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*Using WhatsApp as a Methodological Tool to Reinforce the English Vocabulary  
of Seventh Grade Students at CINDEA Liceo Vargas Calvo during the Second  
Quarter of 2017*

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### **Abstract**

This investigation is based on the topic of practice outside the class to reinforce knowledge; the project implies the problem of students not having opportunities and or easy way to practice in order to reinforce pronunciation. The purpose of this investigation is to apply the use of the smartphone application WhatsApp in order to create opportunities to students, to relate with the target language in order to practice and reinforce knowledge already they have. With the help of videos and audio-text the student's knowledge will be reinforced in a schedule outside school. The investigation concludes that the application of WhatsApp and the technique used is effective and the improvement is reflected in the evolution of participants in class and in the student's grades.

## **Resumen**

Esta investigación se basa en la práctica del idioma Inglés fuera de clase utilizando el teléfono celular y de esta forma reforzar el conocimiento del estudiante; el proyecto informa que el problema la mayoría de estudiantes tiene es la falta de oportunidades para practicar y mejorar la pronunciación. El propósito de la investigación es aplicar el uso de la aplicación de teléfono WhatsApp y crear oportunidades para que los estudiantes practiquen el idioma, reforzar el conocimiento obtenido en las lecciones anteriores. Con la ayuda de multimedia como videos y audio-textos se reforzará el conocimiento de los estudiantes en un horario fuera de clases para mantener al estudiante ligado al idioma. La investigación concluye que la Aplicación WhatsApp, junto con la técnica de refuerzo, al ser utilizada mejora satisfactoriamente la actitud del estudiante durante clase y el conocimiento del idioma Inglés.

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## **Table of contents**

Chapter I.....	1
Introductory Framework .....	1
1.1. Background of the Study.....	2
1.2. Research Question.....	14
1.3. Purpose and Significance of the Study.....	15
1.4. Objectives of the investigation.....	16
1.4.1. General Objective.....	16
1.4.2. Specific Objectives.....	16
1.5. Limitations of the study .....	17
Chapter II .....	19
Theoretical Framework .....	19
2.1. Antecedents .....	19
2.1.1. Using mobile phones for vocabulary activities .....	20
2.1.2. Ideas for using WhatsApp with E.L.S.....	21
2.1.3. Mobile Assisted Language Learning: Applications of Emerging Mobile Technologies ...	23
2.1.4. Working with Educational Games .....	25
2.1.5. Contribution to Vocabulary Learning via Mobiles .....	27
2.1.6. Comparison of the Effect of Vocabulary Learning Using SMS versus Flashcards .....	27
2.2. Literature Review.....	28
2.2.1. Listening and Reading Skills.....	28
2.2.2. Vocabulary .....	33
2.2.2.1 Personalized Lessons.....	35
2.2.2.2. Give the Learner Autonomy.....	36
2.2.2.3 Monitor Progress .....	36
2.2.2.4 Diversity of Practice Activities .....	36

2.3 Technology in Education .....	37
2.4. Variables of the Investigation .....	48
Chapter III .....	50
Methodological Framework .....	50
3.1. Research Method and Scope .....	50
3.2. Selection and Description of Population and Participants .....	52
3.2.1. Description of the Institution.....	52
3.2.2. Description of the population.....	54
3.2.3. Description of the participants .....	54
3.3. Implemented Strategies .....	55
3.3.1. Observation and Survey .....	58
3.3.2. W.O.K. through WhatsApp / Pre-Test and Post Test.....	59
3.3.2.1. Topic 1: Ordinal Numbers.....	60
3.3.2.1.1. W.O.K. No 1 (ordinal numbers).....	60
3.3.2.1.2. W.O.K. No 2 (ordinal numbers).....	61
3.3.2.1.3. W.O.K. No 3 (ordinal numbers).....	61
3.3.2.2. Topic 2: Personal Questions.....	61
3.3.2.2.1. W.O.K. No 1(Personal Questions) .....	61
3.3.2.2.2 W.O.K. No 2 (Personal Questions) .....	62
3.3.2.2.3. W.O.K. No 3 (Personal Questions) .....	62
3.3.2.3. Topic 3: Possessive Pronouns .....	62
3.3.2.3.1. W.O.K. No 1 (Possessive Pronouns).....	63
3.3.2.3.2. W.O.K. No 2 (Possessive Pronouns).....	63
3.4. Data Collection Instruments.....	64
3.5. Validation of Instruments.....	65
Chapter IV .....	67
Data Analysis .....	67
4.1. Analysis and Interpretation of the Results .....	67
4.1.1. Classroom Observation. ....	68
4.1.2. Teachers Survey .....	71
4.1.2.1. Descriptive analysis.....	71
4.1.3. Student´s Survey .....	86
4.1.3.1 Descriptive analysis.....	86

4.1.2. Pre-test / Post-test.....	92
4.1.3 W.O.K. through WhatsApp.....	97
4.1.3.1 WOK: Topic 1 ordinal numbers.....	97
4.1.3.2 WOK: Topic 2 Personal Questions .....	99
4.1.3.3. WOK: Topic 3 Possessive Pronouns.....	100
Chapter V .....	101
Conclusions and Recommendations.....	101
5.1 Purpose of the Conclusion .....	101
5.2 Conclusions.....	101
5.2.1 To identify the problems the students have when learning English in order to help via WhatsApp to overcome the difficulties presented .....	102
5.2.2 To apply the use of the smartphone application WhatsApp with students to reinforce vocabulary via audio and text messages with seventh grade students at the CINDEA institute	104
5.2.3. To evaluate the effect of WhatsApp as a methodological tool to reinforce the vocabulary acquisition process through audio-text messages practice in 7 <sup>th</sup> grade students of CINDEA Liceo Vargas Calvo.....	105
5.3 Restatement of the Research Question.....	107
5.4 Unexpected Results.....	108
5.5 Recommendations.....	108
Appendixes.....	111
Appendix 1 .....	112
Appendix 2.....	114
Appendix 3.....	117
Appendix 4.....	121
Appendix 5.....	124
References.....	127

## **Chapter I**

### **Introductory Framework**

English students in Costa Rica share a common problem, which is acknowledged by the majority of English learners; this problematic is the lack of practice, and the English students at CINDEA Liceo Vargas Calvo, are not the exception. The investigator chose this institution to put in practice the research project to assist students with their learning process, and to improve a method to reinforce the vocabulary learned in class with the use of technology; that is, using the smartphone application WhatsApp. This because whenever the students are not at school; they can be able to use this tool to conflict the lack of practice of the language, and the big gap of “Zero-English” when the learner is not in the English class.

This gap is the enemy of the English learners, because the lack of practice will help them to forget everything; however, it is not the student’s fault, since the problems are created by the lack of opportunities to practice. Consequently, with this instrument the investigator will give the learners the opportunity to analyze information and learn by their own way and pace.

In addition, it is important to acknowledge that even though the professor gives and creates opportunities to the student, it depends one hundred percent on the student’s commitment and the how much importance he gives to the second language. Learning a language with steady practice and dedication is not hard to accomplish; on the other hand, if there is no interest on the student’s part, there is not much to expect.

### **1.1. Background of the Study**

These days, the mobile phone is used everywhere and by everyone. People of diverse ages learn how to use this device; for example, two year old kids use their mom's cellphone to watch a video, and even the elderly use the telephone to communicate with family. In most of the cities of the world, it is possible to see a group of people using smartphones and sometimes without even considering the individual they are sitting with. This is a very common scenario, as people are together at dinner, but at the same time separated by the telephone. There is no doubt that the cellular phone was not created to generate this big separation among people, but unfortunately its accomplishing this negative split-up among many people.

Nowadays, smartphones have become an important part of our life. Without this device, some people cannot even function properly, as it is a "must have with me" article that most people take wherever they go. The technology has been evolving and the smartphones are making everything easier and less complicated to people; for instance, to communicate with people all around the world, even with people from different countries at the same time with just one message.

With millions of applications available to download on any smartphone, communication has changed and now social networks and instant messaging apps are part of our daily routine. The investigator thinks that not all the processes that make things easier are one hundred percent beneficial to people because it creates laziness. This is the case of cellular phone, as it has many features and applications that distract students, as they sometimes prefer to spent time on social media networks instead of studying.

This problematic is growing and, thus it is creating chaos in some institutions, because students do not stop using this device (smartphone) when they get in to class. Nevertheless, it is not possible to ban the cellphones from schools as for some parents it is important that the children carry the cellular in case of emergency. In many institutions, professors have had the obligation of confiscating cellphones, because the student was not paying attention, and was also distracting his peers during the class.

Consequently, the researcher questioned himself this issue and here is when the interrogation arises to the investigator, and has tried to find a way to build a relationship between English learning and cellular phones, and show students how to take advantage of such tool. The use of the smartphone as a methodological tool to improve the process of vocabulary acquisition is possible. However, it totally relies on the students' interest in learning because the teacher can only show the way, but the student must use the opportunity and take advantage of it to learn and improve knowledge in order to build willingness and confidence to listen and respond.

Is it possible for a professor to confiscate a personal expensive object such as a smartphone during class? The investigator thinks that instead of creating a bigger gap between Teaching-Learning and smartphones, it is important to consider the amazing and useful things that can be done with the smartphone when it comes to reinforce a foreign language, in this case English. The only limitation is the teacher's imagination.

There have been some investigations about how to use the smartphone in regular classes, and most of the projects have had positive results. However, in this case the investigator is focused on using an specific application of easy access to most of students.

This particular application was chosen because it is very popular among smartphone users to communicate via text or audio message; as a matter of fact, the WhatsApp application has been downloaded more than a million times. Furthermore, because it is easy to use and already installed in most of the cellular phones it is going to be the methodological tool used in this investigation to reinforce English vocabulary among students, via text and audios in order to improve listening and at the same time, the reading skills.

Whenever a new subject or ability is being learned, the most important part of that particular learning process is practice. The process of learning a new language requires a lot of practice, and one of the biggest problems in the educational system is that the English language it's seen in class for less than 5 hours per week, which is a very short period of time involved on an English environment. Therefore, in order to learn a new language, the student must have at least 50% of the time surrounded by English. In Costa Rica, Spanish is the common language spoken out of class, and if the English pronunciation it is not heard daily it would be difficult for the student to imitate sounds and relate with the language. This connection with the language is needed by the learner to build enough confidence to try to imitate the sounds and enunciate words.

With this study the investigator is building a relationship of harmony between the educational institution and technology; a fusion of concepts of professor-knowledge and student-cellphone. The investigation will take advantage of technology and will give the student the opportunity to reinforce English outside the classroom hours, in order to decrease the gap of hours without English. Whenever, the student feels comfortable to do it, whether is at home or at the institution, he would be able to reinforce his English vocabulary just by using the smartphone, literally on the palm of his hand. This will keep the student with a

sharp knowledge of the English vocabulary and grammar. Most importantly, the student will have the professor as a focal point to enquire any doubt or question just by using a cellphone application and sending a message from the commodity of his home, outside school.

There have been some studies about the use cellular technology to reinforce English, students can practice and learn with a computer or a mobile phone. The many ways of practicing, just depend on the efficiency of the professor on choosing the correct kind of practice or examples that will be given to the students, this can be via email, via SMS, and via link of an internet browser, and others. Several types of mobile technologies are now available; therefore, an extend number of ways to learn a new language digitally, but unfortunately some people are not able to afford a laptop and it is much more less expensive to buy a cellphone.

The easy access that children have to a telephone nowadays, has created more advanced kids that learn faster how to manage new smartphone applications than their parents. High school population can be very judgmental about what cellphone you use, and with more companies giving options to get a telephone, many parents choose to buy a good telephone and pay it with hard effort. As Stockwell (2010) says, it is a fact that mobile phones are relatively inexpensive as compared to, for example, wireless laptop computers that also have functions such as, internet browsers that are available in current mobile phones. The range of possibilities of mobile phones as tools for learning increases furthermore (p.95). The number of applications increases every day and the opportunity of reinforcing vocabulary is the reason why the investigator wants to focus on the use of “WhatsApp,” a free smartphone application that any person with a smartphone can download, to chat to family or friends all over the world.

The most noticeable difference between a laptop computer and a cellphone is the size. However, Stockwell (2010) mentions many other differences on his research paper. He states that for a group of students in Japan, the computer was better, but accordingly with evolution of cellphones some students of the institute in Japan changed to smartphone as his favorite way of practicing throughout the end of the investigation.

The computer laptop was the favorite way to practice of many students, one of the reasons was that the screen of the computer is bigger and it was easier for the student to read emails, open links, browse the web, and understand questions or topics the professor sent. The problem with this kind of practice using email or links is that it makes students use the internet connection on cellular phones and the price will increase, reason why students also preferred the computer. Having a computer might not be such a difficulty for some people in Japan, this is why the investigator thinks that the computer was in most of times the gadget of choice.

Also because for one hundred percent of the students was the first time using a cellphone or computer to practice on a first level English class divided on 15 classes and one per week, during 15 weeks receiving the practice on an email with a link to access to a webpage friendly to use with a smartphone. Although the students were between the ages of 19 to 21, the specific kind of practice, in spite it was smartphone friendly, was easier to complete on the computer because of the time spent on the computer was less than on the cellphone. The students also said that it was easier to write and express themselves using the keyboard of the computer rather than the small letters on the cellphone.

On this current year, it can be seen that technology has evolved to bigger and better telephones that do all the assignments a computer can. In addition, the cellular phone influences youngsters, and when referring to communication the smartphone is a huge part in people's life. Nevertheless, whenever the smartphone is brought to school, it might cause complications with professors and distraction inside and outside of class. As Stockwell (2010) states on his investigation, this perception of the problems with the mobile device as learning tool is one that must be overcome if mobile phones are to enter the mainstream (p.97). However, it is a problem that may eventually cease to be an issue by itself, as the acceptance of the mobile phone as learning tool becomes more widespread, as this learning tool will enhance the language learning process. In addition, it also gives students the opportunity that many learners did not have, which is to practice the foreign language outside the classroom, which is a vast help to students that only receive around 4 hours of English per week, and practically all the information provided by the professor is via paper-sheets or books.

Practice with copies or books create difficulties for students to finish exercises or homework; and, on the free time, depending on whatever extracurricular activities the student may have, it will be extremely hard to carry the English book or the copies wherever the student goes. It does not matter if the students still have the motivation to practice with copies at home, is almost impossible for them to know what is the correct pronunciation of the word and meaning of a particular word depending on the context just with copies. This would not be a problem with a smartphone because any word can be found on the internet with the exact meaning and pronunciation.

When the acceptance of the mobile phone as learning tool becomes more widespread around the country, the different ways of learning will upsurge and not only students and professors will be benefited. For example, it will bring a lot of benefit to our ecosystem; with fewer copies to print, less paper to use, less trees to cut, and also it will educate students that digitalized material is more useful and less destructive to nature, as well as less expensive.

This new era of technology arrives hand in hand with eco-education, not only thinking on creating new gadgets for personal use, but also thinking on saving the planet of climate changes and contributing to save nature and the world. With the advancement in technology, more mobile phones will be used and the amount of copies and paper will decrease. This will also bring an economic benefit saving money not having to buy paper or print ads to every student.

The investigator counts on this technological evolution will reduce the amount of material used in all institutions, consuming less sheets of paper every class. Many other public institutions can be able to use the mobile phone not only as a learning tool, but also as an educating tool. This tech-revolution attached with an ecological idealistic thought will bring a balance between the terms education, evolution, learning, and nature. The equilibrium that will give peace and will take care of the planet for the future generations with a better-evolved education, but everything must start with a simple step to go forward.

Evolution is constantly bringing new instruments and ways to interact with the environment. The cellular phone has adopted many functions that used to be done separately and now can be done at the same time with just one device on the palm of the hand; for instance the camera, email, music, messages, alarm clock, calendar, and many other

functions. This is the reason why this particular gadget must be used on the professor's advantage as a methodological tool or assistant to reinforce the vocabulary learned, as well as listening of the oral productions of a foreign language. According to Burston (2013), since the mid-1990s, MALL (Mobile Assisted Language Learning) has focused on the exploitation of five mobile technologies: pocket electronic dictionaries, personal digital assistants (PDAs), mobile phones, MP3 players, and most recently ultra-portable tablet PCs (p.157). Of all these tools have been used to teach a foreign language. Currently, the most regular device a person can have at reach is a smartphone. This is why, the investigator tries to emphasize the importance of including the cellular phone on the everyday practice of a new language in order to keep the vocabulary on a "fresh" state of mind and to make the student feels ready to answer any question whenever it is necessary.

The importance of taking the lead creating new ways of reinforcing the student's foreign language and taking advantage of those 20+ years of technology evolution to strengthen specific objectives, in order to solve one of the biggest problems that ESL learners embrace, as it is the lack of practice outside the classroom hours, this problematic can be fulfilled with this particular device.

It is known that the majority of persons have the telephone near 24/7 on regular bases. It is very important to find a way to reach the student with something different, easy to use; something that will help to increase the student's knowledge and confidence, which is very important when is time to express thoughts in another language. This is also an entertaining way of reinforcing information that will keep the learner focused and with a sharpen the knowledge of the foreign language.

Technology must have a relationship with learning and building the bases to grow together within a single balance; and this can be done gradually by including technology in the English classroom. The inclusion of a dynamic tool such as the smartphone, with and progression of other methods of trust, will allow the student to take the control of his own learning, which will bring better results depending on the interest on the subject.

As Khazaie (2011) says, with the development of technology and boom of digital revolution, foreign language teachers find it necessary to think about new effective ways to create a better foreign language teaching and learning environment that is supported by multimedia technologies (p174). The digital revolution its already happening and it is not possible that some institutions are prohibiting the use of cellphones, instead of using them as a tool that can be a major help on the teaching process (depending on the teachers imagination). This device provides many different ways to learn, practice, and reinforce language; therefore, it can be used as a helpful instrument to investigate, find new things and not just to take pictures and send messages. The real potential of the cellphone must be shown to the students, and the teacher has the job to reach the student in a way that it would make him feel comfortable and secure, and at the same time amused by the method of reinforcing knowledge and sharing ideas.

The investigation is based on the fact that most of people spend an enormous quantity of time chatting or sending text messages; this is why the investigator is creating a way to reinforce the vocabulary seen in class, and giving the student the opportunity to practice it outside the classroom using the smartphone application WhatsApp. This because depending on the teacher's imagination and the student's willingness to use the cellphone to reinforce their knowledge on the spare time, the students' vocabulary will increase significantly.

The importance of a safe learning environment will increase the confidence of the student to express ideas, understand, and relate with information given by the professor. Sometimes the classroom it is not the most comfortable zone and does not help in the learning process. Mockery is the enemy number one that many times creates a quiet English classroom and isolate students from the actual oral practice, for example, repetition, role-playing, speeches. Oral communication plays an important part on language learning process and after asking the students at CINDEA Liceo Vargas Calvo they stated that they preferred to finish practice comfortably at home and with no chance of feeling embarrassed.

In contrast with Khazaie (2011) carried out the investigation on the University of Isfahan, Iran. The students received a mini laptop with specialized software that measured very specifically the English level of every student in order to filter accordingly to the student's capacity; this experiment contained four steps to develop which were:

- a) Introduction: Brief explication to students on how to use the software and the setup of the schedule.
- b) Measure: The students take a brief test to compare the student's English level.
- c) Learning: 20 words will be shown to the students using the institutions laptops on different ways.
- d) Testing: Assessment of the vocabulary showed with multiple-choice and recognition questions.

These four steps are very useful for the investigator's research. The main difference will be the methodological tool used, as it will be a cellular phone application that will give the students the opportunity of reinforcing the knowledge outside school hours. In a third

world country, such as Costa Rica, it would be almost impossible to give mini laptops to students to practice; however, the investigator's idea is to give the students a chance to soak up the brain with the foreign language even when they are not in class, reinforcing the vocabulary acquisition process in order to keep the vocabulary learned and clear doubts on a remote way, to achieve this goal a smartphone is necessary.

Ghotekar (2012) mentioned that "One of the most notable changes during the past few decades relates to the way English has become increasingly global. With the growing popularity of the English Language, achieving mastery over English has become a need of our students. English has become a passport for success in today's world. These days it seems mobile phones are used everywhere by everyone, which leads to the obvious question: How can mobile phone technology support learning in the second language classroom? The answer is "in a number of ways" because mobile phones come with ever-increasing functions that most students are adept at using." (p.1). This particular reinforce will keep the students sharp and ready for whenever the next class is taking place and it will make sure that the students wont easily forget the vocabulary learned in class therefore improving the English vocabulary on a controlled environment.

Problems on the English education methodology make the process of teaching difficult; thus, creating a weird environment among students in class. Nevertheless, this will not help to advance forward in the English education, but instead the students' attitude towards the learning procedure will be the most influential variable that might appear. It does not matter how good and entertaining the activity via smartphone is, if the student is not interested in learning, as there is no chance that knowledge will grow on the learner. In

addition, many other negative facts are involved in process of learning other language, as for example the fear to speak in front of others. This is due to the fact that when time to respond to the professor, the student is afraid of making a mistake and therefore being the reason of laughter in the group, a terrible thing for a teenager or a person building confidence.

What student's does not realize it that if they spend more time practicing, instead of being afraid, they would improve themselves. However, it is not totally the students fault, because they might not have the opportunities to practice, since the lack of free time or other priorities will not allow the student to master the English language.

Students are losing that feeling of wanting to know more, their need to increase their knowledge, being better than yesterday, and make the world a better place to live in. With the balanced overview of the technology and education among students, they can start using this tool to learn and not just to waste time.

This telephone application research tries to reach the point where the student feels comfortable using WhatsApp to reinforce vocabulary, but without the sensation of being chased by the professor and trying to get an answer. The student will be on full control of his learning process, making him responsible of the improvement; therefore, learning what he wants and when he wants it. A clever mix of activities will help the investigator measure the level and the progress among students. The facilities provided to the student by the professor to reinforce the vocabulary learned in class will help him to save time while studying, and the students will get more listening stimulation via audio messages and short videos and small texts about a specific topic.

The investigation is going to take place at CINDEA Liceo Vargas Calvo, which is located in San Jose, San Pedro Montes de Oca. The institution during the day is used as a primary school, and at night it is an institution for older people. In the CINDEA Vargas Calvo, the groups are divided in basic, advance, expert, and school. This investigation is going to take place on the basic level, a group of 17 students.

This institution contains mainly students that work and study, and/or have had difficulties to study and they are taking a second chance. Many students have economic problems, which sometimes makes it difficult for them to buy books or copies to follow up in class. The basic group of students will be used for the experiment; this group has 17 students, and the experiment will take place with 16 volunteers that are on board of using the telephone to reinforce vocabulary through the application WhatsApp.

The students are between the ages of 18 through 28, with 8 men and 7 women. Some of them are mothers and have one or more children, with makes it more difficult for them to practice with books. This is why, the idea of using the cellphone was well taken by the mothers, as they saw an opportunity to be under the influence of the English language Environment, even if they were not at school. The big problems that have been argued all along, the lack of practice that affect student's vocabulary knowledge and with nothing to help the student to remember the information presented in class, can be solved thanks to the usage of the smartphone.

## **1.2. Research Question**

The research question is very important because as Chalmers (2010) said, it is the focus of the research, and answering the question is the main aim of the thesis, "everything

else follows from there.” (p.1). this is why the research question must be really clear and accurate. Based on the background of the study, the investigator frames the research question as follows: What is the effect of using WhatsApp as a methodological tool to reinforce the acquisition of vocabulary of 7<sup>th</sup> grade students at CINDEA Liceo Vargas Calvo institution through listening and reading activities outside the classroom?

### **1.3. Purpose and Significance of the Study**

The purpose of the research is to allow the students to reinforce the vocabulary learned in classes through the use of technology, as an instrument to involve the learner into the English environment during the week. This investigation will fight against the biggest problems of language learning, the lack of the English practice and the gap between classes and zero English stimulation outside class mostly of the times.

With this new way of reinforcing vocabulary via listening and reading practice; hopefully in the future, students will find the confidence they need to talk and use words in English that in class they might not use. It has to be stated that not only the learners will be benefited, but also the professors with more prepared students in class, and whenever a question is asked a student will answer, creating a healthier environment for students.

Many advantages will come when the digital revolution is fully extended in education; with this innovation, there will be an economic benefit for students, professors, institutions, and any other third party that might have been involved. With more persons being included in the digital reinforce process, fewer copies will be needed and fewer books will be bought.

#### **1.4. Objectives of the investigation**

Objectives are essential on a research paper; as they provide the information needed to know if the specific goal was achieved. The Business Dictionary (2017) defines objective as “A specific result that a person or system aims to achieve within a time frame and with available resources.” In general, objectives are more specific and easier to measure than goals. Objectives are basic tools that underlie all planning and strategic activities. They serve as the basis for creating policy and evaluating performance.

##### **1.4.1. General Objective**

To analyze the impact of the use of WhatsApp as a methodological tool to reinforce the vocabulary acquisition process of 7<sup>th</sup> grade students at CINDEA Liceo Vargas Calvo.

##### **1.4.2. Specific Objectives**

To identify the problems the students have when learning English in order to help via WhatsApp to overcome the difficulties presented.

To apply the use of the WhatsApp a methodological tool to reinforce student's vocabulary via audio-text messages with 7<sup>th</sup> grade students at CINDEA Liceo Vargas Calvo.

To evaluate the effect of WhatsApp as a methodological tool used to reinforce the vocabulary acquisition process through audio-text messages practice on 7<sup>th</sup> grade students CINDEA Liceo Vargas Calvo.

### **1.5. Limitations of the study**

Technology is part of the human life and it must be included in the learning process. If a device as common as the cellular phone is included in the education system, it must be carefully and gradually done. This will bring benefits to students and the society will get the sense of using this artefact as a learning tool and not as a leisure device. The limitations the research has are countable, but all of them can be solved in order to continue with the vocabulary reinforcement. Whenever the internet connection is not a good one some problems will appear and the student might not be able to download images, audios, or videos that are necessary to reinforce vocabulary according to the researcher's plan to practice. If any problem arises, students will have a couple days to reply, if the student does not have the correct attitude towards learning, it will not be possible for any professor to teach a specific subject. The student has to increase the knowledge and be part of the journey of education in a new language, which is a road full of regular mistakes and lots of practice but always pursuing the main goal, the ability to express diverse thoughts in a different language, English.

The investigator has chosen the application WhatsApp because is one of the most common ways of digital communication in the country. If the student does not use the application WhatsApp regularly and he does not want to download the application, the investigator will take that into account of the student's interest in learning, because as it was said before, it does not matter how excellent is the job the professor is performing, the student will not learn if he does not have the attitude to do it.

This research will be directed to people from ages older than 18 years old, to avoid problems with parents or an inappropriate message from any student. People that are age appropriate know how to respond appropriately and accordingly to the subject and the information asked. If a person is sending inappropriate messages to the teacher or peers, he/she will be eliminated from the project and the researcher will have a private session with the student, if this person is definitely not interested in learning the language, he will not receive any more messages from the project learning group.

The point of using this smartphone application to reinforce vocabulary is to give the cellphone the correct use it should have and not as a social media device. The problem with the lack of practice will be solved because the student will have the opportunity to practice English. With this project, the researcher hopefully expects to help future educators to visualize that the problem of lack of practice can be solved and put in use, in a correct way the application WhatsApp to improve vocabulary in a comfortable environment to students, therefore helping students overcome limits.

## **Chapter II**

### **Theoretical Framework**

With this study, the investigator pretends to innovate the educational methodology by including the smartphone in the learning process to reinforce the acquisition of vocabulary, while students are outside school, using a specific application of instant messages. The idea is to decrease the gap the students have without the influence of an English environment. An experiment will be conducted to see if the students at CINDEA Liceo Vargas Calvo are willing to use a smartphone application to reinforce the acquisition of English vocabulary outside the institution via audio-text messages and multimedia, and how committed the apprentices are to the new learning process.

This second chapter presents information on listening skills, vocabulary, and technology in education, related to the new way of reinforcing the vocabulary acquisition process via smartphones, by putting aside the old textbooks and notes on copy sheets that most the time are misplaced by the student. The activities used for the purpose of this study will be examined in the context of task descriptions in the literature.

#### **2.1. Antecedents**

For the antecedents, the researcher consulted six research papers dealing with information on technology in education and the use of personal equipment such as the telephone and the computer, gathering information, and keywords to develop the project, and use all the collected information to build a research with improved strategies.

There has been investigations that include technology in the English learning process, even some investigations using WhatsApp to help students learn more vocabulary, but those experiments are not designed to focus on the problem that is presented by the investigator, which is, the lack of practice outside school. It will be done a comparison of different studies regarding technology to teach a target language, in this case English.

The investigator will apply technology to enrich the students' vocabulary via the cell phone application WhatsApp; this by using modernized practices focused on reading and listening and thus analyzes the pronunciation of words. This has as a purpose that hopefully someday the students will have the confidence to develop a correct sentence by themselves and reading about a specific subject with sureness. This growth of confidence will keep the learners motivated to continue learning more vocabulary on their own account.

### **2.1.1. Using mobile phones for vocabulary activities**

The use of technology in the learning process has been evolving. This is not a new method, but the innovation is based on the use of the smartphone application WhatsApp. As Stockwell (2010) says, "Internet-capable mobile phones allow immediate connection to a server, which makes it possible for learners to retrieve updated or specific information as they require it, and for teachers to maintain detailed logs of access" (p. 95). Within the World Wide Web, there are tons of information that can be used as an advantage for the learning process. This connection that Stockwell relates has the information data saved in servers around the world; however, in present days this connection goes beyond a server, as now the connection is among people. This since even groups of people from different places around the world can get in touch with just a simple message. And this is precisely what the

investigator is pursuing, as through the cell phone application WhatsApp, it can be used audio-text messages to interconnect with students, and thus using technology in a whole new level to reinforce the vocabulary acquisition process and pronunciation. This will provide the student with the opportunity to listen and read without a book, and most importantly the repetitions the student needs to understand and analyze the vocabulary

Every person learns from what is around; therefore, it is a shame that most of the time in schools technology is not fully used as an advantage for the student. Also, it needs to be stated that outside the school, the student keeps on learning, and sometimes a student learns more from his friends and from the social media than from the teacher. As Stockwell (2010) said Mobile learning for language learning has reached a stage where it is starting to move out of the classroom and into the real world. Through mobile phones, we have the potential to provide a rich learning environment for our learners, but there are still issues that must be considered before they can reach their full potential. Obviously, there is still the problem of the lack of willingness to try new mobile technologies, but this is something that may slowly become less of an issue as perceptions change (p.107). With this change of perceptions, the educational system will change for good. Currently is very common for a student to forget what he learned at school. Nevertheless, with regular practice everything will be different, and students will not forget the vocabulary.

### **2.1.2. Ideas for using WhatsApp with E.L.S.**

The Oxford University press (2016) commented in the article, 25 ideas for using WhatsApp with English language students, that there are three main obstacles to using technology in education. First, it is the availability of technology and internet connection in the classroom. Second, it is teacher's technophobia. Finally and perhaps the biggest problem,

the teacher does not know how to use it for language learning purposes (p.1). With the evolution of technology it will be easy to overcome the first obstacle, because internet connection can be provided to students and it would not be as hard as it sounds, as it will bring many benefits to students.

In relation to the second and third obstacles, it has to be stated that they are difficult to overcome. Technology in the classroom is going to depend on the teacher and his relationship with technology. This because for some professors, regardless of their age, it is hard to innovate the teaching method and keep the teaching strategy just the way it is with no modification. In Costa Rica, the Educational System has strict rules about what to teach, giving the teacher a poor choice and a bunch of limitations when it is time to plan the lesson. To combat the teacher's technophobia, technology must be included gradually and consecutively in institutions.

Regarding the third obstacle; this ignorance on how to use technology for language learning purposes, is due teachers have not thought about technology as a tool because as mentioned before, the public educator is not able to create a customized lesson, as they must follow restricted rules and there is a little time to teach. This is why; many changes must be done in order to include technology in the education system.

As mentioned in the cited article (2016); if our classrooms are not well equipped, we can take advantage of the technology that students have on their phones, even if there is no internet available in class. Many activities can be set up by the teacher and extended beyond the classroom when students later link to Wi-Fi. Alternatively, students can show each other their phones at different stages of activities to gain a bigger inclusion of students. (p.2)

### **2.1.3. Mobile Assisted Language Learning: Applications of Emerging Mobile Technologies**

As Yang (2013) declares on his investigation, “Recent research or review on mobile assisted language learning tends to focus on more detailed applications of newly emerging mobile technology, rather than has given a broader point focusing on types of mobile device itself” (p19). The union between technology and education has reduced the gaps that exist creating a beneficial result to students; they will have the knowledge on the palm of their hands. Students will take the advantage of the smartphone to learn a language always near, putting aside the computer that is not very common in all the households. In addition, telephone applications are a very useful tool to reinforce the language, since many applications to learn a new language are available, ready to be downloaded. However, the motivation to learn is not digital, and it must grow in the student from the inside to the outside.

The investigator wants to help students feel motivated by giving them the tools to practice and feel assisted whenever in doubt and not just on the 4 hours of class per week that the students receive. Yang (2013) applied his research based on different ways to practice and using the meaning of new Tech: short message service (SMS), instant messages (IM), microblogging (mobile blogging), ambient technology (augmented reality), GPS, and tablet computing mention; and he states that long time ago the application market was not as exploited as it is today.

According to Yang (2013), besides the increase of usage, mobile device technology has been drastically developed and transformed in an integrated way. In addition to the traditional purpose for oral communication via mobile phones, the current multifunctional

mobile technology enable users to access to the Internet ubiquitously for locating and searching information, emailing, reading e-books, and even shopping. The mobility has also enabled learning independent of location and any time even out of classroom (p.20).

In the present day, with just one device (the smartphone) and millions of applications, the information is literally on the palm of our hands. However, it really depends on how the educator teaches students to use the cellphone; since it is important to highlight the big impact a telephone will have on a person. Now, in the year 2017, two-year-old kids are playing with tablets and other technologies that did not exist before, because these gadgets are now relatively available in some houses, the new generations are growing with telephones and tablets normally at home, and the professors should take this fact as advantage to help the Education system, improve.

It can be common that in houses people are taught to use technology just for entertainment and these people will never use this artefact to learn. Nevertheless, if the parent teaches children that technology can be used to learn and absorb knowledge, to expand understanding of things, and to study, whenever a professor tries to use technology as a tool to practice, the students will not look at it as strange or weird, on the contrary, it will be an amusing moment for the learners.

There are many different ways of learning depending on different factors, for example the teaching method. For a student is easier to learn when he is having fun; in other words, if the student feels comfortable while learning, it will be a natural process. So, with a combination of technology-language learning, the student can get a benefit with an enjoyable education.

#### **2.1.4. Working with Educational Games**

As mentioned by Marklund (2014), “Games and education have, to put it lightly, always had a turbulent relationship. On more than one occasion, games have been viewed, by educators and the general public, as detractors and distractors from activities deemed more serious and valuable. During certain periods, computer and video games were at best called a “waste of time,” and at worst declared directly harmful to children and young adults. But as is the case with any technology or medium (e.g. VHS and television), games have grown into public acceptance as they started to get into more peoples’ homes and everyday lives. Games are not as isolated and alien as they used to be, and the stigma around the word “video game” is starting to unravel. As the knee-jerk reactions against video games started to subside, the discussions regarding games are starting to focus more and more on the positives. Games are environments that present us with many interesting and unique opportunities for communication, engagement, problem solving, creative expression, and community building. These qualities can be put to good use in many different areas, one of the biggest ones being education” (p4). These games should be very well planned and the target subject should be considered, in order to make the student learn what is necessary and not feel overwhelmed by the practice.

Whenever a game or a practice is created many things must be taking on account, as Marklund (2014) says on his research about creating a game; to create an educational game, make sure that there is an open dialogue between you and the developer throughout the project. As an educator you know details of the subject matter you’re teaching and the details of your school and its students better than the developer’s do, so make sure that you invite the developers to understand the situation as well so that they can create a suitable game for

it. The game should primarily have a clearly stated function in your educational setting, it's seldom enough to just proclaim that "I want a game that teaches the English language. In general, games want to entertain and engage their players for long periods of time, but as a teacher you're working with very strict time limitations and thus need to focus on the parts of a game that are relevant to your lesson plan" (p.8).

According to Marklund (2014), Games are environments that present us with many interesting and unique opportunities for communication, engagement, problem solving, creative expression, and community building. These qualities can be put to good use in many different areas, one of the biggest ones being education, and games are frequently being experimented with as an asset that can radically improve teaching processes (p.4), therefore improve the generation of growing learners with a better education having countless values and is going to benefit society in a greater way in the future, because if everyone is more educated, cities will be filled with well-behaved people with better jobs and better quality of life. It will create a transformation as the years pass by, and generation through generation will be able to see the change. There is no other way rather than transformation, and everything has already begun to change. Social networks have changed the world and made a great contribution to worldwide communication, allowing the evolution of education to keep on going forward towards the future; hopefully, creating a better society and better human beings. The different kind of students that a professor has on the classroom must be taken into account whenever the reinforcement practice is being generated.

### **2.1.5. Contribution to Vocabulary Learning via Mobiles**

As Khazaie (2011) said, individuals in societies have different manners and psychological barriers. An example could be a child who is filled with fear or middle-aged individuals unwilling to attend classes due to their shyness, especially in the time of attending a classrooms speech. Also referring of today's students having enormous access to digital technology display characteristics such as digital fluency and familiarity with new technologies never before imagined (p.154). The professor must be aware of all of these situations and create a solution related to technology to help the student with the learning procedure and create a save environment for all the students in class. With the use of the telephone as a methodological tool to reinforce vocabulary, the learner will be able to select when and where to practice, not only in school as generally happens. The English environment can be at home or at the bus using headphones, listening the audios the number of times the student needs to hear it, providing the learners with the control of their own education.

It will be possible to learn using the telephone, it is just necessary for the students to be guided correctly and gradually, because the project is new-fangled and the learners must create basic knowledge on how to use it first and get acquainted with method just like the first moments with new device, for example cellphone, tablet, TV and others.

### **2.1.6. Comparison of the Effect of Vocabulary Learning Using SMS versus Flashcards**

As Karimkhanlooei and Fooladi (2015) declared, vocabulary plays a central role in language learning. Language learners are expected to have a large scope of vocabulary to fully comprehend what they are reading. In other words, the extent of comprehension is

directly related to the extent of the individual's vocabulary (p. 472). The investigator completely agrees with Karimkhanlooei and Fooladi on the importance on the vocabulary knowledge in order to read better and master more ways to link words and create different sentences, other skills are also important and should not be overlooked.

In their research paper, Karimkhanlooei and Fooladi used technology to teach words and they managed to make the students learn more than 30 words. In addition, they made a comparison between learning with physical flashcard images and with words and meaning sent via SMS. In a period of two months, with two groups of students, the learners received vocabulary; one group received the vocabulary with flash cards and other group with the telephone via SMS messages from 8 am to 10 pm. In this investigation, the results brought that the students that used the telephone knew more words than the students using flashcards did. An inconvenience with the project was that the learners were having problems linking the words they knew, not sure how to use them in a real situation sentence.

How to pronounce words is hard to practice or teach without an English class with the teacher corrections; however, now there is new technology and audios to help the student catch the right pronunciation of words, and thus give them the bases of knowledge and confidence to express thoughts, not just reading, but really knowing how to pronounce and understand whatever its being read.

## **2.2. Literature Review**

### **2.2.1. Listening and Reading Skills**

As Lunenburg (2010) says, communication depends on the ability not only to send, but also to receive messages. So the ability to listen effectively greatly enhances the

communication process. However, many of us are not good listeners (p.8). A good communicator passes a clear message that is not hard to understand and it will not be hard to respond. In order to speak or express feelings in another language; the process of everyday practice is very important and will bring a big improvement in the students' knowledge. The time invested in the Basic English skills practice will help the learner to build confidence and be prepared when it is time to reply in English; the interaction with the environment more regularly will help the learners, with confidence to show and improve what they have learned during the year in the English class.

The reading skill takes a huge part on the learning process because it has many benefits to the student in many areas. Although most students do not realize it, they spent a lot of time of the day reading. Whenever the students are using the social media or sending an email, reading is necessary to understand a message and to know how to reply to it with a logical meaning. Reading is also helpful to improve vocabulary; with every paragraph a student reads, it create opportunities to learn new concepts, and with the knowledge the student will improve his response time, and will also have more than one option to reply and express his ideas clearly.

Any reading is helpful, it does not matter the subject, with any small reading, new words will be learned and words the students already knew will be reinforced by the text; and some new words that are not in the student's daily vocabulary, will be understood by context. This is advantageous to students because learning how to get meaning from-context will help them to create more complex sentences to use in conversations.

It is very well known that in today's world, reading is basic to everyday life. As children in school learn to read, adults, in life, read to learn. People read the newspaper to

know what is going on in the world, read about rules to play games or sports, and read to learn about how to do things, for example recipes. These readings, as simple as they sound, will definitely contribute to the learning and reinforcement of vocabulary of a specific subject.

Reading is also used to learn English in class, but sometimes it is not as effective as one might want to, because with books it is hard to link a text with pronunciation just by using an audio artefact to play for all the students. Using technology to take advantage will generate the tools to give the students text and audios creating the opportunity to practice outside the classroom, with the option of reading the text as much as the student wants, and with an audio that will guide the student during the pronunciation learning (listening).

Reading takes an important part in learning vocabulary, as it is easier to express ideas when the vocabulary possessed its extent and adaptable. Readers need to first learn to form an individual sentence. Then, readers can learn how to understand the text at a deeper level. The investigator believes that reading a little text about target information will help the students to retain the data learned. A good reader will analyze the information given by the professor, and if the students have any doubt, the professor will be available in a remote way after class hours for any consultation that might appear.

Reading a text must be part of the learning process in order to help the students to build a passion towards reading and not seeing it as a punishment. Reading must be embraced with craving, some students read outside school just because they like to do it, but other students do not even read a paragraph as homework because a rejection exist among students towards reading. The interest of the student is very important, and that is what the new generation of teachers must aim to, to create inside the student the attentiveness and

interest to use the telephone to learn English and know that it is going to be useful and necessary in the future.

One of the biggest problems the students confront when they are reading is that most of the times the learner does not know how to pronounce the words and new vocabulary is not recognized, thus generating a gap between known vocabulary and new vocabulary, and this is why the learning is interrupted and not one hundred percent effective during reading. Some teachers use audio-comprehension in class with students, but the number of distractions are many. Trying to read and listen with a poor quality sound will make the learning process difficult, with no option to repeat at least more than twice because the English class is for a limited period, and the English learning turns into a difficult task to accomplish. The investigator will eliminate this problem sending short texts to students via text WhatsApp and the respective audio for the students to use as a guide and listen with most of the attention the pronunciation of the new words. Listening connected with reading is very useful, because it will be easier for the students to repeat the audios on the cellular phone.

The importance of listening goes further than other skills. As stated by Iwankovitsch (2001) one important benefit of listening is gaining information. If someone has a report to do or to find information about how to build a deck, finding someone who knows about it can allow you to get the information in a few hours that would take him/her a week of reading and researching to acquire. Another benefit of good listening is establishing better relationships with people and family members. Everyone wants to be understood and accepted. If one can find listeners who understand and accept, he can experience pleasure from their company and feel closer to them (p.6). This is being able to understand another's

thoughts and feelings whether one agrees with them or not. This understanding is a difficult task for the poor listener, that has no intention of accepting other people thoughts, and stops listening whenever another idea do not concord with his own idea. A good listening skill is important in many levels and if another language is being learned, understanding it correctly is going to be the variable on whether you respond correctly or not, to the question or argument in a conversation.

Many people hear, but not listen. Many poor listeners surround the classroom because we are not taught to listen. In school, the professor teaches how to read and how to write, also how to enunciate and speak, but not to listen. Poor listening can bring consequences to the students, just as Lawson (2007) implies, poor listening is often the cause of misunderstanding and they can result in conflicts. Many errors in the job can be traced on poor listening skills (p. 4). Although listening is a primary activity, most individuals are inefficient listeners. Tests have shown that immediately after listening to a ten minute oral presentation, the average listener heard, understood, properly evaluated, and retained approximately half of what was said, and within 48 hours drops to 25%, in other words we comprehend and retain one quarter of what was said.

In order to avoid poor vocabulary retention, the students must learn to listen carefully and pay attention in class. Teachers should demonstrate in class everything is needed to speak and explain to students how to improve the listening skills, perhaps with multimedia videos the learner can get more in touch with the language. As Tyagi (2013) says; that hearing and listening are two different activities. Hearing is passive whereas listening is active. Listening is a psychological process. It can therefore be improved by regular practice. Listening is a very helpful skill. Active listening is really an extension of the Golden Rule.

Some of the tips, which can help the person to improve his listening skill, are to face the speaker and maintain eye contact to minimize internal distractions and focus on what the speaker is saying, these tips would help to understand everything better (p. 6). The project is going to benefit personal growth and will develop effective communication, fewer misunderstandings, and improve relationships. The latter because some relationships are damaged by misunderstandings that can lead to unsatisfactory business transactions, as well as incorrect approaches in personal relationships. However, good communication can also bring personal growing, since a person acquires knowledge and grows by listening and understanding other people viewpoints, differing ideas, exchanging experiences, and exploring conflicting viewpoints, and exploring new ideas.

The bond between listening and reading in education is necessary. The student will build the bases that are going to create confidence when is time to speak. However, it will not be possible for a student to speak English by just receiving 3 lessons per week, and the only practice is using copies, notes or books, and no audios to analyze pronunciation which is fundamental on the learning of a target language. This lack of opportunity to reinforce skills with audio-text messages can be solved using technology, as the English learning process will be easier, and the English teacher will give the students the opportunity to practice whenever is not at school with an instrument always carried.

### **2.2.2. Vocabulary**

When a language is being learned, vocabulary is an important key to produce an idea that makes sense and it is understood. The foundation of the vocabulary starts with the parents at home; as a little kid, every person learns through repetition and practice, and it is in

that way that, a second language can be learned, as well. The English Oxford Dictionary (2016) defines vocabulary as “The body of words known to an individual person;” taking that into account, it can be said that vocabulary is the words of a certain language that a person’s knows, therefore as much vocabulary is known, more masterful the person will be.

Vocabulary can be words, sentences, phrases, idioms, and the terminology a student knows will be helpful to understand new topics, or even create questions in order to clarify his own doubts. A student that is committed to learn will practice and improve his vocabulary in short time, and would be able to help other peers in class to understand and reach the same English level. For all the students in the same English level is a difficult task to accomplish, but a good professor will help the student to keep the vocabulary learned “fresh” in the students brain, not giving him the opportunity to forget, but instead helping the learner to acquire more expressions and words.

An extended vocabulary is a serious instrument of defense, as Alqahtani (2015) said; vocabulary knowledge is often viewed as a critical tool for second language learners because a limited vocabulary in a second language impedes successful communication. (p.22) In other words, the lack of vocabulary will complicate the message and the limitations to speak will reduce sentences. This will guide people to a famous sentence used by many English learners in Costa Rica, “I understand what you are saying, but I cannot reply in English”, either for embarrassment, lack of vocabulary, or the painful combination of both variables.

Alqahtani (2015) also states that the acquisition of an adequate vocabulary is essential for successful second language use because without an extensive vocabulary, we will be unable to use the structures and functions we may have learned for comprehensible communication (p.22). This is why a good educator will teach the student vocabulary with

meaning and context, explaining how to use the words in expressions and phrases in a correct manner and not just vocabulary without a specific purpose.

It is important to realize that according to Jiangwen and Binbin (n.d), the teaching and learning of vocabulary, although it is only sub goal of a range of goals that is important on a second language learning, plays a key role in the overall structure of the language teaching program because of its basics functions in the language components (p.13). It is highly important for teachers to make the best selection of the types of vocabulary to be thought.

Teaching vocabulary is not an easy task to accomplish, because all the students have different ways to learn, and the same methods will not work on all the students. This is why; the teacher must be prepared to different kind of scenarios in the classroom. Some characteristics to a nice vocabulary teaching method are the following:

#### **2.2.2.1 Personalized Lessons**

It is not as easy as it seems, but a vocabulary lesson directed specifically to the learner's needs, will be an advantage to the person, as it will support the student to learn and remember the information. The motivation will grow if the vocabulary complies with the student's goals, interests, and learning style. For example, if the student is learning English to work in a hospital as a doctor, he will be interested in technical vocabulary; and other student might be interested in traveling, so the vocabulary of interest will be another. This person will be interested in regular phrases and words that native speakers use, to teach this vocabulary the English level of the student must also be measured in order to avoid teaching the student more information that can be handled; this will create frustration among students and will be a negative result of the poor quality of teaching.

### **2.2.2.2. Give the Learner Autonomy**

Whatever the practice book says or whatever the task input by the professor is, the learning will depend on the student. The professor is just there to guide him and mentor him, but if the student is compromised with learning, the result will be approached with practice. This is the part, where the professor gives the student an opportunity to practice outside class, with innovations that will not keep the student attached to a book. This person will have autonomy to master his own learning level gradually.

### **2.2.2.3 Monitor Progress**

Language learning, as any other type of learning, can be difficult to master or even disappointing, because even though the student is practicing, sometimes it is difficult for the students to express ideas. If the professor is keeping a control over the students' doubts and concerns, the teacher will be able to give feedback, to improve in some areas that need more correctness. The positive reinforcement from teacher to student will comfort the learner's motivation, and it will give him an extra boost, so it is necessary to continue focusing on a specific goal, on this case, learning ESL.

### **2.2.2.4 Diversity of Practice Activities**

The regular way of teaching English using a textbook is repetitive and boring to most of students, since it is not helpful to learn a list of words that are not going to be used in an oral message production. There are different ways of reinforcing and practicing vocabulary with students without using the textbook or the list of words. For example, getting in touch with technology will ground a new learning method, and using the smartphone as a methodological tool will allow the vocabulary acquisition process to be enriched with a big

variety of practices, and thus the learner can conserve the data and use it even outside the classroom.

### **2.3 Technology in Education**

The importance of including technology in education is extremely notorious, because many regular students use the cellphone to communicate with family, friends, and entertainment for more than 6 hours per day. However, the smartphone is almost never used to practice or learn specific topic. The mobile phone has evolved and now it can complete operations that years ago were only available in computers.

Some applications for smartphone are designed to practice English and reinforce vocabulary, but it will depend on the student's motivation. The smartphone can be used to reinforce English via an educational application for over 20 minutes, or it also can be used to scroll down on Facebook for more than an hour. This is why the importance of a clear and soft alliance that must exist between technology and vocabulary reinforcement, in order to make the learner feel comfortable, while using the telephone to enhance vocabulary. The success of the project will depend on the design of the practice presented to the learners.

The idea is to create reductions in the amount of time spent without any English "influence" during the day and give the student the opportunity to practice. It is known that one of the biggest problems an English learner faces is the absence of practice when the learner is not in class. Sometimes, this is not because the student does not want to study or practice, it is just because with book or copy sheets is complicated and demotivating to practice a new language. The investigator focuses the research in the fact that in the present day, most of the people over 18 years old own a cellular phone. This device can be used as an

instrument to practice English outside school hours, by giving the students the opportunity to practice with audio and reading comprehension exercises through WhatsApp.

Bouhnik and Deshen (2014) referred to the use of the application WhatsApp in class, by saying that this app is relatively a new phenomenon, so little research exists regarding its influence in interpersonal communication in general and between high school teachers and their students in particular. A research on the use of WhatsApp in a South African university class registered positive feedback from students who claimed that it was an easier way to communicate with their teachers and the rest of the class. In addition, they stated that it was a productive or fruitful discourse in relevant issues in an informal environment, where students could learn intimately and authentically and that it was also fun (p. 219).

Since the early days, human beings have been exploring different ways of learning. Education at home by parents and in institutions has been evolving along the years, as now children have even more knowledge and ideas compared with children of their same age back in the 80's. For example, fifteen years ago the babies were born with the eyes closed and now because of different stimulation the baby receives during pregnancy, they are born with the eyes open and already associated with the outside world.

The investigator is connecting technology and education in order to include the smartphone in the daily basis as an instrument of learning and not just as a leisure artefact. Therefore, the importance of recognizing the big help the student can get, when such device is used to reinforce vocabulary. This because the learner will get the opportunity to practice what is already learned in class, using the smartphone outside school hours.

With this instrument, the investigator seeks to help the student practice English outside school hours in order to keep the memory fulfill with the foreign language and not

forget the information learned in class. This is one of the biggest problems of English students in some of the Latin American countries because as any other subject matter, practice is very important. The problem in Costa Rica's English education is that most of the students learn by reading books and at the end of the day they have bad pronunciation, lack of vocabulary, and have poor grammar. Therefore, they are not able to answer back in the target language, but they are able to understand. This is because of the 4 hours per week the students receive in class are not enough to master a language.

The investigator agrees with Alemi, Reza, Sarab, and Lari (2012) when they state that because of the limited class hours, students do not have the opportunity to speak and use all of the words in class. This causes some problems for language teachers and learners. The problem faced by a language teacher is how to teach this large number of vocabulary during a limited time. They can focus and teach individual words explicitly, but deliberately the teaching of vocabulary is one of the least efficient ways of developing learners' vocabulary knowledge. However, explicitly teaching of vocabulary constitutes an integral part of a well-balanced vocabulary program (p. 99). On this part of the English education process, a gap is reached because in order to master a language, a lot of practice is needed. However, the limited time that teachers have in class is an obstruction to students to practice freely what they think is valuable to learn. This because most of the time, the professor has to run through every topic in order to complete the schedule, without even carrying if the student learned or not. Nevertheless, this can create an environment of unhappiness with the learning process; therefore, there is discouragement among students and when a person is not motivated to learn, it will not be possible for him to storage any information in the brain.

Alemi et all (2012) based their study in the practice via SMS (text messages). A text message was sent to the student with a word including significance synonyms and antonyms, or presentations were sent to students via links to enter and recapitulate the times the students' feels it was to necessary to do so. Taking advantage of the revolution of technology is essential to restructure the educational system, in order to make students see the smartphome as a tool to learn. With this new use of technology as an advantageous item for educational purposes, the progress in the English learning will increase tremendously. The professor has the responsibility to take his place in the process and include the computer usage and mobile phone interaction instead of copies and notes that the student might not remember in the following class or might leave at home.

Computers are now the most common device used in the work environment and the professors normally use a computer to save data and to keep the information in order. More than 15 year ago, a professor used to take his information in a simple book, and if it was misplaced all the information would be lost. The student can recognize the same problems, when the copies are lost or when the book is forgotten at home. With technology in education, it is possible to avoid this problem; therefore, this investigation focuses on vocabulary and analyzing pronunciation (listening) and reading.

Not all people are in favor of technology in the educational process; for some professors sometimes it might be dangerous to include it because it can cause more distractions than benefits. Norman (2016) said that the future of the educational system is practically determined by the development of technology. Some educators and experts are against the trends of implementing Ed-Tech tools and apps in every single aspect of the schooling system, mainly because technology is a source of distraction for students.

However, proper technology integration guides students towards greater understanding of all concepts covered in class (p.1). For some teachers to include the cellular phone in class is not such a good idea, because the learner will be distracted with other applications. This distraction not only will be negative to the student, but also the professor is not going to succeed in his task, which is teach the student how to speak English.

The conveniences students will get when including technology in education will boost the capacity of learning, the production of words, and the confidence to speak in class; therefore, the performance will improve depending on the student motivation and compromise with the learning process. The benefits that students might get with technology in education are variable, depending in many factors, like the students attitude towards English. However, if a professor decides to include technology in class, it will be easier for the teacher to explain some particular subjects, as some information is really difficult to understand even if the professor explains it several times, but if the professor uses some examples with multimedia, he/she will facilitate comprehension.

The majority of educators prefer to keep track of the students' progress, because it is very helpful to know how much the student is learning and on with areas he might need an extra push. This helps the professor to know the skill the student needs to focus on, and with technology, this task will not be that complicated anymore. Nowadays, technology has given the teacher many tools to give the students the proper follow up. Today there are platforms and tools available to keep track of the individual evolution of each student, and even some institutions have a specific software or some professors prefer to use a simple excel sheet that might do the work.

Some students see education as a waste of time and not important to life, and they do not succeed in the learning process, dropping out of school at an early age; and thus giving up on the education process. Most of youngsters spend a lot of time on social network from a very early age, so including technology in education will make students spend more of their free time reinforcing their knowledge, with interactive lessons and presentations.

Technology also helps to make distance more accessible, with the advantage of setting the schedule accordingly to the needs and take the lesson at home. Virtual lessons are getting more popular and easy to access, with the internet. For example, having a conversation with a person from UK or USA is not a complicated task to accomplish and it can be very helpful to students to have or hear a real English conversation. This will allow them to realize that practice is the key to someday being able to have an English conversation with a native speaker. Therefore, by using technology, the student can practice listening and reading with audio-text, and being able to respond the message sent.

Another advantage of the inclusion of technology in English education is that students can practice using the cellphone anywhere and any place with the convenience of not having to attend to classes and practice anytime, and making the class easier to understand. In this way, more students will be able to get the knowledge therefore there will be more ideas and more connections in order to get strategies regarding problem solving. If technology is included in the education process, it will be more enjoyable and interesting for the students.

The use of WhatsApp as a methodological tool is seen by the investigator as a way to help students reinforce knowledge and at the same time make them realize that this device is not just for leisure, as it can be a helpful tool in the learning process. WhatsApp messenger is

an application for gadgets that use the internet connection. This app is used to share different kinds of information such as videos, images, location, contacts, GIF, instant messages, audio files, and others. This application was launched in 2009, and in just 8 years, it already has millions of users all over the world. In 2011, WhatsApp was on the top 20 of the apple store, just 3 years after being launched; and by 2013, it had about 200 million active users. The benefits education can have using this application are many, it just depend on the teacher imagination to create a practice and to demonstrate students that learning can be entertained and that it should not be seen as an obligation, but as a privilege for the current students that are accustomed to technology.

This known text message application can be included in the English learning process; since, according to the investigator, there are many ways to use the cellular phone to learn and practice vocabulary. This application has replaced the SMS (regular messages) and one of the main reasons is that WhatsApp messages are free for the users and with no ads, like in other free apps. For instance, Bouhnik and Deshen (2014) took WhatsApp to school to measure the positive effect on students and innovating ways of reinforce vocabulary. They chose this particular application because as they stated in their research, WhatsApp enables communication with anyone who possesses a Smartphone, has an active internet connection, and has installed the application. The overall cost of the application is very low, up to one dollar per year (p. 218). This means that, it is more convenient for students to use the smartphone, as the times spend on WhatsApp practicing will be free of charge and the student will take full advantage of it.

Today, it is more accessible for a person to buy a smartphone and people prefer telephones rather than computers; not because the telephone is cheaper, but a computer

cannot be used to take calls and to send messages as a telephone does. In other words, with technology revolution some telephones are equally capable of performing several task than personal laptop computers were created to do. The telephone is now, for most of people in big cities, a required instrument used in a variety of things that can go from GPS (Global Positioning System) to radio player while using an internet connection. This is why most people prefer to pay for a smartphone than a computer. The investigator agrees with Stockwell (2010), when he refers on including the smartphone in education and leaves the computer as an optional resource, because not everybody can afford a computer and the institution cannot provide learners with the laptop because of the lack of budget. Added to this is the fact that mobile phones are relatively inexpensive as compared with, for example, wireless laptop computers, and with functions such as Internet browsers that are available in current mobile phones, the range of possibilities of mobile phones as tools for learning increases even further (p.95). The correct use a person gives to the cellular phone will depend on the example given at home, and if it is included on the education process, it is possible that a person will start to see the telephone as an information door and not just as a distraction tool.

One study focused predominantly on improving listening skills and vocabulary through mobile phones was conducted by Stockwell (2010). This investigation was performed in Tokyo with three different groups with 175 students, a three-year period investigation with pre intermediate level students that had never used the cellular phone for language learning before; although all 175 students had a smartphone with all the capabilities. Stockwell states in his research that: vocabulary activities based on the textbook materials were developed and made available to learners either on PC or on their mobile

phones. An orientation on how to use the activities was given in the first class in the semester, which included showing learners how to log in and complete each activity type. Time was also spent on ensuring that learners understood how to complete the activities. In addition, learners were given the opportunity to ask questions about how to use the system on both the PC and the mobile platforms in class, the students, were also able to switch platforms whenever they wanted, this means that they could use cellphone and computer, the work completed will be saved (p.98).

This investigation has a standard webpage in which the student has to sign in to begin; therefore, the teacher must explain very clearly how to interact in the webpage and respond any question. The advantage of using a specific web page is that the teacher is able to have a control on the students, checking their grades and their progress and after each lesson the student receives a grade, which will make him want to overcome his own achievement.

With the option of using both, telephone or the computer, the learners have the opportunity to analyze which instrument will be more useful for them. The problem with using a specific webpage and not an application is that a web page will always be easier to scan on a computer, because in the smartphone it will not have the same detail. This is why most students prefer to use the computer to complete the practice in the first two years of investigation. It was also seen that students that used the smartphone to complete the practice got a lower grade and spent more time in the practice than students that used the computer. This might happen because of the distractions the student gets when he tries to practice; for example, on the train or on the bus, thinking on the next stop or any danger that can appear. Otherwise, on a computer at home, these kinds of distractions do not exist, making the time

spend more useful, this is why most of students prefer to use the computer for lesson 5 and 10, the test lesson.

The investigator thinks that this research although it has very valuable information, it can also be considered as difficult to students to have to sign in to a web page and work strictly from there. As Bouhnik and Deshen (2014) said in their research, over the past year the high infiltration of Smartphones into the market has initiated the growing use of WhatsApp as a communication platform for various student groups, and more recently for groups of teachers and their students as well (p.219). The low cost of the application, united with the ability to send an unlimited number of messages, the desire to feel part of the trend, the capacity to conduct an on-going conversation with many people, and a sense of privacy relative to other social networks, are some positive characteristics students see in the application WhatsApp. Although not everything is positive, some students complain in the groups and there is a big amount of messages received with no specific purpose. This is why the professor has to talk to students in order to make them understand and respect the rules of the practice group, if used.

The following chart is based on the opinion of people familiar with social networking in Costa Rica, in which as it can be seen, WhatsApp is shown as the most education friendly application to include in the system.

**Table No1: How Costa Ricans are familiarized with communication through the internet.**

	<b>e-mail</b>	<b>SMS</b>	<b>Facebook groups</b>	<b>WhatsApp</b>	<b>Twitter</b>
<b>Cost</b>	Internet connection required	Payment	Internet connection required	Internet connection required	Internet connection required
<b>Opening a group</b>	possible	impossible	Easy	Easy	Possible, but unnatural
<b>Adding or removing members to a group</b>	Not possible	Not possible	Requires approval	Possible	Requires approval
<b>Having a fluent conversation as a group</b>	Not possible	Not possible	Easy	Easy	Non natural
<b>Privacy</b>	High	High	Low	High	Low
<b>Teaches usage in private life</b>	High	Low	Low	High	Low
<b>Students usage in private life</b>	Low	Low	High	High	Low

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<b>Sharing</b>	Easy	Possible, but	Easy	Easy	Easy
<b>content</b>		unnatural			

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Adapted by Eric Solano

The technical advantages of WhatsApp are variable; as Bouhnik and Deshen (2014) said, one of the main benefits of WhatsApp is its simplicity. The respondents named a variety of technical advantages of this tool. All the participants had experienced disappointment in their previous attempts at incorporating various technologies into their educational processes. WhatsApp’s simplicity, low cost (if any), privacy (in comparison to other social networks like Facebook or Twitter), and widespread use among teachers and students alike in their private life made it a prime choice (p.225).

With a WhatsApp group it might be possible that students relationships grow in a positive way, but on the contrary it is also possible that students might misbehave with rude vocabulary in the WhatsApp group if used. Bouhnik and Deshen (2014) explained a personal experience with one WhatsApp group that in which one student misbehaved and was immediately removed from the group, after that, the student apologized privately, and was added again. This situation did not happen once more, because all the students understood the purpose of the study group.

**2.4. Variables of the Investigation**

Within the investigation, the researcher has to know that not every process using SMSs will engage students in language learning. Some limitations can be found in a classroom full of persons that want to learn more than others do. One limitation is the motivation the student has to learn a language, because sometimes the student might think it

will not be helpful in the future, and/or the professor way to give the class or prepare the practice is not adequate to the student's English level, which makes it complicated to practice and difficult to understand.

Regarding technology, a problem can be found if the student does not possess a smartphone to practice; this will compromise the practice, unless he is able to do the lesson on a computer, but in this case, the idea is to give the student the freedom to practice outside classroom, and not be stuck on a computer. Some students will prefer to work the old fashion way, using text workbook, without evolving to the new era, using technology. However, as it was said before everyone has his own way of learning, and if the student thinks is better for him to use paper sheets, the professor must give the opportunity to the student to practice the way chosen

## **Chapter III**

### **Methodological Framework**

The importance of gathering information in the correct manner is going to help the investigator to get accurate results. In the present chapter, the investigator will discuss the methods used in the project to accomplish his goal, the instruments will be described, and also the method of research will be mentioned stage by stage, for example how to apply the strategy assignment, usage of a smartphone application and multimedia about different subjects presented to students. The researcher is also going to describe the population and-the institution where the project is going to be developed, as well as the instruments that will be used to collect data. Additionally, a full description on how the information gathered will be analyzed will be provided.

As Chaleunvong (2009) said, the data-collection techniques allow us to systematically collect information about our objects of study (people, objects, phenomena) and about the settings in which they occur (p.3). This is why, it is imperative to be precisely detailed about the way how the instruments are described; as this will help the reader to understand how instruments will be applied. In addition, the legitimacy of the investigation is going to depend on the instruments and how the information is collected.

#### **3.1. Research Method and Scope**

The research method can vary depending on the scope and interest of the researcher. For example, if the goal is a result on a big scale, a quantitative research is the designated type of method; this type of investigation has many advantages such as the possibility of

comparing information on a big scale, and is helpful to inform guidelines to groups of people. Because it is used on a massive way, it also gives the opportunity to compare groups depending on population and determine relations that might appear among participants.

On the other hand, the qualitative research is more focused on gathering information on how the participants are facing individually the situation and many outcomes yet to come. This type of research allows the identification of a new topic that can be developed even further, with information collected via one-on-one interview with the participant. As it is mentioned by Ben-Eliyahu (2014), “Because of the investment in this type of research and the relatively few number of participants, findings from qualitative research cannot be generalized to the whole population. However, such research serves as a spring board for larger studies, and deeper understanding that can inform theory, practice, and specific situations” (p.2). The importance of a well-developed qualitative research can be the foundation to motivate people to begin a bigger investigation to get a larger result and measure more variables.

The research method selected is the qualitative research because the investigator is aiming to a detailed description of the results. The data is gathered with instruments used with the participants individually, such as interviews, observations, digital questions using the telephone. The investigator is avoiding generalizing the population; instead, he recognizes new untouched singularities of every student. This is why the research method selected is the qualitative method, because the attention is focused individually on how much the students use the telephone in class and how willing they are to use that particular artefact as a methodological tool to reinforce the vocabulary acquisition of the students at CINDEA Liceo Vargas Calvo.

### **3.2. Selection and Description of Population and Participants**

In this section, the institution and the population with which the investigator is currently working are going to be described.

#### **3.2.1. Description of the Institution**

The investigation was developed in San Jose at CINDEA Liceo Vargas Calvo, an institution located near the U Latina and UCR. This institution is a high school in the morning and in the evening is a CINDEA, created for young adults that for different reasons did not finish high school and decided to get back to finish what they already have started.

In Costa Rica there are many ways to obtain the bachelor degree outside high school, and CINDEA is one of them. CINDEA Liceo Vargas Calvo is located in the district of San Pedro, Montes de Oca San Jose, former CINDEA Nuestra Señora de Lourdes, moved to the Liceo Vargas Calvo; as size and commodity were the main reasons. The Institution is located next to the Calazans School, 100 meters east from the U Latina Campus San Pedro by the train rail.

This institution was chosen by the investigator as he completed the final practicum in the same place. The investigator will develop the project with the teacher's approval with volunteers of 7<sup>th</sup> grade that he never met before. In this institution, called CINDEA, people from a more advanced age have the opportunity to finish the studies and get the bachelor degree, and thus a better job.

Liceo Vargas Calvo is a high school in the morning with more than 400 students from different ages, and in the evenings, the night shift corresponds to CINDEA with a schedule

from 6 pm to 9 30 pm for all the students. The English education method is based on three modules, and English students usually work in class with a notebook and copies that sometimes are provided by the teacher, as the majority of the times the students leave the material at home.

The new house of CINDEA is bigger than the former one, and has more classrooms adapted for more people. However, there are some problems in the infrastructure, mostly in the public areas, such as the stairs and the restrooms. The building is old and needs restauration. It counts with 18 classrooms plus the principal's office, a nice copying place that avoids the students' to go outside to get copies. In addition, the institution has a big parking space for the professor's cars and some student's motorcycle, a huge difference from the old CIDEA that had zero parking spaces.

The train rail locates near the institution, and sometimes in the middle of class, the train passes by generating extreme noise that creates distraction among the learners and makes the teacher to stop the lesson for a moment, and continue when the train is gone. The proximity to several bars, located in San Pedro, is a dangerous attraction that makes some of the students miss class and go have a drink with friends. This is why there is a security guard that does not allow students to get out the institution before the classes are finished, or on the recess time, which is 15 minutes from 7 to 715 pm. This security guard has the command of opening the gate before classes (before 6 pm), during the break (from 7 to 715 pm), and at the end of the school period at 9 30 pm. This is in order to prevent the students from skipping lessons and increasing assistance in class. This magnificent idea has brought a positive influence on students that now attend to one hundred percent of the lessons when they get in the institution and take advantage of the opportunity to study and grow.

### **3.2.2. Description of the population**

The population of the institution CINDEA is new to the investigator because even though the location has changed, the same professors attend the English Department, but the majority of students were still in the same institution in advanced courses. These students are from different parts of San Jose, but mostly from the east part of the Capital. Every student has their own story; all of them have different ages and singularities. Such as single parents with many responsibilities, people to take care, and students with daily jobs and other responsibilities than school homework.

### **3.2.3. Description of the participants**

The research is going to be conducted with students of different ages and different gender. The project was explained in class to the students. The investigator asked volunteers to participate in the project, and many students were agreed to participate and one of the main reasons was because the students really want to learn English, but it was extremely hard for them; therefore, they feel like they needed some help.

Almost all students agreed to participate; in a class of 17 students, the investigator will count with the help of 16 students to get data about the use of WhatsApp and how it can be used to improve the vocabulary learning with specific reinforcement. These volunteers are coursing the basic level at CINDEA institute, which means the students should know supposedly around what a 7<sup>th</sup> grader does. The students come from all over the metropolitan area, near places such as San Pedro, Sabanilla, Salitrillos, San Ramon, but there are also students from places located far away, and because of their jobs it is easier for them to live in San Jose and visit the loved ones over the weekend.

There are students from different places studying for the same objective, with is a bachelor degree and graduation. The age range is another detail that called the investigator's attention, because the students have from 18 to 28 years old. In the class, it can be found mothers taking back their studies with a 6 years old kid waiting at home, and a pregnant lady with 4 plus months of gestation and the father of the one baby also studies in the same institution and they both work during the day time and study to provide a better future to the unborn child.

### **3.3. Implemented Strategies**

The classroom is composed by 17 students, as mentioned earlier; the investigator will apply the project with 16 volunteers in a period of 3 weeks. The students will be treated as equal with no special characteristic. There are 7 women and 8 men, all from diverse ages and backgrounds, but with the same poor English level because of different reasons; for example, the lack of interest on the language, the methodology used to teach, or most outstandingly the lack of practice. Even though, they are in the same English level, it is possible to notice the interest of learning in some particular students more than others.

There is not much confidence among students to read a text or even mention a few words to respond the teacher, because they have never heard the correct pronunciation of the words or maybe just a few times. The English language is almost not touched in class, because the classroom work is based on copies taken from a book, and with help of the teacher the students manage to finish sentences, reading the copies that unfortunately at the end of the year will probably end in the trash can. This is why the digital practice can be the beginning

of a revolution, the student will have the data (audios, text or videos) available to read, hear, or watch whenever it is needed, in order to improve the reading and listening skills.

During the project, different strategies will be put into practice to collect the accurate and necessary data to get to the results with the information gathered. The analysis is the main point of the project; the learner will receive valuable information via the application WhatsApp, as an instant message will be sent frequently for the student to analyze and maintain a connection with the language outside the classroom. The student will have to analyze the information to reinforce a specific topic discussed in class, and at the same time using technology multimedia, the investigator will present the students with opportunities to reinforce the language even further. For example, audio texts and videos and at the end of the messages a small practice to evaluate if the reinforcement helped the students.

It is important to know what information to share and how in order to make the receiver comfortable and not overwhelmed. As Young & Kuo (2007) mentioned, the main activities involved in knowledge sharing are transmission and absorption. The transmission activity includes effectively sending and correctly presenting knowledge to the potential knowledge recipients, and the absorption activity is the effectiveness of knowledge use (p.1225).

For this project, the investigator is going to share information using technology, more specifically the smartphone application WhatsApp. Valuable information regarding a precise subject is going to be shared through groups of three or four messages to the student. The information will be sent every two days, audio-text, video and images, to the student in a group of three of four different communications about the same topic. The receiver has the

responsibility to analyze and reply, whenever it is necessary. These groups of messages, for the purpose of this study, will be called “Waves of Knowledge” (W.O.K).

The WOK is a concept created by the investigator and it refers to how the information is going to be shared to the students. This new technologic vocabulary acquisition method is developed by using WhatsApp as a methodological tool. This application was chosen because is very familiar to students, and the investigator has the advantage of using the help of Web-WhatsApp to share information more easily and comfortably with a well-organized approach.

The Waves of Knowledge will preferably be sent outside school schedule. The WOKs are composed by text, audios, images, videos, and whatever the professor might think that would help to create an opportunity to reinforce the language learning process. Each topic will be composed on two or more WOKs, and the first one will be preceded by an interview to make sure the student is familiarized with the topic because the WOK is send to reinforce and make the student to remember what is already known and not to teach new information. The second WOK is simple, just to re-fill the student’s memory. This second WOK will be sent to the learner in order to make him recharge the knowledge he already received in class, by reinforcing and, at the same time, helping the student with the vocabulary acquisition process. The last WOK is followed by a set of questions to make sure the student was engaged by the topic and to recognize the importance the students gave to the English learning. The investigator is giving the student via WOKs, a chance not many English students have, which is a digital and modernized way of practicing without books, using audio-text to improve reading and writing right on the palm of their hand with the control of using it whenever the time is right.

The majority of times, repetition is not an option that students have in regular class, because time is not enough and professors have to hurry to make sure the student receive all the necessary topics. However, sometimes professors are more focused on giving the information without making sure, if the students understand correctly. This is why, practice outside the class is so important, as time in class is not enough for a student to learn the correct way to read, listen, or speak.

Students will also receive short videos with important information that can be downloaded to the cellular phone and reproduce the number of times the learner believes it is necessary. The investigator will also send, at the end of every particular subject, a set of questions to reinforce even more the knowledge acquired. The last W.O.K. will have some interrogations to emphasize what it was learned and to verify if the information is being sent to students in a clear manner and without any difficulties or possible confusion. The learning process will depend on the students and how much they want to grow. It is the student's decision to spend extra 5 minutes in the English reinforcing project or to spend 2 hours in Facebook or other social media network, as it may be the case.

### **3.3.1. Observation and Survey**

The observation was made to understand why students are having so much trouble learning English, and how WhatsApp can be used as a valid tool to help them improve. It was very noticeable for the investigator to see students using the telephone mostly outside the classroom, but sometimes also inside the class. Even when the teacher was explaining a specific topic, the telephone was being used, creating a conflict teacher-student, and because of the distraction, so the teacher had to stop the lesson to ask the student to put it away.

When the teacher was explaining a topic, not even one student had the courage to read when the teacher asked to, because they do not know how to pronounce, even if the words are part of the vocabulary learned in the previous lesson. The majority of the students forgot the vocabulary learned because practicing outside classroom is not easy, they see the use of copies as a limitation to practice outside. In this case, the survey will provide important information about what the students think of technology in education and how to use it to learn (Appendix 1).

The observation conducted by the investigator has as main goal to identify the problems the students have when learning English. The teacher possibly causes some of these problems, as well. In this case, the investigator was able to find out a problematic created by the teacher, through a survey to teachers in order to understand the opinion of the professors towards technology in English learning (Appendix 2). It is important to know the opinion of teachers about regular English education and how they can incorporate technology in the teaching process. This is why the investigator is going to apply the survey to teachers and students as well, to get the idea about the complaining and use this information to improve the English teaching process via the smartphone application WhatsApp.

### **3.3.2. W.O.K. through WhatsApp / Pre-Test and Post Test**

To accomplish the project, the investigator is going to rely on the smartphone application WhatsApp to reinforce three specific topics learned in class. The learners will receive information via multimedia, taking advantage of technology, and thus giving the student the opportunity to reinforce what is already known. Whenever they receive the

W.O.K; the receiver will have the responsibility to use it to analyze and practice as much as needed, even when the students are not at school.

The first W.O.K. will always be sent after the pre-test, which is arranged by a few interview questions to see how much does the student know about a specific topic to make sure the information shared is according to the students' knowledge. In addition, how the student's knowledge might or might not increase, will be measured with the post-test in the final W.O.K. This will be measured in a digitalized way with questions to the students as explained below; the W.O.K.s are developed as follows:

### **3.3.2.1. Topic 1: Ordinal Numbers**

The topic was developed by the investigator in three W.O.K.s for the student to easily recognize pronunciation with reading combined with an image to support the mental physical appearance and therefore help the student with the vocabulary reinforcement (Appendix 3).

#### **3.3.2.1.1. W.O.K. No 1 (ordinal numbers)**

This first W.O.K. is preceded by some questions regarding the topic in order to make sure the students are prepared to receive certain information to reinforce the vocabulary already known. It is formed by an audio-text with the ordinal numbers from 1<sup>st</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup>. With this multimedia message, the learner can play it and read it, as much as is needed. An image of a race is also included with the places from 1<sup>st</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup>, so the students can analyze and relate vocabulary images and sounds.

**3.3.2.1.2. W.O.K. No 2 (ordinal numbers)**

Listening and reading will be reinforced with two audio-texts regarding how to use ordinal numbers in two common situations that can be presented in a regular day such as birthdays and sentences about the common situation where ordinal numbers are used, for example a race and specific dates.

**3.3.2.1.3. W.O.K. No 3 (ordinal numbers)**

It is the last W.O.K. of the topic. It contains the post-test that will gather the data to be analyzed by the investigator, as mentioned before. This third W.O.K. has writing numbers reinforcement with audio-text and a short video about ordinal numbers from 1<sup>st</sup> to 10<sup>th</sup> to help the students relate images and audio. Four simple questions will follow the third W.O.K. These questions deal with ordinal numbers from 1<sup>st</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup>, dates of anniversaries and writing numbers.

**3.3.2.2. Topic 2: Personal Questions**

This special topic has the same reinforcement with audio-texts, images and videos that will help the student remember what the teacher presented in class. This first W.O.K. will be sent after the completion of the pre-test, which is a short interview to the student to verify the knowledge of the topic and how prepared the student is to analyze the W.O.K. received (Appendix 4).

**3.3.2.2.1. W.O.K. No 1(Personal Questions)**

It is composed by audio and a text messages about personal questions and regular situations that could happen to anyone, as well as personal information about special

preferences. This first W.O.K. was designed to make the student remember important vocabulary that will be tested further on.

#### **3.3.2.2.2 W.O.K. No 2 (Personal Questions)**

This second WOK deals with a text about a simple conversation on the first day at work between some two ladies, the respective audio-text to help the students understand the pronunciation of words through a reading and repetition of words. This would give the student the courage to imitate sounds in order to improve the language speaking.

An interesting video of a little girl introducing herself in front of the class is also part of the second WOK. This specific scenario will help the student relate with his first day in class and the vocabulary they can use when introducing themselves in front of peers. The multimedia message is an audio-text regarding everything the little girl says; therefore, the student is able to read and to listen to the correct pronunciation of each word, in order to improve the English skills.

#### **3.3.2.2.3. W.O.K. No 3 (Personal Questions)**

The last WOK is an audio-text with a story about a nice young woman that recently moved to Costa Rica and is introducing herself to the class, the audio-text contains basic information any person could say when meeting someone new. At the end, there are some common questions that are asked on the first day of classes, such as how old are you?

#### **3.3.2.3. Topic 3: Possessive Pronouns**

This specific topic is very important to know and, at the same time, complicated to manage. If they want to express ideas about their possessions, the W.O.K.s regarding this

specific topic will be very helpful. The pre-test of this specific subject was made on a different modality, because it was important to measure the students' knowledge on the subject. The Pre-test was presented with "mark the correct option" in a piece of paper. These few simple questions are followed by a small interview to make sure the student knows what possessive pronouns are, and also to make sure the learner is familiarized with the topic (Appendix 5).

This particular topic combines two W.O.K.s, because the knowledge about the topic was very limited, and the investigator did not want to confuse the students providing more information than they could handle.

#### **3.3.2.3.1. W.O.K. No 1 (Possessive Pronouns)**

The first W.O.K. allows the learner to use correctly the possessive pronouns, and it relates the information to TV characters (the Simpsons) in order to help the learner to get more involved and clearly understand the information provided. This WOK contains a paragraph about the special cartoon characters; followed by an audio in order to help the students to listen to the English language while reading the paragraph. This will give the students the chance to read, listen, and repeat the sentences countless times.

#### **3.3.2.3.2. W.O.K. No 2 (Possessive Pronouns)**

The last W.O.K. of the topic is a short text about belongings and how the English language is used when talking about possessive pronouns. This W.O.K. is also formed by an audio-text, and is followed by a short video about the possessive pronouns, that will help the students understand and acquire the information in a clear way. After watching the video, the learner will receive a link to go further on YouTube and learn even more about possessive

pronouns. The post-test on this W.O.K. is presented in the form of questions with the same pattern of the pre-test; this to help the student to complete the questions successfully.

### **3.4. Data Collection Instruments**

In this study, the data will be collected through several instruments, for example an observation, pre-test and post-test, interview, and questionnaires applied to students via WhatsApp to measure the possible variables of the project. The observation was the first instrument used by the investigator. During a week, the investigator visited the three English lessons to observe the group, and realize how the students develop their ideas in class and how the reading and listening skills were developed and reinforced in class.

The students were measured with interviews and questionnaires before and after the project in order to determine the improvement of students; this observation was combined with a survey to verify how students feel regarding the technology involved in education, most importantly the smartphone.

Most significantly, the investigator observed how the class was developed by the teacher and the technique used to get the students attention. The observations were also focused on how intense was the use of the telephone in the institution and inside class. In the institution, the majority of the students own a cellular phone, and most of the learners are active users of the Application WhatsApp. During class, time was lost tremendously and therefore the teacher had to repeat the explanations three or more times for the students to understand the activity, and there were other distractions such as the smartphone in class.

The Project is based on remote Reinforcing of the vocabulary acquisition process in order to create opportunities for students to get involved with the English language, when the learner is not in class. This action will help the student not to forget what he already know and reinforce the listening and reading skills.

The students were preparing for midterms and the investigator was asked to develop three specific topics in order to help students to improve the scores. The first topic was the ordinal numbers, personal information questions, and possessive pronouns. The students found it useful because the telephone is always with them, and is not an extra book to carry around, and with the facility to pay attention to the audio-text, which will help the students' English level.

### **3.5. Validation of Instruments**

The instruments of investigation are created by the researcher with a specific purpose and are used to help the student in the English learning process. In any instrument, there will always be some level of error because it is not possible for all the instruments to be perfect on every level. The instruments were used outside the classroom, because the idea is to create a safe environment for the student to reinforce the vocabulary and the information that they already know.

For the validation of the instruments, the researcher used the W.O.K.s with colleagues outside the group of volunteers. This people provided feedback to improve the reinforcement and change details in order to make it friendlier to students. This will prove the W.O.K. theory, and how a regular reinforcement of the language can be beneficial to learners. The acquaintances of the investigator that participate on the project will help the investigator to

get a second opinion on the consistency of the messages and applicability of the W.O.K.s for the investigation.

## **Chapter IV**

### **Data Analysis**

This investigation has a major focus to analyze impact on the use of the application WhatsApp as a methodological tool to reinforce the vocabulary acquisition process of the students at CINDEA Liceo Vargas Calvo. In this chapter, the investigator will refer to the results of the instruments, as the observation and the interview applied to the students, as well as to develop the WhatsApp project using the WOKs

The researcher will explain the results obtained after using WhatsApp as a methodological tool to reinforce knowledge outside the classroom. The results will show the reality of what students think about the inclusion of technology in education, and how vast is the willingness to use the WOKs to reinforce their own knowledge outside the institution.

#### **4.1. Analysis and Interpretation of the Results**

Every instrument has a specific value and importance, the observations and the interviews helped the investigator to acknowledge the English level in the classroom and the techniques used by the teachers to apply and complete the class. In order to reach a conclusion to the problems presented by the investigator Therefore, there will be an analytical evaluation of the effectiveness of the use of the application WhatsApp as a methodological tool to reinforce the vocabulary learned in class; how students respond to the messages outside school and the reaction of the new approach will be measured with the instruments that will be mentioned below.

#### **4.1.1. Classroom Observation.**

The project is focused on how to help students to improve English vocabulary and help the learners by providing them with opportunities to reinforce the target Language. It is important to understand what the key to get the students attention is to know how the learners behave in and outside class, because the project is going to take place outside the institution. The idea is to reach the student technologically via the telephone application. The observation was chosen as the first instrument by the investigator because it is important to know the student's knowledge, before trying to reinforce what he already knows.

It is also important to know how the class is being taught and the students opinion towards teacher's methodology, because as Quesada (2016) mentioned one of the main problems in English education is that most of the students were indisposed to join the lesson. They preferred to become good listeners. They had little intention to take part in the teaching learning process. The teacher wrote all the material on the board including practices. He did not make any activity during the two lessons and the only material he used was the book as a reference to explain and the board to teach learner. (p58). This is true since the biggest barrier the teacher has to overcome in Costa Rica is the lack of interest of learning. However, it is not only the students fault, the professor is responsible too, and sometimes the problem is lack of interest in teaching correctly, mostly provoked by the teaching theories and restricted methods that create a limitation to the teacher imagination and originality to develop a lesson.

The observations took place in the institution during the first three English classes. The students attend class three times a week, from Wednesday to Friday, from 6 pm until 7:30 pm, with a recess of 20 minutes. After that period the teacher goes to another classroom, which means that the students maintain contact with English during the week for 90 minutes three

days a week. This means that students relate with the language for 4 hours and 30 minutes per week. During the observation the investigator noticed that some students arrived late to class, they were distracted using the telephone and the participation in class was not as it was supposed to be developed, as the students were not willing to participate, and preferred to stay as active listeners. The teaching method the professors are using must be updated, as they used copies and reading sentences that the students did not really understand, and students are not going to remember the vocabulary learned the following class.

This lack of interest is easily perceived in students, and is affecting the professor's mood and intentions to teach the students in a correct way. One of the biggest problems found in the observation is that the students forget copies, meaning of words and pronunciation. The investigator will try to diminish the problems found by technologically reinforcing vocabulary when the student is not in class.

In addition, the investigator easily noticed how the students were fully engaged with the telephone outside class and inside and during the break time. The students just went out using the telephone or they just stayed inside the class to use the mobile. This artefact it's turning the companionship of the future; but how is it possible to engage the smartphone with the English learning process.

As mentioned in Chapter II, many people from other countries have already done it, but on this particular part of the continent, Central America (native Spanish speakers) there is no information about a project with these characteristics. This is why the importance on starting the project from zero, in other words, words and sentences – listening and reading. This due to the fact that it will be impossible for students of a regular level to interact via

voice message with the teacher, since there is no confidence to use audio messages, and this could help to improve the confidence and preparation of students.

Indisputably a change must be done, because the students are passing or dragging the English classes without learning more than a few words, so, some immediate questions pop out, is the Costa Rican educational system doing a good job in the English department?, how is it possible to that students are more involved with the target language when the learner receives just 4 to 5 hours per week of written English? It is obvious that it would not be possible for anyone to learn a new language with just that little time to learn, clear doubts and practice. Otherwise the student would remember the information learned. This means that if the student forgets the information taught, the learner would not care what is going to be taught in the following subject, and the effort to learn will not increase, this creates a boring English class not just for the students but for the teacher as well.

After the two week observation process the investigator is ready to go to the next step; that is, to explain to the students the procedure of the project and clarify any uncertainty. After making sure everybody is clear with the procedure, the investigator believes the opinion of the students towards technology in education is important to take into account. The English educators were also asked to fill in a survey to gather information regarding the use of technology with students, and it is important to collect the learner information regarding the use of technology to teach. The investigator asked volunteers and professors to fill in the survey to measure the acceptance opinion in technology among students and teachers.

#### **4.1.2. Teachers Survey**

The information provided by the professors helped the investigator to know the acceptance or problems the project might have. Their point of view is important as well as the student's, and is going to be measured with a simple 12 questions questionnaire applied to the English teachers of the institution and other English teachers that are teaching in different institutions. The total of 12 English teachers gave their opinion about reinforcing knowledge using the WhatsApp application. Nine female teachers gave their valuable opinion about the introduction of technology in English learning; some of these professors are well experienced, with many years working as professors. To the investigator this difference in the teachers age is valuable, because it will give diverse point of view to the investigation, some professors are more likely to use technology than others.

##### **4.1.2.1. Descriptive analysis**

The questionnaire created to the teachers focuses on measuring the use of English in class, as well as how the teacher uses the telephone, the willingness of the professor to share information, and pros and cons the professor thinks might exist while developing the project.

##### **Question 1: How is your relationship with English in class?**

It is important to know how much the teacher dominates the language, and how is the class being taught. In a native Spanish speaker country, it's hard for a professor to give the class 100% in English, not because the professor is not able to do it, but because for some students it's hard to understand. For this reason, an equal level of English and Spanish must exist in every class, in order to create a safe environment to student, an environment that will provide the learner with the security to participate in class through repetition, as listening to

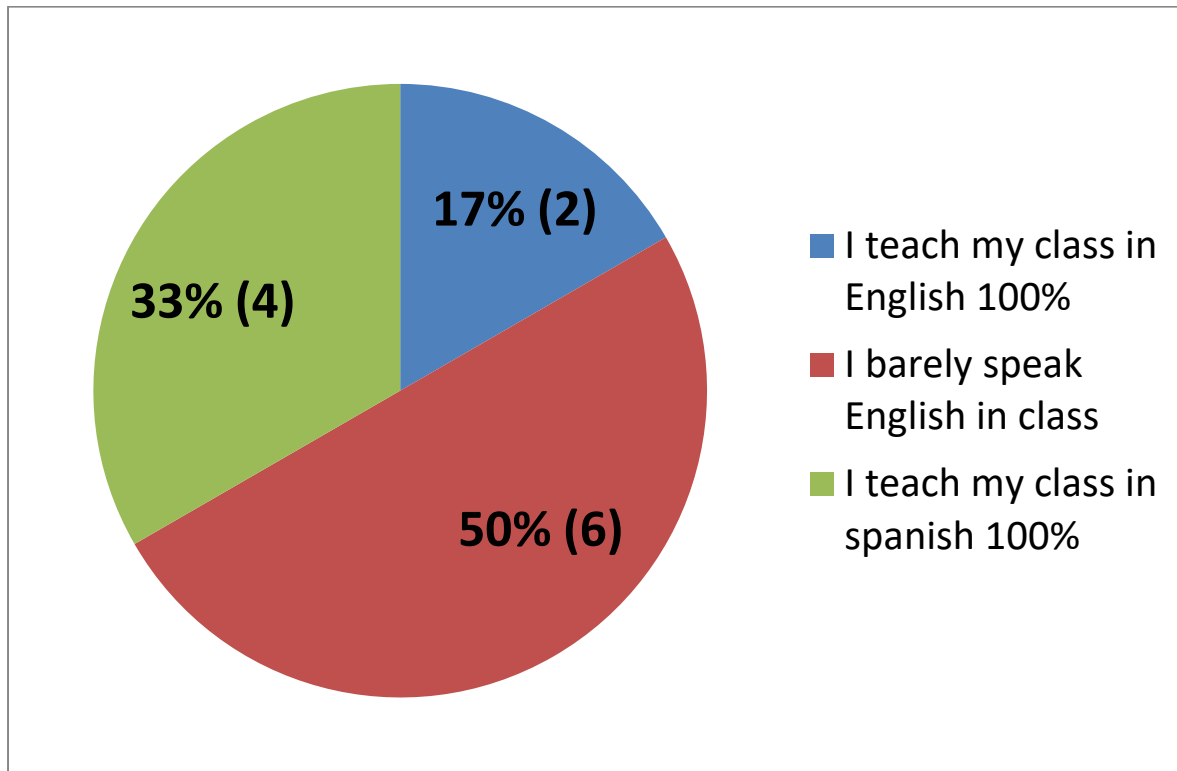
the teacher will be important to create the basis of a new language. If the professor is not teaching the class in English, it won't be possible for the students to speak, because in order to learn a language, listening and repetition are key to set an example to the learner on how to speak and how to pronounce different words.

Table 2 shows one of the biggest the difficulties students face when learning English. The questionnaire was applied to 12 English teachers and the result shows that most English professors are used to teach in Spanish, because according to them it is easy for the students to understand the language. The majority of teachers use the English language just when necessary, and not in the whole class. This bad example is going to be copied by students and will create a lesson full of listeners; but zero speakers. The Student is not going to speak English knowing that not even the teacher does it. The example given to students by the teacher will create confidence to speak, and unfortunately, according to table 2, not many teachers are used to develop a class 100% in English.

**Table No2: How much English is used in class by the teacher?**

Professor's Opinion	Teachers account	Percentage %
I teach my class in English 100%	2	16.6
I barely speak English in class	6	50%
I teach my class in Spanish 100%	4	33.33
Total general	12	100%

Table No#2: Source Eric Solano.

**Figure 1: the language use to teach English in Costa Rica.****Question 2: Do you think the telephone can be used to reinforce information?**

The use the professor can give to the telephone outside classroom hours is important to measure. It is necessary to know how the professor feels about helping the student outside school hours. The telephone can be used to reinforce information with students, but it is important to know if the teacher thinks it is helpful, productive, and also if the professor is willing to use it.

In the questionnaire applied, almost all the teachers agreed that the telephone can be used to practice or reinforce the language. The project is presented on three specific subjects provided by the teacher. Therefore, if another professor decides to reinforce knowledge via WhatsApp, he must create the practice in order to use it, so the idea is to standardize the

W.O.K.s to provide the learner with the exact amount of information needed and avoid notebook homework that is not giving the expected results.

According to the teacher's response regarding question 2, it's easy to confirm that all professors believe that it's possible to carefully include the telephone in the learning process in order to benefit the learner, as the usual method is not as effective as it should. Teachers even create activities to do in class; therefore everything they create is physical and not digital, all the professors agreed on including the smartphone in the teaching process as reinforcement of Vocabulary. In addition, they also agreed this process must be gradually introduced as well as completely regulated.

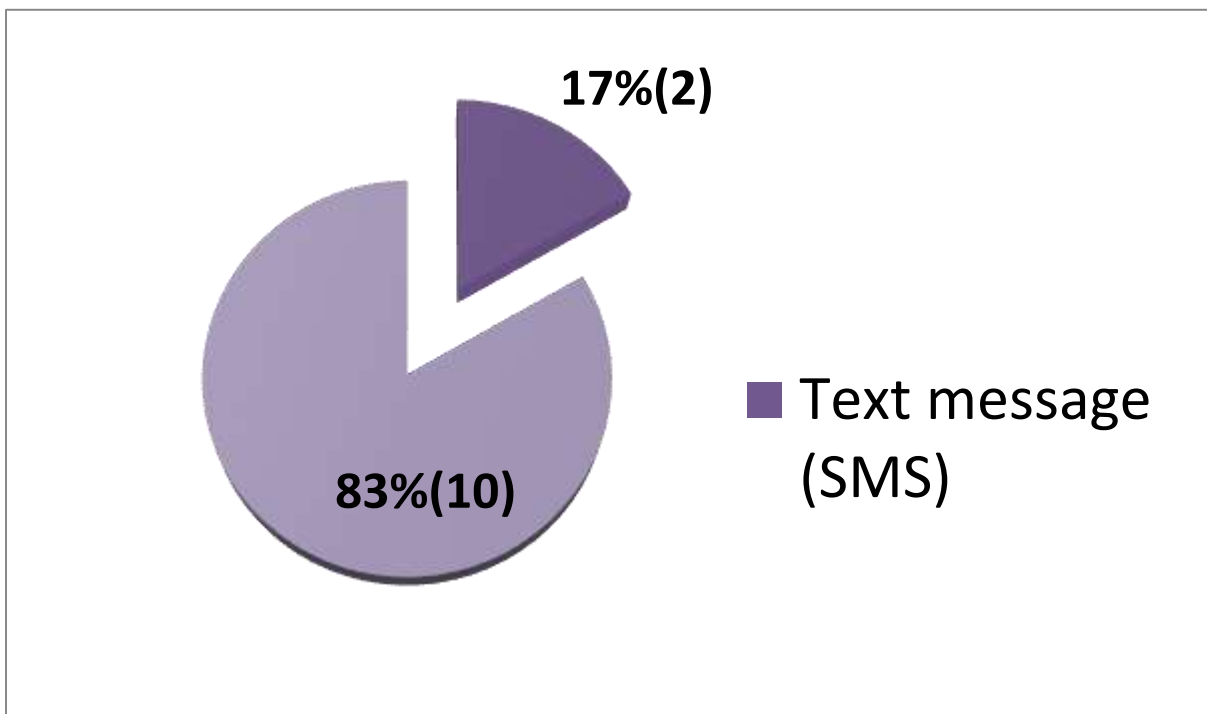
**Question 3: What smartphone application do you use to contact people?**

In this research project, the application used is WhatsApp, and is important to know if the teacher is familiarized with the application. This is measured because it is not affordable to use an unknown application; as this will create limitations to the teacher and the students. The use of a known application as this will save time and create a comfortable environment to reinforce knowledge.

Communication via smartphone is possible in many different ways. A variety of applications makes communication easier and faster to people. The investigator is basing the study on the use of WhatsApp, based on the fact that it is the most used application to communicate. WhatsApp is the most common smartphone application used to communicate and share Data among Costa Ricans, and Question 3 demonstrates how the majority of teachers use WhatsApp to communicate with family and friends.

The questionnaire presented many options to communicate, for example, skype, Facebook, email; and all the teachers marked WhatsApp, with just two exceptions that prefer other applications. However, even though they marked other application, these professors confessed that are active users of the application WhatsApp but not as much as other teachers are.

**Figure 2: How a teacher does usually communicates via smartphone?**



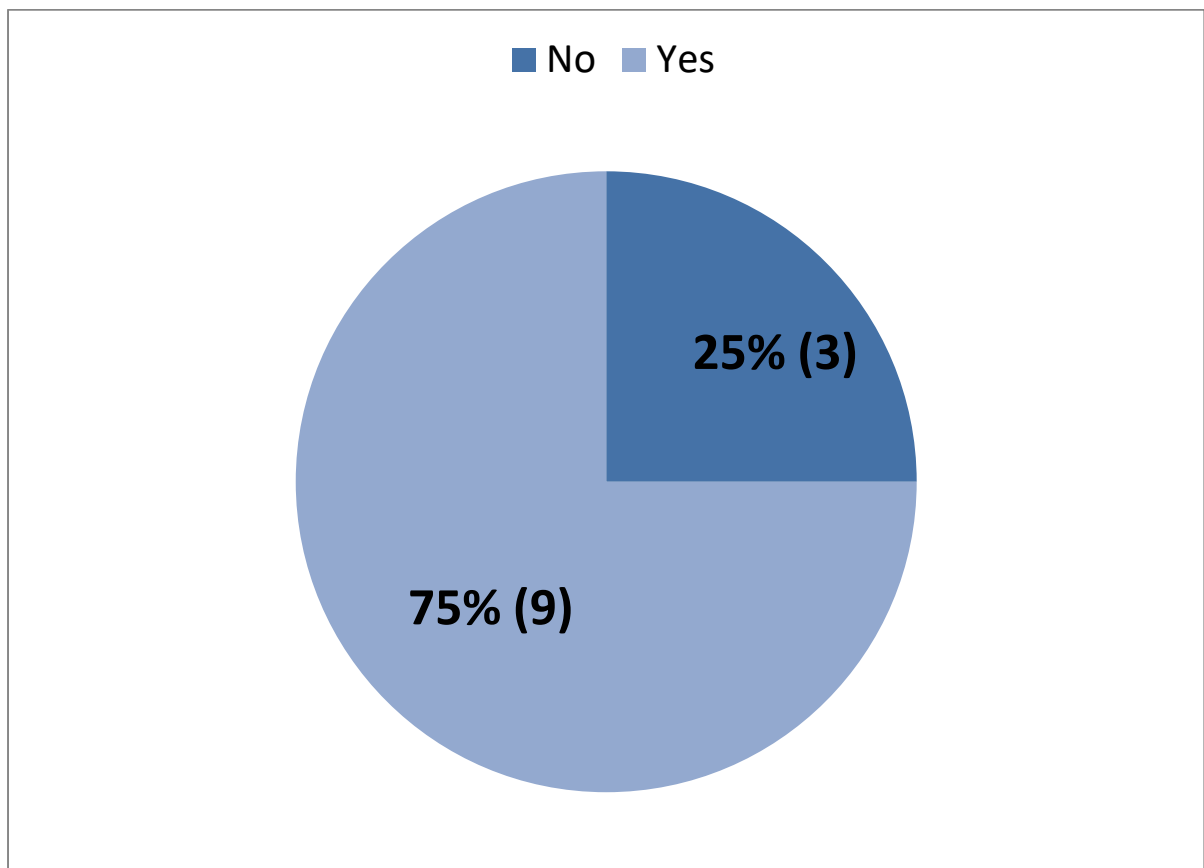
**Question 4: Have you ever helped a student with a particular doubt through the smartphone?**

The experience the teacher has on the remote operation is important, but it is more valuable the availability the teacher is able to provide students with in order to help them to reinforce knowledge, and clearing doubts about any English topic outside School hours. Teachers must be willing to help the students outside class, and have the knowledge

regarding technology in education; in other words, to be well acquainted with the use of technology in education.

Most of the teachers have helped students before using the telephone. Even though, there were not many applications or ideas to reinforce the language, the professor helped the student clearing doubts on the different topics discussed in class. This shows that the teacher is willing to help the student to improve his English skills, the problem presented by the investigator shows up again, which is, the lack of methods and possibilities available to help students reinforce what is already learned and keep a fresh knowledge.

**Figure 3 Does the professor have any experience helping students over the phone?**



**Question 5: Are you familiarized with a method to practice English using the telephone?**

There are numerous ways to practice English on the internet. For Example, it can be through a smartphone application or a webpage, it depends on the teacher's originality. For this reason, the investigator is measuring if the teachers have ever used a similar system to reinforce vocabulary via text messages, because in a country such as Costa Rica, technology is not included in the English learning process.

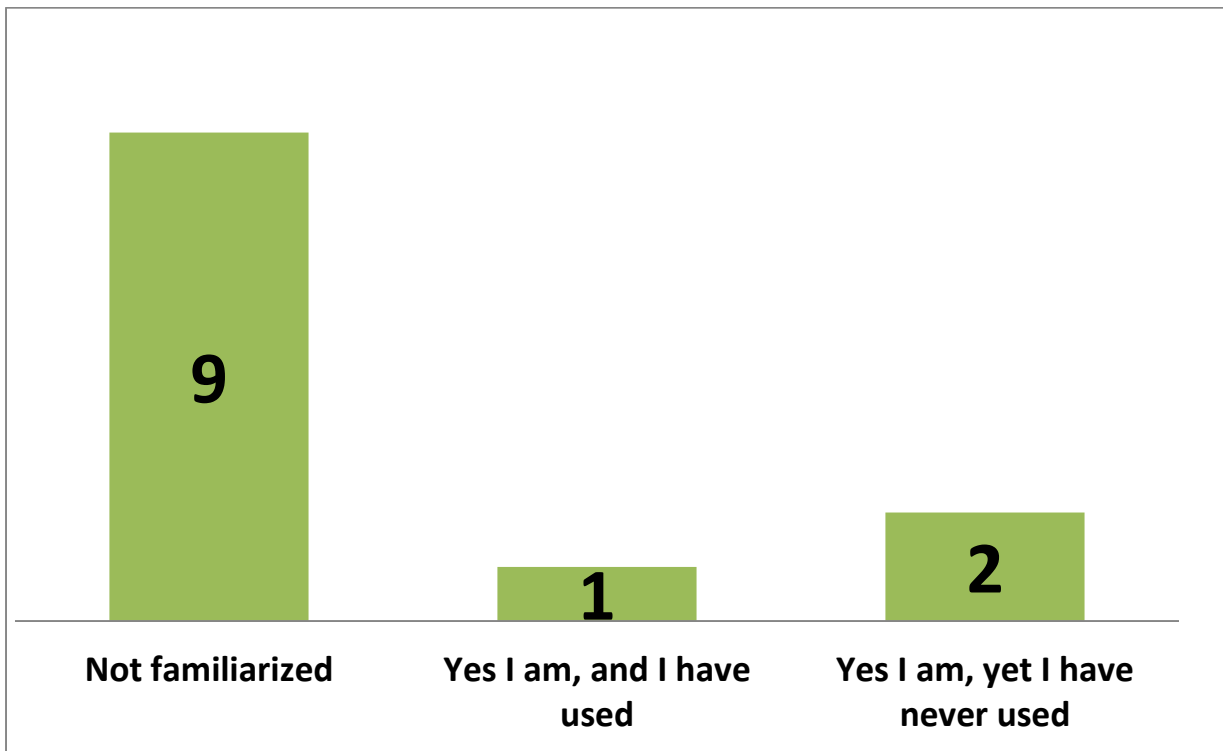
Nevertheless, the idea of reinforcing the English language will have a positive impact on English students and as expressed in question 4, the majority of teachers are willing to help students to clear doubts about a specific topic through the telephone. It is something that already happens, taking on a count that it does not exist yet, a specific method to do so. The creation of a way to motivate students will give the teacher the guns to fight the battle against lack of practice.

Question 5 shows that the smartphone is not regularly used by professors to reinforce a specific subject, since it does not exist a particular method the teacher can rely on and make the learners reinforce the knowledge they have. Even though there is no official app to practice, most teachers as stated before, are willing to invest time in the reinforcement project.

As it is shown in Figure 4, some teachers might know a method to reinforce English, but they have never used it with the students and others have never imagined using the telephone to reinforce vocabulary. With this research, the investigator is trying to include the telephone as a methodological tool in the English learning process, as shown in question 5; it is poorly

used by teachers. Professors in Costa Rica are not used to technology in the learning process; some teachers prefer to keep the copies and notes, and are not willing to update their knowledge, impairing the students' needs.

**Figure 4: Is the teacher familiarized with a method to reinforce English via smartphone?**



**Question 6: What is the most common problem student's face when learning English?**

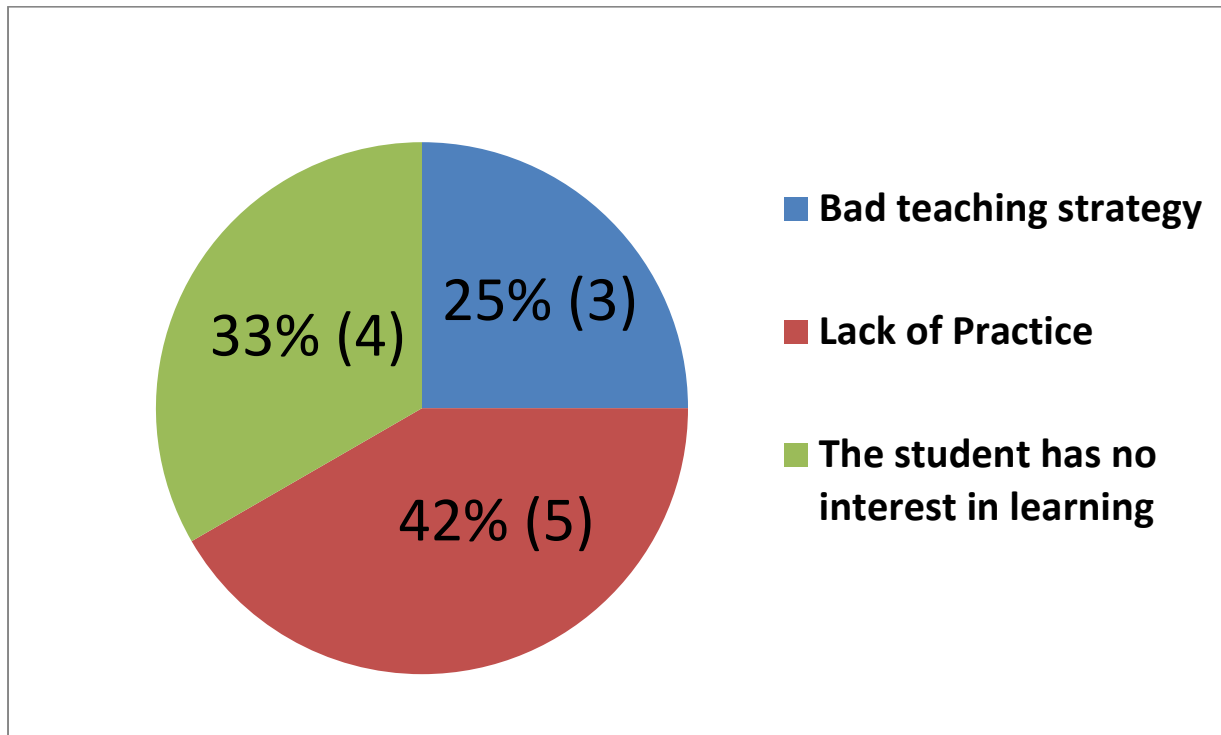
In a Spanish speaking country, it is not a secret that English students face difficulties to practice the language, and therefore to master it. Is important to know the teacher`s opinion when these problematics are being discussed. In order to create a better English teaching method, it is imperative to understand the roots of the problem and start from there. This is

why the investigator is gathering the teacher`s opinion on the student`s problem to learn English, so once the problem is identified, the next question is why?.

Question 6 shows the teacher`s opinion regarding student`s problems and limitations regarding English learning, two of the three problems informed by the teachers can be resolved, according to some professors, a problem that affects English learners is the lack of interest in learning the language, but the investigator believes that this problematic is fully related with the other two problems informed, bad teaching strategy and lack of practice.

These three limitations acknowledged by the teachers are related and can be solved just with a better method that can give the student the opportunity to practice and reinforce the knowledge outside school. This method will give the learner more confidence to speak therefore the interest on the learning will increase considerably.

When the teacher does not accomplish his task, it creates a path of failure for the next years to the students; building little by little the three problems circled by the teachers as the most common. If the student does not learn correctly because a bad strategy, the professor must change the approach in order to make the student more related with the language, so he can understand more vocabulary. The change of methodology to teach will come accompanied with several opportunities to send to students via smartphone to reinforce the language outside school hours; therefore, solving part of the problem mentioned by the teachers.

**Figure 5: What teachers think is the most common problem to learn English**

**Question 7: How do you think the telephone can be used to reinforce a specific English Topic?**

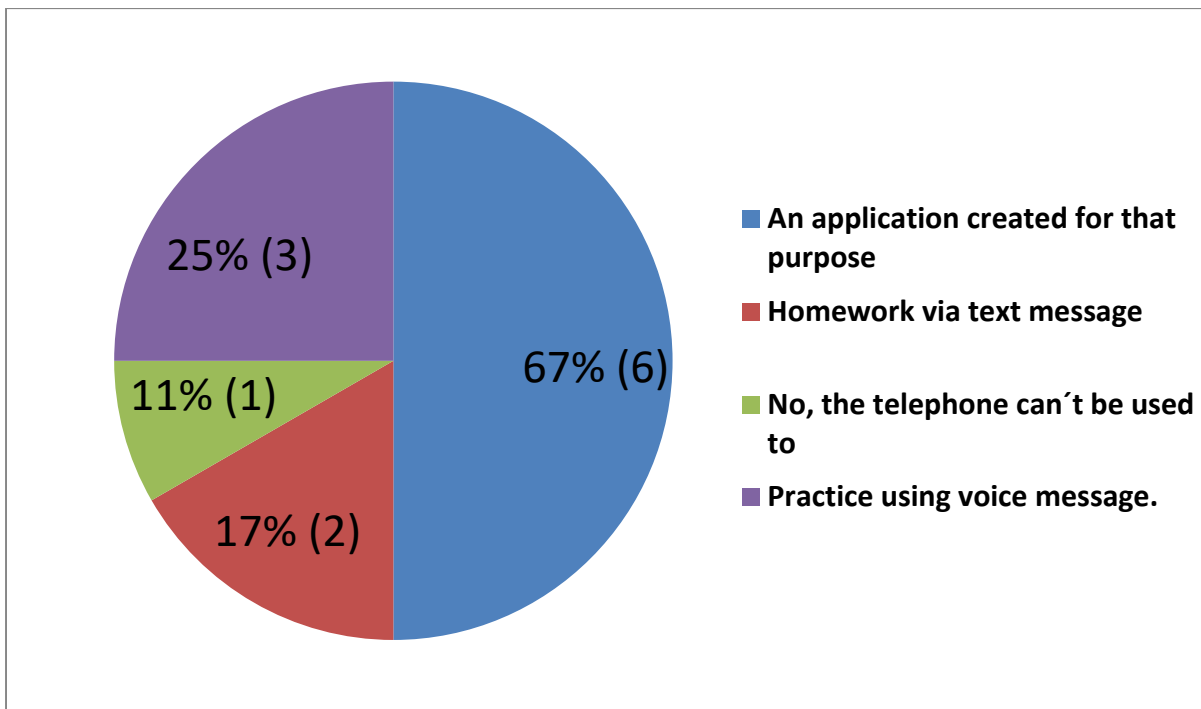
The originality of the W.O.K.s depends on the teacher's imagination, as well as by taking in count the student's needs and priorities; for example, the WOK can be used with a specific topic that the teacher knows is creating confusion among learners in order to clarify doubts.

Most of teachers recognized that an application created to reinforce language can be used. The investigator will focus on using what is already in use on smartphone and that the student commonly uses. On the other side, it's well known that most students already have the application WhatsApp on the telephone, and it will just a matter of giving the number and

initiate the W.O.K method. The fact that the teacher chose as most common option the use of an application opens a gate to the project and gives the opportunity to help learners.

Some Teachers believe that voice message can be used to reinforce vocabulary, but students need to build a confidence before sending any audio messages. This means that the first part of the project will initiate with reinforcing via audio-text message the reading and listening skills; and as the students developed this skills, oral practice will be introduced.

**Figure 6: How does the teacher believe smartphone can be used as a methodological tool to reinforce English?**

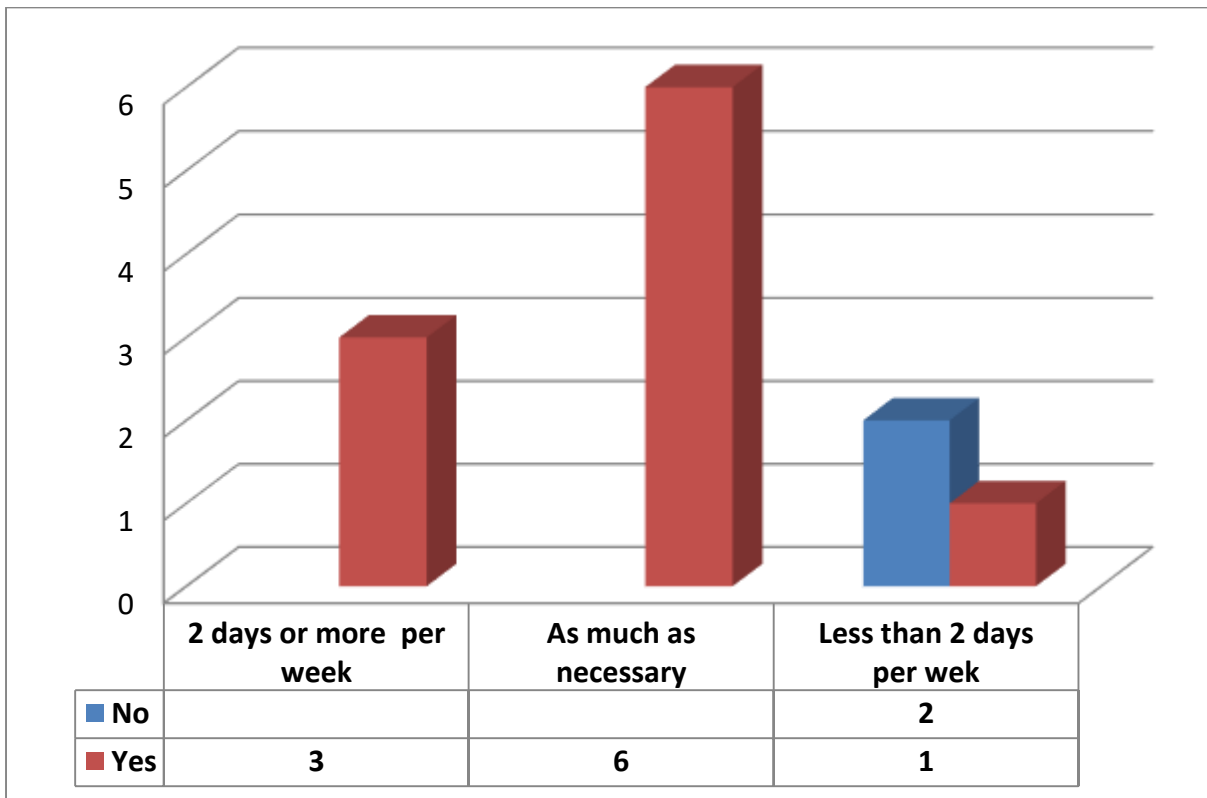


**Question 8 and 9: Would you be willing to use the cellular phone to reinforce a specific subject outside classroom hours? How many days per week would you be willing to reinforce English with student using the smartphone?**

The investigator is measuring the level of commitment that professors are willing to assume and on questions 8 and 9, it is stated that teachers are willing to include a WOK method in order to help students in the learning process. Reinforcing information that students already managed will create a big improvement in students.

Figure 7 shows that according to question number 8 and 9, teachers are willing to use a smartphone to reinforce vocabulary among students and how many days per week will use it for this same purpose. Some of the teachers are willing to help the student as much as necessary because they care about a good English level in education.

**Figure 7: is the teacher willing to reinforce knowledge to learners via WhatsApp? How much time per week?**

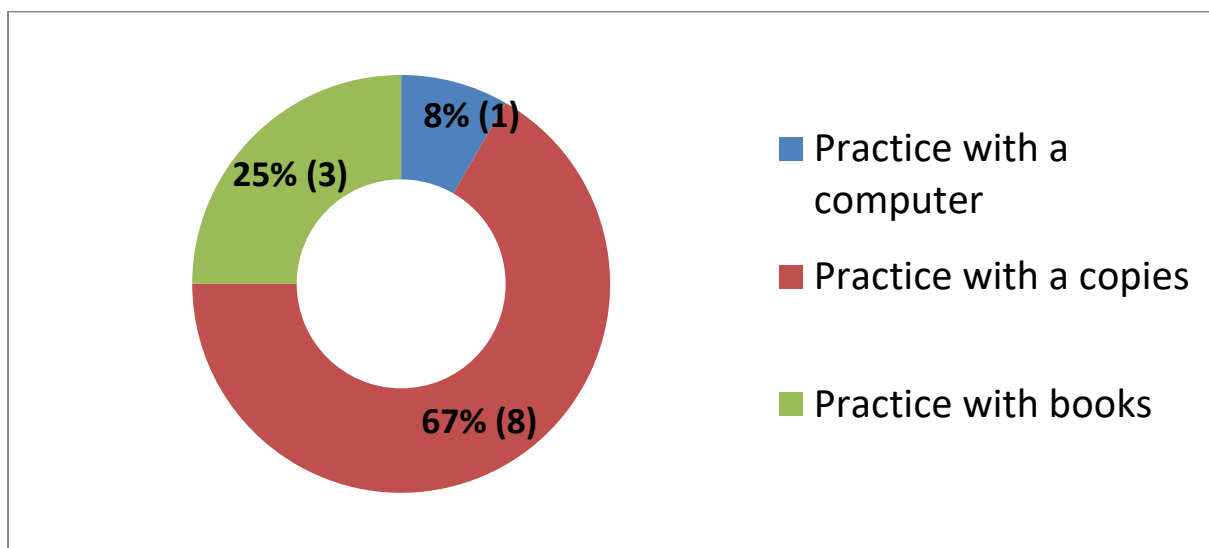


**Question 10: How do you prefer to practice English with students?**

Many professors are not willing to improve the teaching method and remain in the past, with old ways of practicing without reinforcing listening or pronunciation; this because the methodological tool used is a book or copies and a notebook. The investigator will attempt to change this old method including smartphone technology in everyday reinforcement in order to motivate the student to learn giving the students opportunities to practice.

Question 10 shows the methods that are commonly used by professors in the English classroom to teach new vocabulary, and it is very clear that most of the teachers use the old method with copies and books. The National Department of English Education does not have a practical method to help students with the English learning process using technology yet, and some of the teachers are in a comfort zone with the old-fashioned books and copies, and a below average English level among students.

**Figure 8: Common method used by the professor to teach in class.**



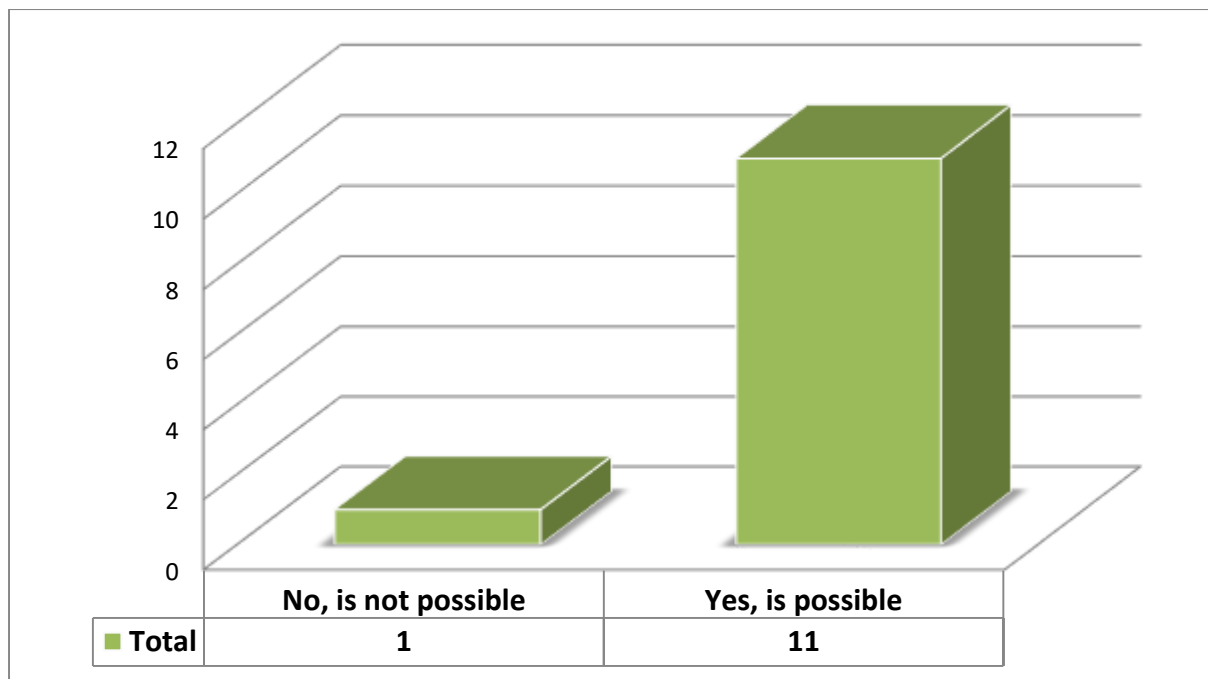
**Question 11: Do you think reinforcing through WhatsApp is possible?**

WhatsApp is used in Costa Rica to communicate via text or voice message, and, besides this app is popular because it is possible to send videos and audios as well.

For this reason, most of the teachers like the idea of including the application in the English learning process as a methodological tool to reinforce knowledge to students.

As Figure 8 shows, the majority of teachers are willing to use the application to reinforce the vocabulary that students already know, and to develop the education with technology to benefit the students. The Age of the teachers is an important factor in the evolution of teaching, because as it is shown on Figure 9, just one teacher does not think it is possible to use the smartphone as a methodological tool, and is the professor with more years worked educating people.

**Figure 9: Do teachers believe WhatsApp can be used as a methodological tool?**

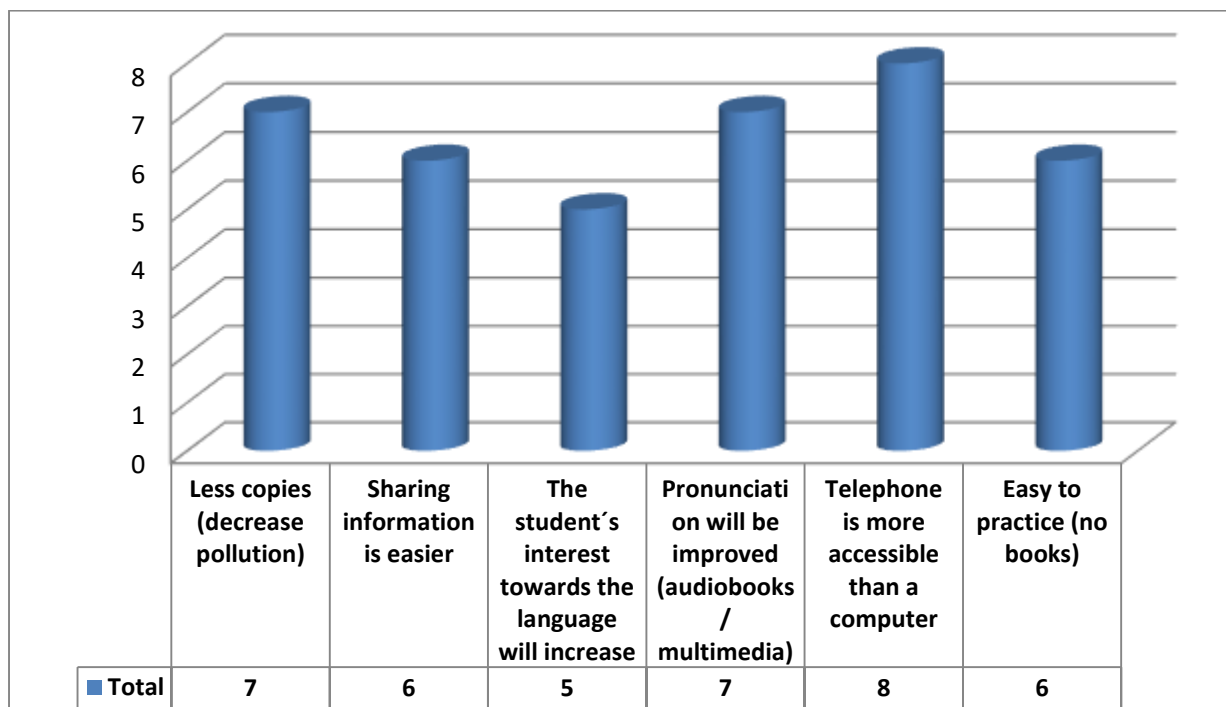


**Question 12: Which benefits do you think will bring the implementation of the project?**

There are many benefits that the project will bring to the learners, as well as variables that will influence positively in order to create an acceptance of technology in education; the teachers chose the benefits they think would bring a bigger impact on the research project.

Many professors are aware that technology in education brings many benefits. The last question of the teacher’s survey attempts to measure the teacher’s opinion towards the implementation of WhatsApp as a methodological tool. The benefits that teachers believe that make a difference are many, but one of the most important one is the easy access for a student through a smartphone.

**Figure 10: The benefits of including WhatsApp as a methodological tool in the educational system.**



### **4.1.3. Student's Survey**

During the observation, the investigator noticed that all the students with no exception owned a cellphone and most of them were frequent users inside and outside class. Most of the students use the telephone to communicate with friends and the social media; so with the questionnaire the investigator intended to find out the students' opinion about using the telephone as a methodological tool, and their willingness to try the method exposed by the investigator.

#### **4.1.3.1 Descriptive analysis**

The questionnaire created for the learners focuses on measuring the use of the smartphone in the English class, as well as the student's opinion on using the cellphone to reinforce knowledge, the willingness of the student to reply whenever necessary and share important information, and how the students felt that English will help them in the future.

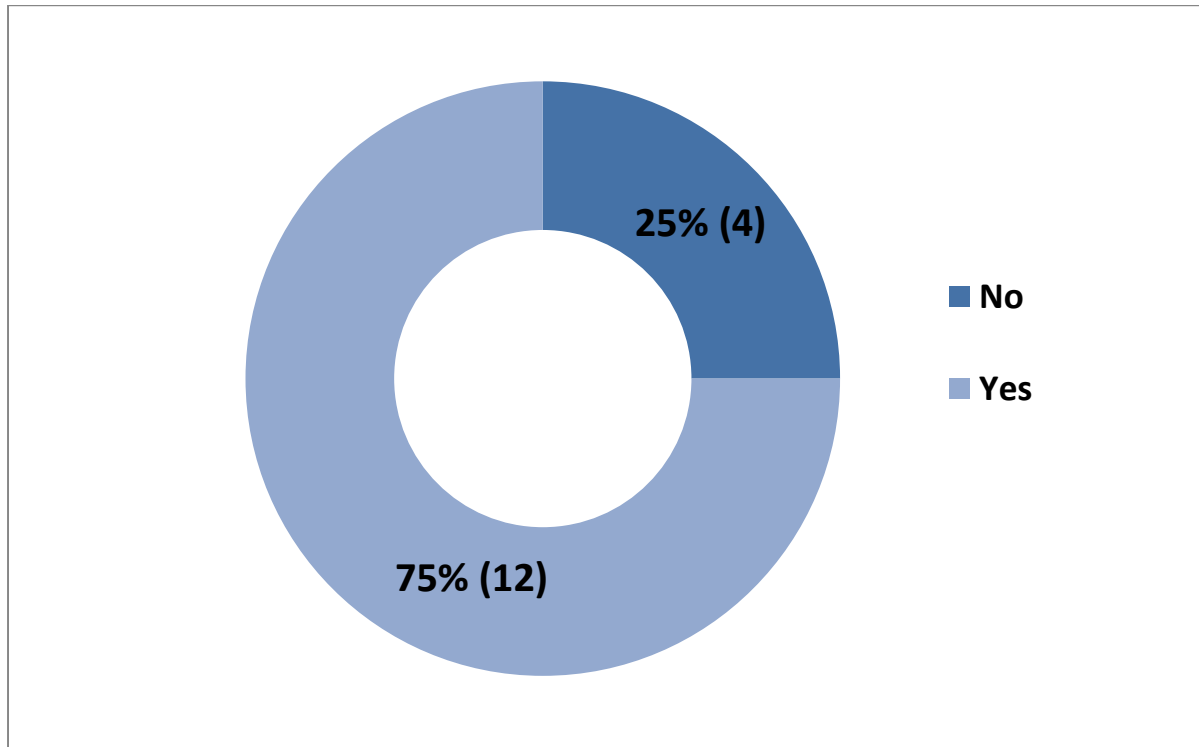
#### **Question 1 and 2: Do you regularly use the Application WhatsApp? Would you be interested in reinforcing the knowledge using WhatsApp?**

The whole idea of the project relies on WhatsApp. It is important for the investigator to know if the students have prior experience using the application, and if the learner is interested in receiving the Waves of knowledge (W.O.K.). Since the students volunteered to participate, the investigator assumed the students are willing, just as shown in the questionnaire one hundred percent of them were interested in the English reinforcing via WhatsApp.

Question number one was responded by 16 students, and one hundred percent of the population under investigation agreed that WhatsApp was used daily and regularly, which

makes it the best application to apply in the project. The learner's did not have to download an application or learn how to use a new app. On the other hand, a few students responded in a negative way to question two, for different reasons; however, the investigator is able to see the willingness in the majority of students.

**Figure 11: Is the student willing to use his phone to reinforce the English language?**



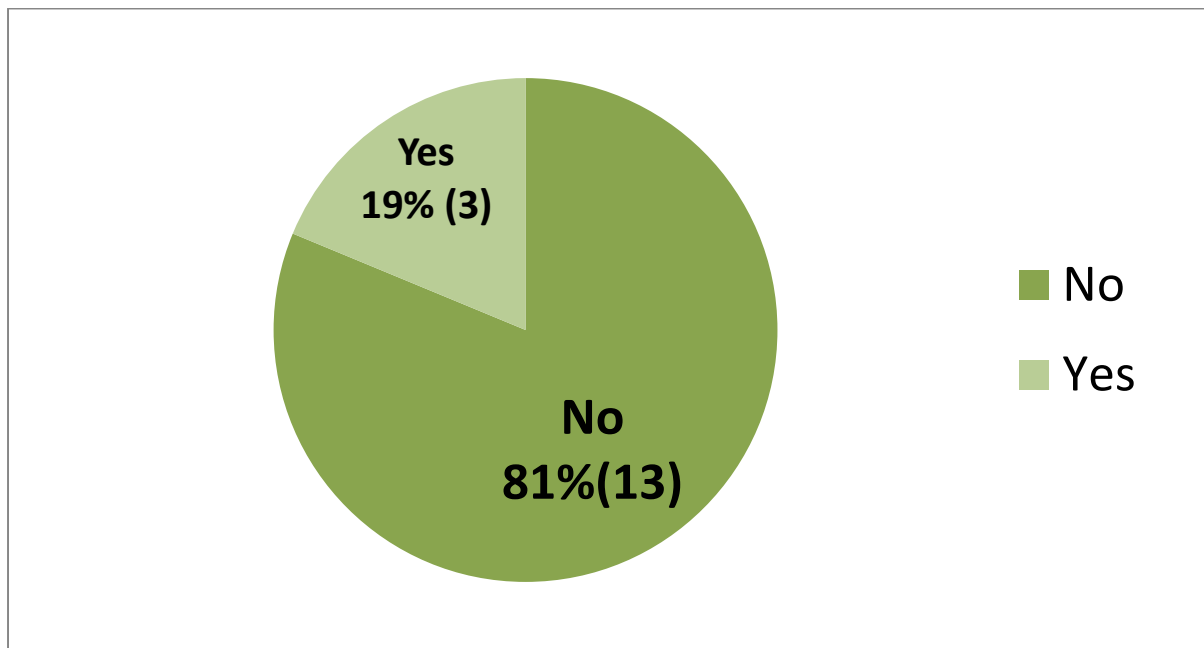
**Question 3: Have you ever used the Smartphone to reinforce or practice English?**

As mentioned before, all the students own a smartphone, so there is no doubt they use this artifact every day. Unfortunately, the use the student gives to the smartphone is not the one expected by the investigator. No one has informed that a Smartphone can be used to teach, learn or even practice a specific language skill; but there must be a positive attitude of the student towards learning English.

With Question 3, the investigator is measuring if the student ever used the telephone to learn, practice, or reinforce the English Language. With the results obtained in the study,

the investigator noticed that students are not used to use the telephone to practice, since out of 16 students just three of them (19%) have used the phone to learn or practice English. With this question the investigator is not asking how much time they devoted to practice English, but the important data is if the student had the initiative to start reinforcing the target language by their own.

**Figure 12: Does the student have any experience using the phone to reinforce knowledge?**

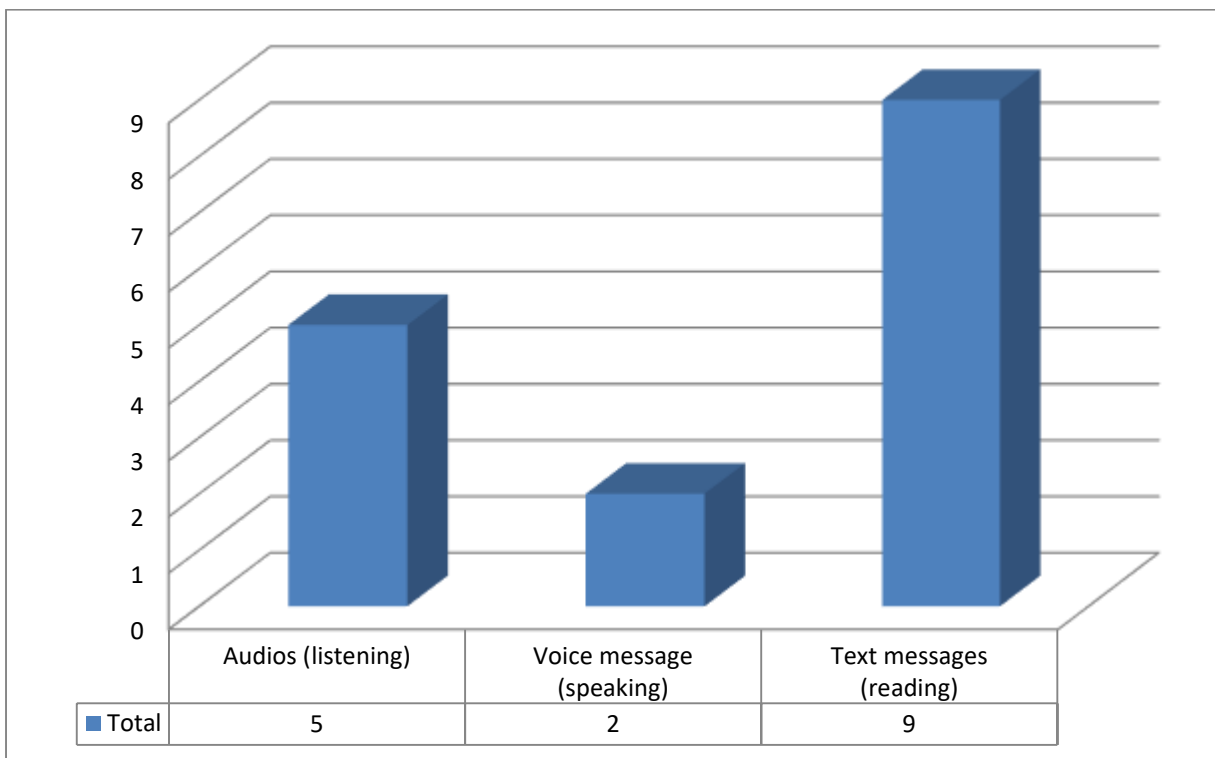


**Questions 4 and No 5: How do you think the phone can be used as a methodological tool to reinforce English? how do you prefer to reinforce your English knowledge outside the school?**

It is imperative to know if the students believe in the reinforcing method presented; for this reason the investigator wanted to measure through questions 4 and 5 how the students believe the smartphone can be used to reinforce their knowledge and which methodological tool they would chose to reinforce or practice English at home.

It is very easy to see how the acceptance of the smartphone is growing, as most of the students selected the phone as a favorite way to reinforce English knowledge outside the class. Many students wanted to use the smartphone to receive text and voice messages, but the investigator thinks there must be an order to share the information and an appropriate way to measure of what the students already know. The learner must feel comfortable with the project and not overwhelmed. The research project will star with Audio text messages to reinforce reading and listening skills, in order to make the learner create the relation between words and sounds. If the learner wants to reinforce the speaking skills, he must do it on his own with repetition; the investigator is giving the learner the opportunity to improve the English level via the smartphone, but it will depend on the student’s attitude and dedication.

**Figure 13: how the students believe the smartphone can be used to reinforce English knowledge.**

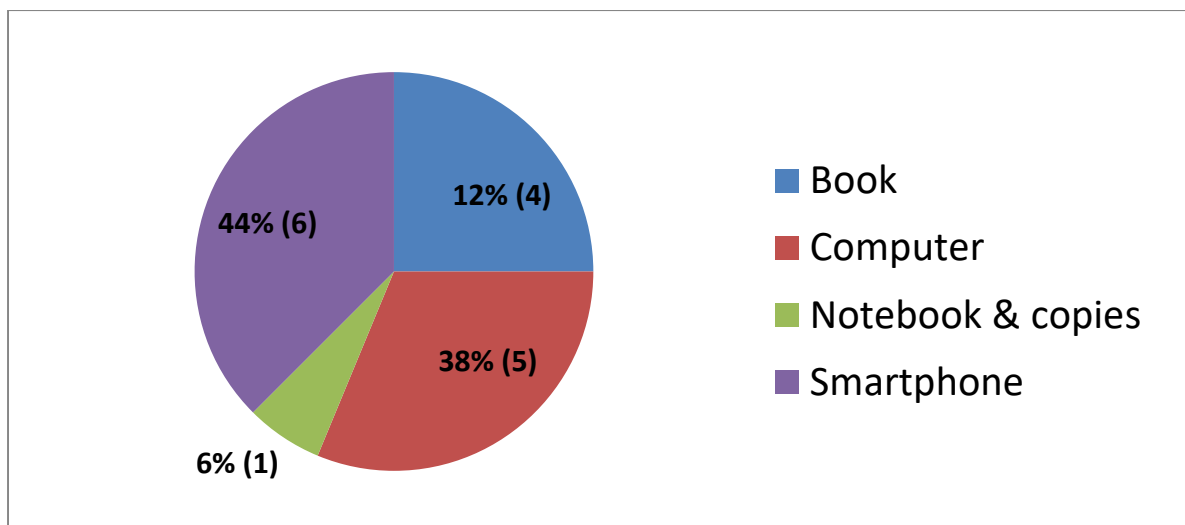


**Question 6: Which methodological methods to reinforce the target language would take more time to practice at home?**

The importance of time and how it should be perfectly used to reinforce vocabulary is that the learner must feel his time is being used wisely. There are many ways to reinforce the language, but unfortunately, the method used in almost every institution is the books and copies, since few institutions use technology and it has been proven to produce better results.

The students believe that technology must be included the current methods of practicing or reinforcing English outside school, since, according to them, it takes less time to use the books and the copies but the information shared is not as good as the information shared via technology devices such as the computer and smartphones. Therefore these artefacts are more accepted by students. There is no doubt that technology is making its way into the learning process. For instance, Figure 14 shows that the regular instruments commonly used are outdated and level of reinforcement the technology provides is beyond books and old copies.

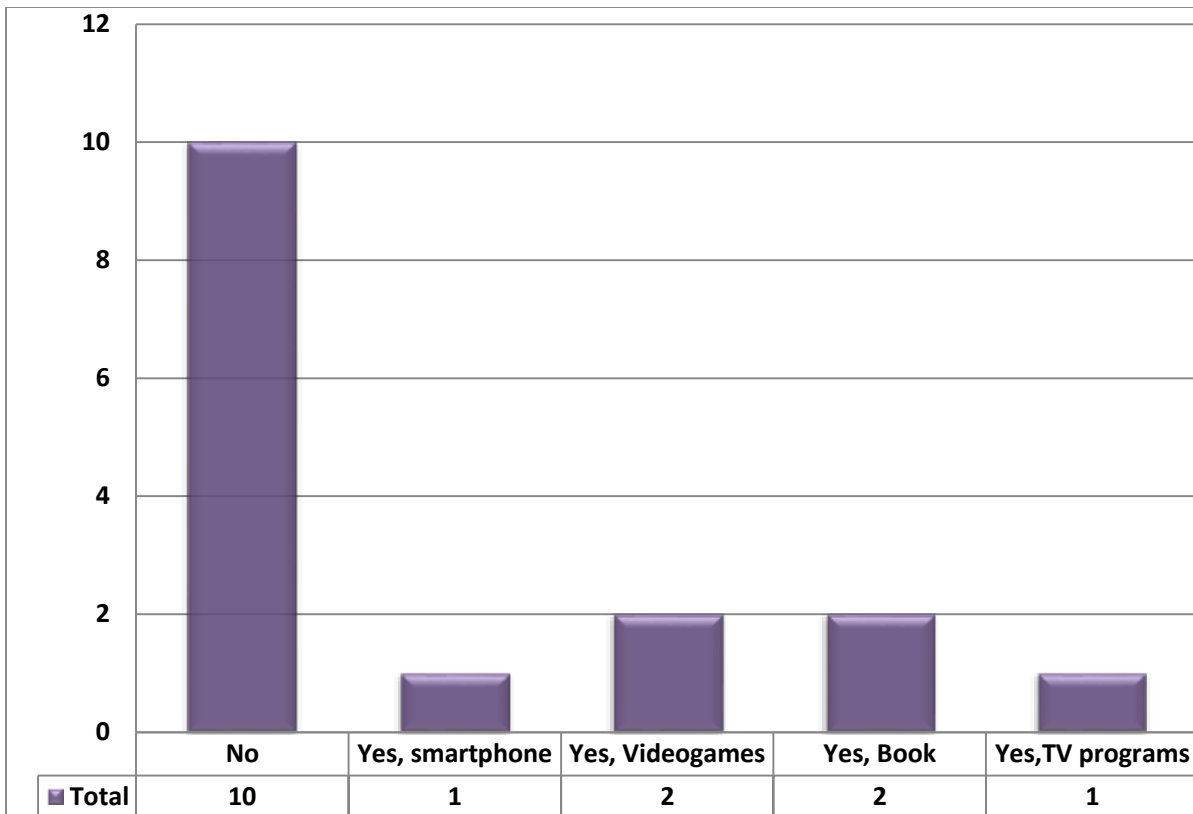
**Figure 14: What instruments the student believe it would take more time to use to reinforce or practice English?**



**Question 7: Besides the regular English class, do you practice English outside the school?**

One of the biggest problems the investigator mentioned in the research is the lack of practice, since students do not get an opportunity to practice and reinforce what is already learned. The investigator is aiming to measure how much the students practice what is already known outside the English class, and the result was shocking, as students are not used to practice the language when they are not in school. This creates a difficult environment in class to the student and the professor. Some students usually practice English with video games and TV programs, which is not the recommended process, but it does the job of teaching a reinforcing some language without a specific target.

**Figure 15: Do the student practice English outside school? How?**



**Questions 8 and 9: How much time would you be willing to expend reinforcing your English knowledge outside class? Do you think the English language will help you grow in the future?**

For the investigator, it is important to know if the learners are willing to use the technology to reinforce knowledge and what do they think that English will be helpful in the future. These two questions are taken together to make clear that 100% of students are willing to use the phone outside school to reinforce the language. There is, of course, the possibility of something out of the ordinary come out to incapacitate the student to follow the reinforcement procedure; that is, to analyze the W.O.K.s and reply when the third W.O.K arrives.

It is important to mention that all the students are willing to use the phone to practice English and that all the students believe that English will open doors and opportunities for them in the future. Therefore, English must have more emphasis on including technology to create opportunities to reinforce language to the students, because according to the questionnaire, all the students are willing to practice and are convinced that English will be helpful in the future profession. Knowing that the learner is willing to participate 100% in the project is just a matter of time to develop the project and verify the effectiveness of the method.

**4.1.2. Pre-test / Post-test**

The investigator was asked to teach three specific topics, as the students needed to get ready for the midterm exam that was about ordinal numbers, personal questions and possessive pronouns. The students took a Short interview before going on the subject suggested by the teacher, the investigator tried to verify how much the students knew about

the topic before sending WOKs via text messages with audio-text messages to reinforce knowledge.

According to the interview (pre-test) learners were not very familiar with the subjects. From the three groups of questions referring to the specific subject, the investigator created a percentage in order to understand the three subjects combined together, with the knowledge of the student. It is important to emphasize that for the pre-test the investigator asked them the questions; this could bring positive and negative benefits. The students were a little nervous with the one on one interview. The learner could be embarrassed or afraid to make a big mistake while speaking. On the opposite side, there is on hundred percent of input from the students.

The pretest was applied with a set of seven questions to each student about the specific topic, with an average grade to compare with the post test, to verify if the student had an improvement on the knowledge level.

**Table 3: Pretest results obtained by the interviews applied to the students about the specific subject informed.**

Pre-test	Interview	Interview	Interview	Total = 21	Grade
	topic1:	topic2:	topic3:		
<b>Learner 1</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>42,86</b>
<b>Learner 2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>38,10</b>
<b>Learner 3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>23,81</b>
<b>Learner 4</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>42,86</b>
<b>Learner 5</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>47,62</b>

<b>Learner 6</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>14,29</b>
<b>Learner 7</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>14,29</b>
<b>Learner 8</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>42,86</b>
<b>Learner 9</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>47,62</b>
<b>Learner 10</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>42,86</b>
<b>Learner 11</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>14,29</b>
<b>Learner 12</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>52,38</b>
<b>Learner 13</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>28,57</b>
<b>Learner 14</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>47,62</b>
<b>Learner 15</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>47,62</b>
<b>Learner 16</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>38,10</b>

After the pretest, the investigator explained the students the topics of focus, that were distributed among students during the period of time of three weeks to reinforce knowledge and get prepared for the midterm exam. The post-test was applied by the investigator using the new system that is the smartphone application WhatsApp. The most noticed difference between the pre and post-test is that in the post test using WhatsApp, the learning depended on the commitment and interest of the student.

There are many reasons why a student might not able to answer the phone, and this investigation was not the exception; hence, some students did not reply to the WhatsApp messages. Not all the students participated in the post-test, as from 16 volunteers 6 persons did not reply to any question and those “no reply students” will be counted as a N/A on the

Table 4, on the other hand the 62, 5% that replied to every set of messages or as called by the investigator “Waves Of Knowledge” (WOK) did an amazing job using the application.

Every topic had two or more WOKs and the last one followed a group of simple questions about the topic just to ensure that the learners got the message right and the vocabulary was reinforced. The investigator rated these set of questions in order to get a grade to compare with the pre-test result.

In the pre-test, there were many of low grades, the highest grade was 58, 38% of knowledge. On the other hand, the post-test presented mostly better grades and the lowest grades (among the ones that participated) were 60-60-66, and on the pre-test these same students had a score of 47-32-38, consequently, these changes represent an improvement in all the students that replied to all the WOKs.

Table 4 shows that the students that participated in the project had an upgrade on the percentage of knowledge as compared to the pre-test as mentioned before. It is not possible for the investigator to measure the students that did not participate, but it is important to measure the level of participation to implement ways to improve the project, in order to reach the 100% of participation.

The WOKs were well received by some students with the variable mentioned by Stockwell (2010) Learners who complete activities on a busy train, for example, may find it difficult to concentrate, as they are preoccupied with other things around them, such as ensuring they do not miss their stop or keeping their balance if they are standing (p.105). As a result, they may not do the activity as a single unit where they answer all questions at one time, with their mind focused elsewhere in between. Some students have other

responsibilities, as for example a family to take care of, and that is why it is difficult to take time and listen to the audios and reply messages.

**Table 4: the Post-test results are informed below, the post-test was applied via WhatsApp, and therefore some students chose not to answer.**

Post-test	Interview			Total: 15	%
	Topic1	Interview topic2	Interview topic3		
Student 1	5	4	3	12	80,0
Student 2	5	4	4	13	86,7
Student 3	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	0,0
Student 4	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	0,0
Student 5	5	5	5	15	100,0
Student 6	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	0,0
Student 7	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	0,0
Student 8	3	3	5	11	73,3
Student 9	4	0	5	9	60,0
Student 10	5	4	0	9	60,0
Student 11	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	0,0
Student 12	5	5	5	15	100,0
Student 13	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	0,0
Student 14	5	5	5	15	100,0
Student 15	4	4	5	13	86,7
Student 16	4	3	3	10	66,7

The post-test shows an improvement on the students' knowledge. According to the data gathered, the three topics under study were composed by messages, audios, and videos that prove to be helpful on reinforcing a subject already learnt.

#### **4.1.3 W.O.K. through WhatsApp**

To accomplish the project the investigator relied on the smartphone application WhatsApp. With every specific topic, the learners will receive information via multimedia, taking advantage of technology, and giving the student an opportunity to reinforce what they already know whenever they receive the Wave of knowledge (W.O.K.); even though the Student is not at school.

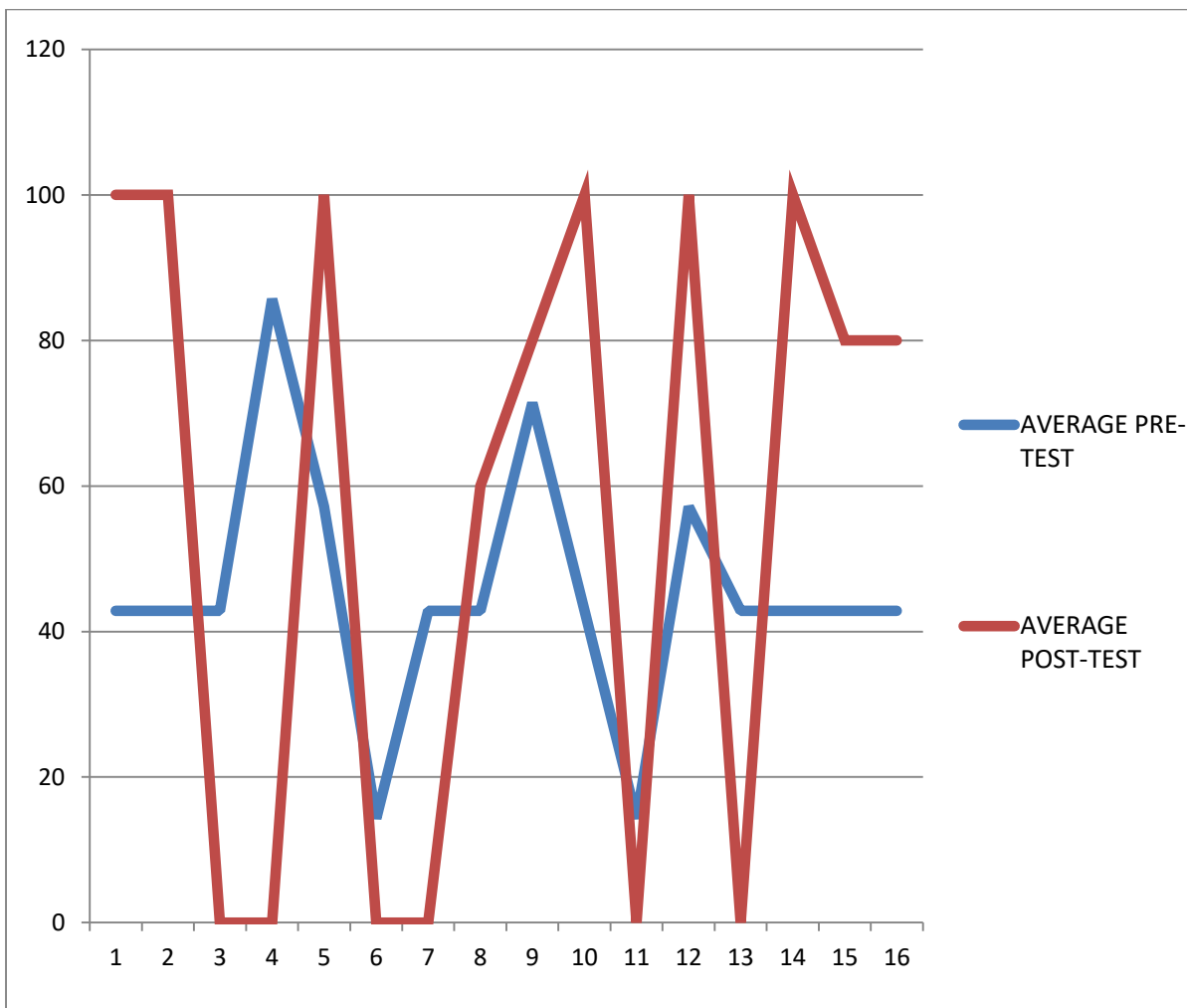
##### **4.1.3.1 WOK: Topic 1 ordinal numbers**

The Topic was developed in three WOKs, so that the student easily recognized pronunciation and reading combined with an image to support knowledge and help with the reinforcing. The WOKs were well accepted by students and created some confidence in them to speak more on the following class. Forgetting the information shared in the last lesson was not a huge problem, as this can be prevented with good communication and well prepared project that provide students with the opportunity to reinforce language even outside school.

A comparison was made by the investigator on how the students responded to the questions before the WOK (pre-test) and after the WOK (post-Test). It is important to clarify the huge difference between the pre-test and post-test. The pre-test was applied via interview with a full attendance from students and the post-test was applied by the investigator via WhatsApp, giving the opportunity to just not reply.

Figure 16 shows how students understood the topic, the knowledge capacity before receiving the WOKs and after receiving it, and how the knowledge was improved with reading and listening. Most of the students got better grades on the post-test; this confirms the WOKs are effective to improve student’s vocabulary knowledge.

**Figure 16: How students understand the topic –ordinal numbers- (pre-test &post-test Comparison).**

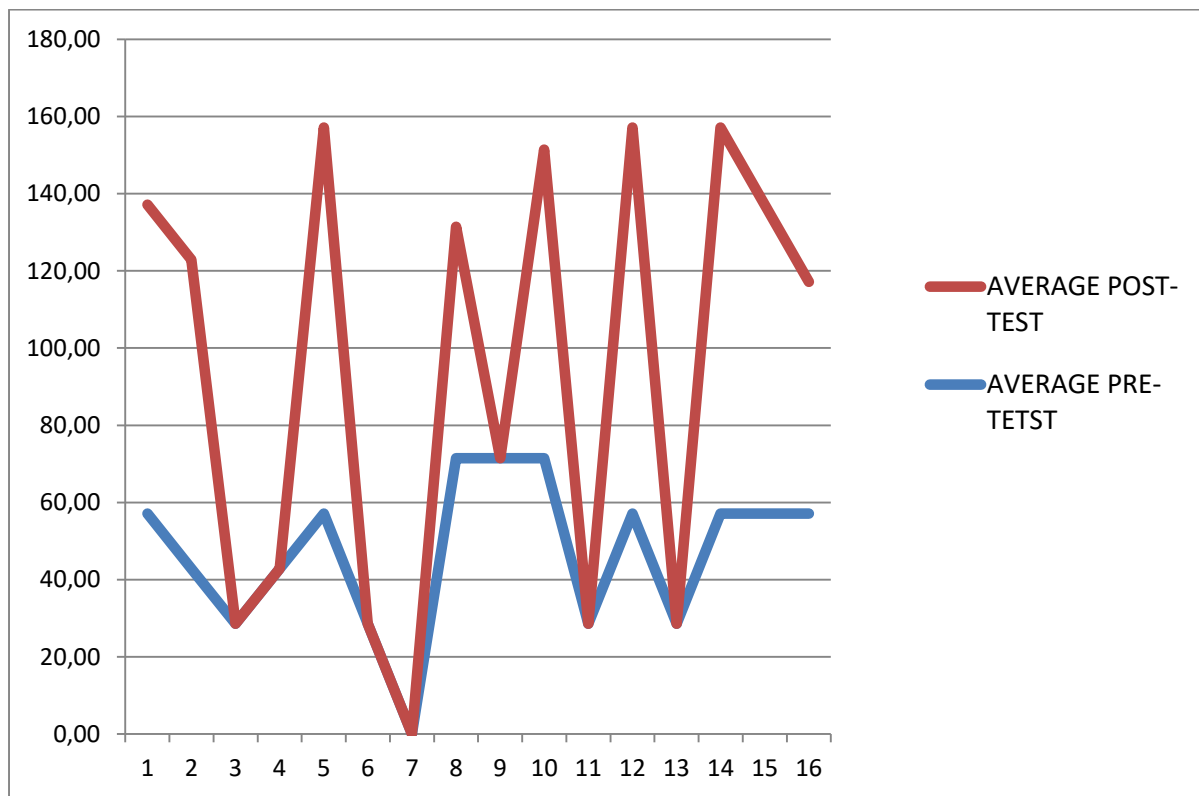


**4.1.3.2 WOK: Topic 2 Personal Questions**

This special topic had the same structure that is reinforcement with audio-texts, images, and videos to help the student remember last class. This known topic was presented to the students with audios and text, therefore, some learners were not able to reply the easy questions of the last W.O.K. even though the questions were common and simple.

In a comparison between the student’s knowledge about the topic –personal Questions- it is possible to understand how students had low English level and how the students that worked the WOKs correctly had an improvement on the English level and prove again the use of Technology to reinforce knowledge is effective.

**Figure 17: Comparison between students’ knowledge before and after the use of the WOK method.**

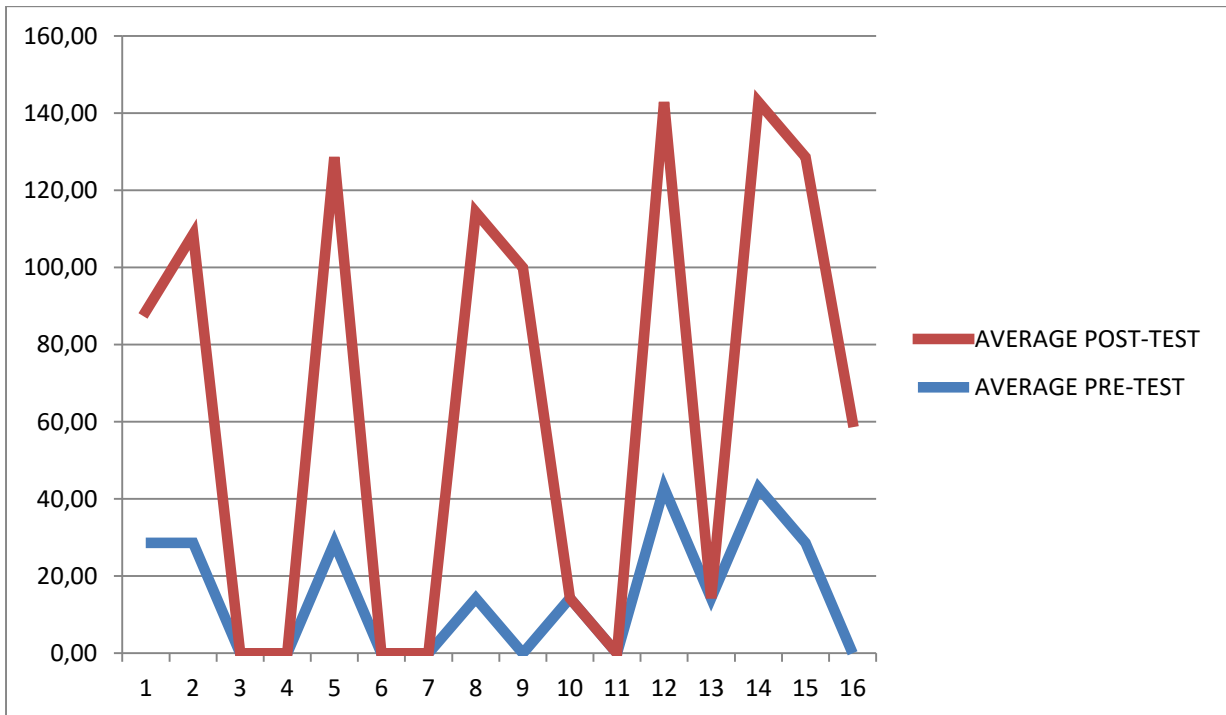


**4.1.3.3. WOK: Topic 3 Possessive Pronouns**

This particular first W.O.K was positively accepted by the learners because it had a cartoon character, which is very famous and caught the students’ attention. By making a reinforcing methods friendly and available and if the learner is amused, it is possible to teach a difficult topic. This specific topic was developed in just two W.O.K.s; Otherwise the students will feel overwhelmed about the unfamiliar topic.

This last topic was more complicated to teach. The learners were unacquainted about the topic and felt overwhelmed by the Interview. On the other side the post- test allowed students to have a huge improvement in the students’ knowledge. The inconvenience was that many students decided not to reply the last WOK.

**Figure 18: Comparison between students’ knowledge before and after the use of the WOK method for the topic Possessive Pronouns.**



## **Chapter V**

### **Conclusions and Recommendations**

In this chapter, the investigator will draw conclusions and propose some recommendations regarding the project. All the objectives will be considered in the conclusions, in order to answer the research questions framed by the investigator in Chapter 1. During the project, the investigator noticed some particularities while applying the pre and post-test; therefore, these observations will be discussed and supported with some recommendations to help future researchers to know how to proceed in particular sceneries.

#### **5.1 Purpose of the Conclusion**

It is important to point out that the purpose of the conclusions obtained in this research project is to help the reader realize the huge benefit a smartphone can provide when used, as a methodological tool, to reinforce the vocabulary that the student already knows. This tool will give learners the opportunity of reinforcing their knowledge outside the classroom, and thus decreasing the gap of zero English that exists outside the English class. If any future researcher decides to pursue this particular path, these following conclusions and recommendations are going to be of significant help in new areas of research.

#### **5.2 Conclusions**

The research was conducted with seventh grade students at CINDEA Liceo Vargas Calvo. This investigation shows how the implementation of WhatsApp as a methodological tool can help the learners to improve their vocabulary knowledge in order to be prepared for the next lesson. There were several improvements achieved by the students, above the

academic scores, learners were really into the methodology used and it was observed that the students began to participate more in class, and even some of them felt more comfortable on the repetition area. The use of WhatsApp as a methodological tool to reinforce English outside school improved the knowledge of vocabulary of the seventh grade students under study, as it can be seen in a comparison of the pre and post- test applied to learners, made by the investigator.

The Environment in class turned into a more comfortable one. The teacher noticed that the students were more willing to participate. In addition, it was easy to see how the shyness decreased and how the students participated more actively in the class. After the strategy was applied, the students demonstrated a positive change in the vocabulary already learnt, showing the confidence to recognize words by listening, repeat sentences after the teacher, and even answer simple questions presented on previous lessons.

After the analysis of the information provided in the previous chapters, next it can be found the conclusions in relation to each one of the objectives stated in Chapter 1. The researcher attempts to explain whether those objectives were accomplished and if so, how they were accomplished.

### **5.2.1 To identify the problems the students have when learning English in order to help via WhatsApp to overcome the difficulties presented**

The investigator used different instruments to complete the project. The observation was a very useful instrument to measure students level of knowledge and most importantly how much did the students retain until the next class. In addition, the observation was used as a way to identify the problems that most of students were having when learning English.

During two weeks, the investigator noticed that the majority of the students had trouble remembering the information of the previous class; therefore, the professor was having trouble initiating class, as sometimes the professor had to repeat the information of the previous class in order to begin and be sure the students understood.

It was observed that students were not practicing English, as they should, because it was very difficult for them to complete the English book exercises outside classroom as homework. The only way to practice English was with notes and copies and this made it extremely difficult for the learner to dedicate enough time to reinforce English through homework. Many students mentioned that even though they wanted to practice outside school they did not understand words and sentences in the book, and this did not provide them with the opportunity to learn and thus created a language barrier and changed the attitude of the student towards the English practice.

The investigator also noticed that some professors were not using the English language as much as they should. The professor must have the confidence and show the students during the lesson how to pronounce words and how to enunciate during the lesson; otherwise, the students will be just mere listeners, and consequently will not have the confidence to express their ideas in English. Repetition is an important part in the learning process; nevertheless, the investigator observed that when the teacher used the audio player to help students to improve listening skills, the audio was played no more than twice. Even though the learners wanted to hear it more times, the teacher did not play it because of time issues. The teacher could not afford to play the audio more than three times because the learners had to complete a practice to evaluate the listening before the end of the lesson.

In conclusion, the investigator found many difficulties among students and teachers that were creating limits to develop the class. In addition, the lesson was not taught as it should because of the issues mention above. Knowing that learners have problems practicing outside school the information learned in class, and that the teachers have difficulties helping students to practice, the reinforcement of the subject taught in class outside school with the smartphome will benefit the teacher, as well as the students.

### **5.2.2 To apply the use of the smartphone application WhatsApp with students to reinforce vocabulary via audio and text messages with seventh grade students at the CINDEA institute**

The investigator explained to all students how the project worked and after the student understood the concept, the investigator asked them to save a specific telephone number in order to begin the vocabulary reinforcement through the application. The CINDEA Liceo Vargas Calvo has a nightshift schedule from 6 pm to 9:30 pm and most of the students' work, for this reason the reinforcement via WhatsApp, called WOK, is sent in the afternoons and on weekends every two days. There were three WOKs for every topic. The investigator, using a computer and Web WhatsApp (a method to use the application WhatsApp in the computer), had the facility to send paragraphs and audios he had already recorded. The messages were sent on weekends when the student had time to reinforce and a couple on school days, both with a positive acceptance of the learners.

The student received the information about the specific topic in order to help them to reinforce the vocabulary already learned. The WOK consisted of three or four messages according to the topic and the student had an opportunity to reinforce and practice what they

already knew using the phone, an artefact that is always with the learner. This group of messages that constituted the WOK consisted of four types of messages to help students reinforce the language, that is, audio messages to reinforce listening, text messages to reinforce reading and writing, images to reinforce reading and video messages to reinforce listening and reading at the same time. With these features that the Smartphone application WhatsApp can provide, the teacher will take advantage and create a variety of opportunities for students to reinforce their knowledge according to the topic chosen.

To conclude with, many students received the messages with the information learned in class and the student replied in a positive way. The investigator sent the message to make the learner know the most important vocabulary of the topic learned in class. The learners received the WOKs and analyzed the information in their own manner. This proactive action of analyzing the WOK was asked to learners and it showed the commitment students have on learning English, as well as the student's improvement, and therefore their English level.

### **5.2.3. To evaluate the effect of WhatsApp as a methodological tool to reinforce the vocabulary acquisition process through audio-text messages practice in 7<sup>th</sup> grade students of CINDEA Liceo Vargas Calvo**

The investigator measured with several charts how students improved their knowledge and certain skills in each topic sent via WhatsApp through WOKs. The learners used the opportunities given by the professor accordingly to their interest in learning and mastering of the language; therefore, different types of improvements were found after using the application. Some students improved the pronunciation of some words, for example numbers and dates; and other learners, got more involved in class, as they answered

questions aloud and helped classmates to finish the practice or understand the meaning of sentences.

Each topic had a group of WOKs in order to provide the learner with the opportunity to practice and learn at different moments of the day. After each topic was reinforced accordingly, the last WOK was sent. The investigator used the last Wave of Knowledge (WOK) to include a questionnaire with less than five questions to know how much the student learned about each topic at the end. The effect of WhatsApp was also evaluated depending on the student replies to these questions. The analysis the students performed to answer the questions showed how the WOK was put in practice in a correct way, with repetition and constancy.

The topic number two was personal information questions; a very important topic with common situations that can happen in a regular day, for example introducing oneself in front of a class or asking somebody the name, just to name a few. With the last WOK of Topic 2, the investigator wanted to provide students with the sense of how introduce oneself in class. This information was sent via audio-texts to students; unfortunately, for this particular subject, many students failed to complete the last WOK because they felt it is was an easy topic, therefore an extra practice was not necessary.

The idea of the project was to help the learner reinforce the knowledge of the previous class, to make it possible for the student to remember the information given by the teacher. Using the smartphone as a learning artefact and facilitate the students the new English approach. With the last topic, the students felt related because the information was about a famous TV family, the Simpsons. They were used to reinforce possessive pronouns. The

students reacted positively to them, as this created a positive reinforcement to the students that did participate in the project.

To finish with, there were students that did not take advantage of the reinforcement sent by the investigator. The students that took the project for granted had no improvement in the English level and did not dare to participate in class. So it could be said that the method used, helped the students to reinforce the English level, but as said before, it is the decision of each student if they are sufficiently committed to keep on studying and practicing with repetition in order to improve the English skills. These WOKs will help the learner to remind and not easily forget what was taught during the previous class, after the WOK was sent, but it was up to the student whether to use it or not.

### **5.3 Restatement of the Research Question**

**What is the effect of WhatsApp used as a methodological tool to reinforce the vocabulary acquisition process via listening and reading activities outside the classroom, with the students of CINDEA Liceo Vargas Calvo institution?**

The implementation of technology in the learning process is imperative to be included instead of banned. The new generation is growing with technology in their hands, and the majority of students already own a smartphone. Therefore, including the phone in the learning process may bring many benefits and positive effects to students.

This investigation helped the students realize that to learn English, practice outside school is very important and that there are many ways to practice just with the telephone and internet connection. The effect of WhatsApp was noticeable in all the participants with

higher scores and more confidence to repeat words. With more confidence the lessons became more enjoyable and interactive. Thanks to this new method, the teachers were able to take more advantage of time in class, and the learners remembered most of the information of the previous lesson, so the teacher did not have to remind the last topic to students at the beginning of the class.

#### **5.4 Unexpected Results**

In every investigation, there is the possibility of coming across some unexpected results. In this case, some learners, that for reasons like lack of time and other responsibilities, were not able to neither analyze nor reply to the last WOK of some of the topics, which included the post-test, even though they volunteered to the project. They left the messages as read, and therefore they got the lowest grade on the project. The project is aiming to make the learner take the control of the reinforcement and improvement of their skills. However, this depends 100% on the learners, if they want to take advantage of the WOKs sent by the investigator. Once the message is sent the investigator's job is completed and it depends on the students whether they used or not, and on this investigation some students decided not to participate in some topics.

#### **5.5 Recommendations**

During the research, the investigator noticed some specific points that could be improved or done in a different way. For future investigation that might want to use this application to improve or continue the research, the following are some recommendations that could be useful.

An important recommendation for a new project will be making a good election of the participants. The CINDEA institute is known because the students there have other job or responsibilities, this can create a barrier to the learning and with no time to analyze the WOKs it will be difficult for the learner to take advantage of the opportunities. The project must be applied to students that are more compromised with the learning and/or have more free time, for example a private institution or high school students with a regular daily schedule.

Another recommendation is not to use WhatsApp groups, instead use a broadcast list that will provide the facility of sending a private message at the same time to all students included in the broadcast list. This broadcast list will give the opportunity to students to reply via private message if any doubt appears when analyzing the WOK. This private message method will eliminate the spam problem most of WhatsApp groups create. It will be also important for the investigator, since the students can reply whenever the WOK is analyzed, and simple OK sent by the learner will help to make the teacher known the message was received, and now it's very common to use emoji's, this can be also used to confirm the reception of the work.

The WOKs with videos were very well received by the students; therefore, it would be a good practice to find appropriate videos and include the subtitles to help students reinforce knowledge with the application. A teacher can send more videos and being more helpful for the learners, as this will make the WOKs more advantageous.

The final recommendation is to set up a schedule to send the WOKs; in other words, to make the students know when the WOK is coming without any unpleasant surprise. It is

preferable to apply the WOKs in a school with morning schedule, as the Wave Of Knowledge can be sent at, for example 4:00 pm every Tuesday, Thursday, and the last WOK could be sent on Saturday. In addition, the student is advised to reply before Sunday midnight. As motivation to reinforce and practice the topic, the student can be offered some extra-points for replying; otherwise, it might not be important to students to participate. As said before, it depends 100% on the student's commitment, and this extra motivation with points will make students to get more involved.

### **Appendixes**

This section shows the external documents used as support by the investigator, as for example, the survey that the researcher used to gather the information to be analyzed. The teacher's survey consisted in a set of twelve items where the professors read a question and answered it in a multiple-choice manner. In this section, it is also included the survey applied to students, as well as the Waves of Knowledge used to reinforce students' knowledge. It is important to remember that the WOKs (Appendix 3), besides all the information to be reinforced also contain the pre-test (interview) and the post-test (questions via WhatsApp).

**Appendix 1**

## Student's Survey

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

- 1- Do you regularly use the Application WhatsApp?
  - a) Yes
  - b) No
- 2- Would be interested in reinforcing English knowledge using the WhatsApp application?
  - a) Yes
  - b) No
- 3- Have you ever used a smartphone application to reinforce or practice English?
  - a) Yes
  - b) No
- 4- How do you think the smartphone can be used as a methodological tool to reinforce vocabulary?
  - a) Audios (listening skills)
  - b) Text messages (Reading skills)
  - c) Voice Messages (speaking skills)
  - d) Is not possible
- 5- How would you prefer to reinforce or practice English outside school?
  - a) Notebook
  - b) Computer
  - c) Smartphone
  - d) Book
- 6- Which methods of learning do you think would take more time to use as a methodological tool?
  - a) Book
  - b) Computer
  - c) Smartphone
  - d) Notebook
  
- 7- Besides the English class you take in School, how do you practice English outside School?
  - a) Yes, with books
  - b) Yes, TV

- c) Yes, With videogames
  - d) Yes, with a computer
  - e) Yes, other
  - f) None of the above
- 8- How much time would you be willing to invest on the English reinforcement method outside school?
- a) minimum
  - b) 2 hours per week
  - c) 5 hours per week
  - d) As much as necessary
- 9- Do you believe that English will help you grow professionally?
- a) Yes
  - b) No

**Appendix 2**

## Teacher's Survey

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Question 1: How is your relationship with English in class?

- A. Teach in English 100%
- B. I Speak English more than necessary
- C. I barely use English
- D. teach in Spanish
- E. Other \_\_\_\_\_

Question 2: Do you think the telephone can be used to practice or reinforce information?

- A. It is possible, I would use it
- B. It is possible, I would not use it
- C. I don't believe is appropriate
- D. I have never use my telephone to reinforce students' knowledge

Question 3: What smartphone application you use to contact people?

- A. text SMS
- B. Facebook
- C. WhatsApp
- D. Skype
- E. Other

Question 4: Have you ever helped a student with a particular doubt through the smartphone?

- A. Yes
- B. No

Question 5: Are you familiarized with a method to practice English using the telephone?

- A. Yes I am, I have used
- B. Yes I am, yet I have never used
- C. Not familiarized

Question 6: What is the most common problem student's face when learning English

- A. Lack of practice
- B. Student has No interest in learn

- C. Inefficient teachers
- D. Inefficient materials to practice (difficulty to carried books)
- E. Lack of confidence. (I understand but I don't know how to answer)
- F. Poor teaching strategy
- G. Other\_\_\_\_\_

Question 7: How do you think the telephone can be used to reinforce a specific English Topic?

- A. Homework via text message
- B. Voice message
- C. Video call
- D. An application created for that purpose
- E. No, the telephone cannot be used to practice English.

Question 8: Would you be willing to use the cellular phone to reinforce a specific subject outside classroom hours?

- A. Yes
- B. No I would not use the telephone to practice English.

Question 9: How many days per week would you be willing to practice English?

- A. Less than 2h
- B. More than 2h
- C. More than 5 h
- D. As much as necessary

Question 10: How do you prefer to practice English with students?

- A. Practice with a copies
- B. Practice with a computer
- C. Practice with a Books
- D. Practice with a telephone
- E. Other:

Question 11: Do you think reinforcing though WhatsApp, it's possible?

- A. Yes, is possible
- B. No, is not possible

Question 12 - Which benefits do you think it will bring the implementation of the project?

- A. Less copies (student saves money)
- B. Less copies (decrease pollution)
- C. Facility to practice (no books)
- D. Pronunciation will be improved (audiobooks / multimedia)
- E. Sharing information is easier.
- F. The student's interest towards the language will increase
- G. Telephone is more accessible than a computer
- H. Other: \_\_\_\_\_
- I. None of the above

**Appendix 3**

**Ordinal Numbers**

**PRE-TEST - INTERVIEW**

- A. ¿Are you able to count until 20? Please do so
- B. Are you familiarized with the ordinal numbers?
- C. Can you mention the ordinal numbers you know?
- D. ¿Would you be willing to answer three Questions in English? (yes/no)
  - On a car race we have, first place, second place and third place, who won the race?
  - Today it's Carmen's twentieth birthday!! How old is Carmen?
  - When it's your birthday?

**Ordinal numbers (WOK 1)**

ORDINAL NUMBERS



From 1<sup>st</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup>

- A. First / second / third
- B. Fourth / fifth / sixth
- C. Seventh / eighth / ninth
- D. Tenth/eleventh/twelfth
- E. Thirteenth/fourteenth/fifteenth
- F. Sixteenth/seventeenth/eighteenth
- G. Nineteenth / twentieth



**Ordinal numbers (WOK 2)**

\*Listen, Read and Analyze\*



Sentences using ordinal numbers

Thomas won the race, his friend Bob Finished on the \*second\* place

I will race you to the bus, I will be \*first\* and win

Jeremy with red clothes and yellow shoes arrived on the \*fifth\* position, he was not last

there are just 3 medals, for the \*first\* the \*second\* and the \*third\* place

The \*fourth\* place and \*fifth\* place are cousins, they live in the same house.



BIRTHDAYS

When we have a conversation about birthdays, this is how we refer to the specific date:

Examples:

- My birthday is on January 21<sup>st</sup>, my mother's birthday in on July 15<sup>th</sup>
- Julia's birthday is on August 23<sup>rd</sup>; my father's birthday is on May 5<sup>th</sup>
- My birthday is on December 2<sup>nd</sup>; my sister's birthday is on October 14<sup>th</sup>

**Ordinal numbers (WOK 3)**

## Writing numbers



## How to write numbers

- 765 - \*seven hundred sixty-five\*
- 1268 - \*one thousand, two hundred sixty-eight\*
- 202 - \*two hundred two\*
- 69 - \*Sixty-nine\*
- 6597 - \*six thousand, five hundred ninety-seven\*
- 112 - \*one hundred twelve\*
- 4009 - \*four thousand, nine\*



## Ordinal numbers video



Reinforcement Evaluation

Please answer the simple questions via text message

ADVICE

\*(copy the text, paste it in the new message option, and edit it from there) \*

\*From 1<sup>st</sup> to 10<sup>th</sup>, write 3 ordinal numbers\*

-

-

-

\*From 11<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup>, write 3 ordinal numbers\*

-

-

-

\*When it's Costa Rica's Independence Day? \*

\*Write the word for the following numbers\*

28: \_\_\_\_\_.

130: \_\_\_\_\_.

222: \_\_\_\_\_.

669: \_\_\_\_\_.

4078: \_\_\_\_\_.

**Appendix 4****Personal Questions****PRE-TEST - INTERVIEW**

- A. What's your full name?
- B. How old are you?
- C. What is your favorite hobby?
- D. ¿Would you be willing to answer three Questions in English? (yes/no)
- What's your favorite food?
  - What's your mother's name?
  - How old are you? When is your birthday?

**Personal Questions (WOK 1)**

Questions about you

Do you have any children? \*Yes, I have # 2 children\*. Or \*No, I don't\*

How many brothers and sister do you have? \* I have # 2 brothers and # 1 sister. \*

How old are you? \* I am # 24 years old. \*

When is your birthday? \*My birthday is on May the 4<sup>th</sup>. \*

Where are you from? \* I am from Costa Rica .\*

What is your favorite food? \*My favorite food is Pizza .\*

What is your favorite color? \*My favorite color is Blue .\*

Which sports do you like? \* The sport I like is Soccer .\*



**Personal Questions (WOK 2)**



1<sup>st</sup> day at work

- \*Hello Good Morning. \*
- Hello Good Morning. How are you?
- \*Fine. Thanks. Has the Boss come yet? \*
- Yes. He came earlier today and He is in his office
- \*I am the new intern, my name is Lois\*
- Hi Lois nice to meet you, I am Jenna.
- Would you like a coffee before talking to the boss?
- \*I will talk to him first. Thanks! \*
- \*Can we get that coffee after work? \*
- Yes sure, have a nice day see you after work



My name is \_\_\_\_\_.  
 I live in \_\_\_\_\_.  
 I am #\_\_\_\_ years old.  
 I am a student.



**VIDEO INTRODUCING MYSELF**



**Personal Questions (WOK 3)**

\*Listen and analyze \*

Listen carefully to Susan's Story; follow the text with the audio and analyze pronunciation.

**\*LET ME INTRODUCE MYSELF\***



Hello! My name is Susan and I live in San Pedro, Costa Rica. I used to live in England, but, San Pedro it's a nice town to live in. I go to Middle School. I am twelve years old and will be thirteen in July, 8<sup>th</sup>. My favorite subjects are English, History and Music. I love to roller-skate, ski, and talk to my friends about school. I don't have any hobbies, but I like to watch TV as much as possible. At school we learn Math, Science, History, Spanish, English, Computers and Economics.

*\* Reinforcement Evaluation \**

**\*Questions\***

1. What it's your name and how old are you?
2. What is your favorite color?
3. Where does Susan lives? **\*(from the text)\***

**Appendix 5****Possessive Pronouns****PRE-TEST**

-

**INTERVIEW**

- A. Do you know what possessive pronouns are?
- B. Which possessive pronouns are you familiarized with?
- C. Can you create a sentence using possessive pronouns
- D. Would you be willing to complete some sentences choosing the correct possessive pronoun?
  - My sister gave mine/her/its watch to me.
  - The horse hurt its/hers front foot in a trap.
  - My brother met his/her/their wife in Paris.

**Possessive Pronouns****(WOK 1)****MEET THE SIMPSONS**

- *This is Maggie Simpson, Homer , and Marge are \*her\* parents*
- Bart is \*her\* Brother and Lisa is \*her\* sister
- Lisa and Bart are \*their\* siblings
- *This is Homer Simpson, Bart is \*his\* son.*
- Lisa is \*his\* daughter and marge is \*his\* wife.
- Bart, Lisa and Maggie are \*their\* children
- *This is Lisa Simpson, Homer, and Marge are \*her\* parents*
- Bart is \*her\* Brother and Maggie is \*her\* sister
- *This is Marge Simpson, Bart is \*her\* son, and Lisa is \*her\* daughter*
- Bart, Lisa and Maggie are \*their\* children. Homer is \*her\* husband.

**Possessive Pronouns****(WOK 2)**

Listen and analyze the short text



\*Our dolls, their car\*



The boy says, “This is \*[my]\* car”.

\*[His]\* sister says “It’s \*[your]\* car, but it’s \*[my]\* doll. Use that doll over there. It’s \*[yours]\*”

The brother says “\*[mine]\* is small. He’s not a good driver.”

The girl says, “Okay, put \*[yours]\* next to \*[mine]\*. They can ride together”

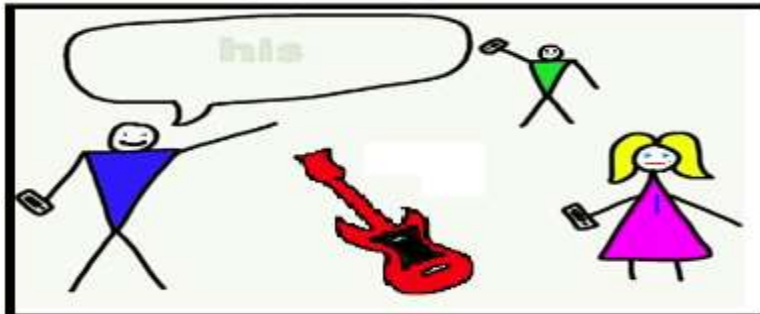
\*[Their]\* mom asks, “Whose car is that?”

The kids look at \*[their]\* two dolls and laugh.

“It’s not \*[ours]\*. It’s \*[theirs]\*”



VIDEO Possessive pronouns



\*Video recomendado para reforzar conocimiento con los ” Possessive pronouns”\*

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YEgGO6ZDQC0>

Follow the previous link of a video to improve Possessive pronouns knowledge.

*\*Reinforcement Evaluation\**

Please answer the questions via text message

*\*Read the sentences, find the error and re-write the sentence in a correct manner\**

(Lea la oración, encuentre el error y reescribala de manera correcta)

This is Lisa Simpson, Homer is \*[her/his/their]\* Father

The dog hurt \*[its/hers]\* foot in a trap.

This Cellphone is \*[mine/his/her]\* and the book belongs to Sam

John Forgot \*[his/her/their]\* computer at home

\*[Her/his/mine]\* makeup is expensive

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