a limited capacity and no permanent content, this kind of memory has an enormous capacity and its contents are durable over time.

However, to ensure moving new materials into permanent long-term memory, requires number of principles to be followed, described by Thornbury, 2002:

- Repetition – repetition of encounters with a word is very important, useful and effective. If the word is met several times over space interval during reading activities, students have a very good chance to remember it for a long time.
- Retrieval - another kind of repetition. Activities, which require retrieval, such as using the new items in written tasks, help students to be able to call it again in the future.
- Spacing - it is useful to split memory work over a period of time rather than to mass it together in a single block.
- Pacing – to respect different learning styles and pace, students should be ideally given the opportunity to do memory work individually.
- Use - putting words to use, preferably in an interesting way, is the best way of ensuring they are added to long – term memory. This is so called “Use it or lose it” principle.
- Cognitive depth - the more decisions students make about the word and the more cognitively demanding these decisions are, the better the word is remembered.
- Personal organizing - personalization significantly increased the probability that students will remember new items. It is achieved mainly through conversation and role-playing activities.
- Imaging – easily visualized words are better memorable than those that do not evoke with any pictures. Even abstract words can be associated with some mental image.
- Mnemonics – tricks to help retrieve items or rules that are stored in memory. The best kinds of mnemonics are visuals and keyword techniques.

- Motivation - strong motivation itself does not ensure that words will be remembered. Even unmotivated students remember words if they have to face appropriate tasks.
- Attention - it is not possible to improve vocabulary without a certain degree of conscious attention.

## **5.2 FLASHCARDS**

According to the British Council (2004)

Flashcard is a card containing a small amount of information, held up for students to see, as an aid to learning.

Flash cards are a simple, versatile, yet often underexploited resource. Some reasons for using flash cards and a selection of activities for use in the young learner classroom are indicated in the following list:

- Why use flash cards?
- Where to get flash cards?

### **Why use flash cards?**

Howard Gardner's multiple intelligence theory reminds teachers that there are many types of learners within any one class. Gardner's research indicates that teachers should aim to appeal to all the different learner types at some point during the course. It is particularly important to appeal to visual learners, as a very high proportion of learners have this type of intelligence. Flash cards can be



bright and colorful and make a real impact on visual learners. Many of the activities outlined below will also appeal to kinesthetic learners.

For children at reading age, flash cards can be used in conjunction with word cards. These are simply cards that display the written word. Word cards should be introduced well after the pictorial cards so as not to interfere with correct pronunciation. Flash cards are a really handy resource to have and can be useful at every stage of the class. They are a great way to present, practice and recycle vocabulary and when students become familiar with the activities used in class, they can be given out to early-finishers to use in small groups. I sometimes get the students to make their own sets of mini flash cards that can be taken home for them to play with, with parents and siblings.

### **Where to get flash cards?**

- Buy them - Some course books provide a supplementary pack of flash cards or they can be bought in sets.
- Make them yourself - If you don't have access to professionally produced flash cards, don't worry, it's really easy to make your own even if you're not very artistic. You can use pictures from magazines, draw simple pictures or copy from the internet or clip art. The most important thing is to make sure they are all of the same size, on card (different colors for different sets) so you can't see through them. If possible you can laminate the sets as you make them and they will last for years. The advantage of making your own, apart from the fact that they're cheap and yours to keep, is that you can make sets for your specific needs. You

may like to make a set to use in conjunction with a story book or graded reader, or even to accompany project work.

- Students make them - I have recently begun to incorporate the production of flash cards into the classroom. After introducing a new lexical set, using realia or the course book, ask students to produce the flash cards for you. Give each one an item to draw. They can be mounted on card to make the set.

### **5.2.1 CLASSIFICATION OF FLASHCARDS**

According to David A. Hill (1990) classified pictures according to their size into three 'key' categories:

- "Large (20x30 cm): useful for whole-class work"
- "Medium (10x15 cm): useful for group-work"
- "Small (5x5 cm): useful for games and other group-work activities"

This classification applies to picture flashcards as well. I have simplified Hill's classification and divided them into two groups only. The first group covers "Big flashcards" (about 15x20cm or larger), typically used by the teacher for whole-class activities such as presenting new language, controlled practice or as prompts for speaking activities. The second group then covers "small picture flash cards" (smaller than about 15x20cm), usually used by students for working individually or for games and activities in pairs or groups. Hill(1990)

## **Big picture flashcards**

Big picture flashcards are very helpful tools in presenting and drilling forms of new words, since they draw learners' attention and make these often boring activities more enjoyable. And that is exactly what teachers need when presenting new language –to catch their learners' full attention, to raise their interest in the presented subject and hence also their motivation. At the same time flashcards (as well as other forms of pictures and visual aids in general) enable students to link the meaning of the words with real-world images immediately. When using flashcards in presentation, it is easy to involve learners actively and to combine the presentation with controlled practice. The presentation of vocabulary with flashcards can be done in lots of various ways, for example in telling a story or just simply based on a set of vocabulary for a particular topic.

Wright (1990) listed several possibilities how to illustrate the meaning of a new word or a piece of language through pictures. A single picture might often serve this purpose well enough; yet, employing several pictures might be in some cases preferable if not necessary to make sure that students get the correct idea about what aspect of the picture the teacher had in mind. Displaying several different pictures with one identical feature should suffice for this purpose. For example to teach the phrase 'to be horrified', the teacher could show three pictures of people horrified by different things.

According to this researcher, the teacher works with two antonymous pictures, or similarly, compares two pictures with things very alike in their meaning, such as 'hill' and 'mountain'. Yet another possibility is to employ the sense of a collective idea or to present the word as a part of a larger thing. As for the first case the verb 'to work' can be accompanied by pictures of different people working in various jobs; in the second case, the word 'leaf' can be put into context as a part of 'a tree'.

Wright & Haleem (1996) say that the Big flashcards are suitable for vocabulary practice and testing. To draw students' attention, it is advisable to reveal pictures in an interesting way presented several activities that might be modified for this purpose, such as 'Flashing picture', where the teacher just flashes the cards quickly and students guess or describe what they saw. As another example might serve 'The slow picture reveals'. Wright & Haleem (1996)

In addition the picture is used in a more meaningful and 'real-life communicative' way than being just displayed for students to say what they can actually see. This will probably have a greater impact on the retention of a piece of vocabulary again and also subsequently on the ability to use it in communication.

Hill (1990) demonstrated this idea on the example: "In the same way that the idea of holding up a pen and asking 'What's this?', expecting the answer 'It's a pen' is uncommunicative, it is uncommunicative to hold up a picture of a pen and ask 'What's this?' expecting the same answer."

### **Small picture flashcards**

A plenty of variations of these cards are typically applied in communicative activities in pairs or small groups of students, thus finding a meaningful role in reviewing and practicing vocabulary. In a closer look, we will find one-side-only cards, both-sided ones and sets of pairs (antonyms or synonyms, a picture and the corresponding word or phrase) or sets of cards connected e.g. by their meaning.

Being flexible in their way of use, these cards offer teachers and their students a large amount of possibilities in applying them in a number of activities and games such as 'domino' or various forms of word matching activities. Moreover, they are fit for a range of sorting or ordering activities, e.g. creating a story. These cards can also be used for games based on asking each other questions and exchanging them while searching for a set. On top of that, they might be helpful in individual practice of vocabulary, e.g. looking at a picture and guessing the meaning written on the other side.

The researcher Both Hill (1990) and Wright (1990) say that activities with this type of visual material very useful and presented plenty of them in their books.

### **5.2.2 HOW TO USE FLASHCARDS?**

According to Read C. & Soberón A. the flashcards can be used in many ways to introduce and practice vocabulary, as well as consolidate, recycle and extend children's language. Here are 30 ideas to have up your sleeve!

**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 e.g. ‘Point to the spider! Point to the butterfly!’ 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 e.g. they can pretend to eat a particular food (if you 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 e.g. *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 to 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 e.g. *It's 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 by asking you questions e.g. *Is it red?*

*No, it isn't. / 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 6-8 flashcards from different units on the blackboard. Elicit or remind children of the names. Choose one and give clues e.g. *It's a small animal.*

*It's got eight legs. It runs. I'm scared of it. What is it?* Children listen and identify the correct flashcard: *(It's the) spider.*

### **Kim's game**

Stick 8-10 flashcards from different lexical sets on the blackboard. Elicit or remind children of the names. Give the children one minute to look in silence and try and 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 of three or four. Give each group a flashcard and explain that this is the name of their group. Give instructions e.g. *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 don't 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 4-6 flashcards on the left of the blackboard for one team and 4-6 flashcards on the right of the blackboard for the other team. Say the 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 don't see) and explain that children must make 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 flashcard 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 Centre has three chances to find out who's got the flashcard by asking questions e.g.

*Have you got the sweater? Yes, (I have). / No, (I haven't).* 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 8-10 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 e.g. *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 e.g. *Do you like carrots?* *Yes, (I do) / No, (I don't)*. 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 isn't 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 teams with most flashcards at the end of the game are the winners.

### **Flashcard bingo**

Use 10-15 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 from 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!* and 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 then 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 e.g. butterfly, beetle, spider, grasshopper or apple, carrot, pizza, tomato. Children look and identify the odd one out and say why e.g. *Spider. It's got eight legs. / Pizza. It isn't from a plant.* Repeat the procedure several times.

### **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 blue, he paints with 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). "What a wonderful dog!" say Jack and Jenny.* Children listen and hold up the color 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 8-10 flashcards and word cards for this activity. Stick the flashcards in jumbled order on one side of the blackboard, facing inwards so that children can't 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 e.g. *Number two, please!* and, as you turn it round to show the picture, to say what it is e.g. *(It's 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 e.g. 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.

### **5.2.3 ACTIVITIES THAT CAN BE DONE WITH FLASHCARDS**

According to Joanna Budden (2007), the activities that can be done with flashcards have been divided into the following categories: Memory, drilling, identification and TPR activities.

In this article, there is an example for each type of activity.

#### **Memory Activities**

- Memory Tester
- Place a selection of flash cards on the floor in a circle.
- Students have one minute to memorize the cards.

In groups, they have two minutes to write as many of the names as they can remember.

### **Drilling Activities**

- Invisible Flash cards
- Stick 9 flash cards on the board and draw a grid around them.
- Use a pen or a pointer to drill the 9 words. Always point to the flash card you are drilling.
- Gradually remove the flash cards but continue to drill and point to the grid where the flash card was.
- When the first card is removed and you point to the blank space, nod your head to encourage children to say the word of the removed flash card.
- Students should remember and continue as if the flash cards were still there. They seem to be amazed that they can remember the pictures.
- Depending on the age group I then put the flash cards back in the right place on the grid, asking the children where they go, or I ask students to come up and write the word in the correct place on the grid.

### **Identification Activities**

- Reveal the word
- Cover the flash card or word card with a piece of card and slowly reveal it.
- Students guess which one it is.
- Once the card is shown, chorally drill the word with the group using different intonation and silly voices to keep it fun. Vary the volume too, whisper and shout the words. Children will automatically copy your voice.
- Alternatively, flip the card over very quickly so the children just get a quick glimpse.
- Repeat until they have guessed the word.



### **TPR activities**

- Point or race to the flash cards
- Stick flash cards around the class.
- Say one of them and students point or race to it.
- Students can then give the instructions to classmates.
- You can extend this by saying "hop to the cat" or even "if you have blonde hair, swim to the fish" etc.

You can also incorporate flash cards into a game of Simon Says. "Simon says, jump to the T-shirt" etc.

## **f. METHODOLOGY**

### **6.1 DESIGN OF THE RESEARCH**

The present investigative work corresponds to Action Research, which has become more popular as a mode of research among practitioners. It includes the process of actively participating in a change situation and 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 strategies, practices and knowledge of the surroundings within they are related.

This action research has the aim of improving the English language vocabulary through the application of strategies and activities with the use of flashcards.

Besides, this study is an applied educational research work since it is a practical action research that will allow the practitioner to study aspects, analyze and reflect on the results that will be derived of the application of different strategies and activities with flashcards for teaching vocabulary.

### **6.2 METHODS, TECHNIQUES AND INSTRUMENTS**

#### **6.2.1 METHODS**

This study will make a description of the data resulting from the application of an intervention plan that will allow the application of strategies and activities with flashcards to improve the English language vocabulary and achieve the set goals

of this research project; and, to support its development the following general methods will be applied along the descriptive research:

***The Scientific method*** will facilitate the study of the flash cards applied in the developing the vocabulary. 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 questionnaires and the tests. It will also be used to make the interpretation of the data, the logical analysis and draw up the conclusions.

***The Statistic method*** will be used to make the quantitative and qualitative statistical analysis of the data obtained from the questionnaires and tests.

Furthermore, this work will use the research spiral cycles proposed by CITATION KOS05 \ 12298 (KOSHY, 2005) 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; p.2). 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, 1993; Atweb, Kemmis & Weeks, 1998). Action research will be applied in this study because it will enable the researcher to follow the steps in the spiral that will help 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**

In order to gather the necessary information to carry out this research work, the researcher will apply the following research techniques for collecting data: the observation, the survey and the test.

**The Observation:** It will be applied at the beginning of the research in order to identify the problematic related to the learning of the English vocabulary and to analyze the possible solutions that solve the problematic found.

**The Questionnaire:** It will be applied at the beginning and at the end of the intervention plan.

First, the questionnaire will gather information related to the strategies and activities that the teacher applies to teach the English language vocabulary and the resources she uses. And secondly, the questionnaire will help collect information about the strategies and activities applied with flashcards that the researcher will be carried out, it will allow to find out if her teaching activities have caught students attention and have helped improve the English language vocabulary of the students.

**The test:** In the same way, a test will be applied at the beginning and at the end of the intervention plan; at the beginning it will be used to diagnose the level of vocabulary that students have; and, at the end to verify the level of vocabulary achieved by the students after the strategies and activities applied with flashcards.

Summarizing, the results of the observation will help carry out a qualitative analysis to find out the problematic related to the learning of vocabulary; while the results of the survey and test will allow developing a quantitative analysis in order

to determine if the intervention plan has been successful and in order to achieve the proposed objectives of this action research.

### **6.3 PROCEDURES**

The process of this action research work will include the following stages:

First, the problematic was detected in advance through the observation, where the researcher could realize that the students do not have a satisfactory level of the English language vocabulary because of the lack didactic resources such as the flashcards.

After that, the researcher investigated the strategies and activities that can be applied using flashcards; this allowed the researcher to have enough information to plan the teaching activities that will be developed through the working plan.

The intervention plan will start with the application of the questionnaire and the test, which will allow finding out the strategies and activities carried out with didactic resources by the teacher and to identify the level of vocabulary that the students have. These results will also help the researcher to reflect about the best teaching practices, the motivation, the evaluation process and the attitude that a teacher should have in order to catch students' attention, and in this case, to get students develop a good range of vocabulary.

Then, the teacher will apply the most suitable strategies and activities with flashcards in order to improve the English language vocabulary of the students, this process will be done with the help of other didactic resources and teaching

aids that provide a good classroom environment, motivation and taking advantage of time at maximum.

Once finished the teaching activities, a second questionnaire and test will be applied in order to verify if the strategies and activities with the use of flashcards have improved the English language vocabulary of the students.

After the intervention plan, the researcher will analyze the data collected; it will allow her to verify the set goals have been achieved and to draw the conclusions of the intervention program.

Finally, a written report that details all the activities carried out during this action research and intervention plan will be presented for the private and public presentation of this research work.

### **6.3.1 Tabulation**

The tabulation of data will be done through a logical analysis of the information collected through the surveys and tests applied at the beginning and at the end for the intervention plan. In the two questionnaires conducted.

### **6.3.2 Organization**

The researcher will organize the research work with the information received in all the stages applied in order 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 collected data and graphics will be described considering the information of the 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.

### **6.3.4 Population Sample**

All the students of the Third Year of Basic Education of the "24 de Mayo" school have been chosen as a sample. Most of them have a poor level of English language vocabulary, which impedes them and the teacher to have a fluent communication and interact using this foreign language at a level that corresponds to this Year of Basic Education.



#### 6.4 WORKING PLAN

**SCHOOL:** “24 de Mayo”

**GROUP OF STUDENTS:** Third Year of Basic Education week

**TIME:** 6 weeks, 2 periods of 45 minutes per

**BIBLIOGRAPHY:** Calderon, Luis. Textbook “Enterprise”. 3<sup>rd</sup> Year of Basic Education. Quito-Ecuador 2005

		OBJECTIVES	ACTIVITIES	PROCEDURE	RESOURCES/ INSTRUMENTS	OBSERVATION/ NOTES
<b>WEEK ONE</b>	<i>Monday - Diagnostic</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To introduce students the purpose of the intervention plan through the action research that will be carried out.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Researcher and students' introductions.</li> <li>Explanation about the intervention plan</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The researcher introduces students and asks them to introduce everyone through a game called “pass the ball”.</li> <li>The researcher explains students the research that she is carrying out and the purpose of the intervention plan she has prepared to improve the learning of the English language vocabulary through flashcards.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Intervention plan</li> <li>Ball</li> </ul>	
		To collect information about the strategies and activities carried out by the teacher to develop the English language vocabulary through a questionnaire.	Survey application	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The researcher explains the way students have to answer the questionnaire to collect information about the strategies and activities used by the teacher to develop the English language vocabulary</li> </ul>	Questionnaire Copies of the questionnaire Pencils	
		To evaluate the level of vocabulary that the students have.	Diagnosis evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The researcher explains every question of the diagnostic test in order to find out the level of vocabulary that the students have.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Tests</li> <li>Pencils</li> <li>Audio Cd.</li> <li>Cd player</li> </ul>	

		OBJECTIVES	ACTIVITIES	PROCEDURE	RESOURCES/ INSTRUMENTS	OBSERVATION/ NOTES
	Tuesday – Lesson 1	To recognize the colors vocabulary using flashcards.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Warm up</li> <li>• Review of the items learned previously</li> <li>Pronunciation practice</li> <li>Naming of new words.</li> <li>Assessment: worksheet activity</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•</li> <li>• The researcher starts the class by showing flashcards about common objects that students probably identify very well. After that, she hides the flashcards and encourages students to remember the pictures showed.</li> <li>• The researcher introduces students new vocabulary related to colors.</li> <li>• Students name the colors showed to them using flashcards.</li> <li>• Students practice the pronunciation o new items.</li> <li>• The researcher shows students different objects and encourages students to say the color of each one.</li> <li>• Students get a worksheet where they have to color some objects according to the instruction (color) said by the researcher.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Flashcards: colors <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Board</li> <li>• Worksheets</li> <li>• Color pencils</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	

		OBJECTIVES	ACTIVITIES	PROCEDURE	RESOURCES/ INSTRUMENTS	OBSERVATION/ NOTES
		WEEK ONE	Wednesday – Lesson 2	To recognize the basic geometrical shapes using flashcards.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Warm up</li> <li>• Presentation of the geometrical shapes</li> <li>• Pronunciation practice</li> <li>• Drawing of the shapes on the board</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The researcher motivates students through a game in which she will draw an object or a figure in students' back and they have to guess what object was drawn.</li> <li>• The researcher introduces students some basic geometrical shapes using flashcards.</li> <li>• The researcher has students to practice the pronunciation of the geometrical shapes.</li> <li>• Students name the fruits showed to them through flashcards.</li> <li>• The researcher speaks aloud a geometrical shape and in pairs asks to run to the board and draw it. (The first student who finishes the shape correctly will have prize.</li> </ul>
	Thursday – Lesson 3	To describe the geometrical shapes using colors.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review of colors</li> <li>• Researcher's explanation</li> <li>• Description of geometrical shapes using colors</li> <li>• Assessment: worksheet activity</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The researcher reminds students the color studied in the previous class through flashcards.</li> <li>• The researcher explains students a simple grammar structure in order to they will be able to describe the geometrical shapes using colors.</li> <li>• Students will describe some geometrical shapes shown through flashcards, they have to use the colors and the structure explained previously.</li> <li>• Students color some geometrical shapes and complete a simple description in a worksheet according to the researcher's instructions.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Flashcards (geometrical shapes)</li> <li>• Color pencils</li> <li>• Board</li> <li>• Worksheet</li> </ul>	

		OBJECTIVES	ACTIVITIES	PROCEDURE	RESOURCES/ INSTRUMENTS	OBSERVATION/ NOTES
<b>EK ONE</b>	<i>Friday – Lesson 4</i>	To identify some fruits using flashcards.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Warm up</li> <li>• Review of the colors studied in the previous class</li> <li>• Pronunciation practice</li> <li>• Naming of new words</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The researcher encourages students to sing a song about colors; while singing, students have to raise flashcards with the color they are saying.</li> <li>• The researcher introduces students new vocabulary related to fruits using flashcards.</li> <li>• Students practice the pronunciation of the fruits.</li> <li>• Students name the fruits showed to them using flashcards.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cd player</li> <li>• Audio Cd</li> </ul> Flashcards: fruits and colors <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Board</li> </ul>	
<b>WEEK TWO</b>	<i>Monday – Lesson 5</i>	To describe the fruits presented in flashcards using colors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Warm up</li> <li>• Researcher's explanation</li> <li>• Description of fruits using flashcards</li> </ul> Assessment: worksheet activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The class will be started with the game "Guess what I draw". In this activity, part of an object (fruit, shape or other common object) will be drawn, the students have to figure out and guess what object is being drawn.</li> <li>• The researcher explains students how to describe the fruits using colors.</li> <li>• Students repeat the researcher's sentence model.</li> <li>• Students will be given a flashcard to describe a fruit using colors.</li> <li>• Researcher gives students a worksheet and explains that they have to match each fruit with its correct name.</li> <li>• Students match the fruits to the names.</li> <li>• Students color the fruits according to the instructions given in the activity.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Flashcards</li> <li>• Color pencils</li> </ul> Board	

		OBJECTIVES	ACTIVITIES	PROCEDURE	RESOURCES/ INSTRUMENTS	OBSERVATION/ NOTES
WEEK TWO	Tuesday – Lesson 6	To describe the fruits through flashcards using colors and the adjectives big and small.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Warm up</li> <li>• Explanation</li> <li>• TPR activity</li> <li>• Fruits description</li> </ul> Assessment through a worksheet	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•</li> <li>• The researcher starts the class encouraging students to play the game “Hangman” using the vocabulary previously learnt (fruits and colors).</li> <li>• The researcher explains students the adjectives big and small for describing objects showing fruits of different sizes through flashcards.</li> <li>• The researcher explains students a basic grammar structure in order to they describe the fruits using the adjectives indicated previously.</li> <li>• The researcher shows students some fruits of different size through flashcards, if the fruit is big students have to stand up, if the fruit is small they have to keep sit.</li> <li>• Students will describe some fruits orally using the adjectives big or small and the colors.</li> <li>• Students will have to write the word big or small according to the pictures given them on a worksheet.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Flashcards: fruits               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Board</li> <li>• Markers</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Worksheets</li> </ul>	<p><i>* To ask students to bring for the next class magazine or newspaper cutouts in order to carry out a collage.</i></p>

		OBJECTIVES	ACTIVITIES	PROCEDURE	RESOURCES/ INSTRUMENTS	OBSERVATION/ NOTES
WEEK TWO	Wednesday – Lesson 7	To reinforce the vocabulary acquired during the intervention plan through an overall review with the aid of flashcards.	Warm up Review Controlled speaking activity Collages design Collages description	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The researcher starts the class with a game called “Stop my hand”, in which the students will have to complete the different categories of vocabulary studied previously, such as: fruits, colors and shapes.</li> <li>• Through the game and with the aid of flashcards, the researcher reminds students the vocabulary learned previously.</li> <li>• The researcher asks students to name different kind of vocabulary and to describe some fruits and shapes using the colors and the adjectives big/small.</li> <li>• In groups of three, the students will design a collage with the cutouts asked previously. They will have to stick the cutouts into the categories of fruits and shapes, some of them big others small. Finally, the researcher will stick the collages on the board and will ask each group to describe their collages.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Flashcards: fruits, shapes, colors <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Board</li> <li>• Markers</li> <li>• Cutouts</li> <li>• Glue</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Stick tape</li> </ul>	

		OBJECTIVES	ACTIVITIES	PROCEDURE	RESOURCES/ INSTRUMENTS	OBSERVATION/ NOTES
		<b>WEEK TWO</b>	<i>Thursday – Survey application</i>	To verify if the strategies and activities with flashcards applied during the intervention plan improved the English language vocabulary of the learners.	Answering the questionnaire application	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The researcher will apply a new survey through a questionnaire in order to know if the strategies and activities applied by her have caught students attention and have helped encourage the learning of the English language vocabulary.</li> </ul>
<i>Friday – Evaluation</i>	To demonstrate the level of the English language vocabulary achieved by students during the intervention plan.		TPR activity Final evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The researcher will start the class with a TPR activity in order to get students relax before the evaluation.</li> <li>The researcher will evaluate the level of the English language vocabulary acquired by the students through the test.</li> <li>The researcher will explain every question of the final test in order to students do not have problems taking it.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Tests</li> <li>Copies of the test <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pencils</li> <li>Audio Cd.</li> <li>Cd player</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	





## **h. BUDGET AND FINANCING**

### **8.1 RESOURCES**

#### **8.1.1 Human**

- Researcher.
- Students of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Year of Basic Education.

#### **8.1.2 Material**

The material utilized in the present research work consists of:

- **Office material:** books, dictionaries, copies, paper, folders, stick tape and bindings.
- **Technical Resources:** Internet, computer, printer, flash memories, and camera.
- **Didactic Resources:** flashcards

### **8.2 BUDGET**

<b>ITEM</b>	<b>COST</b>
Elaboration of the project	\$250.00
Copies and creation of the project	\$100.00
Elaboration of the thesis	\$350.00
Copies and creation of the thesis	\$200.00
Unforeseen	\$100.00
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$1000.00</b>

### **8.3 FINANCING**

The expenditures resultant from the development of this research work will be covered by the researcher

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**ANNEXES**

**UNIVERSIDAD NACIONAL DE LOJA**  
**ÁREA DE LA EDUCACIÓN, EL ARTE Y LA COMUNICACIÓN**  
**ENGLISH LANGUAGE CAREER**

**TEST**

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Grade:** \_\_\_\_\_

**1. MATCH THE FRUIT TO ITS NAMES**



Apple

Peach

Pear

Banana

Orange

**2. COMPLETE THE WORDS WITH THE MISSING LETTERS**

C\_rc\_e

O\_ang\_

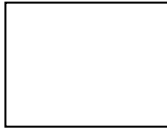
Bl\_ck

Sq\_ar\_

P\_rpl\_

Tr\_an\_le

**3. DRAW THE SHAPES YOU HEAR**



SQUARE



CIRCLE

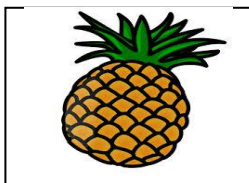


TRIANGLE

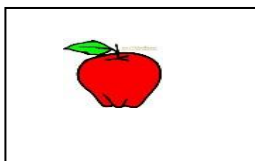


RECTANGLE

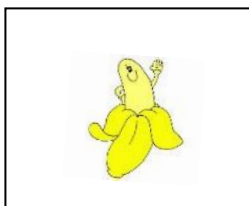
**4. CIRCLE THE CORRECT ADJETIVE THAT DESCRIBE THE FRUITS.**



The pineapple is big/ small



The apple is green / red



The banana is yellow/ blue



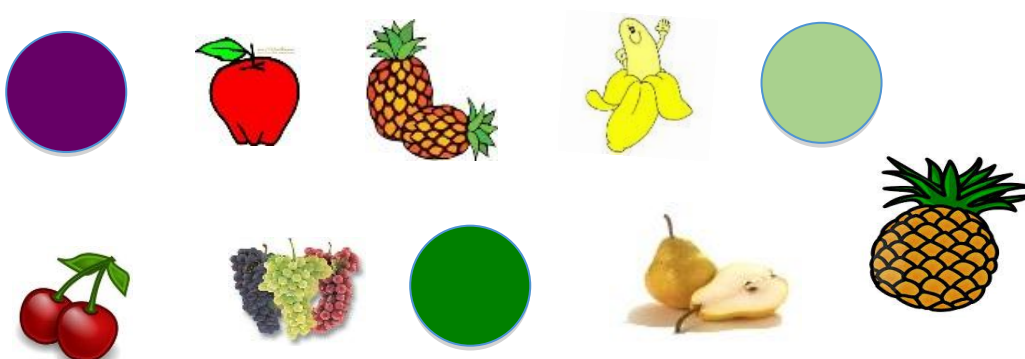
The peach is big / small



The watermelon is big / small

5. LISTEN AND CIRCLE THE WORDS YOUR HEAR

(*Example: banana, purple, pink, grapes, apple*)



**UNIVERSIDAD NACIONAL DE LOJA**  
**ÁREA DE LA EDUCACIÓN, EL ARTE Y LA COMUNICACIÓN**  
**ENGLISH LANGUAGE CAREER**

**STUDENTS' SURVEY**

*Dear student:*

*The purpose of this questionnaire is to research about the use of the flashcards in the learning of the English language vocabulary. Therefore, your collaboration is very important to gather accurate information related to the topic of this research work.*

**1. Do you like the English subject?**

Yes ( )

No ( )

**2. Do you know what flash cards are?**

Yes ( )

No ( )

**3. Does your teacher use flash cards to teach you vocabulary?**

Yes ( )

No ( )



**4. Which of the following activities with flash cards does your teacher apply in class to help you to learn the English vocabulary?**

- Flashcard miming ( )
- Missing flashcard ( )
- Flashcard whispers ( )
- Guess the flashcard ( )
- Flashcard groups ( )
- Flashcard charade ( )
- Flashcard letters ( )
- Flashcard chain ( )
- Flashcard bingo ( )

**5. Do you consider that learning the English language vocabulary with flash cards is...?**

Funny ( )

Boring ( )

**6. Do you think that use of flash cards help you to improve your vocabulary?**

Yes ( )

No ( )

### MATRIX OF CONSISTENCY

**Theme:** The use of flashcards to improve the vocabulary of the English language of the students of Third Year of Basic Education at “24 de Mayo” school, academic period 2013- 2014.

PROBLEMS	OBJECTIVES	VARIABLES	INDICATORS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How does the use of flash cards improve the English language vocabulary of the students of Third Year of Basic Education at “24 de Mayo” school during the academic period 2013-2014?</li> </ul>	<p>To use flashcards to improve the English language vocabulary of the students of 3rd Year of Basic Education at the “24 de Mayo” school” during the academic period 2013-2014.</p>	<p>DEPENDENT</p> <p>The use of flashcards</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Flash cards</li> <li>Importance of the use of flash cards</li> </ul>
SUB PROBLEMS	SPECIFIC		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What are the issues that constraint the learning of the English language vocabulary of the students of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Year of Basic Education at the “24 de Mayo” school” during the academic period 2013-2014?</li> <li>What strategies and activities can be applied with flashcards in order to improve the English language vocabulary of the students of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Year of Basic Education at the “24 de Mayo” school” during the academic period 2013-2014?</li> <li>What teaching strategies and activities are going to be taken into account in the intervention plan to improve the English language vocabulary of the students of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Year of Basic Education at the “24 de Mayo” school” during the academic period 2013-2014?</li> <li>How the strategies and activities applied during the development of the intervention plan help to improve the English language vocabulary of the students of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Year of Basic Education at the “24 de Mayo” school” during the academic period 2013-2014?</li> <li>Do the applied strategies and activities allow the improvement of the English language vocabulary of the students of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Year of Basic Education at the “24 de Mayo” school” during the academic period 2013-2014?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To identify the issues that constraint the learning of the English language vocabulary of the students of the 3rd Year of Basic Education at the “24 de Mayo” school” during the academic period 2013-2014.</li> <li>*To investigate the strategies and activities that can be applied with flashcards to improve the English language vocabulary of the students of the 3rd Year of Basic Education at the “24 de Mayo” school” during the academic period 2013-2014. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To design an intervention plan with the use of strategies and activities with flashcards to improve the English language vocabulary of the students of the 3rd Year of Basic Education at the “24 de Mayo” school” during the academic period 2013-2014</li> <li>To apply the intervention plan as part of the classroom activities to improve the vocabulary of the students of the 3rd Year of Basic Education at the “24 de Mayo” school” during the academic period 2013-2014.</li> </ul> </li> <li>To verify if the use of flashcards helped to improve the English language vocabulary of the students of the 3rd Year of Basic Education at the “24 de Mayo” school” during the academic period 2013-2014.</li> </ul>	<p>DEPENDENT</p> <p>The vocabulary of the English language</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Classification of flash cards</li> <li>Strategies to use flash cards</li> <li>Activities with flash cards</li> <li>English language vocabulary</li> <li>Importance of vocabulary</li> <li>Types of vocabulary</li> <li>Vocabulary memorization</li> </ul>

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