

**UNIVERSIDAD INTERNACIONAL DE LAS
AMÉRICAS**

ENGLISH TEACHING

**TIMED ACTIVITY BASED ON A PERSONALIZED
ALPHABET AS A WAY TO IMPROVE ENGLISH
VOCABULARY ON 8th GRADERS AT RICARDO
MORENO CANAS HIGH SCHOOL DURING
SECOND TRIMESTER OF 2019**

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Dedication

To the most wonderful people I know: my mother, my father, and my sister.

Table of Contents

Chapter I	15
Introductory Framework.....	15
1.1 Problem Statement.....	15
1.2 Objectives of the Investigation.....	16
General objective.....	16
Specific objectives.....	16
1.3 Justification of the Study.....	16
1.4 Antecedents	18
1.5 Scope.....	24
Chapter II.....	25
Theoretical Framework.....	25
2.1 Literature Review	25
2.1.1 Traditional English writing techniques	25
2.1.1.1 Dictation	26
2.1.1.2 Reading aloud	28
2.1.1.3 Use of dictionary	31
2.1.2 Long-term memory	33
2.1.3 Unusual writing techniques	36
2.1.4 Common writing mistakes.....	40
2.1.4.1 Wrong word usage.....	40

2.1.4.2 Content problems	41
2.1.4.3 Spelling mistakes.	41
2.1.5 Dopamine in the learning process.....	43
Chapter III.....	49
Methodological Framework.....	49
3.1 Research Approach.....	49
3.1.1 qualitative method.....	49
3.1.2 quantitative method.....	49
3.2 Research Design	50
3.3 Information Sources.....	53
3.3.1 primary sources.....	54
3.3.2 tertiary sources.....	57
3.4 Analysis Categories	59
3.5 Data Collection Instruments.....	60
3.6 Collection Data Process and Data Analysis	62
Chapter IV.....	65
Data Analysis	65
4.1 Analysis and Interpretation of the Results	65
4.1.1 Observation checklist	65
Materials.....	66
Amount of students.....	66
Attitude of students towards the class.....	67

Physical space of the class.	67
Participation equality.	67
Class time.	68
Environment in the class.	68
Frequency of questions.	68
Students with disabilities.	69
Type of questions.	69
4.1.2 Questionnaires.	69
1 Objective.	70
2 Objective.	82
3 Objective.	88
4.1.3 Grading scales.	95
4.1.4 Checklist.	99
Chapter V.	107
Conclusions and Recommendations.	107
5.1 Conclusions.	107
5.1.1 To identify deficiencies regarding use of vocabulary during the language acquisition process.	108
5.1.2 To apply a timed activity based on a personalized alphabet to improve spelling and retention of words during the language acquisition process.	111

5.1.3 To evaluate the efficiency of using a timed activity based on a personalized alphabet as a technique to improve spelling and retention of words in the language acquisition process.	115
5.2 Restatement of the research question.....	119
5.3 Unexpected results.....	120
5.4 Recommendations.....	120
Bibliography	122
Appendix.....	123
Appendix 1	123
pictures.....	123
Appendix 2.....	132
instruments: objective 1.....	132
instruments: objective 2.....	135
instruments: objective 3.....	137

Figures

Figure 1 shows students' considerations about common techniques on English class.....	71
Figure 2 shows common mistakes students make during the writing process.....	72
Figure 3 illustrates students' considerations due to poor vocabulary.....	74
Figure 4 presents students' thought about how boring writing activities might be sometimes.....	75
Figure 5 illustrates students' thought about learning by doing.	77
Figure 6 shows results of how frequent students forget the meaning and writing of words.	78
Figure 7 illustrates the students' motivation after finishing an activity successfully.. . . .	80
Figure 8 shows the results on the more students enjoy the class, the more they learn.	81
Figure 9 illustrates the technique's usefulness to improve spelling and retention of words.	89
Figure 10 shows the results on how the technique kept students active and entertained. ...	91
Figure 11 shows the results for students preference about the use of the Personalized Alphabet.....	93
Figure 12 illustrates how motivated students felt after finishing the activity successfully.	94
Figure 13 illustrates students' wrongly spelled words.....	96
Figure 14 presents the memorized words per round by students.....	98
Figure 15 illustrates the comparison between second round to the first round.	100
Figure 16 illustrates the comparison in how easier was to remember more words on each round.....	102
Figure 17 illustrates how students felt when they realized their ability to overcome goals.	104

Figure 18 shows the results of students' feeling toward the technique.	105
Figure 19 illustrates students' feeling to continue using this technique.	107

Abstract

This research is focused on improving one of the most important problems regarding English writing: retention and spelling of words. Most of the traditional writing techniques are mainly related to more general aspects. However, memorization and orthography seem to represent two weaknesses during the language acquisition process in English classes. For that reason, this research intends to provide an attainable and concrete solution to this inconvenient. This investigation takes place at Ricardo Moreno Cañas high-school.

Through several theories that were analyzed throughout this investigation, it was possible to conclude that long-term memory and dopamine are two essential components of any learning process. Applying a timed activity based on a personalized alphabet is an efficient tool to enhance the retention and spelling of words during the vocabulary acquisition. Using this technique increases the level of dopamine in the brain, and it also activates the long term-memory. This guarantees a more effective and enduring learning in English classes.

Resumen Ejecutivo

Esta investigación está enfocada en mejorar uno de los problemas más importantes en lo que respecta a la escritura del Inglés: retención y escritura de palabras. La mayoría de las técnicas tradicionales de escritura están principalmente relacionadas a aspectos más generales. Sin embargo, la memorización y la ortografía parecen representar dos debilidades durante el proceso de adquisición del lenguaje en clases de Inglés. Por esa razón, esta investigación pretende proporcionar una solución concreta y alcanzable a este inconveniente. Esta investigación se desarrolla en el colegio Dr. Ricardo Moreno Cañas.

A través de varias teorías que fueron analizadas a lo largo de esta investigación, fue posible concluir que la memoria a largo plazo y la dopamina son dos componentes esenciales de cualquier proceso de aprendizaje. Aplicar una actividad cronometrada basada en un alfabeto personalizado es una herramienta eficiente para fortalecer la retención y la escritura de palabras durante la adquisición del vocabulario. Usar esta técnica incrementa el nivel de dopamina en el cerebro, pero también activa la memoria a largo plazo. Esto garantiza un aprendizaje más efectivo y duradero en clases de Inglés.

Chapter I

Introductory Framework

1.1 Problem Statement

One of the most difficult components when teaching writing in English classes, it is to explain students how different some words in English can be written in comparison to their pronunciation. Spanish pronunciation is relatively similar to its writing in most of the cases. Even though Spanish has important and concrete grammatical rules, it is easier to guess the spelling of a Spanish word by hearing it. This interesting language factor makes some students suffer serious difficulties when writing English words even though they are clear about their pronunciation. Many students show strong abilities in their speaking or listening skill. The problem arises when they are asked to write some English words, they write them exactly as they sound since it happens in many Spanish cases.

Learning English writing is a process that requires strong teaching methods. Being exposed to the same information for long periods of time can make students retain the information for more time. Teaching writing in English classes must not be considered as a simple procedure in the learning process. Teachers must try to make students retain the topics studied in class for the rest of their lives and not only for temporary tests. For that reason, it is necessary to implement effective techniques in the class, so students can learn and keep the information for the future. Professors should always worry about applying the best learning methods in every class they teach.

Retaining information regarding English writing is something that depends on several things, such as: the type of techniques used in the class, the amount of time used for the activities, and the way those activities are applied in the students. Having an excellent syllabus does not guarantee an effective teaching in the writing process as many

teachers think. Teachers should always understand that a good syllabus is not useful if it is not used with appropriate strategies. For that reason, teachers should consider better techniques to improve the long term memory in the writing process instead of making the students understand the topics only for specific exercises. So, what can teachers do to improve English vocabulary acquisition on 8th graders at Ricardo Moreno Cañas High School during second trimester of 2019?

1.2 Objectives of the Investigation

General objective.

To investigate English vocabulary acquisition at Ricardo Moreno Cañas High-School during second trimester of 2019.

Specific objectives.

1. To identify deficiencies regarding use of vocabulary during the language acquisition process.
2. To apply a timed activity based on a personalized alphabet to improve spelling and retention of words during the language acquisition process.
3. To evaluate the efficiency of using a timed activity based on a personalized alphabet as a technique to improve spelling and retention of words in the language acquisition process.

1.3 Justification of the Study

Many students obtain good scores in their high schools, but they are unable to remember and use that information in the future. Having a good score in a test does not guarantee a concrete knowledge. Many Costa Rican teachers are focused on following a

syllabus correctly without applying efficient techniques in the class. It is not a good idea to make students pass the course if they only retain data for a very short time. English vocabulary writing requires more aggressive strategies. Students should be able not only to speak well, but also to read and write correctly.

Having strong writing abilities of English provides important work opportunities for the students in the future. Students need to know how to express themselves in a written form as well. Teachers should also consider the writing process as important as other skills when it comes to learning English. It is important to make students aware about the importance of having an appropriate English vocabulary spelling. Also, important processes in formal contexts involved writing as well. Therefore, if the students are able to obtain a good written English ability, the options to grow professionally will increase.

Applying appropriate techniques to improve the long term memory regarding English writing is a positive aspect for the teachers as well. It is very common to see teachers struggling with exactly the same writing mistakes year after year. Correcting the same mistakes of previous years doubles the teacher's work. In other words, if a student drags the same writing mistakes from seventh to eleventh, an eleventh teacher will have to correct mistakes that were supposed to be corrected in previous years. It might be different, if a student remembers a good English writing for long periods, the mistakes in the next years will not probably be the same. Consequently, the teacher's work will not have to be doubled.

It is necessary to be very careful with the kind of activities that are used during the writing process in English classes. English vowels and consonants are different from the Spanish ones. The brain of a person who is learning a target language might try to adapt those unrecognized sounds to similar sounds in the native language. It is important to clear

and explain that many words in English are not written in the same way they are pronounced. Moreover, of course, the techniques used in the class have to consider that important difference to improve the English writing in the students.

1.4 Antecedents

Sanchez (2018) explains in her investigation that her project arises from the necessity to improve several weaknesses regarding English teaching in Peru. Sanchez (2018) considers that Peruvian secondary English students suffer important problems in the learning process, such as writing difficulties. Sanchez (2018) is clear when she says that some students struggle with the writing of English words (p.8). She develops an investigation that provides important positive aspects that are helpful to improve the writing skills in high school students.

Sanchez (2018) uses music as a way to reinforce the capacity to create descriptive texts in English. Sanchez (2018) includes in her investigation relevant data about the importance of using music as a way to improve the writing skill in high school students. The author explains that music involves important sentiments used as tools to enhance the learning process in the students, for example sadness and happiness. The researcher mentioned before, also explains that all those feelings that music provides can be useful to express personal interest, emotions, and sensations (p.52). It would facilitate the capacity of describing events.

Sanchez (2018) determines the Songs Technique as one of the independent variants of the investigation. The purpose of it consists of reading or singing the lyrics of a song previously chosen (p.31). The procedure includes motivation, presentation of the song, analysis and interpretation of the content, word choosing, as well as an elaboration of

different sentences which have to be composed of words selected from the song (p.31).

This part of the investigation takes into account the importance of music in the process of learning a second language.

Sanchez (2018) establishes the production of descriptive texts as a dependent variant in the investigation (p. 31). It refers to descriptive text as a type of writing in which the students have to describe people, animals, events or even abstract aspects through detailed ideas (p.32). Sanchez (2018) focuses on music as a way to strengthen writing in students who are trying to write correctly in a foreign language. The investigation shows the descriptive texts as a reliable way to test the writing in students.

Sanchez (2018) also includes some important indicators regarding the independent variant (p.32). Those indicators can be useful in order to measure the expectations during the process, such as motivation, good attitudes, and a positive participation (p.32). If those indicators are considered as important factors that can facilitate the learning process in the students, it is possible to assure that, certainly, the students need to feel comfortable and motivated before, during, and after any methodological method in the class.

On the other hand, Sanchez (2018) determines other indicators for the dependent variant. Grammar, coherence, comprehension, usage of words, and organization of ideas are some of those indicators that Sanchez (2018) uses in the dependent variant of the investigation (p.33). The investigation focuses on general abilities and weaknesses, and it provides answers for different fields of writing at a time. The dependent variant tries to make the students use the message of the song in sentences and other contexts. This investigation emphasizes the importance of using entertained events vocabulary in order to make the students learn faster.

Sanchez (2018) summarizes the steps of the investigation procedure in the following order:

“Motivate the students at the beginning of the class through a song that is related to the topic while the students practice the pronunciation with the lyrics. The teacher asks the students to underline the most repeated terms of the song. The most repeated terms of the song are the ones that are related to the topic, so those terms are the ones that are supposed to be underlined by the students. The teacher asks the students what they know about the underlined terms. Then, the teacher presents the topic through notable material. And after that, the teacher evaluates the retained information through written descriptive exercises” (pp.118-119).

Ocampo (2018) supplied important and useful information about writing strategies and the production of English texts in secondary students. The investigation was performed in Lima, Peru. Ocampo (2018) explains that the writing ability was not considered a relevant skill for students in the past. Ocampo (2018) also explains that writing was only a simple part of the learning process, which was used to enhance other skills in a second language learning. In addition, Ocampo (2018) says in the investigation that writing is a more complex process than other skills (pp.16-15).

According to Ocampo (2018), one of the conclusions of the investigation is that writing strategies in class are directly related to the production of English texts in Okinawa High School students. In other words, the better the writing strategies are in the class, the better the production of written texts are in the students (p.103). It is not correct to assume that the writing ability of a student depends only on the amount of time the student reads, for example. Some teachers do not pay specific attention to writing teaching since they consider it is a factor that depends exclusively on the student. However, it is clear that writing strategies impact the learning process of any student when it comes to writing skill.

Ocampo (2018) is clear with the importance of applying correct methodological procedures when it comes to English writing (p.103). If a teacher uses efficient techniques with the students, they will be able to elaborate appropriate writing. Certainly, the writing level of an English student might be influenced by the teacher's methodology. As a fact, it is possible to improve the weaknesses in writing. Even though the level of English is related to the attitude the student has in the class, the success of a learner in the writing skill can increase significantly.

It is important to explain that an effective teaching has to be accompanied by an excellent attitude of the students. Marangon (2012) affirms that there have never been perfect methodological strategies in education when it comes to a target language, but a necessity to adapt the different pedagogical techniques to new contexts in order to create a more effective teaching (parr. 1). For that reason, it is possible to affirm that even though a strategy is effective, it is fundamental to create an appropriate atmosphere in the class in order to increase the motivation during the learning process. Education is a complex field that depends on different factors.

However, it is not correct to omit the lack of better learning strategies in the class. Some national investigations have proved the necessity of improving the quality of English education in Costa Rica. It is evident to see important writing weaknesses in English students at Costa Rican institutes. Hasbun (2009) considers the most important mistakes that Costa Rican students have in the target language. Those mistakes are taken into account as one of the main objectives of the investigation. Hasbun (2009) also considers the opinion of Costa Rican students about those mistakes as well as their importance in the learning process. The information was collected through an interview. (p.2)

During the interview, Hasbun (2009) applies an important survey with clear and direct questions. The students are asked about what they think it is their biggest weakness in their English level. The answers are very interesting. One student says that English vocabulary is even more difficult than grammar because there are many unrecognizable words in the English language (parr.1). As it was observed in the answer, struggling with the vocabulary of the target language might be considered by some students more difficult than knowing how to organized ideas. Teaching English vocabulary writing requires special techniques in order to make the students retain the information for more time.

Another interesting answer of a student about the personal opinion of his/her level of English is related to the similarity between the grammar and pronunciation of Spanish. Hasbun (2009) obtains an answer of a student saying that he/she thinks in Spanish and relates the English words to how they sound in Spanish (parr.1). It explains why many students try to adapt English sounds to similar sounds in the native language when they take writing classes. The fact mentioned before, it is a common mistake from a person who is trying to acquire new vocabulary in the target language.

A poor knowledge of English vocabulary can generate important problems during the writing process according to Hasbun (2009). Hasbun (2009) shows an answer from a student who explains how difficult it is to him/her to create good compositions because of his/her poor knowledge regarding English vocabulary. The student also refers to many unrecognizable words, which make the writing process even more difficult (parr.1). This inconvenient might occur for several reasons: bad spelling of words or a limited knowledge of English vocabulary for example. Both cases could be improved by applying efficient English writing strategies.

Hasbun (2019) also includes an interesting answer in the survey about a student who shows difficulties choosing vocabulary during the writing process. The student explains how difficult is to compose written ideas when there is not a wide knowledge of English words; especially, because many English words look alike (parr. 2). It is important to establish a stronger difference between teaching grammar rules and acquiring new English written vocabulary. The difference would reduce drastically the amount of mistakes in the writing process.

Even the same teachers are aware of common writing mistakes with students who are not supposed to make the mistakes they are making. According to Hasbun (2019), a third year teacher of Modern Languages of UCR recognized that students commonly translate from Spanish to the target language when they are learning a second language (parr.3). Many of those students take exactly the same Spanish letters to write English words when they hear an English sound that they do not understand. Moreover, of course, those mistakes get more clear and evident when the students are writing.

Through most of the previous answers, it is evident the necessity of correcting failures in the process of English writing in Costa Rican education. Many of the interviewed students show important writing mistakes that are not accord with the level of English they are supposed to have. Many students accepted on not having developed skills in the writing field; even though, some of them feel they have good abilities in other skills such as speaking or listening. Unfortunately, many Costa Rican institutions (public and private places) focus mainly on speaking aspects.

1.5 Scope

Learning individually through challenging timed activities based on a personalized alphabet will help students retain the information of the topic since they are forced to pay more attention due to exercises that require problem resolution. The investigation involves several repetitions in each attempt, so it will make the learning more lasting in students. The purpose is to create a new strategy in which the students can learn the information permanently.

This investigation is not focused on correcting grammar, coherence, organization, or other kinds of writing mistakes. It is focused on improving spelling and retention of information regarding English vocabulary. The results will not look for improvements in complex writings as a whole. It will only try to provide benefits in the long term memory regarding English vocabulary writing, as well as spelling improvements.

In general terms, students will experience an easier and more effective way to learn new vocabulary in the target language through a personalized alphabet. Writing techniques are usually designed to improve more complex texts as a whole, but they do not cover more specific and deep aspects. Using a personalized alphabet as a way to teach new vocabulary in English classes will definitely facilitate the language acquisition since it improves spelling and retention capacity at the same time.

Chapter II

Theoretical Framework

This section of the investigation will include the different theories that support this thesis. It includes primary, secondary, and even tertiary sources of information about the different theoretical factors that influence the usage of a personalized alphabet as a way to improve the English vocabulary acquisition in ESL students. The theories are going to be developed in a precise and logical way, and they will also be organized from the most general to the most specific, so the content can be understood and interpreted correctly. This chapter will demonstrate the importance of all the theoretical findings, but it will also provide relevant conclusions based on the practical activities performed in this research.

2.1 Literature Review

This literature review will incorporate the explanation of all the theories on which this investigation is based. All the factors that might influence this research will be analyzed, explained, and compared to the findings included in this theoretical framework. These theories will be useful to prove, not only the effectiveness of this investigation, but also the necessity of incorporating better writing techniques in English classes when it comes to vocabulary acquisition. This theoretical framework will be also important to perceive the fields that have not been covered or studied in previous investigations regarding writing techniques.

2.1.1 Traditional English writing techniques

Firstly, it is necessary to start this section with the explanation of some of the most common writing techniques that teachers have used through history. Those regular writing techniques are still used at high schools currently; even though, they do not guarantee any

effectiveness when it comes to writing improvements. Most of the writing activities in English classes do not cover all the components of the writing skill. Most of them are focused mainly on complex texts as a whole rather than spelling or vocabulary retention. For that reason, it is extremely necessary to apply more effective writing activities that make students learn permanently in all the fields related to writing.

Strategies that do not provide important advances in education should be analyzed significantly. Maybe the problem lies in the way the teacher develops the class, or maybe, in the effectiveness of the strategy. In both cases, if the progress regarding spelling and retention of words does not reach the expectations, it is necessary to evaluate the different techniques that teachers use in the class about vocabulary acquisition. If most of students face difficulties regarding retention of words and spelling, it is evident to conclude that there is an important deficiency regarding the methods that teachers have been using in these fields. It is not correct to continue using tools that not provide positive aspects.

2.1.1.1 Dictation

Dictation is one of the most common techniques teachers use to improve writing skills in students. DRAE (2014) cited by Gonzalez (2017) explains the concept of dictation as the fact of saying something with correct pauses as the listener writes what he/she hears (p.3). This common writing technique has been used because of its implementation facility. Gonzalez (2017) affirms that one of the most important characteristics dictation has, it is the fact of a very versatile tool, which can be adapted to all the different types of characteristics student might present in a class. In other words, its simplicity and effectiveness makes it a reliable writing technique (p.1).

Gonzalez (2017) is clear with three of the most important advantages of using dictation as a technique to enhance the writing skill. First, Marcano, Salazar and Tabata

(2010) cited by Gonzalez (2017) explains that dictation is an effective way to improve the oral comprehension. Students have to identify the phonemes they hear, and then, they have to transcribe the oral information into written words. It is a process that requires a correct attention, interpretation and understanding of the message. Even though it is a technique that involves evaluation of the writing process, it is also a good way to work the oral comprehension in students (p.4).

Gonzalez (2017) provides an important observation regarding the usage of dictation in the class. Gonzales (2017) explains that dictation could also be a good way to make students practice the speaking skill. Teachers normally are the senders during the activity, so students are mainly focused in their listening and writing abilities. However, it is possible to make some changes in the procedures, so students can be able to work other abilities as well. A good option, according to Gonzalez (2017), it is to allow students become senders. For example, one student could be the sender, and some other students could be receivers. It would be a good option to enhance the speaking skill in the class through dictation (p.5).

In addition, Gonzalez (2017) includes the main purpose of dictation as one of its biggest advantages in the class. The writing ability is the main point in which teachers pay specific attention when they use dictation as a technique in the class. Most of the professors use this strategy as the best way to improve spelling. Even though dictation is a tool that could be used through different ways to improve other skills in the language, it seems that spelling is the main field teachers desire to improve every time they use it as a method to reinforce writing aspects (p.5).

However, as many other techniques, dictation could also provide undesired effects if it is not applied or adapted correctly in the class. Actually, Cassany (2004) cited by

Gonzalez (2017) affirms that it is necessary to modify the technique through more complex activities in order to obtain effective results in the students. The standard usage of dictation, in which a student goes to the front to write the answers on the white board, could generate negative aspects in the student. This might affect significantly the learning process in the students when it comes to acquire vocabulary (p.26).

An activity that requires so many changes and modifications to make it effective in a class could not be the best option to consider. Simplicity should always be an attribute of all techniques used in a class. Using a personalized alphabet through a timed activity does not require complex modifications, so it makes it practical and effective under almost any circumstance. Students should feel comfortable as they learn. Writing techniques, as any other learning technique, should always consider the way students feel before, during, and after applying an activity in the class in order to guarantee an appropriate learning.

2.1.1.2 Reading aloud

Reading aloud is another common technique that teachers use to work on language acquisition in writing classes. It is a technique that does not require complex procedures or extra material for its implementation. So, this characteristic makes it one of the most popular ways to make students improve their knowledge regarding vocabulary. Since it is a technique that is used regularly as a tool to enhance vocabulary acquisition, it is fundamental to analyze it deeply through this theoretical framework in order to perceive some of its most important advantages and disadvantages. Its effectiveness will be discussed through previous investigations.

Teachers use this technique in all the different levels of primary and secondary. Of course, the information from the texts depend on the level the teacher or professor is teaching. Because of its simplicity, it is seen as a practical way to make students acquire

new vocabulary. It consists on making students read aloud a specific text, and it does not include any other complex procedure. It might be the reason why most of the teachers constantly use it as one of the main tools during writing classes. However, its advantages and disadvantages should be compared to measure its effectiveness. Reading aloud involves a process that might be more complex than it seems. For that reason, this technique is included as part of this theoretical framework.

Reading aloud is an important way to make students acquire unknown vocabulary. According to Braun (2010), hearing new words several times make students understand and remember new vocabulary better. It works perfectly when the class involves scientific words which can be difficult to remember. For that reason, reading aloud is useful in science classes; however, it could also be implemented in other subjects that require complex language acquisition (p.46). This description corresponds to the standard method, in which the teacher reads and students listen to the information.

Braun (2010) concludes that the best way to apply the reading aloud technique in a class is by making it interactive. Reading aloud helps students improve their attention and motivation in the class, and it also makes them assimilate unknown concepts correctly. Making students get in pairs to create discussions, using illustrations, or accompanying the activity with a brainstorming at the end of the activity are some modifications that can be implemented to make the reading aloud technique even more effective (p.48). Braun (2010) considers interaction as a fundamental aspect to improve the learning process in students.

Braun (2010) affirms that the attitude the teacher has once the reading aloud activity is applied, it is crucial to determine the quality of knowledge students will have. Braun (2010) refers to motivation as one of the most important factors to take into account

when applying an activity in a class. When the educator is motivated during the activity, students can feel a personal connection to the teacher, so they will get more motivated while they experience an excellent language acquisition (p.48). Motivation improves significantly the quality of learning.

Even though reading aloud provides advantages in the vocabulary acquisition process, it also has negative aspects which have to be considered carefully. Huang (2010) explains that reading aloud only gives chances to some specific students. Not all the students in the class have the chance to read, so it makes the rest of the students get bored. Students who are listening might get distracted more easily because they take a passive role in the activity (148). Those students who are not involved in an interactive process during an activity might not receive an adequate learning. It is fundamental to make students be active in the class when they are acquiring new information.

Huang (2010) explains that students who read aloud in the class normally get embarrassed. Being heard by the rest of the students make the reader has negative feelings which can affect the reading skill significantly. Also, being corrected by the teacher or other students during the reading process could definitely make the reader read worse. It would be difficult to evaluate the real strengths and weaknesses of the reader if there are external factors that influence negatively the performance. The way a student feels should be an important consideration in the class (p.148)

Huang (2010) makes an important observation regarding disadvantages of reading aloud as a teaching method. Reading aloud might make readers be more focused on their feelings rather than their learning. Since most of them get embarrassed when they read aloud, it would make them avoid to continue with the reading (p.148). It is not effective to apply techniques that students avoid to develop. Implementing activities that students do

not enjoy is an obstacle that will interfere in an adequate process of learning. Motivation of students determines a big percentage of the effectiveness of a teaching technique.

2.1.1.3 Use of dictionary

Dictionary has been used for decades as one of the most common tools regarding language acquisition. Teachers have used it as the main way to make students learn new words when it comes to a target language. But using a dictionary as a way to enhance the vocabulary acquisition might not be the best technique to improve spelling or capacity of retention of words. Tono (2012) explains that dictionary users might be able to remember the pronunciation of a word by using its phonetic symbols; however, it does not guarantee they are going to be able to remember its spelling or orthography for longer periods. (p.16).

Tono (2012) explains that there are specific cases regarding language acquisition that are difficult for students to remember unless they are constantly exposed to the same information in everyday situations (p.18). However, using dictionaries as a tool to make students be exposed to the same information might not be a good option. The use of dictionary requires a passive learning in which students are only limited to look for meanings. Since it does not involve an active learning, it would be extremely monotonous to use it as an everyday technique.

Tono (2010) explains that a negative aspect about using dictionary as a way to help students acquire new vocabulary in written texts is the fact that normally interferes the fluency in the reading process. Teachers should make students look up words in their dictionaries after other more efficient strategies have failed. (p.30). Teachers frequently use dictionaries for reading comprehension purposes. Students use it as they read, so they can understand the information correctly. However; stopping constantly to look up meanings of

unknown words is not a recommendable procedure since it forces students to pause their reading.

Tono (2010) affirms that a big percentage of English learners do not show a good attitude towards the use of dictionary. Eighty-two Hispanic English students participated in an investigation that analyzed the different preferences students have towards the use of different strategies regarding language acquisition. The results concluded that a significant percentage of those students preferred the use of other strategies rather than use of dictionary (p.30). Of course, dictionaries are extremely necessary to obtain meanings of unfamiliar words, but they should not be used as the only technique when it comes to language acquisition. The attitude of students determines significantly their success in the learning process.

Tono (2010) also provides an interesting conclusion based on previous investigations about the use of dictionary as a strategy to teach language acquisition. It does not matter the time or energy lexicographers spend on supplying supplementary information in dictionaries because users never exploit them completely. Most of dictionaries have extra columns which include supportive information to help users obtain more efficient and precise results; however, even though users are aware of it, they seem to be more interested in using other more simple strategies (p.35).

Greenbom et al. (1984) cited by Tono (2010) obtained a relevant observation during an investigation that compared American students to British students regarding use of dictionary. American students seem to have greater problems than British students even though British students use less dictionaries in comparison to American students (p.42). According to this conclusion, dictionaries do not guarantee spelling improvements during

the learning acquisition process. It could be useful for other purposes, but it might not be adequate to correct orthography.

These negative aspects are accompanied by the fact that the use of dictionary in the language acquisition do not require an active learning. Looking up definitions of words is normally a passive process, and it might result boring for most of students. The tendency of ignoring the supportive information that many dictionaries have could be caused due to the lack of a more interactive process. Students work better when they are involved in active activities. When they are asked to activate their skills to get results, their capacity of learning can improve significantly.

2.1.2 Long-term memory

Cherry (2019) refers to long-term memory as, “the capacity to storage information over an extended period” (parr.2). Teaching techniques should be focused on long-term memory rather than short-term memory. All the activities applied in a class should be tools that make students retain information for long periods. Unfortunately, most of students are susceptible to forget the information after an evaluation. This could be caused by poor educational habits, but this could also be the result of inefficient activities. Regular learning techniques should activate long-term memory, so students can have the capacity to remember new information permanently.

Activities that require resolution of problems are excellent strategies to activate long-term memory since they involve concentration. Thomen (2019) explains that activities that require concentration are effective ways to activate long-term memory (parr.13). Long-term memory is activated in students when they are exposed to situations in which they have be concentrated to obtain a final result. Definitely, using a personalized

alphabet in which they have to be concentrated to transcribe symbols into letters is a good way to activate long-term memory during the learning process.

In addition, Galvis, Marino, Trech, and Recaman (2013) affirms that activities with high levels of concentration are highly effective to activate long-term memory. Riddles that include challenging, interesting, and new problems are very attractive for students (p.43). For that reason, it is possible to conclude that techniques that demand concentration and creativity about interesting challenges are the best to guarantee an excellent learning. Techniques with these characteristics, such as timed activities through personalized alphabets, can definitely be implemented in English classes as a tool to guarantee a correct learning when it comes to language acquisition.

Galvis et al. (2013) says that creativity demands concentration and persistence in order to find solutions to determine problems. Riddles and other types of similar learning activities are excellent ways on forcing students to be creative by using their concentration (p.37). Techniques that involve creativity help students retain information by using their long-term memory. Teachers normally omit creative activities in English classes since they require more time for their elaboration. During the vocabulary acquisition, teachers prefer to give students a list of words, but students are not asked to use their creativity to learn them. Students are limited to acquire new vocabulary by memorizing the words without using any other type of learning method.

Arciniegas (1995) cited by Galvis et al. (2013) says that creativity is an aspect that each person has which affects directly in the way people think and perceive things. It makes people think different from the traditional way. Creativity is useful as a tool to help people express their originality as well. (p.36). It is a component of the learning process that can be important to improve the quality of learning in English classes. The more

creativity students are asked to use in order to acquire new knowledge, the more efficient and permanent the learning will be. It is necessary to implement creativity in order to activate the long term-memory in students. It is crucial to provide an enduring knowledge.

By using a personalized alphabet through a timed activity as a way to acquire new vocabulary, students will not be limited only to memorize a list of words. Memorizing words has been the traditional way teachers have used through history to make students acquire vocabulary; however, it is practical but not effective. Learning vocabulary by remembering words, students do not feel forced to use all their capacity when it comes to learning processes in a process. Even though learning vocabulary might seem a simple process in which students only need to remember words given by the teacher, it should include a higher level of complexity. Otherwise, students will forget the information after a short period.

According to Bellver (2014), repetition is another crucial component that must be included in an effective process of learning. Being exposed to the same information periodically is excellent for the memory. Short term-memory makes the brain been able to keep information for approximately 30 seconds. However, by using repetition, the information could be kept for an indefinite period through long-term memory (parr.2). Based on that statement, it is possible to assume that repetition activates long-term memory. Repetition reaffirms the information that is intended to be remembered by the learner. It is important to expose students to the same vocabulary through several repetitions in order to make them acquire new words permanently.

Accompanying repetition with writing increases the effectiveness of repetition in the learning process according to Bellver (2014). It is a good idea to write as the information is repeated. Writing makes learners remember the data easier and faster

(parr.2). Writing the information could be necessary to change abstract data to more palpable information. Some students need to perceive the information through a visible way. For that reason, writing could definitely be an excellent tool when students learn new vocabulary by using repetitions.

Bellver (2014) includes an important observation about some results obtained during an experiment about the percentage of information that is forgotten after several days without the use of repetitions. After one day, people were able to remember only the 54% of information. After seven days, people were able to remember only the 35% of the information. And after fourteen days, people were able to remember only the 21% of the information (parr.3). Lack of repetition decreases significantly the amount of time that information keeps in the brain. In other words, repeating the same information constantly is a good way to use the long-term memory.

During the activity about the use of a personalized alphabet as a method to make students acquire new vocabulary, students are asked to write what they are learning through several repetitions. In addition, the technique involves creativity. Creativity, repetition and writing are the three most important aspects to take into account to activate long-term memory. These three factors are included in the same activity. Since it has the three most important components, it is possible to conclude that it is an effective technique to activate long-term memory during the language acquisition process.

2.1.3 Unusual writing techniques

Hiding messages in texts, using secret codes in writing or making written messages difficult to read have been common strategies people have used through history. The name of this communicative strategy is Cryptography. Ruiz (2017) refers to the concept of cryptography as the fact of using codes during the writing process. In other words, it is the

fact of writing through an enigmatic way. It had different purposes. However, one of the most important ideas was to protect messages which were extremely important. (parr.1).

Cryptography is a complex procedure which provides interesting data that can be used in learning techniques.

Acrostics could be considered a type of cryptography according to Ruiz (2017). It is a process in which the message is hidden through the first letter of each line of a text (parr.3). The cryptography might be composed of sentences or even words. The idea is to provide a message, which is not easy to read unless the reader pays specific attention to the first letter of each line. It has been common to use this type of cryptography in different fields that require written texts.

Symmetrical cryptography is a type of cryptography that has been very used. Ruiz (2017) affirms that symmetrical cryptography is a process in which the information is provided secretly by using only one code established by the sender and receiver. They agree on one secret code in which both, the sender and receiver, can be able not only to write, but also to read and comprehend the information correctly (parr.4). The purpose is that no one could be able to detect the message unless someone can access the code. This type of cryptography includes a higher degree of security.

Asymmetric cryptography is a type of cryptography that requires two different codes to access the information according to Ruiz (2017). One code is a public code that can be given to anyone who wants to access the message, but the other one is a private code that belongs exclusively to the owner of the information. Of course, both codes are designed by the owner, but only one is given to the public (parr.4). Evidently, the type of cryptography is selected according to the characteristics of the message. The sender selects the accessibility that the information will have based on its content.

Belts of information wrapped up in rods. According to Ruiz (2017), this was a type of symmetric cryptography that was used centuries ago. The same code was used by the sender and receivers. The information was written on a belt which had to be wrapped up in a rod. When the belt was unwrapped, the message got incomprehensible. The rod had a specific size; for that reason, only those who had a rod with the same size could read the information. It was needed to have a rod with the same measures of the owner's; otherwise, the message would get inaccessible (parr.5).

Another ancient technique that was used as a part of cryptography was the Polybios. Polybios is a cryptography technique that is based on a table that includes all the letters of the alphabet. However, the table has one column and one row that have different letters. In the table, each letter of the alphabet is determined by two letters which are the combination of the column and the row. In other words, each letter of the alphabet is symbolized through a pair of letters, and those pairs of letters are used as individual letters to create words, sentences or even texts with hidden messages (parr.12).

Ruiz (2017) affirms that frequency analysis was a common strategy that analysts used in the past to decipher hidden messages in written texts. The process consisted of determining the frequency of letters in the text. Characters that appear frequently in written messages might mean common letters in the ordinary alphabet. On the other hand, less frequent characters in the written message might mean less frequent letters in the ordinary alphabet (parr.8). Certainly, the process was not simple; the analyst had to combine different options until he/she determined the value of each character. Frequency analysis worked well in simple cryptography.

BBC News Mundo [BBC], (2018) refers to Sans Forgetica as a new type of font, which makes the writing process even more difficult. Sans Forgetica is a new way of

writing which adds a higher degree of difficulty to the message. It is necessary to pay more attention to the letters in order to comprehend the information correctly. The idea of this font, it is to incorporate a little obstacle in the reading process in order to obtain better results about the retention of information. By using this type of writing, the message gets somewhat difficult, but it does not turn the information completely incomprehensible either (parr.2).

BBC (2018) explains the importance of making the reading process complex. When the brain is forced to be alert, the level of concentration increases considerably. It definitely affects positively the quality of comprehension and memorization of messages in written texts (parr.1). Adding a certain degree of difficulty in the writing process makes readers improve their capacity of retention when it comes to written information. The more concentrated a person is during the learning process, the better the memorization will be. This aspect would work perfectly during the language acquisition process.

BBC (2018) affirms that little obstacles in the learning process make the brain get involved in cognitive procedures. By adding a certain degree of complexity, the brain will experience an enduring memorization through an unconscious way. It happens because familiar fonts do not require a high degree of concentration. For that reason, the brain will not retain the information for long periods (parr.5). Easy techniques might result more comfortable, but they do not necessarily generate the best results in the future.

It is possible to conclude that using a personalized alphabet as a way to acquire new vocabulary it is an excellent tool to increase the level of concentration during the language acquisition since this technique includes the same component. During the activity, students will have to replace symbols by their corresponding letters. This technique involves complexity and a certain degree of difficulty. It is a technique in which students will have

to be concentrated to obtain their own results. This will guarantee a better quality of learning regarding language acquisition. Definitely, this will improve not only the spelling of words, but also their retention.

2.1.4 Common writing mistakes

Using a personalized alphabet through a timed activity is useful to improve the English vocabulary acquisition. It was explained previously that most of the traditional writing techniques are focused on texts as a whole rather than more specific aspects. In order to prove the necessity of implementing more aggressive strategies regarding vocabulary acquisition, it is important to know some of the most important mistakes students make when they write since writing is a reliable way to prove the knowledge of students when it comes to vocabulary. By knowing the most important writing mistakes students make, it will be possible to understand the necessity of applying strategies that are helpful to improve retention of vocabulary, as well as spelling mistakes.

2.1.4.1 Wrong word usage.

Alfaki (2015) makes a deep explanation about the most important mistakes students make when they write in English. Norish (1983) and Alamirew (2005) cited by Alfaki (2015) say that a good writing composition should be composed of different words used correctly, and it is one of the most common problems of students when they write in the foreign language (p.45). Many students do not know which word to use in a text even though they do not have important grammatical mistakes. In other words, many students know the general grammatical structures to create sentences or even texts, but their lack of knowledge regarding vocabulary affects considerably their writings.

If students receive adequate strategies that reinforce the vocabulary acquisition, students will not experience so many difficulties with the word choice. The more words

students know, the easier will be for them to select more appropriate words. Having a good knowledge regarding English vocabulary will avoid students use words incorrectly. Since students do not know synonyms, they are more likely to use incorrect words which they consider more acceptable to what they want to express even though their usage is not the best for the context.

2.1.4.2 Content problems

Alfaki (2015) also considers content problems as another different problem students suffer when they write in the target language. Clifford (1987) cited by Alfaki (2015) says that students normally face important problems of exploring ideas or thought to communicate with others (p.46). Content problems are definitely related to a poor or limited vocabulary. Ignoring content words in a text, for example, might affect significantly its comprehension or content. A sentence could become incomprehensible because of only one inappropriate word.

Content can also be affected by wrongly spelled words. A wrongly spelled word can make the idea of a sentence almost incomprehensible. It is not necessary to change or omit words to make a text or sentence difficult to understand. Sometimes, a wrongly word in a text can influence negatively the message. It is the reason why a good orthography is crucial not only in the native language, but also in the target language. Writing words correctly is necessary to express ideas adequately. Writing strategies have to be focused on correcting those aspects as well.

2.1.4.3 Spelling mistakes.

Al-zuoud and Kabilan (2013) refer to spelling mistakes as the biggest problem English students face when they are learning English as a second language. Students have important difficulties when they try to express ideas in written texts because they cannot

spell words correctly. Arabic English students, for example, make important mistakes regarding spelling because of the difference between Arabic and English (p.165). It is true that Arabic and English change drastically their system of writing; however, this phenomenon also happens with other languages, such as Spanish. The difference between Spanish and English make students have difficulties when they write because of the different patterns, rules, grammatical structures or even pronunciation both languages have.

Gowere (1995) cited by Alfaki (2015) includes spelling mistakes as one of the most common difficulties that English students suffer during their writing process. Influence of other languages, a different pronunciation, or even historical factors might create an obstacle in English learners who write in the target language (p.45). Undoubtedly, Spanish speakers usually do not know how to write English words even though they know their pronunciation. It happens because Spanish pronunciation does not differ much from its writing. Many words in Spanish are written exactly as they are pronounced. However, many words in English are written very different in comparison to their pronunciation.

Al-zuoud and Kabilan (2013) classify the most common spelling mistakes into four categories: substitution errors, omission errors, insertion errors, and transposition errors. Substitution errors happen when students substitute a letter by another one. Omission errors happen when students omit a letter to the target word. Insertion errors happen when students add a letter to the target word. And transposition errors happen when students reverse the order of two letters or more (p.167). Definitely, spelling errors are specific components of the writing process that have to be considered. Evaluating writing is not an aspect that depends only on coherence, grammatical structures, relevance, or parallelism, for example.

Bell and Burnaby (1984) cited by Alfaki (2015) justify writing mistakes in English learners due to the complexity that writing involves. Writers are required to demonstrate control of many variables simultaneously. The use of an adequate vocabulary is one of those factors that writers have to consider in written texts (p.46). For that reason, since writing is a very complex skill, it is logical to assume that writing strategies have to be well elaborated in order to cover even the most specific aspects that are part of the writing process.

2.1.5 Dopamine in the learning process

Brain is complex, and it is necessary to comprehend the way it works when it comes to learning processes. Dopamine is one of the most important neurotransmitters, and it might determine significantly the quality of learning a student will have. For that reason, learning should always go hand-in-hand with the most general functions of the brain. Efficient learning techniques must facilitate the way brain receives, retains, processes, and keeps new information. This section will include the most important functions of dopamine in the learning process, the different ways to activate it, and its relationship with the language acquisition.

First of all, in order to comprehend better the functions of dopamine in the learning process, it is important to analyze the different ways it affects the Attention Deficit Disorder. Calderon (2011) explains that Attention Deficit Disorder is a common problem that is characterized by hyperactivity, impulsivity, and lack of attention. It affects negatively the academic progress of those who suffer it. This disorder gets more evident as the academic requirements increase (p.24). This is a problem which can be considered one of the main obstacles that students can face in the learning process. Because of its frequency and effects, it must be treated through more efficient learning techniques.

Even though Attention Deficit Disorder is not the main purpose of this research, it is necessary to analyze some of its symptoms since even people who do not suffer it might also have them. Lack of concentration, impulsivity, and a deficient memory are components that any student can also face. Those obstacles are frequent in any class. If the symptoms of this disorder have been studied in order to reduce its negative effects, it makes sense to consider those advances and improvements as tools to reduce those symptoms in the rest of the population. Taking into account progresses and developments related to the Attention Deficit Disorder could definitely provide positive advantages in other fields that share similar characteristics.

According to Calderon (2011), there are three types of Attention Deficit Disorder; however, all of them generate the same difficulty when it comes to learning processes. Inattentive type, hyperactive-impulsive type, and combination type. In all of them, students face important problems when they try to keep their attention in the class. Many of them resist tasks in the class because they do not look attractive enough. They can hardly be concentrated for long periods in comparison to the rest of students, and of course, it affects negatively their learning (p.25).

Calderon (2011) affirms that this disorder gets worse when techniques do not include interaction. Techniques must be attractive for them since they always express they feel bored, tired or lazy in the class. These students need a higher degree of motivation. This means that the more passive students are during the learning process, the worse their performance will be (p.25). Undoubtedly, according to this statement, it is possible to conclude that the vocabulary acquisition process could be one of the most difficult sections when these students learn a target language since this process is not normally a section that includes interactive procedures.

Calderon (2011) explains that the Attention Deficit Disorder is directly related to a low level of dopamine in the brain (p.25). In other words, all the symptoms described in the previous paragraphs, such as lack of attention, lack of motivation, or impulsivity, could definitely improve with a higher degree of this neurotransmitter in the brain. There are pharmacological compounds which are used to help students who suffer attention deficit disorder regulate their cerebral functioning. Certainly, these medical treatments should not be replaced. However, it is possible to increase the level of dopamine in the brain through other daily activities that can be useful to improve the academic performance.

Mandal (2019) explains that an appropriate level of dopamine in the brain improves the memory during the learning process (parr.6). According to this statement, dopamine could definitely facilitate the retention of new vocabulary during the language acquisition process. This would be helpful to eradicate one of the strongest problems of students when it comes to language acquisition: a deficient memory to remember and write new words. The use of strategies in the class to generate higher levels of dopamine is mandatory. Improving long-term memory means an improvement in spelling and retention of words.

Mandal (2019) affirms that dopamine enhances the attention (parr.7). One of the goals of this research is to facilitate the language acquisition process. If a student is able to improve the capacity of attention in a class, the quality of learning will be better. For some students it is difficult to learn new information because their capacity of concentration is limited. A lack of concentration is definitely related to a poor learning. Increasing the level of dopamine will facilitate the acquisition of new words. This is helpful to avoid obstacles which can interfere with the performance of some students.

It is possible to increase the level of dopamine in the brain without using complex procedures. For that reason, it is necessary to consider techniques that help students

increase their levels of dopamine in the class as they acquire a new language. This would be helpful for all students in general. Increasing the production of this neurotransmitter during academic processes would definitely improve the learning quality of all students. This statement does not require complex changes in the curriculum design. This is only an argument that is based on little changes and easy adaptations in the way teachers have used different writing techniques during the language acquisition process.

There are important changes which can be applied when it comes to didactics issues. Some of those changes can easily be incorporated in the class. Many teachers do not know how able they can be, and it could be the reason why those changes do not occur in the class. But even though many teachers know the capacity they have as professionals, they prefer to omit responsibilities. Making small changes in the way a class is given can definitely make the difference in the success of the class. Unfortunately, it is easier to ignore the deficiencies in a class rather than facing them in order to improve the quality of teaching.

Mehta (2013) explains different procedures that are helpful to generate dopamine in the brain. One of those steps is related to the amount of times a person reaches the established objectives. The more times a person reaches a goal, the more amount of dopamine the brain produces. This happens because the brain makes the person wants to re-experience the activity that caused that high production from the neurotransmitter. Furthermore, this is definitely important to help the brain retain new information for longer periods (parr.3). Succeeding at something frequently is a fact that facilitates the learning. Motivation is related to high productions of dopamine in the brain. For that reason, the way students feel in the class can determine the quality of learning they will have.

Failures affect concentration significantly according to Mehta (2013). It is more difficult to pay attention every time a failure occurs since the brain learns better through enjoyable experiences (parr.4). In other words, negative experiences become obstacles during the language acquisition process. It is necessary to apply techniques that look attractive for students in order to increase their motivation. Sometimes, learning difficulties is not a fact that is related to a weak cognitive capacity. Instead, it might be the result of negative experiences that students have faced in academic processes which have interfered adversely.

Setting little goals are more effective than setting too high expectations according to Mehta (2013). It is more probable that students get disappointed when they try to achieve more complex goals. Generally, too high expectations might be unattainable for most of students, and it might generate a counterproductive effect. Cultivating little achievable goals is the key to succeed (parr.4). Teachers might wrongly demand too high expectations in the class. It is important to be demanding when it comes to learning a new language; however, expectations and goals should always be in proportion to the skills, weaknesses, and level of students.

Teaching should be seen as a way to reach determined goals. Students should understand that learning is a process that should be focused on a progressive development. If students learn how to determine their goals during their learning, they will definitely create personal habits which will be useful to guarantee an enduring knowledge. Learning should go hand in hand with personal goals. If students are able to establish their own learning objectives, they will be responsible for their won progress. It is necessary to comprehend that the teacher is not the only one who is in charge of the class progress. It is one of the reasons why learning through a personalized alphabet is an excellent strategy to make students create a more efficient way to learn new vocabulary.

Learning new vocabulary through a timed activity based on a personalized alphabet is a technique that includes all the components that are necessary to generate dopamine in the brain. This technique includes little attainable challenges which are not too high for learning purposes. The challenges will be determined by the time they establish as a goal. The process will include constant personal achievements that will make students feel able to learn progressively. Those personal goals will be helpful to increase the level of dopamine in the brain. In other words, as the students reach their goals, their motivation will grow during the language acquisition process through high levels of dopamine.

The technique will make students learn with a positive behavior, which is one of the most important factors that determine the quality of students' learning during the language acquisition. Students need to feel comfortable in the class. Otherwise, they will not be able to exploit their abilities to the maximum. The students will learn through an active and interactive learning. They will not be limited to be sitting on a chair while they remember a list of words as many traditional vocabulary acquisition techniques. Since students will overcome little challenges several times, they will advance considerably in comparison to the development they show in regular writing techniques.

Through this technique, little changes are included in the didactic process, but those changes do not affect the curricular design the teacher should follow for academic purposes. It means that the teacher will not have to alter the order, type, or amount of information during the teaching process. Instead, the teacher will only have to modify the way in which that information is provided. Those little modifications will definitely generate important advances in the class. The same information can be provided through different methods, and this technique is one of those. Just because the different topics in primary or secondary have been taught through the same techniques, it does not mean that those techniques are the most appropriate.

Through the previous data, it is possible to perceive how the brain tends to repeat actions that involve production of dopamine. For that reason, reaching achievements can be addictive somehow. If students succeed in the goals they establish during the activity, probably, those students will have the desire to repeat the process that made them succeed in that activity. This type of technique would make students be more interested in learning, which is something difficult to obtain sometimes. Teaching has become a repetitive process in which most of students are not interested in the learning itself. Certainly, there are exceptions, but most of them participate in didactic activities since they are part of the requirements to pass the different courses during the year.

This chapter included important data, which was useful to analyze from previous investigations that have been done related to this research. It was possible to see all the topics that have been studied regarding this investigation; however, it was also clear to perceive the fields that needed to be investigated as well. This section is a good tool to prove the effectiveness of using a personalized alphabet through a timed activity to improve the language acquisition. According to all the theories described in this chapter, learning new words requires well designed procedures. This process has different components that have to be considered carefully. For that reason, making students remember a list of words might not be the best way to teach new vocabulary.

Chapter III

Methodological Framework

This chapter will specify the type of institution that will be used to develop the research by providing characteristics about its internal and external components. It will describe its methodology and type of teaching. This chapter will also explain the type of students that will be chosen to participate during the investigation and the reasons why they will be considered as part of this research. Finally, all the different sources of information selected for supporting this investigation will be named as well. In other words, it will be possible to perceive all the theoretical factors that will influence this chapter.

3.1 Research Approach

3.1.1 qualitative method.

This investigation will be focused on a qualitative approach. A qualitative approach is defined as: “Empirical research where the data are not in the form of numbers” (Punch, 1998, p.4). It is the reason why this investigation uses this kind of approach. The objectives are not based on numerical criteria, but in qualities and characteristics. Evidently, this approach fits with the expectations and goals established for the investigation. This research tries to measure improvements in spelling, capacity of retention regarding English vocabulary, and facility for vocabulary acquisition.

3.1.2 quantitative method.

A quantitative approach is also used in this investigation. This approach is defined as: “A way to quantify the problem by generating numerical data or data that can be transformed into usable statistics” (DeFranzo, 2011, parr.3). In the quantitative approach,

the research purposes depend on literature, also in the descriptions, evaluations, identifications, and measurement of results. So, in other words, this approach is included since results are also analyzed through numerical aspects as well.

3.2 Research Design

The three objectives of the investigation are: to identify deficiencies regarding use of vocabulary during the language acquisition process, to apply a timed activity based on a personalized alphabet to improve spelling and retention of words during the language acquisition process, and to evaluate the efficiency of using a timed activity based on a personalized alphabet as a technique to improve spelling and retention of words in the language acquisition process. Each of them will require a different instrument to guarantee their impact at the end of the research. Those instruments will be designed according to each objective, and they will be reliable ways to measure final results.

First, the observer will identify the main obstacles that might affect the learning process in the class through one instrument. Different kinds of factors are going to be analyzed, such as: methodological aspects, environmental conditions, and even characteristics of the students. The first step will be based on detecting all the circumstances that interfere with the learning process regarding language acquisition. Before applying any strategy to correct a specific problem, it is necessary to know the root of it. Moreover, in order to know that, it is crucial to apply a deep analysis that evaluates the issue as a whole.

After obtaining information of all the aspects that interfere with the learning process, the students will be given a list of questions that will be useful to collect information regarding the condition of the students specifically. This section will be done

through an instrument that will be fundamental to know the level of English that students have, the experience they have faced in previous years regarding English learning, as well as different ways they feel during the learning process when it comes to language acquisition. Their points of view can definitely provide a better perspective about the things that should be reinforced in the class.

After recovering information regarding all the possible factors that might affect the learning process, the timed activity with the personalized alphabet is applied in the class. The students will be given a sheet of paper that includes an alphabet composed of symbols instead of letters. Even though the symbols were chosen by the researcher, the person who uses it as a methodological strategy will have the opportunity to modify the alphabet through other characters if he or she desires.

The same sheet includes seven words at the bottom. Those words will be written in Spanish, but they will also have their translation in English next to them. However, instead of letters, the translation will be given through symbols. The students will have to determine the written translation of each word by exchanging symbols for their corresponding letters through the use of the personalized alphabet. In other words, the activity will be based on replacing symbols by letters until the students get the full translation of the seven words.

The students will have to write down the time they spent in the translation of the seven words. The researcher will place a clock in front of the class, so the students can determine the minutes or seconds they lasted at the end of the procedure. The sheet will have a specific space at the end, so the students can write down the time. Since this process is repeated several times, the students will be asked to lower their time in each round. The idea is to conclude the same process with a better time in each round. That would

definitely increase the motivation, concentration, and the effectiveness during the language acquisition process.

Once the students have completed the translation and written down the time at the end of the process, they will be asked to continue with the activity through the next step. On the other side of the sheet, the same seven words will be given to the students. However, in this part, those words will be provided in Spanish only, and they will not include any symbolism next to them. Students will have to write all the translations they remember for each of the seven words provided in the first step. The idea is to see how many words students are able to remember and how well those words are written by them. The amount of remembered words and the amount of wrongly spelled words will be assessed separately. This part does not include any timing section.

All this process is repeated three times with the same seven words, and each round is composed of exactly the same procedure. The only difference between the three rounds is the time students spend in the translation. Even though they will be asked to do the same dynamic three times, they will have to overcome the time they lasted in the previous round. It might look meaningless to repeat the same three times; however, it will prove the importance of using repetitions during the learning process when it comes vocabulary acquisition.

It is necessary to highlight an important aspect: the amount of wrongly spelled words and the amount of memorized words. They will be two categories that will be assessed separately. However, not all the words that are spelled incorrectly will be considered in the section of wrongly spelled words. Wrongly spelled words, refer to words that have any writing mistake, but they are still comprehensible. It does not matter if the word has one or more spelling mistakes. If the word still has meaning, it would

demonstrate that the student was conscious about the translation of the word, but the learner did not remember the way that word was spelled.

Once the information regarding amount of remembered words and amount of wrongly spelled words is collected and recorded in its corresponding instrument, a list of questions will be made in order to collect data based on personal opinions about the activity. These questions will be included in another different instrument. The teacher and students will have to provide answers about what they think of the activity as a strategy to acquire new vocabulary. The questions of the students will be based on their experience during the activity, and the questions of the teacher will be more focused on his or her opinion about the effectiveness of the technique in the class.

Finally, once those questions are applied, two different instruments will be used in order to prove the effectiveness of the technique. It is necessary to obtain final results through reliable data. Those instruments will measure the results of the students' progress during the whole process. Learners will have to provide several answers based on different types of questions, which will demonstrate how reliable and effective the personalized alphabet could be to make students learn new words in English. Those answers will definitely be important to obtain a better conclusion.

3.3 Information Sources

All the sources, used in this research in order to obtain the results, are going to be described punctually. Students who participated during the procedure of data collection became the main source of information that contributed in the investigation. Students, participants, and even teachers were the factors that affected directly the research, so they will be included as part of all the other sources of information used in this thesis.

However, primary, secondary, and even tertiary sources of information that were part of the theoretical framework will also be included in this section since they were used as important tools to relate theoretical aspects to practical procedures.

3.3.1 primary sources.

Information of the institution is the first aspect that will be included in sources information. The name of the institution in which the research is going to be developed is Colegio Dr. Ricardo Moreno Cañas. It is a public high school that is located in Zaragoza, Palmares, Alajuela. It is composed of several grades between seventh and eleventh. The number of students vary from one group to another. However, most of the groups have around twenty-three students. Even though every high school in Costa Rica is different, this institution is not big in comparison to most of the public high schools that are located in populated places. This high school is not located at the very center of the district, so it reduces the amount of the students significantly.

Students receive two types of English subjects in this high school: academic English subject and English laboratory. In academic English, students receive the general topics that are taught in all public high schools according to Ministerio de Educación Pública (MEP). The academic English subject covers the four skills: listening, reading, writing, and speaking. And those skills are taught through the national curriculum that is used for all institutions in Costa Rica.

On the other hand, the English laboratory works as a specific classroom in which students can reinforce all the aspects they study in English academic classes. In this lab, students are allowed to use internet and other digital materials through computers in order to enhance the different skills. Students are graded as any other subject in a high school,

and they are evaluated through all the normal evaluations that are used at any other educational institution.

Participants will be eleventh graders students. They are students that are around seventeen years old. Eleventh graders are students who have been more time at high school, and they have had more experiences regarding English vocabulary acquisition. One of the instruments require open answers, and these participants will be more able to provide better and concrete ideas at the end of the activity because of their five years of experience. It would be easier for them to compare the effectiveness of traditional writing techniques to the effectiveness of timed activities through a personalized alphabet.

It is necessary to use more neutral samples to obtain more reliable results. The younger students are, the easier they get distracted. Young students are more exposed to different types of distractions, and it might influence their answers during the activity. Even though a seventh grader student has a wide knowledge of English vocabulary, his/her answer can get affected more easily during the activity because of external aspects. Answers from younger students might not show what they are really able to do. It is the reason why eleventh graders are considered the best population for this research.

One of the most important problems of students from this institution is the low English performance during the national tests. According to some opinions, English is a subject that must be reinforced significantly in that high school. In addition, this is another reason why students from this institution will be taken into account as part of the research. Improvements are easier to observe when students have shown a low performance previously.

Taking a Time to Read Aloud is the name of a primary source of information that was considered in this research in order to analyze the advantages and disadvantages of

using the reading aloud method as a way to teach new vocabulary. This book covers all the general advantages of using that technique in the writing process. This source of information incorporates important data which are going to be necessary to study the effects of this technique in the class.

The book *The Research on Dictionary Use in the Context of Foreign Language Learning* is a primary source of information that is used to explain the positive and negative aspects of using dictionaries as a way to acquire vocabulary in the target language. It provides several points of view about the advantages and disadvantages of improving spelling through dictionaries. The information taken from this primary source is clear, precise and concrete. This also includes general and historical data regarding the use of dictionaries as a traditional method in education.

News Medical Life Sciences provides a primary source about an article made by a medical writer. It explains the importance of Dopamine regarding memory and comprehension in the learning process. The article proves the importance of Dopamine to enhance memory and understanding in students. It generates relevant conclusion that are going to be crucial to demonstrate the usefulness of strategies that require a high production of dopamine during the learning process. Timed activities based on personalized alphabets are based on a high production of this neurotransmitter.

Juego, Acertijos y Creatividad is the name of another primary source of information that was used to explain the importance of using riddles in the learning process. There are several types of riddles that can be used to make the learning process more effective and permanent, and some of them are explained in this investigation as part of the theoretical framework. This book also explains why those kinds of activities that require a solution are

excellent option to apply in the class. This primary source proves the necessity of incorporating more aggressive strategies

3.3.2 tertiary sources.

The advantages and disadvantages about Dictation as a traditional writing technique was explained through a tertiary source. “El Dictado en el Aula”, it is the name of a thesis that includes important details regarding concepts, effects, as well as positive and negative factors of using this type of writing technique in the writing process. That information was taken into account to strength the theoretical framework of this investigation. The source of information incorporated relevant ideas that were helpful to understand the impact of traditional strategies in education.

Reading Aloud in the Foreign Language Teaching is the name of another tertiary source of information that was considered to explain the disadvantages of using the reading aloud method as a technique to teach new vocabulary in the class. This source will be useful to perceive the negative effects of this traditional technique when it comes to learning new vocabulary in English classes. Common writing techniques does not necessary guarantee an enduring learning.

Two different tertiary sources of information are used to explain some of the most common mistakes in the writing process. Investigating Jordanian EFL Students’ Spelling Errors at Tertiary Level and University Students’ English Writing Problems: Diagnosis and Reedy, are name of thesis that are used to provide data regarding different types of writing mistakes. Those sources explain not only the types of writing mistakes, but also the reason why ESL learners are more susceptible to make them. It also explains the necessity of incorporating new techniques that help students improve their writing abilities.

Trastorno por Deficit de Atencion e Hiperactividad: Describiendo un Trastorno de la Ninez, la Adolescencia y la Adultez is the name of a tertiary source of information that is used to explain the relationship between a low production of Dopamine and the Attention Deficit Disorder symptoms. This source is a thesis that explains the importance of Dopamine in the learning process. It includes information about the symptoms a student might have as a result of a low production of that neurotransmitter, and it also provides conclusions that enhances this investigation.

A tertiary source of information is used to explain the importance of setting short-term goals in order to produce Dopamine in the brain. This source also explains the importance of feeling motivated as a way to produce this neurotransmitter as well. This information is taken from an article that is based on a book. The name of the article is Why Our Brains Like Short-Term Goals, and it explains deeply all the positive effects about setting personal goals. It provides relevant data about the need of using short personal goals as the main way to achieve success.

The article La Repetición es Buena para la Memoria is a tertiary source of information that provides very important data about the usage of repetitions as a way to activate the long-term memory. This source is taken from the website Blog de la Mente. The article is written by an external writer, and it is important to clarify doubts of this investigation. It supplies excellent ideas regarding activities that require repetitions to enhance the writing ability in students.

Finally, El Arte de Eseconder Mensajes and Como es la Sans Forgetica, la Nueva Fuente de Letra Creada por Cientificos para Ayudarte a Memorizar lo que Lees, are the names of the tertiary sources of information that provide very important data about unusual writings. These sources of information explain the most important characteristics of some

unusual writings that people have used through history. They include information about history, but they also include characteristics of each of them. Those sources explain how useful and common these types of writings were in the past. For that reason, they become an important part of this investigation as well.

3.4 Analysis Categories

The definition of activity is directly related to the necessary being active. Being active can create a big difference in the techniques teachers apply in their classes. The more active students are during their learning process, the more effective strategies can be. It is important to implement more aggressive techniques in the writing process. Making students keep sitting on a chair while the teacher explains the topic might not be the best way to make students learn effectively.

The definition of alphabet includes the word symbols. It means that alphabets can also be composed of other kinds of components different from letters. Alphabets are not limited to letters only. It is acceptable to change letter into symbols in the alphabet to incorporate more interesting and funny activities during the class. Using symbols instead of letter is not a common situation, and it can be used to add other creative ideas which can be very effective to improve the learning acquisition in English classes.

The definition of vocabulary is more limited to words than compound sentences. Learning vocabulary is not necessarily related to grammar, coherence, cohesion or organization of ideas. Learning and acquiring vocabulary is relatively different from learning how to write complex texts. Teaching grammar structures does not necessarily improve spelling, and it does not guarantee a good retention either. Improving spelling and

vocabulary acquisition should be taught through techniques that pay more attention to words specifically.

Those definitions provide an important conclusion: efficient techniques for a good vocabulary acquisition in a class must activate students, and they should be focused mainly on words rather than complex texts as a whole. Applying an activity that involves time and an alphabet to reinforce the vocabulary acquisition is an effective teaching method that would make students be active in the class as they learn and retain information regarding English vocabulary.

3.5 Data Collection Instruments

The first objective is focused on detecting deficiencies regarding use of vocabulary during the language acquisition process. The instruments that will be used to measure this objective will be a questionnaire and an observation checklist. A questionnaire will be useful to identify possible aspects that might affect the attitude of students in the class. This instrument includes questions that will be focused on determining more personal and subjective aspects during the learning process. In fact, not all the obstacles in academic processes are directly related to didactic factors. It is necessary to consider other external components that could interfere with the performance of the students.

The observation checklist will be necessary to analyze obstacles which can be related to more physical aspects in the class. There are cases where the physical space is not appropriate for an efficient learning process, and the observation checklist will be useful to take these factors into account. This instrument will identify or discard all those types of interferences that could be affecting the learning during the language acquisition

process. Academic processes involve other types of considerations which can be ignored or overlooked.

Two questionnaires and two grading scales will be used to measure the second objective. One questionnaire will be used to get opinions of the participants once they have already used the technique, and the other questionnaire will be used to get opinions of the teacher regarding the use of that technique as a strategy to facilitate the language acquisition. Getting conclusions through assumptions is not a reliable and professional way to measure objectives. For that reason, the questionnaires used in this second objective will be focused on collecting answers which will be based on opinions about the use of the personalized alphabet as a tool to acquire new vocabulary in English classes.

The grading scales will be extremely necessary to perceive and record the improvement of students regarding spelling and retention of words after using the personalized alphabet. Concrete and palpable results are always crucial to measure the effectiveness of any investigation. The grading scales will guarantee how useful this technique is when it comes to writing and memorization of English words. Those instruments will definitely provide credibility to the research. They will be necessary to avoid getting conclusions from subjective results only.

One checklist and a questionnaire will be used to measure the third objective. The checklist is an excellent tool to realize if the goal was reached successfully or not. Marking all those statement that were achieved is a reliable and practical way to evaluate final results. Its simplicity provides results that are more concrete and easy to measure. Also, since it is composed of close questions, the answers are more precise, and it will facilitate the interpretation of a final conclusion. The checklist used for this third objective will

prevent the wide variety of answers which might generate confusing results at the end of the research.

On the other hand, the questionnaire used in this third objective is similar to the questionnaires used previously; however, the questions are different. The use of a questionnaire provides the students the possibility to share personal opinions about how has been their experience throughout all the activity. Once again, the use of this instrument will also allow the participants to touch other points of view which are not included in other instruments. Both subjective and objective answers are equally necessary. Objective answers facilitates the collection of more concrete and direct results, and the subjective answers are important to cover deeper data which might provide useful information regarding other aspects.

3.6 Collection Data Process and Data Analysis

The questionnaire and the observation checklist will be the two instruments which are going to be used to achieve the first objective. In the case of the questionnaire, it will be composed of thirteen closed questions that will include three possible answers: “sí”, “no”, and “no responde”. Those questions will be applied at the beginning of the process, and they will be necessary to collect information about all the possible factors that might interfere with the learning process. Those questions do not require any English knowledge. Instead, the students will only have to respond based on their experience as English learners.

The observation checklist will be another instrument which will be necessary to measure other factors that might be affecting the learning process in the class. The observation checklist includes ten items in which the observer will have to answer them by

checking either “yes”, “no”, or “not observed”. However, it will also include an extra space with the name of “comments” in case the observer wants to provide an opinion. This observation checklist only includes closed questions that will be crucial to determine other types of obstacles. The questions are more focused on analyzing physical aspects, attitude of the students, and methodology rather than opinions of students. This instrument will be applied at the time the questionnaire is implemented.

Two questionnaires and two grading scales will be used to measure the second objective. In this section, all those instruments are implemented once the activity with the personalized alphabet has been applied. One questionnaire will be intended for students and the other one for the professor. In the first one, students will have to respond five open questions based on their experience using the personalized alphabet as a technique to acquire new vocabulary. In the second one, the teacher will have to answer three open questions based on her point of view about the technique as a tool to teach vocabulary through a different way. Those answers will be useful to collect subjective opinions regarding the effectiveness of the technique.

In the case of the grading scales, each one will measure two different aspects. The first grading scale will measure the amount of wrongly spelled words in each round. It will be composed of three criteria and four grading criteria. The criteria are: wrongly spelled words in the first attempt, wrongly spelled words in the second attempt, and wrongly spelled words in the third attempt. The grading criteria are: needs improvement (6-7 misspelled words), regular (4-5 misspelled words), good (2-3 misspelled words), and excellent (0-1 misspelled words). This grading scale will be filled according to the amount of wrongly spelled words that each student obtained during each of the three rounds of the activity.

The second grading scale will measure the amount of memorized words during each round. This grading scale will be composed of three criteria and four grading criteria. The criteria are: memorized words in the first attempt, memorized words in the second attempt, and memorized words in the third attempt. The grading criteria are: excellent (6-7 words), good (4-5 words), regular (2-3 words), and needs improvement (0-1 words). Once again, this grading scale will be filled according to the amount of memorized words that each student obtained during each of the three rounds of the activity.

A checklist and a questionnaire will be used to measure the third objective. In the case of the checklist, it is composed of twelve statements about facts related to the use of the personalized alphabet as a technique to learn new vocabulary. The students will have to mark with an "X" the statements which they are more identified with. In other words, if the student agrees with one statement, he or she will have to mark with an "X" the space that belongs to that statement. This instrument does not include neither open questions nor several possible answers in each statement.

Finally, the questionnaire will be the other instrument used to measure the third objective. This questionnaire will be intended for students, and it will include ten closed questions. Once again, each item will be based on the experience students had during the activity with the personalized alphabet. Each question will have only three answers: "si", "no", and "no responde". It means that it will not allow answers which are not included within those three options. Through this instrument, it will be possible to measure not only subjective opinions, but also objectives aspects.

Chapter IV

Data Analysis

Judd, McClelland, and Ryan (2011) affirms that “data represents the basic scores or observation, usually, but not always numerical, that we want to analyze” (p.1). According to this concept, it is possible to conclude that this chapter will be focused on analyzing all the scores and observations obtained through the instruments explained in chapter three. This section will be necessary to interpret the results easily. Also, through this chapter four, the reader will be able to prove the effectiveness of the personalized alphabet as a way to improve the vocabulary acquisition process. The information explained in this chapter will be exclusively related to the instruments used in this investigation: an observation checklist, four questionnaires, two grading scales, and a checklist.

4.1 Analysis and Interpretation of the Results

As it was explained in the previous chapter, different types of instruments were chosen for this research. Each instrument was carefully selected, and all of them fit perfectly in the characteristics of each objective. The data related to these instruments are going to be explained through an orderly manner. It means that the first instruments to be analyzed are the ones that correspond to the first objective. Subsequently, the next instruments will be the ones corresponding to the second objective; and finally, the ones that correspond to the third objective.

4.1.1 Observation checklist

According to Collins English Dictionary (2018), observation can be defined as: “the action or process of carefully watching someone or something”. This definition explains the importance of this observation checklist during this research. The main idea of this

instrument was to collect information regarding different types of factors which might interfere with the learning process when it comes to language acquisition. Different types of factors were observed through this instrument, and all of them will be explained extensively. This observation checklist was developed into the segments mentioned hereunder.

Materials.

The purpose of this rubric was to perceive the quantity and quality of materials used in the class during the language acquisition process. An adequate material is an important tool which can enhance the vocabulary acquisition. For that reason, it was necessary to consider this factor in this observation checklist. However, according to the observation, students had abundant material in the class. Several books were used in the class, such as: Teen 2 Teen and Interchange. Those books are used as tools to reinforce not only theoretical aspects, but also practical aspects. In addition, different types of dictionaries were available in the class. In other words, the type and quantity of material seems not to be an obstacle in the class.

Amount of students.

The amount of students sometimes represents an important inconvenient when it comes to learning vocabulary. For that reason, the amount of students was also another factor that was incorporated in this observation checklist. In general terms, the amount of students in the class was appropriate. The class was composed of fifteen students approximately. According to previous investigations, the adequate amount of students should range from ten to twelve students. However, fifteen students is a manageable number for a class. So, as a conclusion, the amount of students did not seem to be an inconvenient according to the observation.

Attitude of students towards the class.

It is not correct to assume that all the students behave exactly the same way. Of course, there were little differences regarding the attitude of each student in the class. However, it was possible to perceive that most of the students did not look very interested in the class. They seemed not to be involved in the learning process. It was clear to perceive that most of them were bored not only during the explanations, but also during the development of the activities. The teacher constantly had to struggle with this difficulty. Undoubtedly, the attitude of the students towards the class was one of the biggest problems that interfered with the language acquisition process.

Physical space of the class.

The classroom was also analyzed during the observation. This rubric intended to determine how appropriate the physical space was. Definitely, it is necessary to consider the space in which a class is given. Sometimes, the classroom does not meet the requirements to guarantee an efficient learning. However, in this case, this aspect did not represent any obstacle. The classroom had the appropriate space for the implementation of almost any type of activity. Moreover, chairs, desks, whiteboard, markers and other components were in perfect conditions.

Participation equality.

Differences regarding participation sometimes determines inequalities in the performance of the students. It is fundamental to guarantee equality when it comes to participation in the class in order to provide an efficient teaching. This was the objective of this rubric during the observation. In fact, this aspect became an important obstacle during the teaching process. The reason is that not all the students participated in the same way, and it was possible to perceive important differences regarding participation. Only some specific students participated constantly during the whole class.

Class time.

As any other important component, the time of each class is a relevant factor that has to be considered in this observation checklist. The amount and quality of time during each lesson sometimes might represent an inconvenient for an appropriate learning. However, the group in analysis receives English classes two days per week, and each day, they receive three lessons. In other words, the amount of time does not seem to be a factor that affects the quality of learning in the class.

Environment in the class.

The environment in which the students learn was also an important part of this instrument. This rubric intended to perceive how comfortable and adequate the environment was for the students. Knowing the relationship between students, as well as the relationship between students and teacher, was the purpose of this point. But, according to the observation, the environment could not have been better. Students respected and helped each other, and the teacher showed an excellent behavior towards them all the time.

Frequency of questions.

Asking the same questions several times might not be a good sign when it comes to learning processes. It is completely comprehensible when a student is not able to understand an explanation at the first, second, or even third attempt. However, when most of students ask practically the same questions several times, it is necessary to evaluate the way the information is provided, and this was the objective for this rubric. Unfortunately, in general terms, the students constantly asked the same questions. The explanations and techniques in the class seemed to be deficient and inappropriate. Students constantly asked the meaning of the same words over and over again, and they looked unable to retain information regarding writing and meaning of vocabulary.

Students with disabilities.

It is important to discard any possible disability that interferes negatively with the development of the students. For that reason, this rubric was incorporated in this instrument. The observation indicated that the deficiencies regarding vocabulary acquisition are not due to visible physical limitations that affect the learning process. Only few students have minor sight problems. However, all of them were sitting in front of the class, and none of them expressed to feel any difficulty that affects the language acquisition process.

Type of questions.

Undoubtedly, the type of questions that students ask is definitely a good parameter to determine the English level students have regarding vocabulary. Most of them asked very simple and basic questions which they were supposed to know. Through the type of questions that students asked, it was possible to perceive that they have important weaknesses regarding vocabulary. They constantly asked questions about the writing and meaning of very simple words. It was clear to observe that the lack of vocabulary was the weakest aspect during the observation.

4.1.2 Questionnaires.

Several questionnaires were applied during this research through the different three objectives. Two of them are based on closed questions, and two of them are composed of open questions. All of them are going to be explained in the next section. However, since there are several questionnaires distributed in the different objectives, they will be divided into three categories: objective 1, objective 2, and objective 3. The questionnaires that include open questions will be explained through a written form, and questionnaires that include closed questions will be explained through graphics.

According to Collins English Dictionary (2018), a questionnaire can be defined as “a written list of questions which are answered by a lot of people in order to provide information for a report or a survey”. This definition explains the purpose of these questionnaires in this investigation. The data provided through these instruments will show different answers based on various perspectives. In order to collect this information, it was necessary to take into account the points of view of many students.

1 Objective.

The first objective includes a questionnaire that is composed of several closed questions, which have three possible answers in each item: yes, no, and no answer. The questions related to this instrument intend to collect information about the experience that students have had regarding the language acquisition process. The results showed in this questionnaire will be useful to perceive personal factors that might interfere with the vocabulary acquisition when it comes to English classes. It is important to explain that not all the questions were selected in this section. Only the most relevant questions were chosen in order to avoid repetitive results.

The first question of this questionnaire intends to detect how common dictionaries, the reading aloud technique, and dictations are in English classes as didactic tools during the vocabulary acquisition process. The results obtained in this question will be necessary to analyze the variety of techniques that professors implement in English classes. The results of this questions will be explained through the next graphic.

Figure # 1

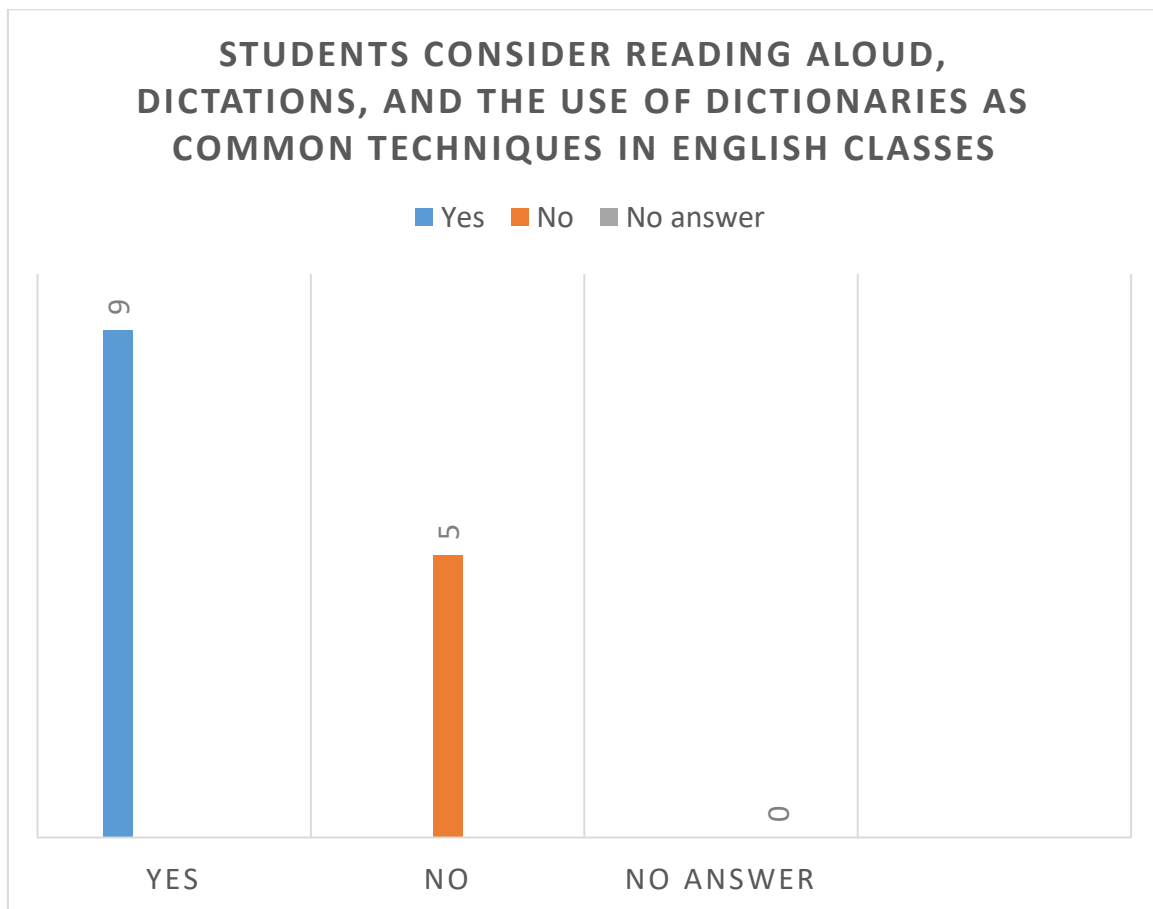


Figure 1 shows students' considerations about common techniques on English class.

Source: Researcher's create

As the previous graphic shows, there is an important difference in the answers that students provided. Among the fourteen students that participated in this questionnaire, nine students expressed that dictionaries, dictations, and the reading aloud technique are common techniques that professors use in English classes as didactic tools. Five students considered that those techniques are not common for them, and anyone decided to reserve their opinion.

Since most of them expressed to be familiarized with those three techniques, it is possible to conclude that those three techniques are commonly used in English classes.

Evidently, if a great majority of students show important deficiencies regarding knowledge and writing of English words, undoubtedly, the techniques that professors use to teach vocabulary represent a negative factor that interferes with the language acquisition process. If a technique does not provide positive results, it is inappropriate to continue using it. In other words, the reading aloud technique, dictations, and the use of dictionaries do not show an important effectiveness when it comes to acquiring new vocabulary.

Another question that was chosen as part of this section was the question number four. This question intended to prove that students constantly forget not only the meaning of words, but also their writing. The results of this question will be useful to specify the weaknesses that students have regarding knowledge of English vocabulary. The results will be explained in the next graphic.

Figure # 2

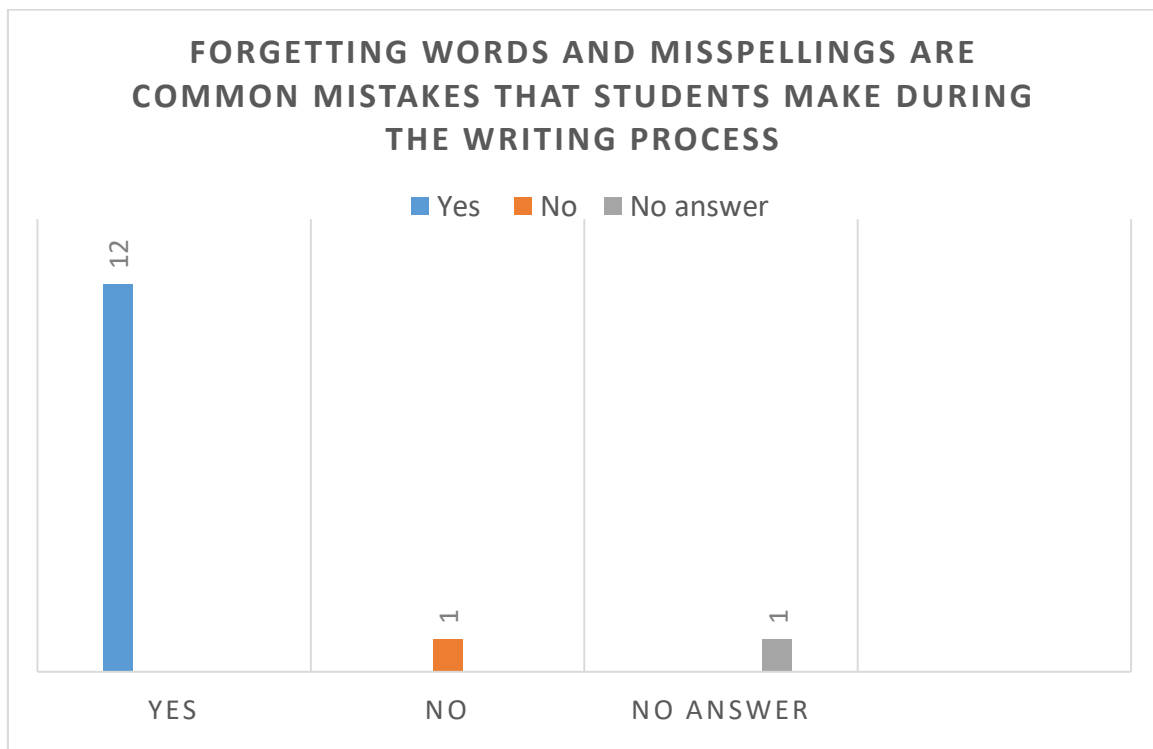


Figure 2 shows common mistakes students make during the writing process.

Source: Researcher's create.

The previous graphic determines important data when it comes to specific problems that students face when they write in English. Among the fourteen participants, twelve students considered that forgetting words and misspellings are common mistakes they make when they write in English. On the other hand, one student expressed that forgetting words and misspellings are not common mistakes in the writing process, and only one student decided to reserve the opinion.

Those results prove an important fact: retention of vocabulary and misspellings are two of the most significant weaknesses that students face when they write in English. This represents a negative factor that has to be corrected. These numbers demonstrate that students have troubles not only with the writing of words, but also with their capacity to remember vocabulary. Through these answers, it is possible to conclude that writing mistakes are not always related to grammatical structures issues. Writing is a complex field, and it involves many components which are omitted many times.

Another question that was considered in this section was the question number five. The results obtained through this question will be helpful to analyze the way in which a limited vocabulary affects the quality of written sentences in the target language. This question intends to determine how negative a deficient vocabulary can be for writing purposes. It might look that weaknesses regarding vocabulary is not fact that affects the writing of sentences significantly. However, the consequences could be more serious than it looks. The results about this question will be explained in the next graphic.

Figure # 3

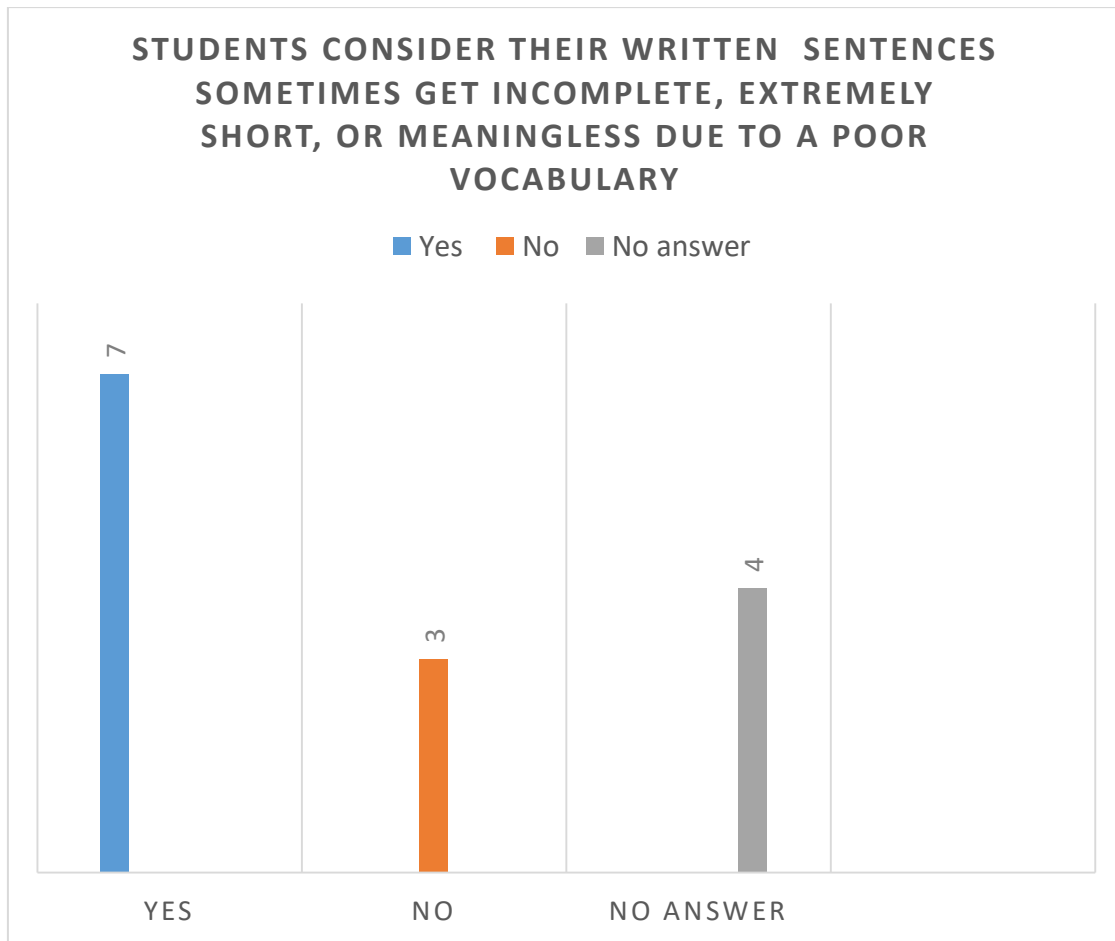


Figure 3 illustrates students' considerations due to poor vocabulary.

Source: Researcher's create.

This graphic shows several different types of answers; however, it is remarkable to perceive a slight difference which is enough to obtain an important conclusion at the end. Among the fourteen participants, seven of them considered that their written sentences sometimes get incomplete, extremely short, or meaningless. Three participants think that this problem is not an inconvenient that affects the quality of their sentences, and four of them decided to reserve their opinion.

Those results are enough to comprehend that a limited vocabulary affects the quality of written sentences significantly. When a students does not know an English word

or simply forgets its writing, the student will probably face an important inconvenient in the writing process. The sentences might get incomplete, extremely short or even meaningless due to the lack of an abundant vocabulary. Both, misspelling and a limited knowledge of words generates this negative aspect. A student can perfectly know the grammatical structure of a sentences or a text; however, if the student uses a wrong word or makes a mistake regarding spelling, it could definitely affect the main idea.

The question number seven was also selected in this section. This question collects relevant data about what the students think of some common writing techniques that professors use in English classes as tools to enhance the vocabulary acquisition. The question is focused on determining how boring those techniques are for them. The question will also be important to measure the motivation of students every time they use those techniques during English classes. The results will be shown in the next graphic.

Figure # 4

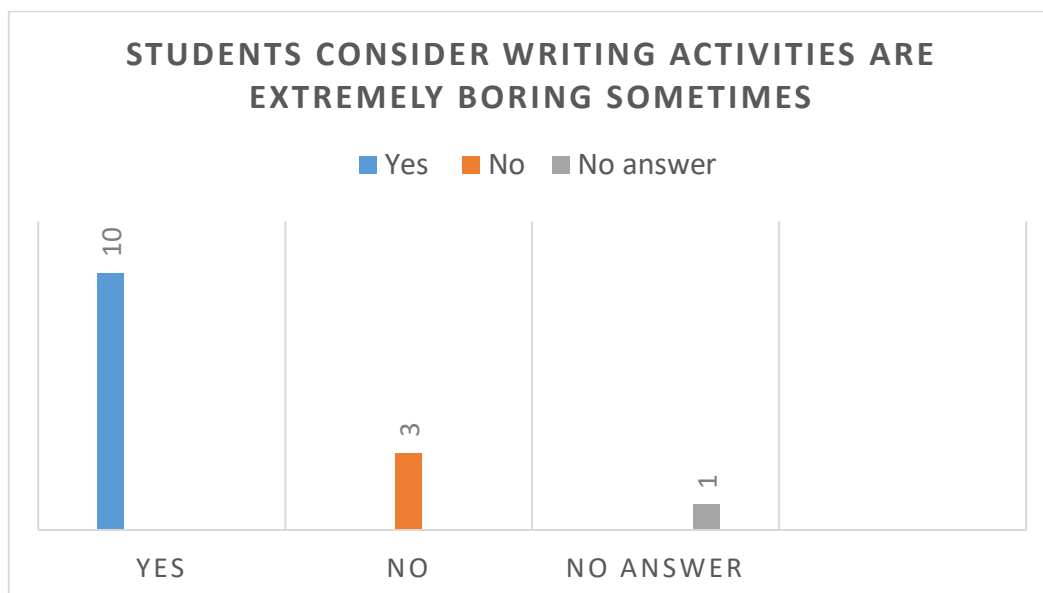


Figure 4 presents students' thought about how boring writing activities might be sometimes.

Source: Researcher's create.

The results show a predominant answer which is enough to obtain a concrete conclusion. According to the results, among the fourteen students that participated in this questionnaire, ten students considered that common writing techniques are extremely boring sometimes. Three students expressed that common writing techniques are not boring, and only one student preferred to reserve the opinion.

As it was explained in the theoretical framework, motivation provides countless benefits for students. It is crucial in the learning process. However, it seems that the lack of motivation in English classes is a common factor. Motivation increases not only the capacity to learn, but also the capacity to retain new information for longer periods. Undoubtedly, an effective technique should be focused on motivating the students as they learn. If common writing techniques are extremely boring, students will not advance properly in the writing process. It is necessary to create techniques in which students enjoy the learning process in order to guarantee an effective and enduring learning.

The next question selected was number nine. This question is fundamental to know the perspective of some students about their opinions regarding the type of techniques they prefer inside the classroom. The question intends to collect necessary information in order to confirm if students prefer to learn by doing, or if, instead, they prefer to learn through less interactive techniques. The results regarding this question will be useful to obtain conclusions based on opinions of students. As in the previous cases, the results will be shown in the next graphic.

Figure # 5

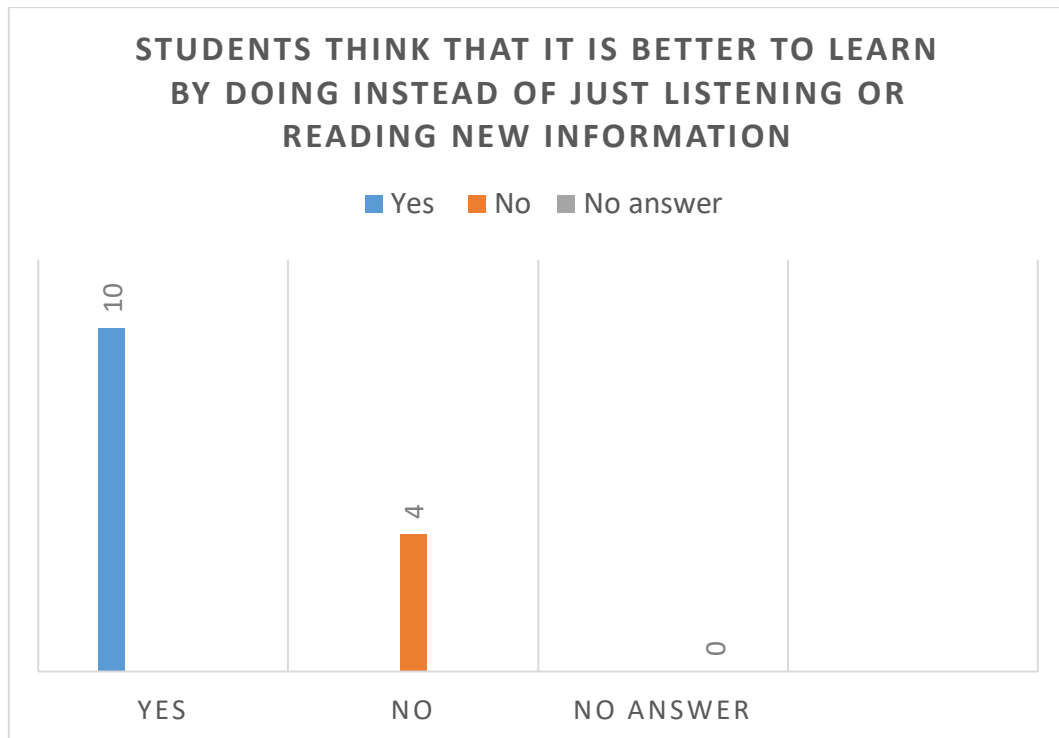


Figure 5 illustrates students' thought about learning by doing. .

Source: Researcher's create

Graphic number five shows a predominant answer regarding the question number nine. Among the fourteen students that were part of this questionnaire, ten students expressed that they prefer to learn by doing instead of just listening or reading new information. Four students expressed that they prefer to learn by using passive skills, such as listening and reading. And, finally, zero students preferred to reserve their opinion regarding this question.

These results prove that students prefer to learn through techniques in which they feel forced to put into practice what they are trying to learn. It might seem that passive and active techniques do not determine an important difference at the end of a learning process. However, as it was explained in the theoretical framework, when a person puts into

practice new knowledge, the brain feels more forced to retain that information for longer periods. That definitely improves the quality of learning. For that reason, it is fundamental to implement techniques that require an active learning.

Question number ten is considered in this section as well since it represents an inconvenient that usually happens in English classes during the vocabulary acquisition process. This question will be useful to perceive how frequent students forget the meaning and writing of English words even after the teacher has already provided that information. This question will be necessary to prove the effectiveness of some of the most common techniques used in writing. The results will be included in the next graphic.

Figure # 6

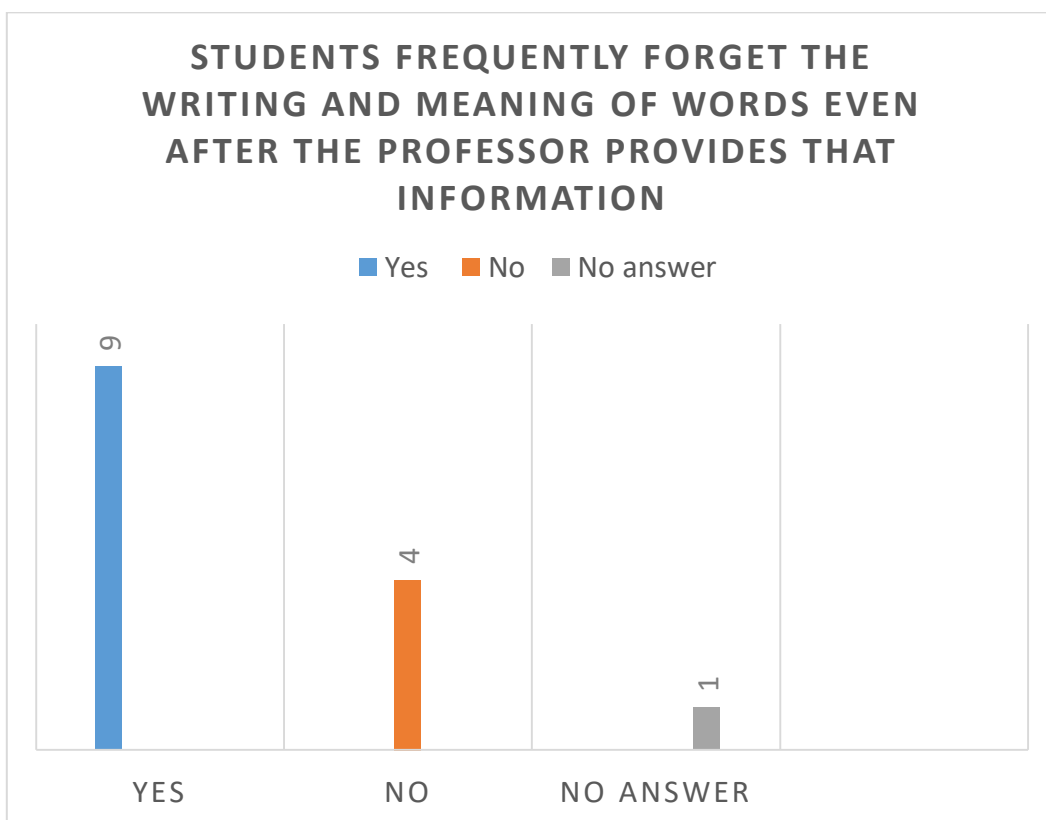


Figure 6 shows results of how frequent students forget the meaning and writing of words.

Source: Researcher's create.

According to the results obtained in the previous graphic, it is possible to observe valuable data, which are fundamental in this section. Among the fourteen students that participated in this questionnaire, nine students considered that they frequently forget the meaning and the writing of words even after the teacher has already provided that information. Four students considered that this is not a factor that affects their performance, and one student preferred to reserve the opinion.

Through these results, it is completely valid to assume that this problem is not always related to a deficient teacher's performance. Even though the role of the teacher interferes significantly with the development of the class, it is necessary to analyze other components, such as the type of techniques. This negative factor is directly related to the fact that students need to get involved in an active learning. A factor in which they feel forced to put into practice what they are trying to learn in order to improve the retention of new information.

The next question that was incorporated in this section was the question number eleven. The results obtained through this question will be crucial to determine how reliable the information included in the theoretical framework is. This question is focused on knowing how motivated students feel when they are able to finish a task successfully. These answers will be an excellent parameter to know the emotions and feelings that they experience towards experiences that involve success. The results will be included in the next graphic.

Figure # 7

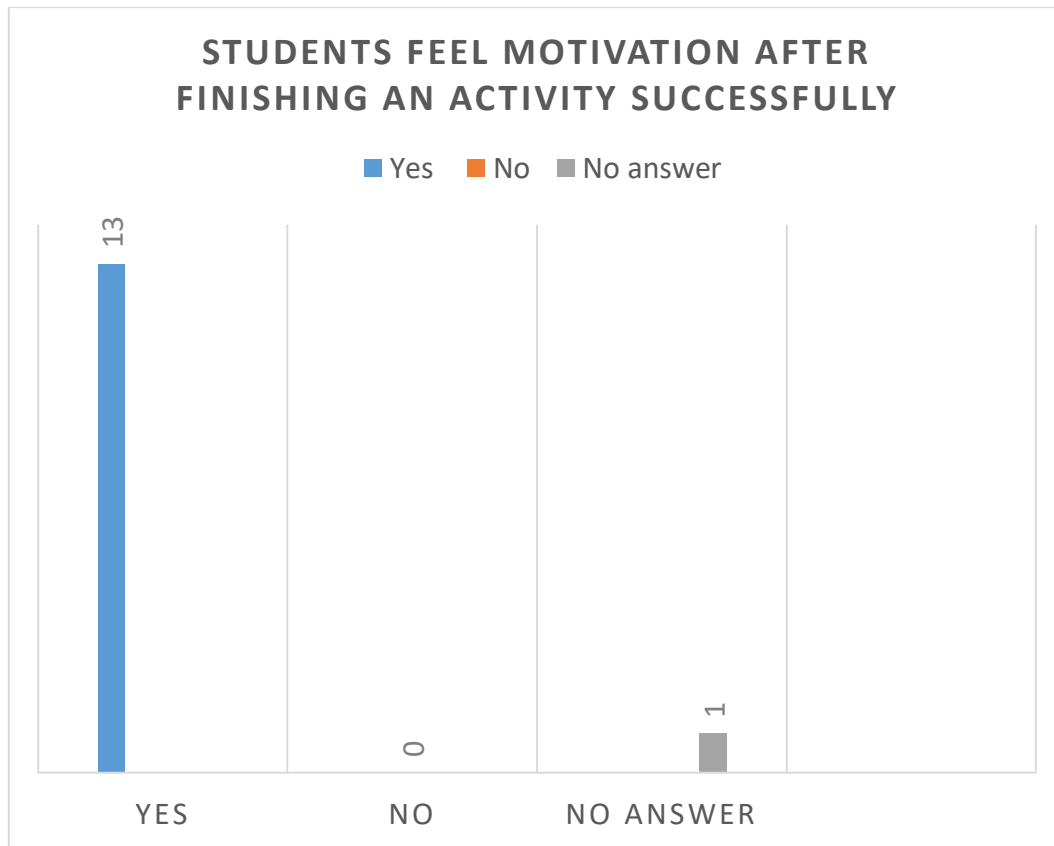


Figure 7 illustrates the students' motivation after finishing an activity successfully..

Source: Researcher's create.

These numbers regarding this graphic are clear and concrete. It shows an unquestionable difference which is enough to obtain a conclusion. Among the fourteen students that participated in the questionnaire, thirteen students expressed that they feel motivation after finishing an activity successfully. Zero students think that they do not feel motivation after finishing an activity successfully, and only one student decided to reserve the opinion.

This important difference is enough to assume the next statement: techniques in which students can overcome personal challenges can definitely increase the motivation

during the learning process. Evidently, this would improve the quality of learning. In other words, every time a student is able to succeed in a specific task, the capacity to comprehend and retain new information will definitely progress. Through this statement, it is possible to conclude that techniques in which students can perceive their personal advance are undoubtedly effective during the vocabulary acquisition process.

Finally, the last question considered as part of this section was question number twelve. This interrogate intends to determine the relationship between entertainment and learning. The answers provided in this inquiry can be crucial to comprehend the importance of considering motivation in English classes. As the other questions, the students answered between three possible options. Once again, the results will be included in the next graphic.

Figure # 8

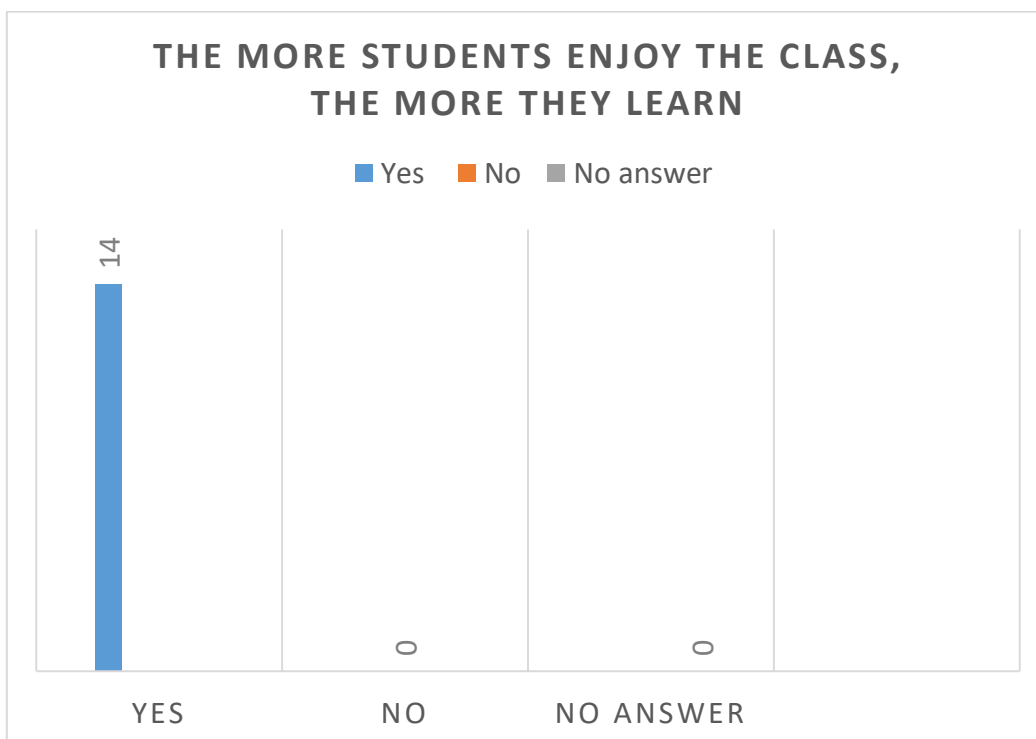


Figure 8 shows the results on the more students enjoy the class, the more they learn.

Source: Researcher's create.

Once again, the results regarding question number twelve show a notable difference. Among the fourteen students considered as part of this questionnaire, all of them considered the more they enjoy a class, the more they learn. Anyone expressed a different answer. The fourteen students agreed with their points of view regarding this question.

According to graphic number eight, it is unquestionable to assume that an effective learning is directly related to the entertainment. Through the previous graphic, it is possible to observe that entertainment is a missing component during the English classes. The more entertained a class is, the more students learn. When students feel bored, their quality of learning decreases significantly. Techniques in English classes must be interesting enough in order to catch the attention of all the students. These results are helpful to comprehend that a boring class can affect the vocabulary acquisition process.

2 Objective.

The second objective includes two different questionnaires that are composed of opened questions. Both are going to be explained through a written form in this section. These questionnaires intend to collect information about the different points of view that students and the teacher have regarding the use of the personalized alphabet as a tool to enhance the vocabulary acquisition process. Both questionnaires were implemented once the technique was applied. One questionnaire collected the teacher's opinions about the activity, and the other questionnaire collected different opinions that students had based on their experience with the technique.

The first questionnaire to be explained in this section is the one that includes the teacher's opinions regarding the technique. This questionnaire is composed of three open questions. Through this instrument, the teacher will explain the reasons why she considers

this technique is effective for the language acquisition process. There are not any short answer questions in this questionnaire. This will definitely allow the teacher to be specific and concrete with her answers.

The first question is focused on detecting the way in which a limited vocabulary affects the writing quality on English learners. This question collects an answer that is based on personal experiences. The teacher is clear in her opinion. She affirms that a limited vocabulary can affect the writing of sentences. The educator explains that students normally feel insecure the moment they write. The reason is how they constantly ask the meaning of words during the writing process.

As the teacher explains in her answer, the writing of sentences is definitely one of the most important deficiencies that students have during the writing process. Undoubtedly, this factor occurs due to a limited vocabulary. If students do not know how to write a word, their quality of writing can get affected significantly. Therefore, at the end, this could definitely affect the writing of more complex texts as well. An extensive knowledge of vocabulary is directly related to an appropriate writing.

The second question intends to analyze what the teacher thinks about the use of the personalized alphabet as a tool to improve the learning and retention of new words during the vocabulary acquisition process. The professor does not hesitate in her answer. According to her answer, students keep concentrated on the learning process since the technique is a different way to acquire new vocabulary. Also, she affirms that students consider the activity interesting because they get involved in a process in which they have to figure out the writing of each word.

The educator's answer is related to several data explained in the theoretical framework. Figuring out data, in order to complete a task successfully, it is an effective way to teach new vocabulary since students need to be more concentrated on the activity. Learning techniques need to demand a certain degree of effort in order to generate an enduring learning. Otherwise, the information will be forgotten easily. It is important to make students get involved in active techniques that require a certain degree of complexity.

The last question for this questionnaire is focused on determining the effectiveness of the personalized alphabet in order to improve the writing of words in English. This interrogate is more concentrated on spelling instead of retention of words. The professor responds positively. She explains that since each word is composed of symbols, students feel forced to pay specific attention to each letter during the activity. In other words, students pay specific attention to how those words are written in the target language.

By replacing symbols by letters, students definitely pay specific attention to the orthography of words in the target language. It is an excellent way to improve the writing of words in English, which is one of the most important things that have to be enhanced on English learners. In many other vocabulary acquisition techniques, students are limited to participate in a passive learning where the only thing they have to do is to read and remember words through repetitive periods. Moreover, as it was explained in the theoretical framework, monotonous and boring techniques are not adequate for an appropriate learning.

As it was elucidated previously, another questionnaire was also implemented in order to collect opinions of the participants. These opinions are based on the experience they had with the personalized alphabet as a tool to learn new vocabulary. In this questionnaire, the learners provided points of view about what they think of the technique.

It is composed of five open questions, and it does not include any short answer question. All the answers are going to be explained through a general form.

Starting with question number one, it intends to collect information regarding what they think about learning with a different alphabet through personal challenges. All of them answered this question positively. Most of them expressed that learning with a personalized alphabet is challenging, funny, and effective during the vocabulary acquisition process. They expressed that the technique is an excellent way to learn easily and faster. Others explained that the fact of including a different alphabet is an interesting aspect that catches the attention of the participants.

Undoubtedly, all of them showed an excellent attitude during and after the activity. Students really liked the idea of learning through a different technique in which they had to overcome personal challenges. They looked motivated and willing to complete the task successfully. Definitely, the attitude that learners show towards the class is crucial to determine an effective learning. Evidently, this performance turned into an objective reached with the use of this technique. The answers included through this question are important to comprehend that students enjoy perceiving their own progress as they learn.

The second question intends to know the first reactions the students had the moment they realized how to overcome their own challenges in order to complete the activity successfully. Once again, all of them expressed positive answers in this question. Others explained that they really felt challenged in order to get a better time during the activity. Some of them responded that they felt a high degree of adrenaline, and others explained that they thought the activity was going to be interesting. There was no any negative answer in this questionnaire.

According to the results obtained through their answers, challenges are highly effective to improve the attitude of the students towards the class. In addition, as it was explained in the theoretical framework, the attitude determines a high percentage of effectiveness when it comes to learning. Motivation improves the quality of learning significantly. It is fundamental to implement techniques that demand interest. If students feel challenged and excited, the retention and comprehension of new information will progress properly.

The third question is focused on analyzing the capacity of concentration during the activity. In this interrogate, students were asked to express how concentrated they felt when they were using the personalized alphabet during the activity. All of the participants answered positively. Some students expressed that the technique improves concentration since it demands focusing in order to complete the task. However, most of them relate concentration to entertainment. They explained that they felt concentrated because they were enjoying the activity.

Through these results, it looks that there is a close relationship between entertainment and concentration. Or, in other words, the more the participants enjoy an activity, the better their concentration is. Since the activity requires high levels of concentration in order to complete the task, it is more likely that the information remains for longer periods. It is the reason why figuring out data is effective regarding acquiring new knowledge.

In the fourth question, the students were asked to express their feelings at the end of each round. All the answers were very positive. Through this question, students had the opportunity to express themselves about the emotions they experienced during the whole

activity through a concrete way. Most of the students answered that they felt adrenaline. Another percentage of participants explained that they felt happiness and excitement. Finally, some others responded that they felt satisfaction.

The fact of overcoming personal challenges generates important amounts of dopamine in the brain according to the information included in the theoretical framework. Every time a person is able to reach an objective or overcome a challenge, the brain produces high levels of this neurotransmitter. As it was explained in chapter two, it improves not only the comprehension, but also the retention of new information. Using learning techniques that include challenges based on time is a very effective way to acquire new vocabulary during English classes.

Finally, the last question from this questionnaire intends to analyze what the students think about the technique as a way to acquire new vocabulary. Certainly, these answers are based on the experience they had once the activity was applied. All the participants answered positively to this question. Most of them affirmed that since the activity is funny and new, they felt more willing to learn. Also, some others explained that it is an effective technique to improve the vocabulary acquisition because it demands concentration. Anyone responded negatively to this question.

All these statements reaffirm the theories that were included in the theoretical framework about on how learning and memorization improves considerably with the production of dopamine. However, in order to increase the levels of this neurotransmitter, it is crucial to be exposed to activities that involve interest, motivation, and challenges. Definitely, the use of the personalized alphabet has the most important components to guarantee an effective and enduring learning.

3 Objective.

This objective also includes a questionnaire that measures the effectiveness of the personalized alphabet as a way to acquire new vocabulary. This questionnaire is composed of ten closed questions. Each question has only three possible answers: yes, no, and no answer. Through the answers that students provided, it will be possible to perceive how appropriate the technique was to improve the writing and retention of new words in English. The answers are going to be represented through graphics; however, only the most important answers are going to be considered in this section in order to avoid repetitive answers.

The first question considered in this part, it is question number four. This question intends to know the perspective of students about how well this technique could be to improve the writing and retention of words in the future. As a matter of fact, including an alphabet that is composed of symbols instead of letters could be interesting, but it might not be effective when it comes to writing and remembering new words. However, the most reliable way to measure this aspect is by asking students directly. The results are going to be explained in the next graphic.

Figure # 9

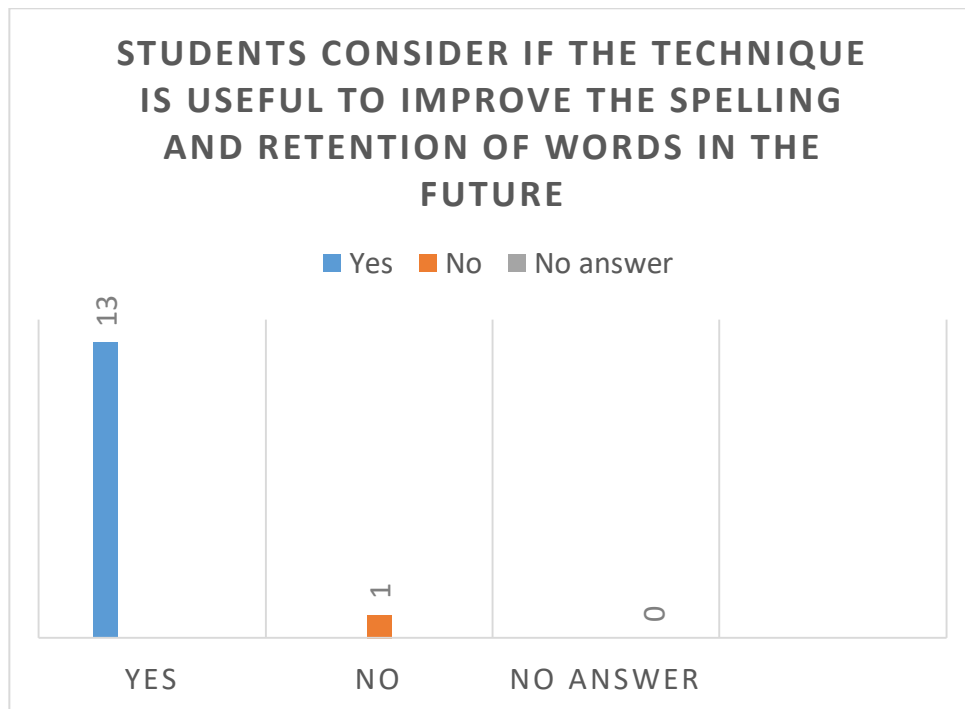


Figure 9 illustrates the technique's usefulness to improve spelling and retention of words.

Source: Researcher's create.

The results shown in the graphic number nine are relevant. Among the fourteen students that were used in the questionnaire, thirteen students answered positively to this question. They expressed that this technique could be useful to improve the spelling and retention of words in the future. One student expressed that this technique might not be useful to improve the spelling and retention of words in the future, and anyone decided to reserve the opinion.

According to their answers, most of them feel that they could get important benefits from this technique. The results show that students have high expectations about the activity. Evidently, they express an important preference for using this technique instead of the traditional writing techniques. The way students feel is a factor that must be considered as well. Their points of view are reliable parameters since the learners are the main protagonists in the process.

Question number seven is also analyzed in this process. This interrogative is focused on perceiving how active and entertained students were during the activity. An active learning makes students get involved in the learning process. The more active and entertained students are, the more effective and enduring the learning will be. It is the reason why these answers can support the idea that motivation is an essential component of any learning process.

Figure # 10

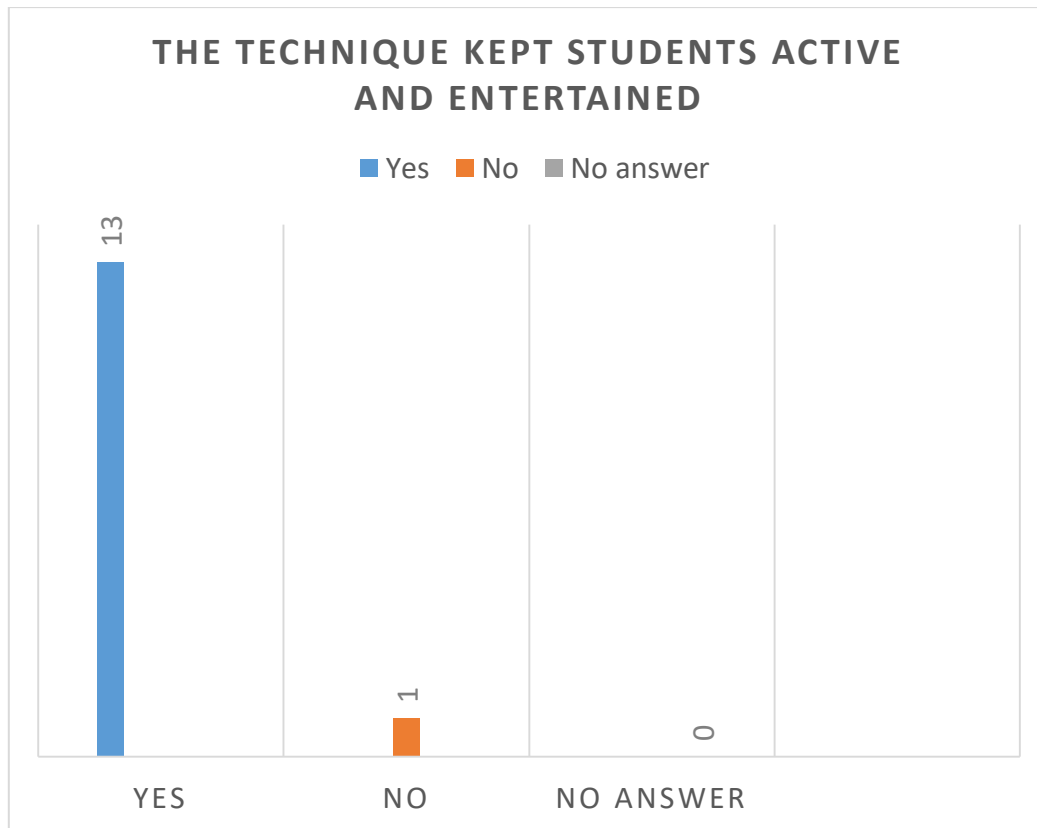


Figure 10 shows the results on how the technique kept students active and entertained.

Source: Researcher's create

According to the answers obtained in this graphic, students reaffirm some interesting data that was analyzed throughout the theoretical framework. Among the fourteen students that participated in this questionnaire, thirteen students considered that they kept active and entertained during the activity. One student does not think that the technique is effective to keep students active and entertained during the activity, and anyone decided to reserve the opinion.

Those statements are important to conclude that the technique with the personalized alphabet is active enough to make students acquire new vocabulary through an adequate way. The production of dopamine, which is highly related to the capacity of comprehension and memorization, is a neurotransmitter that is produced by feelings of

satisfaction. In other words, students need to enjoy the learning activities in the class. Entertainment can influence significantly with the quality of learning that a student can receive.

Question number nine is also analyzed because of its relevance. This question intends to measure how much students prefer this technique rather than acquiring vocabulary through more passive techniques, such as: listening, reading, or looking for meanings on dictionaries. Indubitably, this question does not intend to omit other techniques, but to reinforce the use of a more interactive learning. As all the other previous questions, the results are going to be presented through the next graphic.

Figure # 11

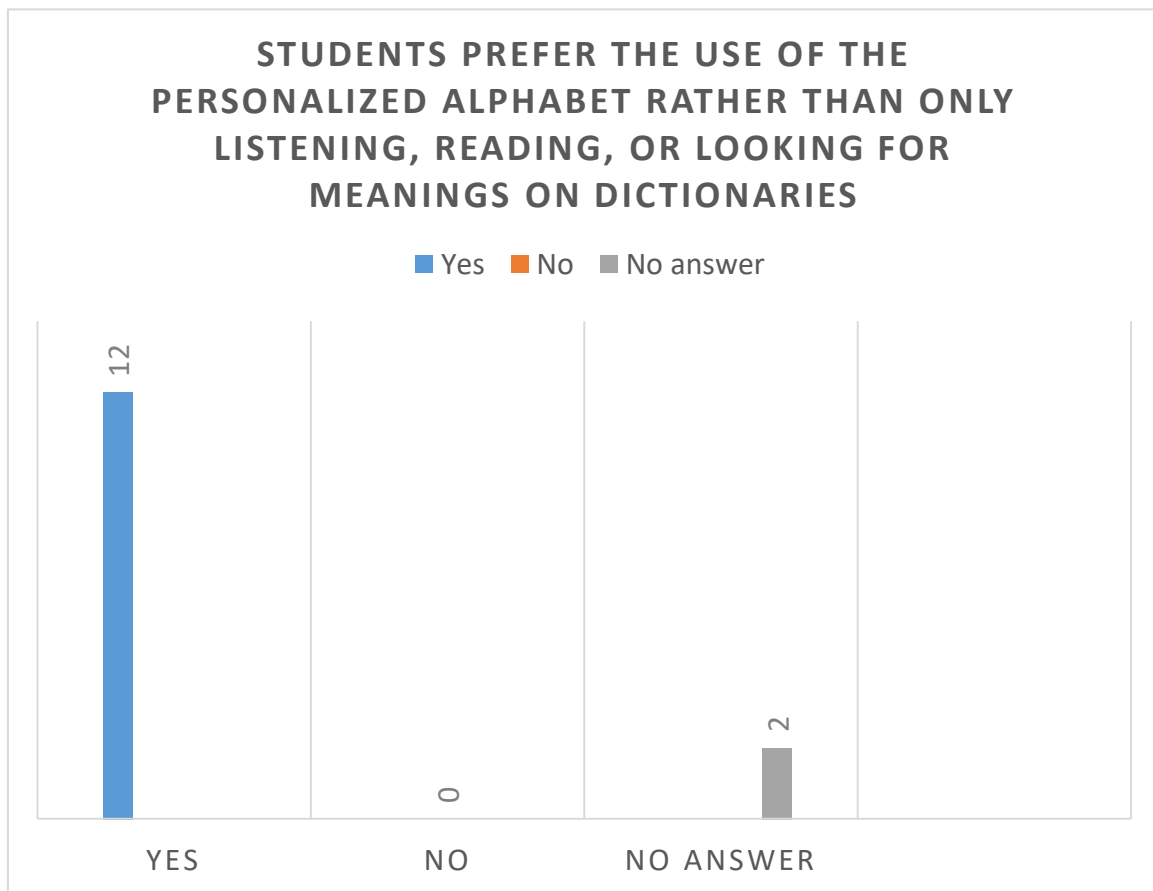


Figure 11 shows the results for students preference about the use of the Personalized Alphabet..

Source: Researcher's create.

The results represented in the graphic number ten show a clear advantage regarding their preference. Among the fourteen students that participated in this questionnaire, twelve students expressed that they prefer the use of the personalized alphabet to acquire new vocabulary rather than more passive techniques, such as: reading, listening, or looking for meanings on dictionaries. Zero students showed preference towards the traditional techniques, and only two students decided to reserve their opinion.

Students need to feel comfortable with the techniques they are using in order to facilitate the learning process. If students do not feel well, the progress can get affected. In this case, after using the activity with the personalized alphabet, students preferred this technique rather than other traditional writing techniques, such as: reading, listening, or looking for meanings on dictionaries. Once again, the attitude that students show towards an activity determines a big percentage of the academic success.

Ultimately, the last questions considered in this section was question number ten. This question is linked to the need on incorporating challenges to increase the dopamine production through the learning process. In this question, students are asked how motivated they felt after finishing the activity successfully. The answers obtained in this question are going to be shown in the graphic number eleven.

Figure # 12

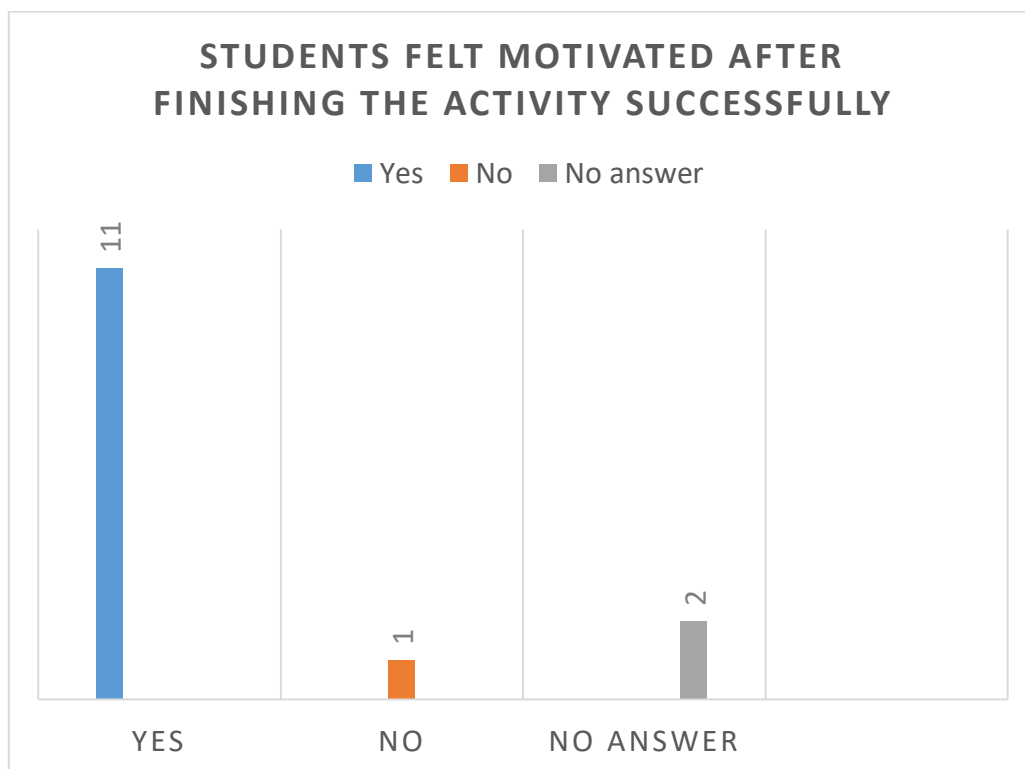


Figure 12 illustrates how motivated students felt after finishing the activity successfully.

Source: Researcher's create.

According to the results provided by students regarding question number ten from the questionnaire, among the fourteen students that participated, eleven students affirmed that they felt motivation after finishing the activity successfully. One student expressed that she or he did not feel motivated after finishing the activity successfully, and only two students decided to reserve their opinion.

Motivation is directly related to a high production of dopamine. Since most of them felt motivated with the use of the personalized alphabet, evidently, it is possible to conclude that they experienced high levels of dopamine during and after the activity. The increase of this neurotransmitter was due to the incorporation of challenges. Dopamine plays an important role in the retention and comprehension of new information. It is the reason why students expressed that this technique could be useful to improve the retention and writing of words in English.

4.1.3 Grading scales.

According to Collins English Dictionary (2018), grading can be defined as, “the act of classifying something on a scale by quality, rank, size, or progression, etc.” In addition, Collins English Dictionary (2018) defines scale as, “a set of levels or numbers which are used in a particular system of measuring things or are used when comparing things. “Those definitions explain the purpose of the grading scales used in this investigation. The results are going to be classified through several levels.

Two grading scales were used in this research in order to collect information about the progress of the students during each round of the activity. One grading scale analyzes the improvement regarding the mount of memorized words in each round, and the other one analyzes the improvement regarding the amount of wrongly spelled words in each

round. The advance regarding those two aspects are going to be explained through two different graphics.

The first factor analyzed during the activity was the development of the students regarding wrongly spelled words during each round. The idea for this grading scale was to perceive how much students improved regarding spelling or words. The results are going to be shown in the next graphic, and it will include the three criteria and the four grading criteria explained throughout the chapter three.

Figure # 13

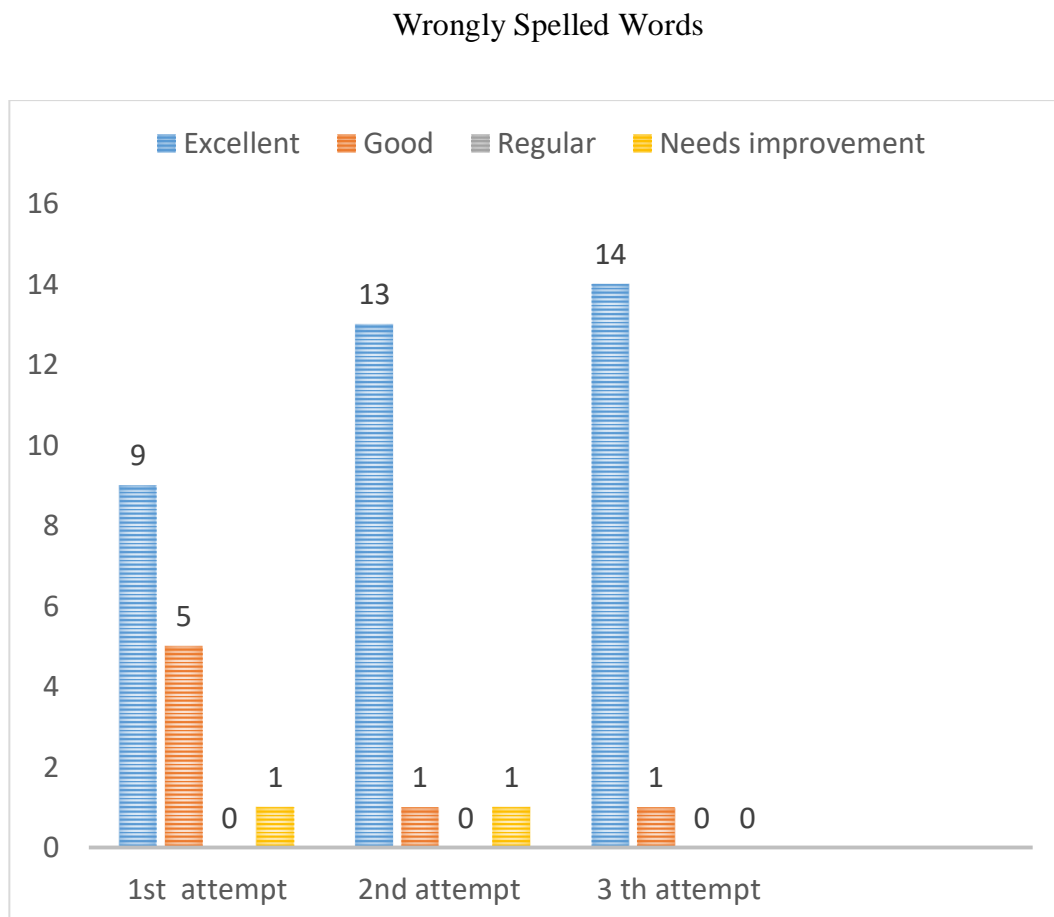


Figure 13 illustrates students' wrongly spelled words.

Source: Researcher's create.

According to the results, in the first attempt, nine students obtained an excellent score, five students obtained a good score, zero students obtained a regular score, and one student needed improvement. In the second attempt, thirteen students got an excellent score, one student obtained a good score, zero students obtained a regular score, and one student needed improvement. Moreover, in the third attempt, fourteen students obtained an excellent score, one student got a good score, zero students obtained a regular score, and anyone needed improvement.

Those results are clear and precise. The graphic shows important differences about the development of the students during each round when it comes to spelling of words. It is possible to perceive the progress that students had. Evidently, a timed activity through a personalized alphabet can be an important tool to enhance the spelling of words during the language acquisition process. It is necessary to focus on writing as a complex skill that is composed of many aspects.

The second factor that was analyzed during the activity was the amount of words that were remembered during each round. Through this grading scale, it will be possible to perceive how much students improved regarding their capacity to remember words in English. The results obtained in this grading scale are going to be shown in the next graphic. And, once again, the three criteria and the four grading criteria of this grading scale are going to be included in the graphic.

Figure # 14

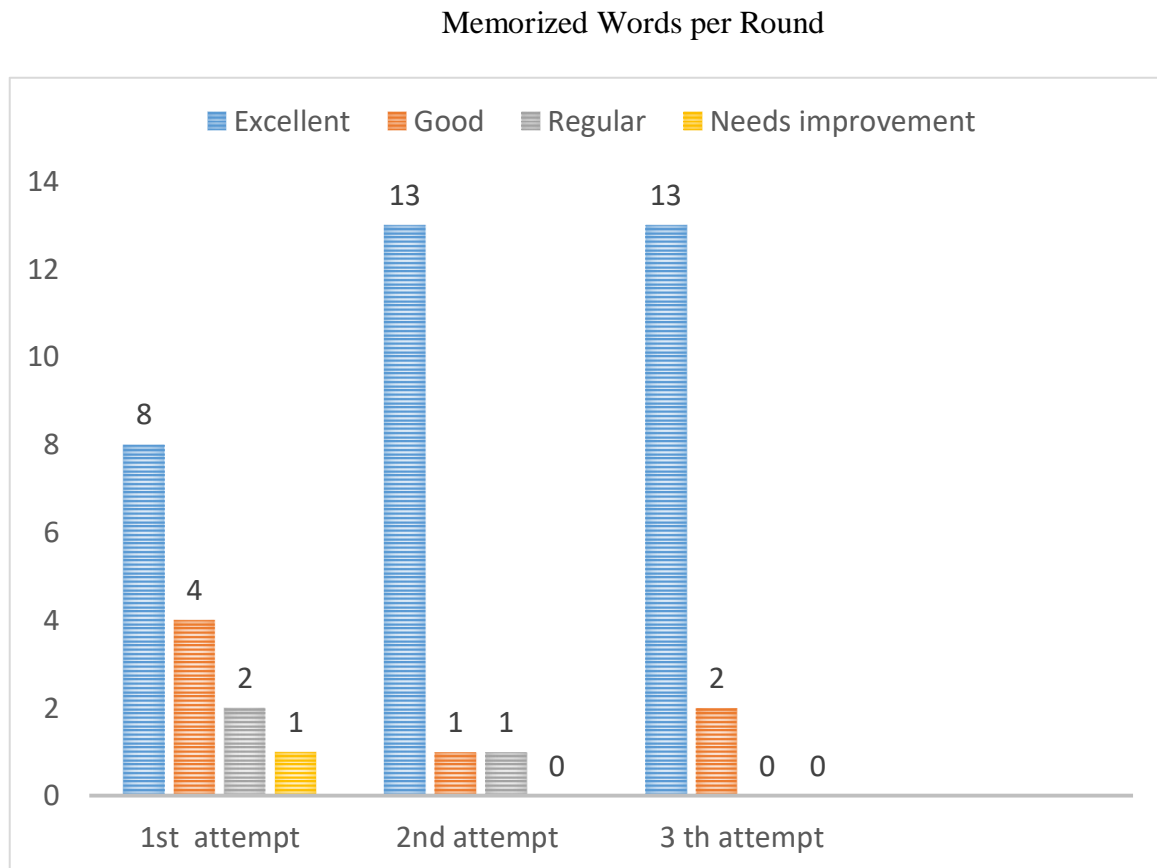


Figure 14 presents the memorized words per round by students.

Source: Researcher's create.

According to the results, during the first attempt eight students obtained an excellent score, four students obtained a good score, two students obtained a regular score, and one student needed improvement. In the second attempt, thirteen students got an excellent score, one student obtained a good score, one student obtained a regular score, and anyone needed improvement. Finally, in the third attempt, thirteen students obtained an excellent score, two students got a good score, zero students obtained a regular score, and anyone needed improvement.

Once again, the progress regarding the amount of remembered words in each round is clear. Students increased the amount of remembered terms throughout the activity. Even though the amount of students who obtained an excellent score during the second and third attempt is the same, the main difference focuses mainly on the amount of students that obtained good and regular scores during the second and third attempt, as well as the amount of students that needed improvement during the three attempts.

4.1.4 Checklist.

According to Collins English Dictionary (2018), a checklist can be defined as, “list of all the things that you need to do, information that you want to find out, or things that you need to take somewhere, which you make in order to ensure that you do not forget anything”. This checklist will be useful to determine how many goals were reached successfully at the end of the whole process. This instrument will be important to evaluate the efficiency of the personalized alphabet as a way to improve the retention and spelling of words. Five statements of the checklist were selected in this section, and each of them will be represented through graphics.

The first statement measures the advance students showed regarding the facility to remember words in the second round in comparison to the first one. Evidently, the answers regarding this statement are based on the way students felt. This question collects important points of view that support the results explained in the grading scales. Those results are going to be showed in the next graphic.

Figure # 15

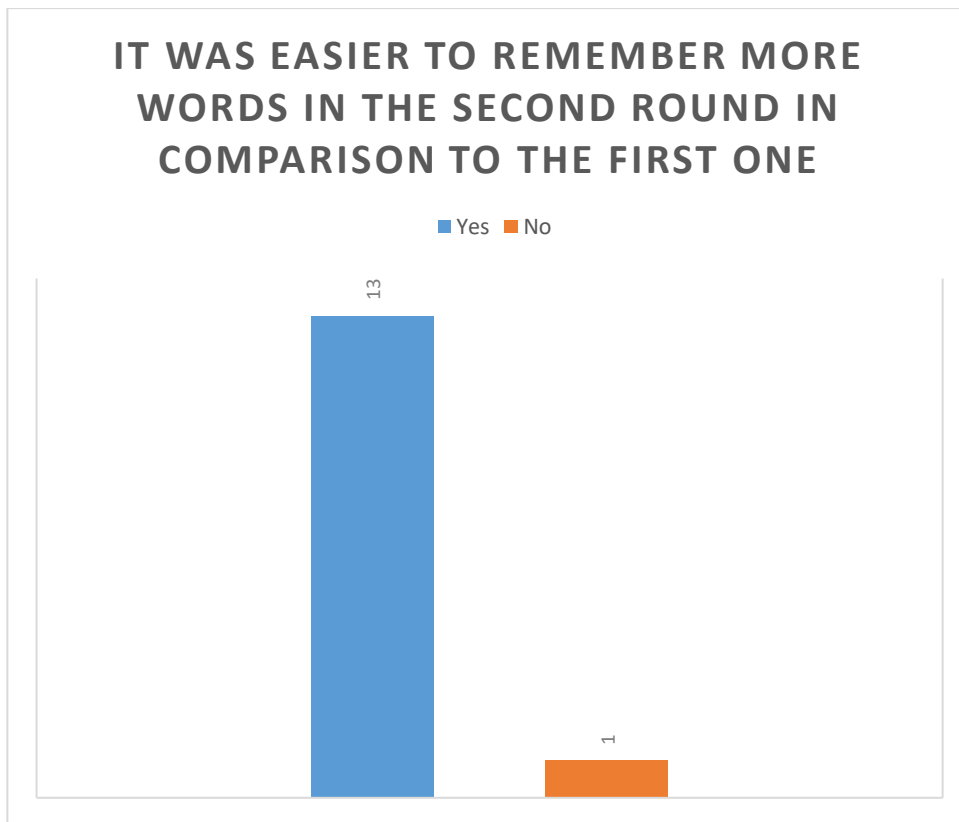


Figure 15 illustrates the comparison between second round to the first round.

Source: Researcher's create.

Those results show an important difference regarding the answers provided in this statement. Among the fourteen students that participated in this questionnaire, thirteen students expressed that it was easier to remember words in the second round in comparison to the first one. On the other hand, only one student expressed that it was not easier to remember words in the second round in comparison to the first one. Those results are precise and concrete.

The answers that students provided in this statement are evidently clear. Students considered that it was easier to remember words in the second round in comparison to the first one. This progress is due to the components that this technique includes. Each aspect of this technique was carefully incorporated to make students improve their capacity to remember and write words better. The repetitions, time, personal challenges, and the replacement of symbols by letters in order to obtain results are only some of the components that increase the levels of dopamine in the brain during the activity.

Another statement that was included in this part shares similar characteristics to the first one. However, this statement measures the facility to remember words in the third round in comparison to the second one. Once again, answers provided in this statement will be useful to know how much students improved regarding memorization. The answers are going to be showed in the next graphic.

Figure # 16

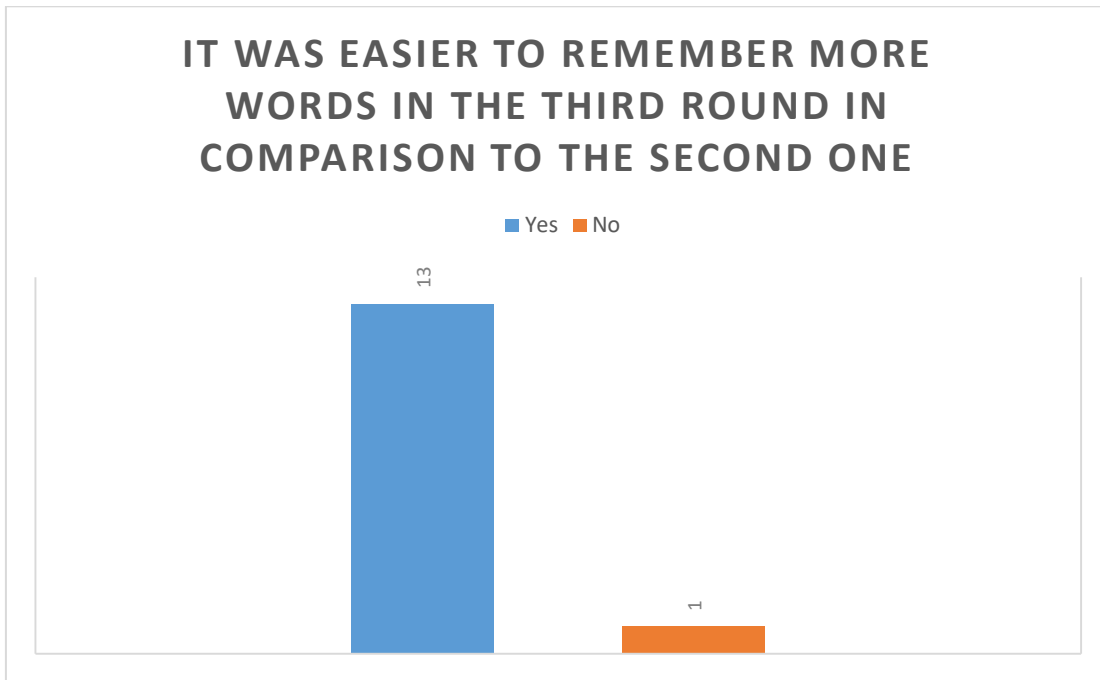


Figure 16 illustrates the comparison in how easier was to remember more words on each round.

Source: Researcher's create.

The answers provided in the graphic fifteen, show more data that is relevant. Among the fourteen students that participated in this questionnaire, thirteen students expressed that it was easier to remember words in the third round in comparison to the second one. On the other hand, only one student expressed that it was not easy to remember words in the third round in comparison to the second one. Those results are important to obtain final conclusions at the end of the research.

Once again, students felt it was even easier to remember words in the third round in comparison to the second one. In other words, as the activity advanced, the capacity to remember words increased significantly due to many components of the technique, such as: repetitions, time, challenges, and replacement of letters by symbols. Only three rounds were needed to improve the capacity to remember words in the participants. The difference regarding remembered words changed drastically from the beginning until the end.

The next statement included in this section is related to the importance of adding challenges in the learning activities. In this question, students were asked if they felt satisfaction when they realized that they were able to overcome their own goals. This question intends to prove the relationship between challenges and the production of dopamine in the learning process. Moreover, through this statement, it will be possible to perceive how efficient dopamine is as a way to increase the motivation in the class.

Figure # 17

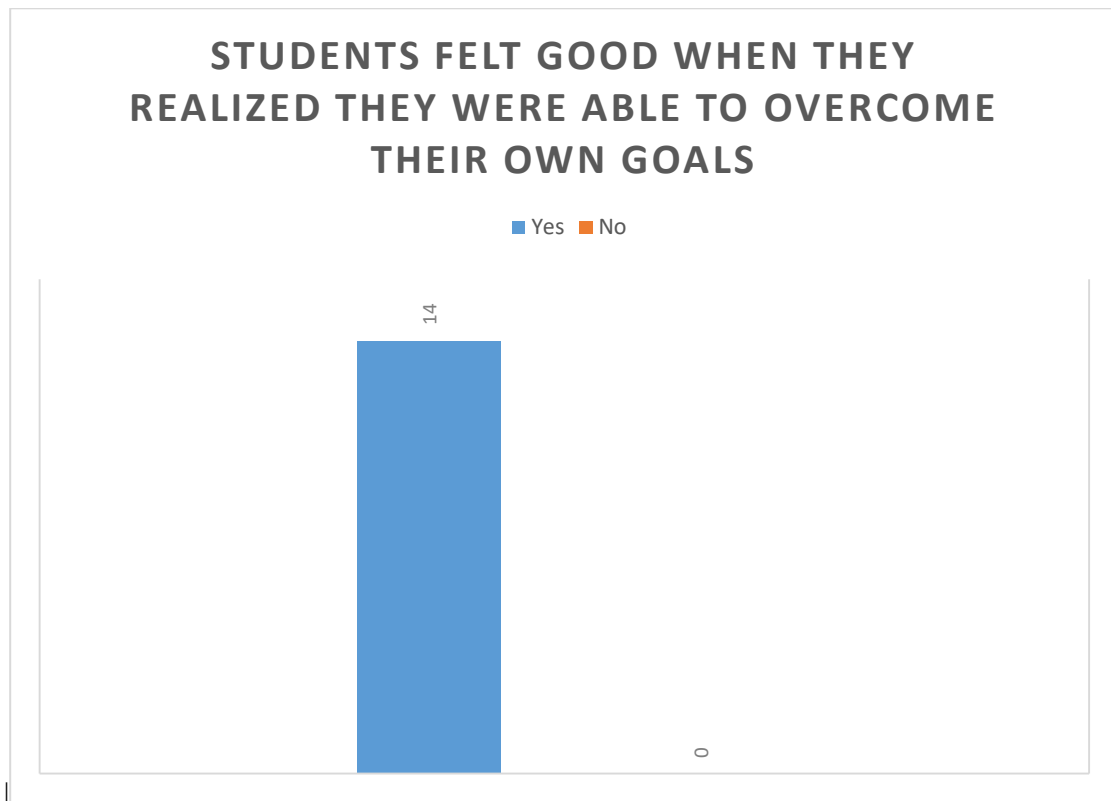


Figure 17 illustrates how students felt when they realized their ability to overcome goals.

Source: Researcher's create.

According to the results obtained in this statement, the answers students provided show an evident difference. Among the fourteen students who participated in this checklist, all of the learners expressed they felt motivated the moment they realized that they were able to overcome their own goals. On the other hand, anyone expressed the opposite. All of the learners answered positively to this statement.

These responses prove the theories explained throughout chapter two. The fact of setting and overcoming goals is an aspect that increases the levels of dopamine significantly in the learning process. In this technique, students needed to set personal goals in order to complete the task successfully: lowering their time in the next round. That requirement is easily achievable for everyone since students are the ones who are in charge of setting and overcoming their own goals.

Moreover, the improvement regarding spelling of word is also analyzed once the students have completed the activity. The next statement is based on determining how much students think they could improve when it comes to words writing. Through this statement, it will be possible to determine the effectiveness of this field through this activity. Even though this statement might look similar to the information obtained in the grading scale, in this case, the results will be based on opinion rather than numbers.

Figure # 18

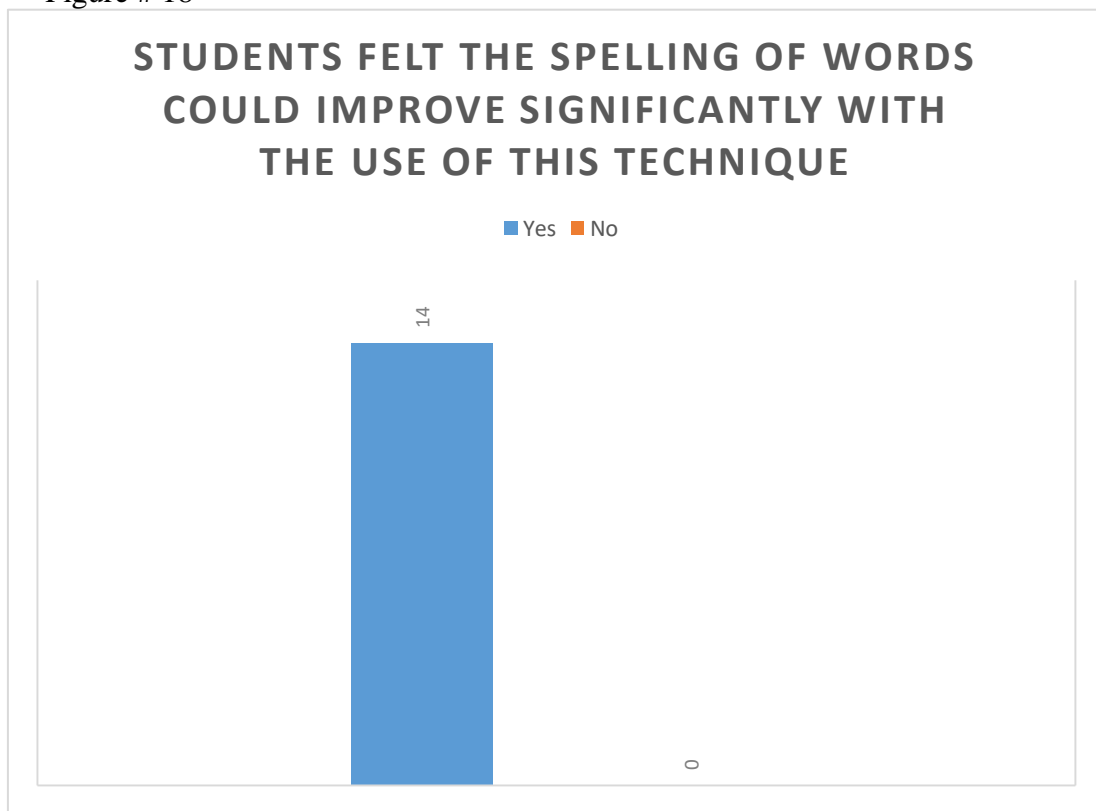


Figure 18 shows the results of students' feeling toward the technique.

Source: Researcher's create.

Graphic number seventeen is clear with the data obtained from this statement. Among the fourteen students who participated in this checklist, all of them answered positively to this statement. In other words, all the fourteen students think that they could improve the spelling of words with the use of this technique. On the other hand, anyone answered negatively to this statement.

The results obtained in the grading scales are directly related to the opinions obtained in this statement. All the results showed in the grading scales fit perfectly with the participants' points of view. It is clear that the personalized alphabet is a powerful tool to enhance not only the retention of words, but also their spelling. This proves the efficiency of this technique, which was one of the three objectives explained throughout this investigation. The two instruments applied in the third objective show positive responses towards the activity.

Finally, the next statement selected regarding this checklist was the last item. It is a statement that is useful to measure the desire of the students to continue learning vocabulary. Even though one of the technique's purposes was to make students learn as they enjoy the task, the activity also intended to awaken their desire to continue acquiring vocabulary.

Figure # 19

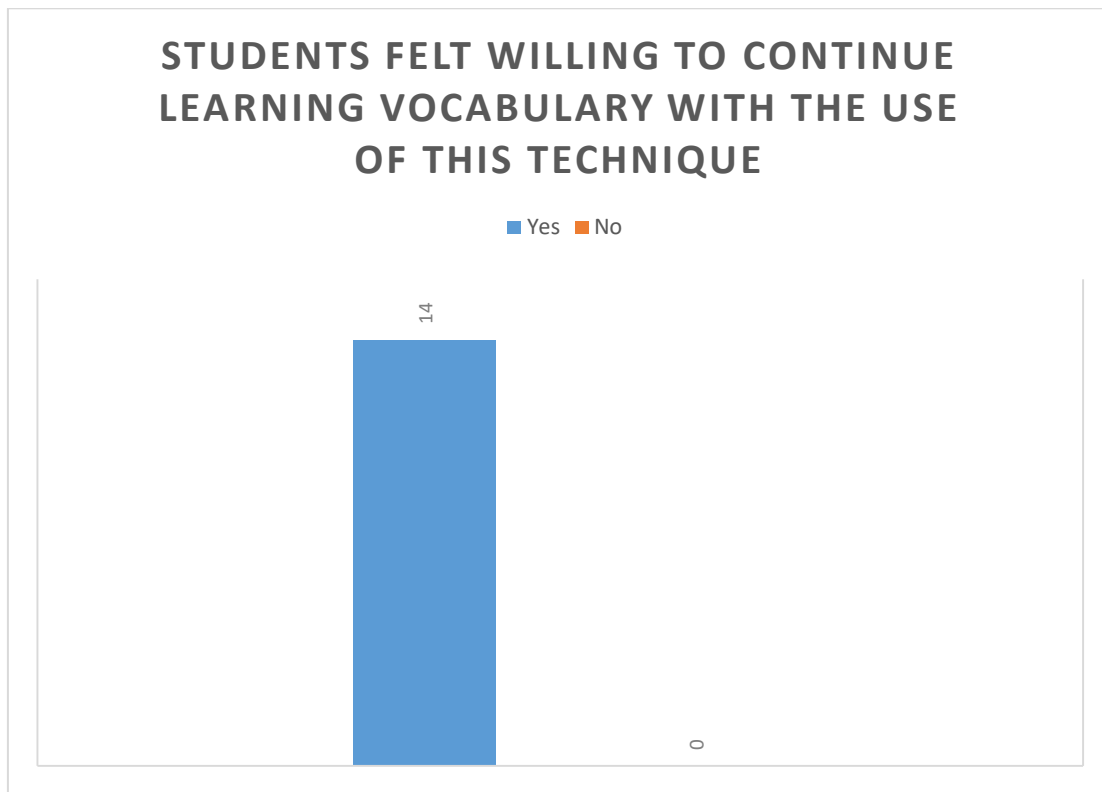


Figure 19 illustrates students' feeling to continue using this technique.

Source: Researcher's create

Graphic number eighteen is evidently clear with the results obtained in this last item of the checklist. Among the fourteen students that participated in this checklist, all of them answered positively to this statements. The fourteen participants felt a desire to continue acquiring vocabulary through this technique. On the other hand, anyone answered negatively to this statement.

Awakening a desire in the students to continue learning is one of the most difficult things in the learning process. When the students are willing and motivated to participate in the class, their capacity to learn improves significantly. Students enjoyed the activity as they learned. Many students even did not know they were learning as they completed the task. This technique is perfectly designed to acquire new vocabulary through a funny and entertained way.

Chapter V

Conclusions and Recommendations

This chapter collects the most important recommendations based on the conclusions obtained throughout the research. These recommendations and conclusions intend to provide useful opinions, which can be necessary to improve the language acquisition process when it comes to retention and writing of words. Certainly, the information included here was carefully analyzed, and it is based on objective data. The results obtained in each instrument were crucial to support this section through reliable information. In the case of the conclusions, they will be divided into the three objectives of this investigation.

5.1 Conclusions

The next conclusions will be analyzed through the three different objectives of this research. In other words, these conclusions will be explained separately in order to avoid confusions. Once again, it is necessary to emphasize that these conclusions are based on all the answers obtained in all the instruments used in each of the objectives. The personal experience will also be taken into account in this section. Personal points of view will be used as tools to enhance the data included here.

5.1.1 To identify deficiencies regarding use of vocabulary during the language acquisition process.

The physical space did not represent any obstacle during the language acquisition process. The classroom had an appropriate space to implement almost any type of didactic technique. Definitely, if other types of more interactive technique had been implemented, the classroom would not have been a negative aspect. Undoubtedly, students were not limited by the space at any moment. Therefore, more general aspects, such as paint, floor, or roof were in perfect conditions for an adequate learning.

Important learning tools were also available in the class. The students had abundant material to practice during the language process. Students had different types of books, which were very adequate to work on theoretical and practical aspects regarding the vocabulary acquisition. All the materials, including the professor's materials, such as markers, erasers, dictionaries or stamps were abundant. It means that the deficiencies related to the vocabulary acquisition are not caused by a lack of academic materials.

Technology was also one of the most significant advantages that students had in the classroom. There were available computers that were useful to enhance the information studied in the class. Students were allowed to access the computers in order to work on the four different language skills: listening, reading, writing, and speaking. Also, other types of technological devices, such as projectors, could also be used by the teacher in order to improve the quality of the class.

The attitude of the students towards the class was good. The way students behaved in the class seemed not to be an important obstacle in the class since most of them behaved respectfully. Even though some got distracted sometimes, in general, most of them responded positively towards the professor and the class. The negative attitudes seemed to

be more related to more didactic aspects instead of personal factors. In other words, the relationship between the teacher and the students was very appropriate.

The main obstacle during the vocabulary acquisition process was the type of learning techniques used by the professor in the class. There were lack of techniques which focused on retention and writing of words specifically. The vocabulary acquisition process was limited to reading texts and looking for meanings on dictionaries. This boring and repetitive process represented the main cause of negative attitudes in the class. Most of the students did not respond positively to these types of procedures. Students did not look motivated, excited or willing to continue learning.

It was possible to conclude that the level of students' vocabulary observed was significantly limited. Many of the students were unable to complete sentences or ideas because of a poor vocabulary. Even though many of them had knowledge about other grammatical aspects, such as construction of sentences or texts, coherence, or cohesion, it was possible to perceive that the main problem is directly related to remembering and writing words.

The type of questions and the frequency with which they ask them is an aspect that was analyzed as well. Most of them asked extremely basic questions about elementary vocabulary. In addition, once the professor provided them the answers, the students seemed unable to retain the information for longer periods since many of them asked the same questions. For that reason, the way the professor teaches new vocabulary should definitely involve more interactive, interesting, and challenging techniques in order to enhance the comprehension and retention of new information.

The manner the professor behaved was always very appropriate. The deficiencies of the students regarding vocabulary is not caused by a bad relationship between students and the professor. The attitude that the professor showed towards the class was one of the most positive aspects that were analyzed. The professor always behaved respectful and patient during the learning process. The students felt free to ask any question at any moment. The environment in the class was very adequate since the professor was always willing to clarify any doubt they could have.

Undoubtedly, it was not possible to perceive techniques to reinforce the writing and retention of words in the class. Students constantly received instructions regarding the construction of sentences during the writing process; however, there were not any technique focused on improving the spelling and retention of vocabulary in English. Some students ignored completely the writing of specific words, and others simply made spelling mistakes. Both cases represented common errors in the class, which have to be corrected properly.

The professor used deficient writing techniques. Every time a student had a question regarding the meaning or writing of words, they were limited to look for meanings on dictionaries. Also, reading aloud was another common technique the professor used as a tool to teach new words in English. Actually, those two traditional writing techniques were some of the most common writing techniques that were included and analyzed in the theoretical framework. Even though they are effective techniques in specific cases, they are extremely monotonous and boring techniques to be considered as the main ways to teach new vocabulary.

The technique with the personalized alphabet was designed and selected due to important deficiencies that students have regarding the use of vocabulary in English. There are not specific techniques that improve the retention and writing of words in English. Forgetting words and making spelling mistakes are common errors which are not corrected properly. This has a significant impact in the construction of more complex sentences or texts. Students easily forget words in English, and they also make important spelling mistakes because of the differences between Spanish and English writing aspects.

Since motivation has to be a fundamental aspect of any learning process, it is necessary to implement a different technique that makes students learn as they have fun in the class. The idea for this investigation was to create a technique that increases the participation in the class. The more students enjoy the class, the better and more effective the learning will be. The attitude of the students is a factor that determines the success of the learning process. It is necessary to respond positively to all the techniques that are used in the class.

5.1.2 To apply a timed activity based on a personalized alphabet to improve spelling and retention of words during the language acquisition process.

Most of the students responded positively when they realized they were going to learn new vocabulary through a different way. They looked interested because of the fact of acquiring new vocabulary through an alphabet that is composed of symbols instead of traditional letters. They liked the idea of being responsible for their own learning. All of the learners expressed the willing to learn since the beginning of the process. It was possible to perceive the positive impact of the technique in the mental aspect.

All of the students looked motivated the moment they were told about overcoming their own limits in order to complete the task. The activity is composed of three rounds, and the students were asked to lower the time in each attempt. This generated an evident feeling of enthusiasm which was very easy to identify. The students wanted to realize how capable they were. The activity demanded them a certain degree of exigency that was useful to make students discover their potential.

The fact of adding challenges increased the levels of dopamine in the students as it was explained in the theoretical framework. Reaching challenges is directly related to rises of dopamine in the brain; however, this neurotransmitter is generated from the moment the person determines his or her own goals. In other words, the dopamine increases not only after reaching a goal, but also even before succeeding in the achievement. The students liked to feel challenged by the task.

Undoubtedly, students looked with enormous willing to learn even before the activity had started. This desire to learn was visible since the moment the instructions were given. This was one of the strongest aspects that could be analyzed at the beginning of the process. Making the students be willing to learn even before the class starts, it is a challenge for most of the professors. In addition, and according to the observation during the activity, it was an easily reached goal.

An adequate use of body language was one of the strongly used aspects by the researcher. During the activity, the researcher tried to move around the class with appropriate gestures in order to catch the students' attention. Moreover, the tone of the voice and a good eye contact were also other aspects used by the researcher during the activity. It is necessary to make students get involved in the technique even since the moment the instructions are given.

It was necessary to work on the mental aspect before and during the activity. The students were told they were able to complete the task correctly. The emotional factor influences directly in the development of the class. For that reason, students need to be told they can overcome challenges that might look difficult. It was important to emphasize the strengths rather than focusing on weaknesses. The perspective students have about themselves influences significantly at the end of the activity.

Patience is a characteristic that all professors should have. This component was also necessary during the activity since it is part of the learning process. Since levels of adrenalin increase due to high levels of competence, it is fundamental to be patient since student tend to react impulsively when they feel extremely excited. It is necessary to know how to handle the euphoria in the group. Otherwise, a positive aspect could become an uncontrollable factor during the activity.

The researcher had to be repetitive and careful with the instructions and development of the activity since the rules needed to be clear before and during the activity in order to avoid confusions. The technique is simple and practical, but it also has a certain degree of complexity. For that reason, the professor needs to make sure that students comprehend the rules correctly. Also, by the moment the students are developing the technique, the teacher needs to supervise the students to make sure they are developing the activity properly.

The capacity to remember words improved significantly throughout the activity. Reinforcing the retention of new words was one of the main purposes of this investigation. Undoubtedly, it was a successfully reached goal. It was possible to perceive the progress of the students regarding the capacity to remember vocabulary during each of the activity attempts. The amount of remembered words increased drastically from the first round to

the third one. By analyzing the data, it is possible to conclude that the technique with the personalized alphabet improves the memory when it comes to remember new vocabulary in English.

During the analysis of results, regarding the amount of remembered words in each attempt, it is possible to prove the reliability of the theories included in the chapter two. All the information included in the theoretical framework, fits perfectly with the results obtained in the amount of remembered words during each round. Figuring out enigmas, reaching simple goals, and using repetitions are only some ways to activate the long-term memory through dopamine. This technique definitely guarantees an efficient and enduring learning.

Improving the spelling of words was definitely another purpose of this investigation. Once again, this goal was reached successfully as well. Students improved their capacity to write words correctly. It was possible to perceive a significant progress regarding spelling from the first attempt to the third one. As the activity advanced, students made fewer mistakes regarding writing of words. Unconsciously, students progressed drastically in the spelling of new vocabulary.

As in the case of retention words, overcoming personal challenges, using repetitions, and figuring out enigmas are important ways to improve the capacity to write words correctly because of dopamine. The raising of this neurotransmitter helps learners remember how to write words properly. In other words, dopamine is useful not only to reinforce the retention of words, but also to enhance the capacity to write them correctly. And this was evident during the development of the technique.

5.1.3 To evaluate the efficiency of using a timed activity based on a personalized alphabet as a technique to improve spelling and retention of words in the language acquisition process.

The fact of using an alphabet, which was composed of symbols instead of letters, affected the attitude of the students before, during, and after the process. The students maintained the same positive behavior from the beginning to the end. Most of the students expressed to feel impressed by the technique because it represented a new and interesting way to learn vocabulary. The students talked positively about the technique even once the activity had finished. The excitement, happiness, and motivation was significantly visible. It is clear that the impact of the personalized alphabet influenced positively the emotional aspect in the class.

Adding challenges in the technique was an aspect that made the students perceive their capacity to overcome limits. At the end of the activity, students expressed to feel capable to complete different tasks successfully even though they might seem difficult sometimes. Students needed to complete each attempt with a better time, and all of them were able to achieve this objective since it represented a very reachable goal. So, at the end of the process, their level of confidence increased significantly.

Students also expressed to feel comfortable with the use of several repetitions in the activity. They consider that this factor improves their capacity to remember words. They felt more secure in the second and third attempt. When a learner is exposed to the same information several times, evidently, the information will be comprehended and remembered better. Once the activity had finished, students explained that it is important to overview the same information several times during the language acquisition process. They said that the more they are exposed to new information, the more enduring that information will be.

The retention of words improved drastically with the use of the technique. The results showed that students were able to remember a very important amount of words at the end of the activity. The progress regarding retention of words is clear and measurable. The difference between the amount of remembered words between the first and third attempt is visible. The results support the theories. Numbers show that the technique with the personalized alphabet is effective to reinforce the retention of words during the vocabulary acquisition process.

The positive effect of the activity in the spelling of words is also measurable through real results. Data obtained in the grading scales show that all the students advanced in the spelling of words. In the second attempt, students were able to correct the spelling mistakes they made in the first attempt. Finally, in the third attempt, the students were able to correct the spelling mistakes they made in the second attempt. This proves the effectiveness of the technique in the writing of words during the vocabulary acquisition process.

The professor provided important opinions regarding the use of this technique as a way to reinforce the retention and writing of new words in English. The educator concludes that the activity is a very different strategy to teach vocabulary. According to her opinion, this factor is a positive aspect because students like changes, and they tend to get bored with monotonous writing techniques. She explained that it is necessary to apply writing techniques that involve more interaction in the class since most of the writing techniques are extremely passive and repetitive.

According to the professor's opinions, another important advantage of this technique is the fact of having to figure out something in order to obtain a final result. The educator explained that students get more involved in the learning process since they are in

charge of their own learning. She affirms that it is necessary to implement new techniques that require more analysis to guarantee a better and more enduring learning during the vocabulary acquisition process.

The professor also affirms that motivation is a crucial component of any learning process. For that reason, the implementation of this type of techniques improves the quality of learning in the class. She expressed that students were able to enjoy the activity as they learned, and it definitely facilitates the progress in the class. Motivation, excitement, and adrenaline were only some of the ingredients that influenced positively in the development of the class during the activity.

The raising of dopamine and the activation of the long-term memory were the main aspects that generated the results obtained throughout the investigation. Dopamine and long-term memory influence significantly in the comprehension and retention of new information. First of all, figuring out enigmas require concentration. This activates the long-term memory, but, at the same time, it increases the level of dopamine in the brain during the learning process. Adding a certain degree of complexity forces the brain to pay more attention to the task. This facilitates the learning, and, it also generates a more enduring learning because of high productions of this neurotransmitter in the brain.

An important aspect that is related to high productions of dopamine is the fact of adding little challenges. Every time a person determines and reaches a goal, the levels of dopamine increase in the brain. The activity with the personalized alphabet is composed of little personal challenges that have to be reached in order to complete the task. All the students were able to overcome their personal challenges, and the progress could be visible by the time the results were analyzed.

Using repetitions has two important functions: it activates the long-term memory, but it also influences in the production of dopamine. Being exposed to the same information several times guarantees an enduring learning because of the activation of the long-term memory. The technique with the personalized alphabet includes three rounds with the same information. These repetitions generate dopamine in the brain, but they also activate the long-term memory. In general terms, the activation of long-term memory and the increase of dopamine are extremely useful to remember the meaning and writing of words.

Certainly, it is necessary to emphasize that the more students enjoy an activity, the higher the levels of dopamine will be. The production of dopamine is directly related to satisfaction and pleasure. Students enjoyed the technique from the beginning to the end. This definitely generated high levels of dopamine. At the same time, this influenced their capacity to remember and write words correctly. The quality of learning is related to how much students enjoy the class. It is necessary to apply different, interactive, and attractive learning techniques.

As a conclusion, the three objectives regarding this investigation were successfully reached. It was very satisfying to perceive how the final results fit perfectly with the purpose of this research. The data analyzed in the theoretical framework support the development of the students at the end of the process. This activity was carefully designed based on several conclusions that were obtained throughout the analysis of different theories, and, undoubtedly, it is pleasant to perceive that this technique can be used to reinforce two of the most important deficiencies regarding vocabulary acquisition: retention and spelling of words.

5.2 Restatement of the research question

An important question was set at the beginning of this research, what can teachers do to improve English vocabulary acquisition? All the results obtained throughout this investigation are enough and necessary to answer this question. The analysis of the results show that the technique with the personalized alphabet is an effective tool to reinforce the retention and writing of words in English. According to the data obtained, this technique improves the memorization and spelling of new vocabulary. Undoubtedly, all the students that participated in the process advanced in this two aspects. So, definitely, it is possible to conclude that the purpose of this investigation was successfully reached.

5.3 Unexpected results

Even though the activity is composed of personal challenges, some students tended to compete with each other. However, this unexpected result can easily be corrected. At the beginning of the technique, it is necessary to emphasize that the activity does not consist of competing with the rest. In other words, the effective learning consists of overcoming personal limits rather than focusing on alien issues.

5.4 Recommendations

Firstly, teachers should apply techniques that require a certain degree of analysis, creativity, and concentration, for example, figuring out cases or enigmas. This activates the long-term memory due to the concentration it demands. Interesting techniques that involve reasoning are definitely excellent ways to guarantee an effective and enduring learning when it comes to vocabulary acquisition. Activating the long-term memory in the learning process is crucial to help students retain the information for longer periods.

It is recommended to include activities in which students have to overcome their own limits during the vocabulary acquisition process. Setting little goals at the beginning of the class regarding new vocabulary is useful. One option could be to make students memorize a reachable amount of words per day. However, another option could be to make students determine an amount of words by themselves. It is also advisable to include prizes for those who are able to memorize those words. Teachers need to make students feel challenged during the class.

Finally, it is recommended to include time in the activities. Combining time with challenges is highly effective to improve the vocabulary acquisition. Students might be asked to reach little goals through a determined amount of minutes or seconds. One option

could be to make students write words they remember from a list, text, or sheet by using time in order to learn more English words. This enhances not only the retention, but also the spelling of words.

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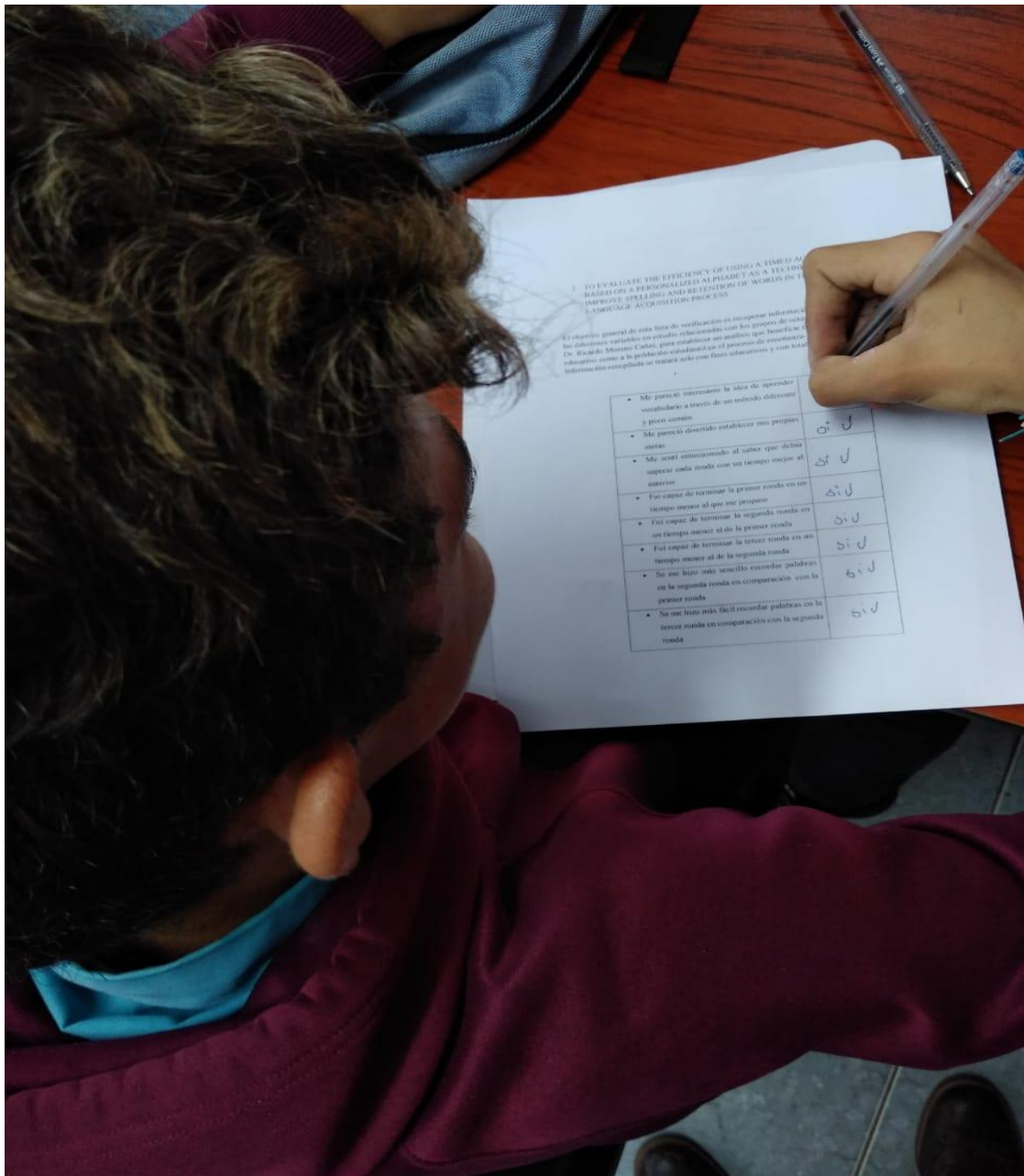
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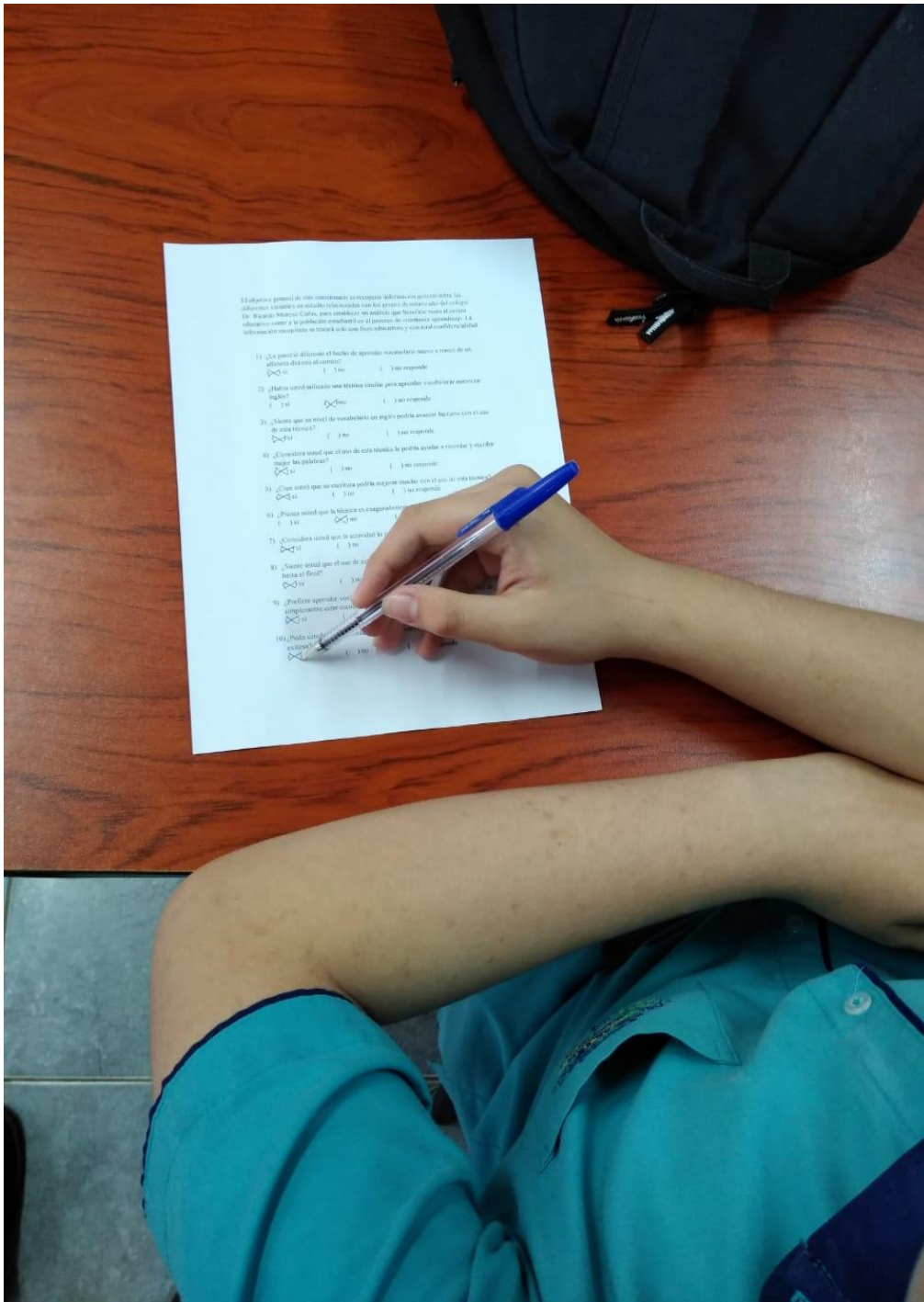
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Appendix

Appendix 1

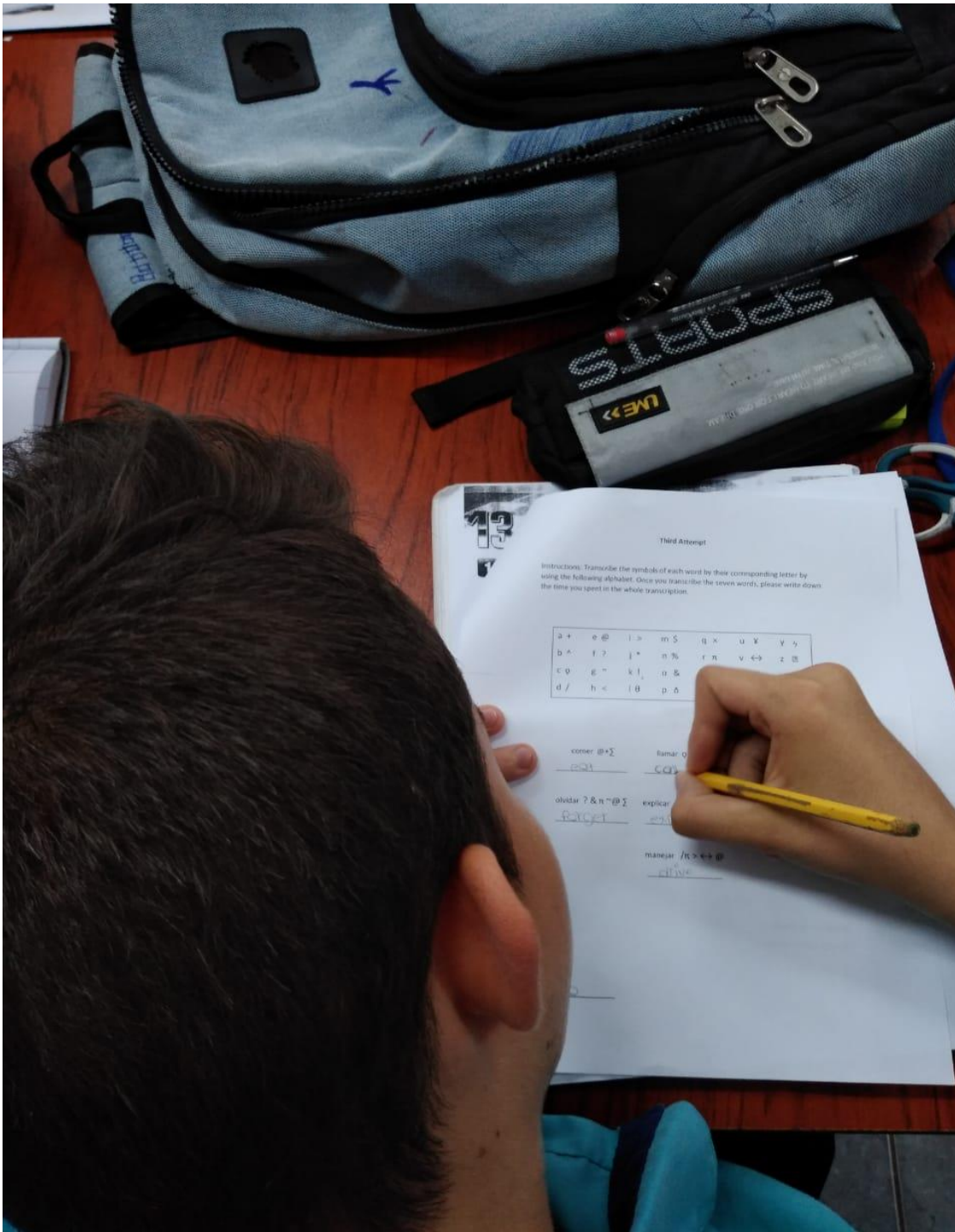
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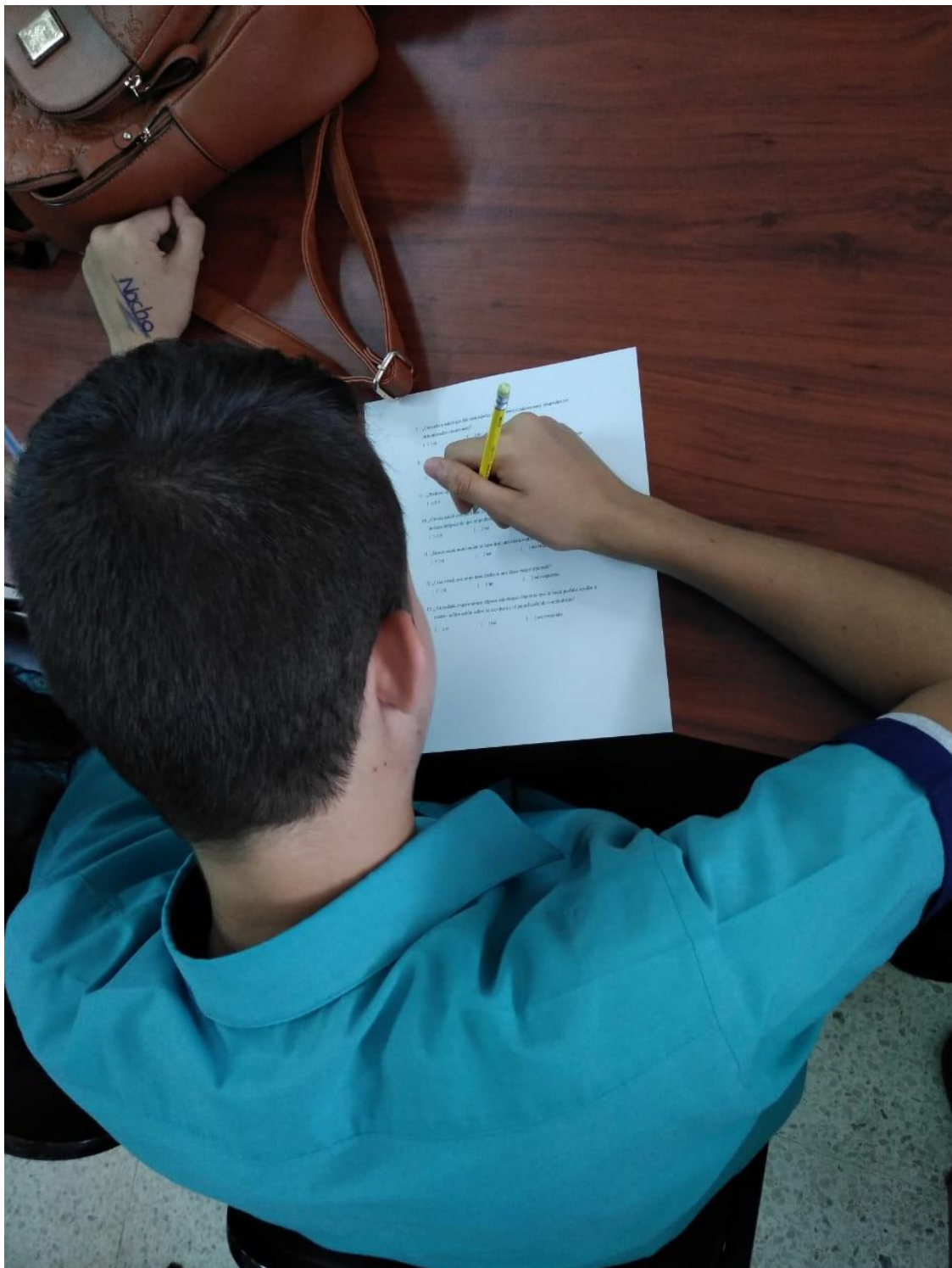


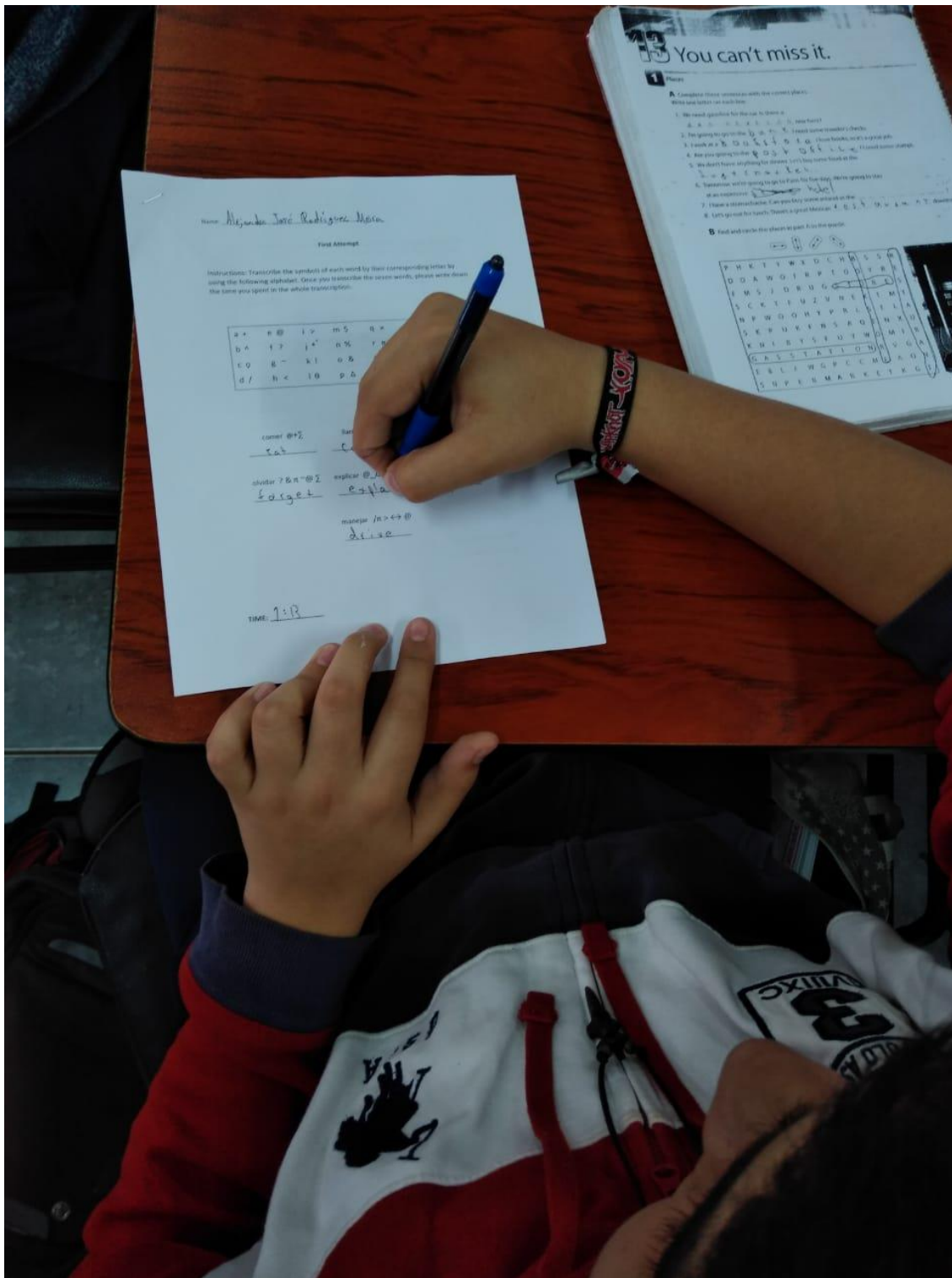
El objetivo general de este cuestionario es recoger información para realizar los
diagnósticos actual y un estudio referencial con los grupos de control del colegio
De Ricardo Montoya Gil, para establecer un perfil que permita tener el control
adecuado y como a la población estudiada en el presente de control de aprendizaje. La
información recopilada se usará solo con fines académicos y con total confidencialidad.

- 1) ¿Le parece difícil el hecho de aprender vocabulario nuevo a través de un
afixado dentro al contexto?
 SI NO No responde
- 2) ¿Habría un nivel de dificultad para aprender a utilizar la afixación en
ingles?
 SI NO No responde
- 3) ¿Sabes que un nivel de vocabulario en ingles podría ayudarte bastante con el uso
de esta técnica?
 SI NO No responde
- 4) ¿Consideras viable que el uso de esta técnica le podría ayudar a recordar y escribir
mejor las palabras?
 SI NO No responde
- 5) ¿Crees viable que se pudiera aplicar mejor mucho con el uso de esta técnica?
 SI NO No responde
- 6) ¿Puedes decir que la técnica es exageradamente
 SI NO No responde
- 7) ¿Consideras viable que la actividad le
 SI NO No responde
- 8) ¿Sabes mejor que el uso de esta
técnica al final?
 SI NO No responde
- 9) ¿Puedes aprender con
simplicidad esta técnica?
 SI NO No responde
- 10) ¿Puedes usar
esta técnica?
 SI NO No responde

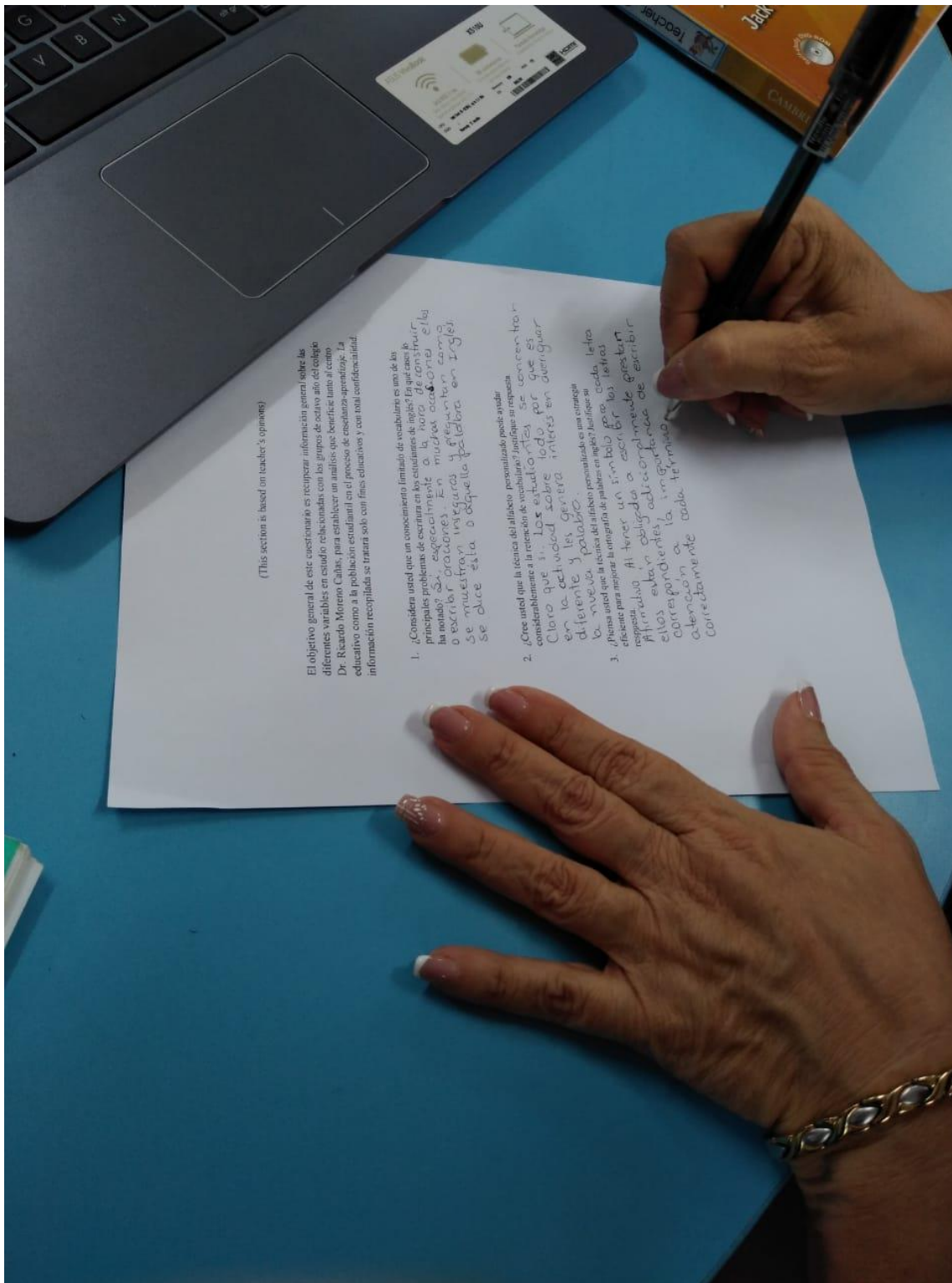












(This section is based on teacher's opinions)

El objetivo general de este cuestionario es recopilar información general sobre las diferentes variables en estudio relacionadas con los ingresos de cada año del colegio Dr. Ricardo Moreno Cullis, para establecer un análisis que beneficie tanto al campo educativo como a la población estudiantil en el proceso de enseñanza-aprendizaje. La información recopilada se tratará solo con fines educativos y con total confidencialidad.

1. ¿Considera usted que un conocimiento limitado de vocabulario es uno de los principales problemas de escritura en los estudiantes de inglés? En qué casos lo ha notado? *Se exageradamente en muchas ocasiones ellos escriben oraciones. En algunas ocasiones se muestran inseguros y preguntan como se dice esta o aquella palabra en inglés. Se dice esta o aquella palabra en inglés.*
2. ¿Cree usted que la técnica del alfabeto fonetizado puede ayudar considerablemente a la retención de vocabulario? *Se conocen los r- Claro que sí. Los estudiantes se conocen los r- en la actividad sobre todo por que es diferente y palabra. lo, n, v, e, c, o. Al menos del alfabeto fonetizado se usa estrategia para mejorar la ortografía de palabras en inglés. Justifique su respuesta. *Afirmativo. Al tener un símbolo para escribir los términos ellos están obligados a escribirlos correctamente y la ortografía de ellos se corrige cada vez que se escriben correctamente cada término.**
3. *Al tener un símbolo para escribir los términos ellos están obligados a escribirlos correctamente y la ortografía de ellos se corrige cada vez que se escriben correctamente cada término.*



Appendix 2

instruments: objective 1.

1. TO IDENTIFY DEFICIENCIES REGARDING USE OF VOCABULARY DURING THE LANGUAGE ACQUISITION PROCESS.

El objetivo general de este cuestionario es recuperar información general sobre las diferentes variables en estudio relacionadas con los grupos de octavo año del colegio Dr. Ricardo Moreno Cañas, para establecer un análisis que beneficie tanto al centro educativo como a la población estudiantil en el proceso de enseñanza-aprendizaje. La información recopilada se tratará solo con fines educativos y con total confidencialidad.

1. ¿Cree usted que el uso de diccionarios, leer en voz alta o aprender a través de dictados, son técnicas comunes dentro de las clases de inglés?
 sí no no responde

2. ¿Utiliza usted algún método diferente a la memorización cuando necesita aprender nuevo vocabulario?
 sí no no responde

3. ¿Siente que su nivel de vocabulario no avanza con respecto a años anteriores?
 sí no no responde

4. ¿Considera usted que olvidar palabras o escribirlas incorrectamente son errores comunes en su proceso de escritura en inglés?
 sí no no responde

5. ¿Siente usted que las oraciones que usted escribe quedan inconclusas, extremadamente cortas o carentes de significado en algunos momentos debido a un vocabulario limitado?
 sí no no responde

6. ¿Piensa que las actividades de escritura son extremadamente sencillas en algunos momentos?

El objetivo general de este reporte observación es recuperar información general sobre las diferentes variables en estudio relacionadas con los grupos de octavo año del colegio Dr. Ricardo Moreno Cañas, para establecer un análisis que beneficie tanto al centro educativo como a la población estudiantil en el proceso de enseñanza-aprendizaje. La información recopilada se tratará solo con fines educativos y con total confidencialidad.

Aspects	Yes	No	Not observed	Comments
1.The class has abundant material, such as: dictionaries, books, or computers				
2.The class has an appropriate amount of students				
3. Students seem to be involved in the class				
4. The classroom has a good physical space to apply other types of interactive activities				
5. All the students participate equally in the class				
6. The time in each class is enough to apply different types of techniques				
7. The environment in the class is appropriate for an efficient learning				
8. Students constantly ask the same questions about writing aspects				
9. There are students who				

suffer any type of disability				
10. Students ask questions about basic vocabulary				

instruments: objective 2.

2. TO APPLY A TIMED ACTIVITY BASED ON A PERSONALIZED ALPHABET TO IMPROVE SPELLING AND RETENTION OF WORDS DURING THE LANGUAGE ACQUISITION PROCESS

El objetivo general de este cuestionario es recuperar información general sobre las diferentes variables en estudio relacionadas con los grupos de octavo año del colegio Dr. Ricardo Moreno Cañas, para establecer un análisis que beneficie tanto al centro educativo como a la población estudiantil en el proceso de enseñanza-aprendizaje. La información recopilada se tratará solo con fines educativos y con total confidencialidad.

1. ¿Le parece interesante la idea de aprender vocabulario nuevo a través de un alfabeto diferente que involucra retos personales? Explique.

2. ¿Cuál fue su primera reacción al saber que debía superar sus propios límites?

3. ¿Cree usted que la dinámica fue útil para ayudarle a mantenerse más concentrado y motivado? Explique.

4. ¿Cuáles fueron sus emociones al finalizar cada una de las rondas?

5. ¿Considera usted que la actividad es una buena manera de aprender nuevo vocabulario?
Explique

(This section measures the amount of wrongly spelled words in each round)

Criteria	Needs Improvement (6-7 misspelled words)	Regular (4-5 misspelled words)	Good (2-3 misspelled words)	Excellent (0-1 misspelled words)
Wrongly Spelled Words: 1st attempt				
Wrongly Spelled Words: 2nd attempt				
Wrongly Spelled Words: 3rd attempt				

(This section measures the amount of memorized words per round)

Criteria	Excellent (6-7 words)	Good (4-5 words)	Regular (2-3 words)	Needs Improvement (0-1 words)
Memorized Words: 1st attempt				
Memorized Words: 2nd attempt				
Memorized Words: 3rd attempt				

(This section is based on teacher's opinions)

El objetivo general de este cuestionario es recuperar información general sobre las diferentes variables en estudio relacionadas con los grupos de octavo año del colegio Dr. Ricardo Moreno Cañas, para establecer un análisis que beneficie tanto al centro educativo como a la población estudiantil en el proceso de enseñanza-aprendizaje. La información recopilada se tratará solo con fines educativos y con total confidencialidad.

1. ¿Considera usted que un conocimiento limitado de vocabulario es uno de los principales problemas de escritura en los estudiantes de inglés? En qué casos lo ha notado?

2. ¿Cree usted que la técnica del alfabeto personalizado puede ayudar considerablemente a la retención de vocabulario? Justifique su respuesta.

3. ¿Piensa usted que la técnica del alfabeto personalizado es una estrategia eficiente para mejorar la ortografía de palabras en inglés? Justifique su respuesta.

instruments: objective 3.

3. TO EVALUATE THE EFFICIENCY OF USING A TIMED ACTIVITY BASED ON A PERSONALIZED ALPHABET AS A TECHNIQUE TO IMPROVE SPELLING AND RETENTION OF WORDS IN THE LANGUAGE ACQUISITION PROCESS

El objetivo general de esta lista de verificación es recuperar información general sobre las diferentes variables en estudio relacionadas con los grupos de octavo año del colegio Dr. Ricardo Moreno Cañas, para establecer un análisis que beneficie tanto al centro educativo como a la población estudiantil en el proceso de enseñanza-aprendizaje. La información recopilada se tratará solo con fines educativos y con total confidencialidad.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Me pareció interesante la idea de aprender vocabulario a través de un método diferente y poco común. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Me pareció divertido establecer mis propias metas 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Me sentí entusiasmado al saber que debía superar cada ronda con un tiempo mejor al anterior 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fui capaz de terminar la primer ronda en un tiempo menor al que me propuse 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fui capaz de terminar la segunda ronda en un tiempo menor al de la primer ronda 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fui capaz de terminar la tercer ronda en un tiempo menor al de la segunda ronda 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Se me hizo más sencillo recordar palabras en la segunda ronda en comparación con la primer ronda 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Se me hizo más fácil recordar palabras en la tercer ronda en comparación con la segunda ronda 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Me sentí muy bien al saber que pude vencer mis propios límites 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Siento que mi escritura en inglés podría mejorar mucho a través del uso de esta técnica 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Considero que mi memorización de palabras podría mejorar mucho a través de esta técnica 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Me sentí con ganas de seguir aprendiendo más vocabulario con el uso de esta técnica 	

El objetivo general de este cuestionario es recuperar información general sobre las diferentes variables en estudio relacionadas con los grupos de octavo año del colegio Dr. Ricardo Moreno Cañas, para establecer un análisis que beneficie tanto al centro educativo como a la población estudiantil en el proceso de enseñanza-aprendizaje. La información recopilada se tratará solo con fines educativos y con total confidencialidad.

- 1) ¿Le pareció diferente el hecho de aprender vocabulario nuevo a través de un alfabeto distinto al común?
() sí () no () no responde
- 2) ¿Había usted utilizado una técnica similar para aprender vocabulario nuevo en inglés?
() sí () no () no responde
- 3) ¿Siente que su nivel de vocabulario en inglés podría avanzar bastante con el uso de esta técnica?
() sí () no () no responde
- 4) ¿Considera usted que el uso de esta técnica le podría ayudar a recordar y escribir mejor las palabras?
() sí () no () no responde
- 5) ¿Cree usted que su escritura podría mejorar mucho con el uso de esta técnica?
() sí () no () no responde
- 6) ¿Piensa usted que la técnica es exageradamente sencilla o aburrida?
() sí () no () no responde
- 7) ¿Considera usted que la actividad lo mantuvo motivado y entretenido?
() sí () no () no responde
- 8) ¿Siente usted que el uso de esta técnica lo mantuvo activo desde el principio hasta el final?
() sí () no () no responde
- 9) ¿Prefiere aprender vocabulario en inglés a través de esta técnica en vez de simplemente estar escuchando, leyendo o buscando significados?
() sí () no () no responde
- 10) ¿Pudo usted sentir motivación al haber concluido la actividad de manera exitosa?
() sí () no () no responde

Tribunal Examinador

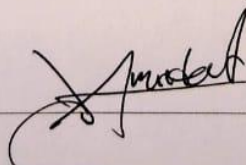
Esta Tesina fue aprobada por el Tribunal Examinador de las Carreras de Inglés de la Universidad Internacional de las Américas, como requisito para optar por el grado de Bachiller en Inglés con Énfasis en Enseñanza.



Lic Leslie Elizondo Mora
Tutor



Lic. Joshua Masís Bermudez
Lector



M.Sc. Dinier Amador Serrano
Directora de las Carreras de Inglés

Carta de la Directora de Carrera

San José, 11 de diciembre de 2019

Señores

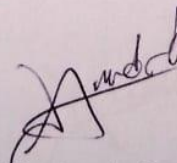
Universidad Internacional de las Américas

Estimados señores:

El suscrito MSc. Dinier Amador Serrano, Director de las Carreras de Inglés, hace constar que ha revisado la Tesina del estudiante, Esteban Daniel Morera Méndez, portador de la cédula de identidad no. 207000555, que ha titulado: **Timed Activity Based on a Personalized Alphabet as a Way to Improve English Vocabulary at Ricardo Moreno Cañas High School During Second Trimester of 2019.**

La mencionada Tesis, responde a los requisitos exigidos en la Guía que nuestra carrera tiene para estos casos. Por tanto, se autoriza al autor para que lo presente ante el tribunal examinador nombrado para esta ocasión.

Atentamente,



MSc. Dinier Amador Serrano

Director de las Carreras de Inglés

Carta del Lector

San José, 11 de diciembre de 2019

Máster

Dinier Amador Serrano

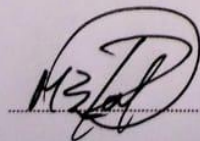
Directora de las Carreras de Inglés y Enseñanza del Inglés

Universidad Internacional de las Américas

Estimado señor:

El estudiante Esteban Daniel Morera Méndez, portador de la cédula de identidad no. 2-0700-0555, ha presentado para su lectura y corrección de estilo la tesina denominada Timed Activity Based on a Personalized Alphabet as a Way to Improve English Vocabulary at Ricardo Moreno Canas High School During Second Trimester of 2019. He revisado y corregido terminología, así como los aspectos referentes a la estructura gramatical, ortografía y puntuación y he comprobado que se han incorporado las correcciones sugeridas al presente documento. Por lo tanto, hago constar que este se encuentra listo para ser presentado a la Universidad como trabajo de graduación.

Atentamente,



Lic. Joshua Masís Bermudez

Carta del Revisor

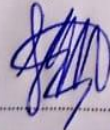
11 de diciembre de 2019

Máster
M.Sc. Dinier Amador Serrano
Director de las Carreras de Inglés y Enseñanza del Inglés
Universidad Internacional de las Américas

Estimado señor:

El estudiante Esteban Daniel Morera Méndez, portador de la cédula de identidad no. 2-0700-0555, ha presentado para la respectiva revisión la tesina denominada *Timed Activity Based on a Personalized Alphabet as a Way to Improve English Vocabulary at Ricardo Moreno Canas High School During Second Trimester of 2019*. Por lo tanto, se hace constar que el documento fue revisado en lo relativo a la estructura gramatical, ortografía, puntuación, cohesión y terminología. Asimismo, se comprobó que las correcciones sugeridas se incorporaran al documento. Por ende, una vez incorporadas las recomendaciones efectuadas en el documento, el mismo se considera listo para su presentación la Universidad como trabajo de graduación.

Atentamente,



Lic. Leslie Elizondo Mora
Cédula de identidad 109990600