

**UNIVERSIDAD INTERNACIONAL DE LAS
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SCHOOL OF EDUCATION AND FOREIGN LANGUAGES

**USING SOCRATIVE APP AS A TECHNOLOGICAL ASSET
TO REINFORCE THE ACQUISITION OF SIMPLE PAST
TENSE OF ENGLISH I STUDENTS AT POLYTECHNIC
INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY DURING THE III
QUARTER OF 2018**

Thesis Submitted to Obtain the Bachelor in English with Concentration in Teaching

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Contents

Chapter I	1
Introductory Framework.....	1
1.1. Problem Statement	1
1.2. Objectives of the Investigation	3
1.2.1. General Objective	3
1.2.2. Specific Objectives	3
1.3. Justification of the Study	4
1.4. Antecedents.....	6
1.5. Scope.....	10
Chapter II.....	11
Theoretical Framework.....	11
Chapter III.....	41
Methodological Framework.....	41
3.1. Research Approach.....	42
3.2. Research Method	44
3.3. Information Sources.....	47
3.4. Analysis Categories	47
3.5. Data Collection Instruments	49
3.6. Collection Data Process and Data Analysis.....	51

Chapter IV	53
Data Analysis.....	53
4.1. Analysis and Interpretation of the Results.....	54
4.1.1. Observation.....	54
4.1.2. Interview	57
4.1.3. Exercises Sent through Socrative to Students	66
4.1.3.1. Simple Past Generalities.....	66
4.1.3.2. Simple Past Verbs.....	71
4.1.4. Rubric	75
4.1.5. Simple Past Tense Quiz.....	78
Chapter V.....	92
Conclusions and Recommendations.....	92
5.1. Conclusions	93
5.1.1. Research Question	93
5.1.2. To use Socrative App as a Technological Asset to Reinforce the Acquisition of Simple Past Tense of English I Students at Polytechnic International University during the III Quarter of 2018.....	94
5.1.3. To identify English 1 students' simple past tense usage prior the inclusion of Socrative app as a technological asset to the learning process at Polytechnic International University during the III Quarter of 2018.....	95

5.1.4. To apply grammar activities reinforcing simple past tense throughout Socrative app implementation at Polytechnic International University during the III Quarter of 2018	96
5.1.5. To evaluate English 1 students' simple past tense usage after the implementation of Socrative app at Polytechnic International University during the III Quarter of 2018	97
5.2. Recommendations.....	97
Bibliography	101
Appendixes	110
Appendix 1.....	110
Observation Sheet.....	110
Appendix 2.....	111
Interview to Sample Population	111
Appendix 3.....	112
Rubric to Gather Student's Thoughts About Using Socrative as a Technological Asset in and out of Class	112
Appendix 4.....	113
Quiz about Simple Past Tense.	113
Appendix 5.....	117
Socrative Exercise – Simple Past Generalities	117
Appendix 6.....	118
Socrative Exercise – Simple Past Verbs.....	118

Tribunal Examinador	119
Headmaster's Letter	120
Reader's Letter	121
Reviewer's Letter	122
Ethics Code	123

Tables

Table 1. Results of the first observation done to the group by the researcher and the professor by the researcher. Researcher's own creation.....	55
Table 2. Justifications Made by the Students to Agree about Using their Cellphones in Class. Information taken from Interview Applied. Researcher's own creation.	64
Table 3. Statements included within the Simple Past Generalities Activity applied through Socrative. Researcher's own creation.....	68
Table 4. Answers provided by the Students to the Simple Past Generalities exercise. Information generated through Socrative App and the paper version of the exercise applied.	70
Table 5. Sentences and given verbs included within the Simple Past Verbs Activity applied through Socrative. Researcher's own creation.	73
Table 6. Answers provided by the Students to the Simple Past Verbs exercise. Information generated through Socrative App and the paper version of the exercise applied.....	74
Table 7. Quiz identification exercise answers per student. Researcher's own creation	80
Table 8. Quiz short answer exercise students' answers. Researcher's own creation	82
Table 9. Grades behavior per activity. Researcher's own creation	91

Figures

Figure 1. Students' Access to Cellphones or Mobile Devices. Information taken from Interview Applied. Researcher's own creation.....	59
Figure 2. Students' Access to Computers. Information taken from Interview Applied. Researcher's own creation.....	60
Figure 3. Students' Access to internet on their Mobile Devices. Information taken from Interview Applied. Researcher's own creation.....	61
Figure 4. Students' Access to internet at Home. Information taken from Interview Applied. Researcher's own creation.....	62
Figure 5. Students' Acceptance to Use their Mobile Devices for Practices in Class. Information taken from Interview Applied. Researcher's own creation.	63
Figure 6. Students' Acceptance to Receive Extra Material in their Mobile Devices for Practices in and out of Class. Information taken from Interview Applied. Researcher's own creation.	65
Figure 7. Percentage of students completing Simple Past Generalities Exercise. Information taken from Socrative App. Researcher's own creation.	67
Figure 8. Number of answers to each statement included in the activity Simple Past Generalities. Information taken from Socrative and the paper version of the exercise applied. Researcher's own creation.....	70
Figure 9. Percentage of students that completed the Simple Past Generalities Exercise. Information taken from Socrative App. Researcher's own creation.	71

Figure 10. Number of Answers to each question included in the activity Simple Past Verbs. Information taken from Socrative and the paper version of the exercise applied. Researcher's own creation.....	73
Figure 11. Students' Answers to the rubric applied on October 31 st , 2018. Researcher's own creation.	76
Figure 12. Number of correct answers per student at exercise B identification part from the quiz. Information taken from the quiz results. Researchers' own creation.	79
Figure 13. Number of correct answers per student at exercise 1 short answer part from the quiz. Information taken from the quiz results. Researchers' own creation	83
Figure 14. Number of correct answers per student at exercise 2 short answer part from the quiz. Information taken from the quiz results. Researchers' own creation	84
Figure 15. Distribution of points per student within the production exercise in the quiz. Researcher's own creation using quiz results.....	85
Figure 16. Contrast of correct answers between Simple Past Generalities Socrative activity and Exercise B from Quiz Identification. Researcher's own creation.....	87
Figure 17. Contrast of correct answers between Simple Past Verbs Socrative activity and Exercise 1 from Quiz Short Answer. Researcher's own creation.	89

Dedication

I would like to dedicate this work to,

My parents

My present and future students

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Abstract

This research was created with the solely purpose to analyze the impact of using Socrative application as a technological asset to reinforce the learning process of language acquisition. For this study, the researcher focused on the acquisition of grammar specifically Simple Past tense. To develop the research a group of 15 students coursing English I at Polytechnic International University were invited to participate on the study, during it, and following the action research approach, the application was used to provide practice in and out of the classroom, and an evaluation was applied based on the course schedule. At the end, the researcher noticed a significant difference on the students' performance within the application and the formal evaluation when contrasting similar exercises. This turn around within the results was justified on the anxiety around a formal evaluation and the time provided for each activity. In conclusion, this researcher can affirm that the learning process of a language can be done using a hybrid between the regular teaching methods and the technological assets we as teacher can find within the network and society, mobile devices included.

Resumen

Este trabajo fue creado con el propósito de analizar el impacto del uso de la aplicación móvil Socrative como recurso tecnológico para reforzar el proceso de enseñanza y aprendizaje en el estudio de un segundo idioma. Para este estudio, el investigador se centró en la adquisición de la gramática, específicamente la construcción del pasado simple. Para el desarrollo de la investigación se invitó a un grupo de 15 estudiantes que estaban cursando la materia Inglés I en la Universidad Politécnica Internacional. Para recolectar la información necesaria, y siguiendo el enfoque de investigación – acción, a través de la aplicación Socrative los estudiantes tuvieron acceso a ejercicios de práctica dentro y fuera del aula, y una evaluación formal fue aplicada según el calendario del curso. Al analizar la información obtenida, este investigador notó una diferencia significativa entre los resultados obtenidos a través de la aplicación Socrative y la evaluación formal, esta diferencia se justifica por la diferencia de tiempo otorgado a ambas actividades y la ansiedad natural que genera una evaluación formal. En conclusión, este investigador puede afirmar que el proceso de enseñanza y aprendizaje de un idioma puede realizarse a través de un modelo híbrido entre los métodos regulares y los recursos tecnológicos que como docentes se pueden encontrar en la red, incluyendo los dispositivos móviles.

Chapter I

Introductory Framework

1.1. Problem Statement

For many years, the Costa Rican educational system has been preparing students for the XXI century. Teachers were asked to prepare children and teenagers to confront the new era society in which technology has become the center of it. For instance, 2016 became the year of change for English teaching as a new curriculum was given, the same has to be sequentially applied in the next five to six years to comply with both primary and secondary school. The new curriculum proposes teaching students to master new abilities and competencies (MEP, 2016). Following the curriculum and its proposal, the students now have to be responsible of their own learning process, “as it answers to their own dreams, illusions, expectations and the challenges of a citizen from the new millennia” (MEP, 2016).

When thinking how the educational system will help nowadays students to reach their dreams despite the challenges they might need to face, Khan (2012) provides some insight as next,

The way we teach and learn is a once-in-a-millennium turning point. The old classroom model simply does not fit our changing needs. It is a fundamentally passive way of learning, while the world requires more and more active processing of information. The old model is based on pushing students together in age-group batches with one-pace-fits-all curricula and hoping they pick up something along the way... When and where do people concentrate best? The answer, of course, is that it all depends on the individual. Some people are at their sharpest first thing in the

morning. Some are more receptive late at night. One person requires a silent house to optimize his focus; another seems to think more clearly with music playing or against the white noise of a coffee shop. Given all these variations, why do we still insist that the heaviest lifting in teaching and learning takes place in the confines of a classroom and to the impersonal rhythm of bells and buzzers?

For Khan, the learning process varies from individual to individual, as each person has his/her own pace to concentrate and learn. Based on the latter, Khan (2012) continues saying,

Technology has the power to free us from those limitations, to make education far more portable, flexible, and personal; to foster initiative and individual responsibility; to restore the treasure-hunt excitement to the process of learning. Technology offers another potential benefit as well: the Internet can make education far, far more accessible, so knowledge and opportunity can be more broadly and equitably shared.

But how can technology be included within a classroom without becoming a distractor? From the multiple offers through the internet about learning applications which is the best? Will watch videos about a specific topic improve the learning process? To properly answer these questions the teacher or moderator will have to first to identify what topic he/she wants to work with, which activities would be best for the topic itself, and finally, to assess if the methodology applied worked or not based on the students' development.

According to Khan (2012) the use of technology just for the sake of technology will not help a student to learn better. But, it will "Create a context in which people can give free rein to their curiosity and natural love of learning, so that they realize they are already smart".

Therefore, after considering the latter information a question come to our minds, what is the

impact of using Socrative app as a technological asset to reinforce the learning process of simple past tense of English I students at Polytechnic International University?

1.2. Objectives of the Investigation

According to Dudovsky (2018) “Formulating research aim and objectives in an appropriate manner is one of the most important aspects of your thesis... research aim and objectives determine the scope, depth and the overall direction of the research.”

Following the researcher’s chain of thoughts, he has formulated the following objectives to conduct this research.

1.2.1. General Objective

The main objective proposed for this investigation is:

- To use Socrative App as a Technological Asset to Reinforce the Acquisition of Simple Past Tense of English I Students at Polytechnic International University during the III Quarter of 2018

1.2.2. Specific Objectives

To comply with the main purpose of this research three specific objectives are being proposed:

- To identify English 1 students’ simple past tense usage prior the inclusion of Socrative app as a technological asset to the learning process at Polytechnic International University during the III Quarter of 2018
- To apply grammar activities reinforcing simple past tense throughout Socrative app implementation at Polytechnic International University during the III Quarter of 2018

- To evaluate English 1 students' simple past tense usage after the implementation of Socrative app at Polytechnic International University during the III Quarter of 2018

1.3. Justification of the Study

As society, the educational process is affected by how fast technology is growing and how easy is for a person to have access to it. Costa Rican educational system is not exception to the impact of technological devices. According to El Financiero (2014), back in 2013 Costa Rica had 1.5 mobile services per inhabitant. It is common watching students play with their phone during breaks, or using social network apps such as Facebook, WhatsApp, Snapchat and Instagram; which are trending day by day gathering millions of users along the world.

Being the latter an ongoing issue during school hours, teachers from all over the country started applying rules and techniques to have the students focus on class. Internal regulations were edited to consider the use of the phone while the students were in the premises of each school and high school. Teachers and parents were both pro and con of the devices and the issue was brought to the head of the Ministry of Public Education (MEP as its Spanish acronym).

In 2017 the Ministry of Public Education (MEP) published a regulation for the use of mobile devices owned by the students. This was done to enlighten and support the personnel of each school and high school throughout the country to handle the use of mobile devices during school time (p. 14). They said: "The use of smartphones within the secondary education is worthy when considered as tools to enhance and stimulate the construction of learning and coexistence relationships under the teacher's leadership no matter the subject taught" (MEP, 2017).

Also MEP (2017) within the published regulation even includes links for each institution to promote research habits within the student body (p. 5). Having all the latter in mind, the idea of applying an education related mobile application becomes appealing to some teachers, and therefore some questions need to be answered, such as which application would be the best one? What would be an acceptable technological asset to complement the class work? And moreover, which available mobile app answers to the subject needs?

One of the indirect objectives of this research is to look for suitable answers to those questions making it relevant. Using a specific, available, related to the learning process mobile app such as Socrative we can provide enough information to teachers who might be able to apply its benefits to their classrooms. Therefore, converting the mobile devices owned by the students as technological assets to the learning process.

Some of the advantages of Socrative are that it has both a mobile and a computer environment making it accessible to all students, even if they have a mobile device or not. Also, the teacher and the student's sites are separate; therefore, teachers will have the ability to either create their activities or even use the ones advised by the application. Furthermore, classrooms can be created through the teacher's site, and students can be divided among them to match the real ones making it easier for the teacher to use it even for graded activities. On the other hand, no access to internet neither through their mobile devices or a wired connection at home can be considered a weakness on this research, however, this can be easily solved if the institution has a computer lab available for the students, having this can also make the project even more interesting by allying both subjects English and Computer Science through Socrative.

At the end, it can be affirmed that both, the student body as the teacher will experience the benefits of including this kind of technology to their classrooms. The first ones will receive enhanced classes and will discover how their cellphones can be used for other things than fun. And the second group will discover in technology a beneficial asset to reinforce, enhance, and make their classes and the learning process more dynamic and attractive.

1.4. Antecedents

Using technology within the classroom has become quite important for teachers around the world. In a society where technology has an easy access and which without it most of the daily activities would not be completed as fast as we need to, it is understandable to want to use it within the classroom.

In the article *Websites for English Language Teaching: Design, Contents and Pedagogical Implications* the authors analyze different websites and classify them based according to their structures, the exercises found on them, the skills promoted on each website and the kind of interaction that takes place if there is interaction. For them “the importance of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) not only in our personal and professional lives, but also in the educational area, is unquestionable.” (Gimenés Quiñonero, Esther, Marqués-Aguado, & Solís Becerra, 2013)

By the time the study was made, internet had become a major thing in our daily lives both professionally and educationally. Solís Becerra, Marqués-Aguado, & Gimenés Quiñonero conclude that, “...To a certain extent, evinced that there is a need to create websites which are more efficient in the field of EFL..., on the other hand, resources should be used as spaces that allow for interaction and communication to take place. (2013, p. 8)

Following the latter authors' thoughts, in the article *Meaningful Online Interactions and Writing Improvement* we find the answer to the ongoing question from and for the faculty, is technology important for the learning process? According to Camara-Walker & Irizarry, "the importance of English and online communication in the process of international consumption and creation of knowledge is a fact that must be considered by the General Education (GE) academic communities today." (2013, p. 149)

According to Cevetello, J. and Warschauer, quoted by (Camara-Walker & Irizarry, 2013)), "Research on communication technology repeatedly concludes that the integration of technology must be conceived as a tool that facilitates the implementation of pedagogically and methodologically sound teaching practices." (p. 151) The study from Camara-Walker & Irizarry was done at the University of Puerto Rico, they used two groups, one of the groups served as an experimental group in an optimal learning environment. The second one, functioned as a control group in a traditional computer assisted learning environment where Spanish speaking students interacted with each other in the same discussion forums without the added benefit of feedback from a more competent other, and a real need or purpose to communicate in English, the target language. Six forums were open for both groups, each group participating using the tools provided for it. Once the obtained data collected through rubrics was analyzed, they conclude that "having feedback from a more competent other has an important effect on writing improvement." (2013, p. 168) For them, "Students' academic writing and technological competencies are developed while they actively participate within learning communities of their fields of study outside the classroom walls." (2013, p. 171)

But, how can our students communicate with other learners or learning communities outside our classrooms? In an era in which technological devices such as cellphones are

easily accessible “It is not a surprise that students want to use cellphones and other mobile technologies in class but getting teachers on board with the idea may be more challenging.”

(Ash, 2010) According to Ash in her article *Teachers Testing Mobile Methods*,

Incorporating mobile devices can change classroom dynamics and significantly affect the way teachers teach, all of which requires technical and instructional support to be successful, experts in educational technology say. Such implications, in turn, are creating a demand for more high-quality professional development in this area.

(2010)

Ash cites Professor Nabeel Ahmad from Columbia University, he said, “Just because you can do something does not mean you should... just because an hour-long professional-development course can be delivered through a cellphone doesn't mean teachers will actually want to receive instruction that way.” (2010) The latter comment let us think in what the correct use of technology as an asset in the learning process would be. However, it is also a motivation to start working with technology in a way in which will enhance the students’ abilities and assist the teacher at the same time.

Aagard, Steven, Kim, Kioh, Nabb, Lee & Tan, Fujuan, on their study titled *International ESL Graduate Student Perceptions of Online Learning in the Context of Second Language Acquisition and Culturally Responsive Facilitation*, through an in-depth interview method collected their data from international students whose first language was not English. (Aagard, Kim, Nabb, & Tan, 2010) The interviews were both voluntary and requested to the participants, seven participants answered eight open-ended questions as well as some follow up inquiries. The whole idea behind the procedure was to gather information about the participants’ likes and dislikes about online learning experiences, the effects of them either

positive or negative and how cultural differences affect online learning in comparison to face to face learning experiences. (2010, p. 11)

Among their findings, the authors noted that positive attitudes towards online learning experiences came from “Participants with proficient language skills, online courses experience, and time spent in the U.S” (2010, p. 11). Regarding language acquisition, participants provided their opinions, vocabulary, and reading and writing skills received positive comments from them as a feeling of improvement on those categories was common. On the other hand, listening and speaking skills did not improve that much according to the participants. (Aagard, Kim, Nabb, & Tan, 2010, p. 12). Although further investigation in this field needs to be done, the authors conclude that both advantages and disadvantages are perceived from online experiences; some of them affected by cultural gaps within the learners. (2010, p. 13)

Moreover, in every learning process there should be a time to learn and a time to assess what was learned. “Technology holds the potential to facilitate assessment implementation and maximize the benefits for all involved stakeholders.” (García Laborda, Guzman, Hambleton, & Sampson, 2015) However, the potential technology can have when involved in the learning process, according to, “Cannot be realized without taking account of the fact that learning and consequently assessment takes place within the context (both social and technological) in which the learner acts.” (2015, p. 1) Therefore, to use technology effectively either when teaching or when assessing we need to have clear what do we want our students to accomplish? Where do we want to get them?

Finally, the one advantage of using technology in a classroom is the immediacy of the information received from the students. In words of Garland quoted by (Ash, 2010) “Because

the results are so instantaneous, we're able to very quickly look as a team at where our children are struggling or succeeding and see what we need to do". Therefore, the corresponding actions needed to correct the students and avoid language fossilizations can be taken almost immediately. The latter will help us improve the students' performance making them better communicators and users of the language.

1.5. Scope

Once the data is collected and analyzed the expectation for it is, first, to list the effects of the use of Socrative app as a technological asset to reinforce the learning process of simple past tense at Polytechnic International University either if they are positive or negative. Second, to understand how technology could be well applied to the learning process using the free use applications offered in the internet and devices we have available in class and at the institution, including the students' owned devices. Third, to discover how the students feel about using technology in and out of class to reinforce what it has been learned by collecting the students' thoughts about the topic.

Moreover, it is expected to confirm if students are open to use their own cellphones and mobile devices to better up their own learning process. On the other hand, understanding how the students use simple past tense in and out of class, and assessing if the students' knowledge in simple past tense improved after using Socrative app in and out of class as technological asset will be part of the scope of this study.

Chapter II

Theoretical Framework

As future professionals in education we are used to words such as educational programs, students' needs, parent – teacher relationship, student – teacher relationship, skills, and learning process, among others. Even though all of them are very important for a correct and successful development of education in any society and each of them has its own purpose to define and develop a good educational program, it is the latter, learning process, we are going to focus at the moment, as the researcher believes it is the core of every educational program. But what is a learning process?

The Collins Dictionary on its online version defines learning process as “A process of learning” (2018), on the other hand, the Merriam Webster dictionary, also in its online version, provides a more English teaching oriented definition, “The activity or process of gaining knowledge or skill by studying, practicing, being taught, or experiencing something : the activity of someone who learns” (2018). From both definitions it is possible to affirm that a process needs to be dictated and followed within an educational environment to have and be part of a learning process no matter if you are in the giving or the receiving end of it.

It is clear then, that in a learning process both parties are equally involved within it, that is the teacher and the students, but, in order to have a successful one, the teaching party needs to understand how the learners learn, for the University of South Wales in Sidney “What your student does is actually more important to their learning than what you, as the teacher, do. Learning activities are what students actually do in your course in order to learn.” (2017) In other words, the activities planned to present, develop and acquire

knowledge should reflect the way the students learn, and what they do to learn. To accomplish that, the teacher needs to give himself time to know the group, both collectively and individually, and understand how they acquire knowledge. Choosing from a variety of well-known teaching techniques such as lecture or tutorial to small group discussions, role plays, group or individual projects, brainstorming, oral presentations, problem solving activities and/or debates will help the teacher to achieve the proposed goals for each topic he or she will develop in class (2017). Quoting the article, the researcher has been referring,

The types of learning activities you develop for your course should be based on the particular learning outcomes that you would like to achieve. Learning activities need to support students in the achievement of course learning outcomes. When choosing learning activities it is useful to reflect on the learning process and what we actually do when we learn something. (University of South Wales, 2017)

Therefore, observation is key for the educator to start planning and choosing learning activities and techniques when trying to develop a topic. In addition, for Alice Thomas in her article *Understanding the Learning Process to Effectively Differentiate Instruction*,

To successfully use differentiated instruction, a teacher must first have a firm understanding of each of the cognitive components of the learning process, what they look like when they are working, and what the specific subcomponents of each look like when they are breaking down. Next, a teacher must develop a rich repertoire of strategies and tactics from which to pull the exact strategy or tactic that will address a specific breakdown for a specific task, at the right moment. Using a great strategy at the wrong time or mismatching a strategy with breakdown for which the strategy will

yield no gains, will frustrate students and teachers alike when the strategy fails to produce the desired result. (Thomas, 2010)

From Thomas' insights (2010), we can get why understanding what the learning process is, and how to plan the strategies having in mind the group of students and the goal to be reached is so important, the mere knowledge of it can be the difference between a successful class or the frustration of both students and teachers. On that topic Thomas continues by saying, "In order to engage, motivate and teach all learners at optimal levels, teachers must understand the learning process in general, understand and respond to students' individual emotional and cognitive profiles and select instructional strategies and tactics that are effective for diverse learners" (Thomas, 2010).

In Costa Rica, the Ministry of Education (MEP) regulates all the processes within the educational process either through their offices or through CONESUP (Consejo de Educación Superior) in charge of all majors offered by the universities within the country either public or private. They elaborate, approve and implement the curriculum for teachers to apply within the different levels of education the students need to cover. For this purpose, specific programs are created for each subject to help the educators on what to teach and how to teach it. On this line of thought, in 2016 English as subject of study within the national educational system received a refreshment on its curriculum, the new document named "Educar para una nueva ciudadanía" (Educating for a New Citizenship) (MEP, 2016) comprises all the new guidelines to teach English within the different school years.

According to the above cited document, "The development of communicative competence in English is an aspiration and a request of the Costa Rican society upon the educational system" (MEP, 2016, p. 4). Based on that, a commitment from MEP with the

students and society has become clear to achieve the goal of “having bilingual citizens in two or more languages by means of a comprehensive, articulated curriculum from kindergarten through high school” (MEP, 2016, p. 4). The main objective of this new curricula is to get the learners to,

Reach a minimum level of English proficiency of A2 when completing primary education and B1 or B2 (depending on the study plans) when completing secondary education progressively, according to the levels described by the Common European Framework of Reference for languages (CEFR). (MEP, 2016, p. 4)

Being that the objective proposed, the new curriculum was designed, consulted, proposed and implemented gradually within all primary and secondary educational institutions. Therefore, it is expected that in a period of 12 years starting on 2017, year of the implementation, the first generation of students following the new curriculum will be graduating as the first bilingual generation, as those students have gone through the whole program since primary school. On the other hand, the high school students that started the program on 2017, will experience a transformation on how they will learn English from now on, hopefully, they will become more adepts to the language. In the meantime, both curricula will be working on parallel as two generations of students will be working their way through the educational system at the same time.

The next image illustrates the proficiency levels projection proposed,

Image 1.

Proficiency Levels Projection for the English Curriculum

Proficiency Levels Projection for the English Curriculum

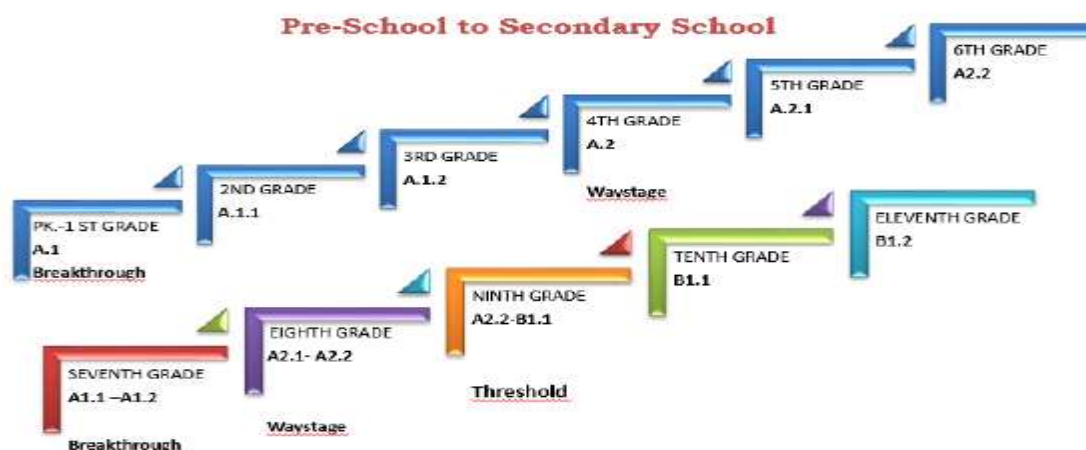


Image 1. Proficiency Levels Projection. (MEP, Educar para una nueva ciudadanía. Programas de Estudio de Inglés. Tercer Ciclo de la Educación General Básica y Educación Diversificada, 2016, p. 5)

Before placing this new curriculum on implementation mode, MEP had taken some prior actions such as declaring English as national interest back in 2008 as a way to boost the competitive sector (2016, p. 4). They had also asked the working and future educators to take the TOEIC-MEP proficiency test to “determine their baseline English proficiency level with reference to standards articulated in the Common European Framework of Reference,” the results of those examinations, according to MEP “have been used to design and implement training courses to improve the communicative language ability of teachers and their teaching practices.” (2016, p. 4)

This new curriculum, according to MEP, is based on three philosophical trends stated in “the Educational Policy "Towards the 21st Century" -- humanism, rationalism and constructivism” (2016, p. 16), at the same time, besides the philosophical, psychological,

neurological, socio-cognitive, socio-cultural and core considerations were included to draft out the new study programs.

Based on the Common European Framework of Reference for Language (CEFR), and its definition of language competences, which, according to MEP “are called upon by the learner when performing language tasks: linguistic, sociolinguistic and pragmatic... involve knowledge, skills, and know-how for each of the following three components” (2016, p. 23), which are: linguistic, socio-linguistic and pragmatic. See the following image describing the specific competences,

Image 2.

Specific Competences

Specific competences		
Linguistic Competence	Sociolinguistic Competence	Pragmatic Competence
Lexical Grammatical Semantic Phonological Orthographic	Social Relations Politeness Conventions Expressions of Folk Wisdom Register Differences Dialect & Accent	Discourse Competence Functional Competence

Adapted from Piccardo, Berchoud, Cignatta, Mentz, Pamula, 2011, p. 35

Image 2. Specific Competences proposed by MEP. Adapted from Piccardo, Berchoud, Cignatta, Mentz, Pamula, 2011, p.35

Because of the analysis made by MEP (2016) the new curriculum,

adopts the Action-Oriented Approach or the Task-based Approach, (Samuda & Bygate, 2008) one of the latest communicative language methodologies which places emphasis on what learners know and do to communicate successfully by completing tasks, using general and specific competences in meaningful context and real-life scenarios. (p. 25)

Therefore, during the implementation mode of this new curriculum, which, will be done in a 5 years' time, there will be a "Progressive shift from the Communicative Approach to the Action-Oriented Approach." (MEP, 2016, p. 25) It is important to note that, even though the learning process is being given a new approach "the curriculum maintains an eclectic view, but favours the Action-Oriented Approach among the other pedagogical views." (MEP, 2016, p. 25)

Each university is founded under the principles and values of its creator, these set of values along with the vision and mission of the university provides a general idea of the student's profile deciding to be part of the institution and the future professional that will graduate from it. Values such as ethics, commitment, loyalty, respect, social responsibility and creativity are part of the students and the core of the institution they chose to attend, for the Polytechnic International University, these set of values are the ones modeling its students.

According to the university's vision, they want to become a referent of the Costa Rican upper education focusing on majors that will leave a positive impact within the society (Universidad Politécnica Internacional, 2018), to achieve it, they have set as their mission, "To form leaders with a professional, human and enterprising perspective, who will answer

to the market demands and transformations, looking to increase the country's competitiveness and sustainable development along with its citizens quality of life" (2018).

Within the learning process of a language it is common to read about the language skills, therefore, it is important to understand what the language skills are. For the Collins Dictionary they are "the ability to use language" (2018). On the other hand, Netlanguages defines language skills as "different aspects of using language; such as listening, reading, writing or speaking. Skills are our ability to do these things" (2017). Moreover, they continue classifying them into receptive when talking about listening or reading and productive when referring to speaking or writing (Netlanguages, 2017).

For Kevin Morehouse in his article in Linguacore language skills are the "Set of four capabilities that allow an individual to comprehend and produce spoken language for proper and effective interpersonal communication" (Morehouse, 2017). For Morehouse, "in the context of first-language acquisition, the four skills are most often acquired in the order of listening first, then speaking, then possibly reading and writing" (2017). So, either they are labeled as aspects or as capabilities both authors agree on the fact that without them language cannot be neither produced nor comprehended as that is the main reason language skills exists. According to Bilingüismo y Tecnología, it is through the language skills that "we receive pieces of information, we provide them and construct our own reality" (The four language skills and their involment in learning English, 2016).

After getting a gist of what language skills are and even know how they can be classified, it is important to understand what each of them do for the language acquisition process. Even though, for this paper the researcher is going to focus mainly on the writing

ability and its subskills such as grammar. The researcher considers worthy to hint all four skills listening, reading, speaking and writing.

“In the context of first-language acquisition, the four skills are most often acquired in the order of listening first, then speaking, then possibly reading and writing” (Morehouse, 2017). When talking about the listening skill, it is important to make the difference between hearing and listening, “Hearing means to perceive sounds vibrations;” ... while “listening involves understanding and giving meaning to what you hear” (Bilingüismo y Tecnología, 2016). In addition, for Morehouse (2017), “Listening is the first language skill we acquire in our native language. It is what is known as a receptive skill, or a passive skill, as it requires us to use our ears and our brains to comprehend language as it is being spoken to us. It is the first of two natural language skills, which are required by all-natural spoken languages.” In other words, it is through listening that we start acquiring languages, once we apply ourselves to understand and decipher the spoken code we are hearing, and our brain gets involved within the comprehension process, we start using and developing our natural listening skill if we are referring to the native tongue, and our listening skill when talking about second language acquisition.

Speaking is the second language ability, in children it is developed “by listening to their relatives. They start relating specific sounds with a concrete meaning in a natural way” For Bilingüismo y Tecnología (2016), “a good start for the academic success is a big contact with the language: the more parents speak to their children the better they get prepared to assimilate knowledge in the school”. Morehouse (2017), describes the speaking skill as, “The second language skill we acquire in our native language. It is what is known as a productive

skill, or an active skill, as it requires us to use our vocal tract and our brains to correctly produce language through sound.”

During the language acquisition process, children develop this specific skill as the second one, through repetition, the process of linking what they listen with what they should produce helps them to develop this skill. The ability to produce language will help the student to voice any misunderstanding he or she may have during the learning process.

Reading is another language skill. The development of this skill is key to a successful language acquisition process. Bilingüismo y Tecnología (2016) refers to it by saying, “The development of reading is the key for a good learning; it’s absolutely necessary to understand what you read in order to assimilate the contents.” On the matter, Morehouse (2017) uses a more technical language to describe the reading skill, for him, this ability is,

The third language skill we may acquire in our native language. As with listening, it is a receptive, or passive skill, as it requires us to use our eyes and our brains to comprehend the written equivalent of spoken language. It is one of the two artificial language skills, as not all-natural spoken languages have a writing system.

Despite the language used by both Bilingüismo y Tecnología (2016) and Morehouse (2017), the two of them agree on the importance of this skill, to get a better understanding of the language itself. Using Morehouse’s words, being able to read provides the language user with the capacity to understand or comprehend “the written equivalent of spoken language” (2017). Therefore, the learner or future user will acquire more vocabulary and will understand even more the language to be acquired by relating the wording he has heard to what he or she is reading.

Finally, we have the writing skill, which paraphrasing Bilingüismo and Tecnología, it is how language is put into paper (2016). On the other hand, Morehouse (2017) defines the writing skill as,

the fourth language skill we may acquire in our native language. As with speaking, it is a productive, or active skill, as it requires us to use our hands and our brains to produce the written symbols that represent our spoken language. Along with reading, it is one of the two artificial language skills, as not all-natural spoken languages have a writing system.

An old saying goes by “we write the way we speak,” following that train of thought. Mastering the writing skill will not only give the capability to the language user to put on paper his or her thoughts, but also, will provide a chance to develop his or her language acquisition further. Penlighten describes the importance of writing as “One of the important ways of expressing your thoughts and communicating ideas and views to others” (2018).

According to Bilingüismo and Tecnología (2016),

By growing, we start losing our capability to absorb languages and we focus on the codes of our mother tongue. We learn our mother tongue by listening, speaking and later by reading and writing. Nevertheless, when learning English or another language, we have to develop the four skills at the same time.

On the opposite end and contrasting with the latter author’s idea, Brice & Roseberry-McKibbin (2018) believe that English as a second language,

Would be taught in their first language 90% of the time and in English 10% of the time in kindergarten and first grade. Gradually, as they learned more English, they

would be taught in the primary language 50% of the time and in English 50% of the time by sixth grade. Studies have shown that children who are taught in this manner outperform ELLs who are taught mostly in English from very early in their schooling. Children in this ideal bilingual learning situation do so well because they understand what they are hearing and are thus able to build their underlying conceptual-linguistic foundation.

It is clear for Brice & Roseberry-McKibbin (2018) that learners of a second language should acquire each language skill gradually, Morehouse (2017) affirms the listening skill is the first ability a native speaker learns, if we compare this idea with Brice & Roseberry-McKibbin's of teaching a second language 90% of the time in their native tongue (2018) we can affirm that each language skill plays an important role within the language acquisition process; which lead us to question ourselves about how are they involved within it? To answer that question, Englishmate (2018) provides the following affirmation,

In-order to become a well-rounded communicator one needs to be proficient in each of the four language skills. These four skills give learners opportunities to create contexts in which to use the language for exchange of real information, evidence of their own ability (proof of learning) and, most important, confidence.

Following that idea, it is important to understand what each skill provides to the learner, to get a better understanding Bilingüismo y Tecnología (2016) gives some interesting information about what each skill provides to the learner, according to the article, *Developing The Four Essential Skills—Listening, Speaking, Reading & Writing* by Bilingüismo y Tecnología, listening “Is the key and can be considered the basis of the other skills. The better the listening comprehension of a student is, the better would be his capability to

develop other skills” (2016). Continuing that thought, reading, “Will provide a ‘mental structure’ and will enhance vocabulary, which will be useful for speaking” (2016). Writing “Will give importance to the message and its presentation” (2016) to this, it is added what Morehouse said about writing, about it being the one giving the ability to place the spoken language into a visual version of it (2017). Finally, for speaking, “Language is a tool for communication” (Englishmate, 2018), having that in mind, “Speaking is the main purpose of the student” (2016).

Below, the next image tries to represent graphically the four language abilities described above,

Image 3.

English Language Skills



Image 3. English Language Skills – Graphic Demonstration. Researcher’s own creation

When writing the user of any language needs to follow a series of rules or grammar. These set of rules “defines the grammatical structure of a language” (Merriam Webster, 2018). Even though grammar is not necessary to communicate, it makes easier for learners of another language to understand and use the structure of the end language. One of the grammar structures to be learned by any English as a second language student is the Simple Past Tense. This specific tense, according to the Education First website (2018),

Sometimes called the preterite, is used to talk about a completed action in a time before now. The simple past is the basic form of past tense in English. The time of the action can be in the recent past or the distant past and action duration is not important.

On this matter, the British Council website (2018) adds that Simple Past Tense is used to express “something that happened once in the past, something that happened again and again in the past, and something that was true for some time in the past”.

Furthermore, Azar (2003) states that “simple past tense is used to talk about activities or situations that began and ended in the past” (p. 25). Based on this, we can understand that Simple Past Tense is only used to express actions or situations that already happened, and they are no longer in occurrence.

The next image will illustrate the authors definition of Simple Past Tense and will add a hint of how the verbal conjugation is done,

Image 4.

Expressing Past Time: The Simple Past

2-1 EXPRESSING PAST TIME: THE SIMPLE PAST	
(a) Mary walked downtown <i>yesterday</i> . (b) I slept for eight hours <i>last night</i> .	The simple past is used to talk about activities or situations that began and ended in the past (e.g., <i>yesterday, last night, two days ago, in 1999</i>).
(c) Bob stayed home yesterday morning. (d) Our plane arrived on time last night.	Most simple past verbs are formed by adding -ed to a verb, as in (a), (c), and (d).
(e) I ate breakfast this morning. (f) Sue took a taxi to the airport yesterday.	Some verbs have irregular past forms, as in (b), (e), and (f). See Chart 2-7, p. 33.
(g) I was busy yesterday. (h) They were at home last night.	The simple past forms of be are was and were .

Image 4. Table illustrating Azar's definition of Simple Past and giving a hint on verbal conjugation. (Azar, 2003)

As any other grammar structure, Simple Past Tense divides itself into the three different types of sentences, affirmative and negative sentences and questions. These three structures are the base of any verbal tense for learners to understand how the tense should be used and how each verb should be conjugated depending on the type of sentence the learner will use. Moreover, it is important to add that following the grammar rules for verbal tenses, Simple Past Tense needs of an auxiliary verb too, in this specific case, the auxiliary verb used by Simple Past Tense is the past form of the verb *To Do*, *Did*.

The following picture describes the grammar structures used within Simple Past Tense, whether if the construction is an affirmative or negative sentence or a question. This figure focus itself in the use of regular verbs, however, the structure is the same for irregular verbs.

Image 5.

Grammar Structures for Simple Past

2-2 FORMS OF THE SIMPLE PAST: REGULAR VERBS	
STATEMENT	I-You-She-He-It-We-They <i>worked</i> yesterday.
NEGATIVE	I-You-She-He-It-We-They <i>did not (didn't) work</i> yesterday.
QUESTION	Did I-you-she-he-it-we-they <i>work</i> yesterday?
SHORT ANSWER	Yes, I-you-she-he-it-we-they <i>did</i> . No, I-you-she-he-it-we-they <i>didn't</i> .

Image 5. Forms of the Simple Past Tense using Regular verbs. (Azar, 2003)

As hinted by Azar (2003) verbal conjugation within Simple Past tense divides the verbs into regular and irregular, about this, the English Oxford Living Dictionaries (2018) when talking about verbal inflections adds, “Many English verbs are regular, which means that they form their different tenses according to an established pattern.” On the other hand, the define irregular verbs as those “verbs that don’t follow the normal rules.” Having this in mind, it is important for both, teachers and students alike, to fully understand how Simple Past tense behaves regarding verbal conjugation. By doing this, students will be a step closer to master the language they are learning, and teachers will make sure the learning process of the topic was fully completed and acknowledge.

The next image explains how to create the past form of regular verbs,

Image 6.

How to Create the Past Form of Regular Verbs

If the basic form of the verb ends in a consonant or a vowel other than *e*, add the letters *-ed* to the end (e.g. *seem/seemed, laugh/laughed, look/looked*).

For verbs that end in *-e*, add *-d* (e.g. *love/loved, recede/receded, hope/hoped*).

If the verb ends in a consonant plus *-y*, change the *y* to an *i* before adding *-ed* (e.g. *hurry/hurried, clarify/clarified*). But if the verb ends in a vowel plus *-y*, just add *-ed* (e.g. *play/played, enjoy/enjoyed*).

Image 6. How to create the past form of regular verbs. (*English Oxford Living Dictionaries, 2018*)

Opposite to regular verbs, irregular verbs do exist, and as explained above they do not follow any kind of rule to be created, however, it is important to add that “sometimes the spelling does not change but the pronunciation does” (*English Oxford Living Dictionaries, 2018*). So, it is possible to affirm that irregular verbs are classified as such because they can change both their written form and pronunciation when conjugated in past, because they can change their pronunciation but not their written form, and also, because they cannot change neither their pronunciation nor their written form, therefore, not following any rule when being conjugated.

The following picture lists some examples of irregular verbs in past,

Image 7.

Examples of Irregular Verbs in Past Form

Verb	3rd person singular present tense	3rd person singular past tense	past participle
be	is	was	been
begin	begins	began	begun
bite	bites	bit	bitten
break	breaks	broke	broken
buy	buys	bought	bought
choose	chooses	chose	chosen
come	comes	came	come
dig	digs	dug	dug

Image 7. Examples of some irregular verbs. (English Oxford Living Dictionaries, 2018)

Within the XXI century, technology has become an important part of our daily lives. Nowadays, technology is present in every aspect of our lives, and education is not the exception. Having this in mind, it is important to understand what technology is, according to the Collins Dictionary “technology refers to methods, systems, and devices which are the result of scientific knowledge being used for practical purposes” (2018). On the other hand, the Oxford Dictionary provides the following definition, “machinery and equipment developed from the application of scientific knowledge” (2018). Based on both definitions, we can confirm that technology is not only part of every person’s daily activities, but also, it is part of the educational process. This because equipment developed through it is used within the classrooms along the world as an asset to make the learning process easier for both students and professors.

Considering the latter idea, a question comes to mind, how is technology used within classrooms nowadays? For the U.S. Department of Education (2018),

Technology infuses classrooms with digital learning tools, such as computers and hand-held devices; expands course offerings, experiences, and learning materials; supports learning 24 hours a day, 7 days a week; builds 21st century skills; increases student engagement and motivation; and accelerates learning.

It is clear that technology has transformed the learning process by basically deleting the existent boundaries between teachers and students, for Ramey “both teachers and students have benefited from various educational technologies, teachers have learned how to integrate technology in their classrooms and students are getting more interested in learning with technology” [...], she continues explaining her idea adding that nowadays “students and teachers can collaborate in real time using advanced educational technologies” (Ramey, 2013).

To continue answering the question about how technology is used or can be used within a classroom, Marcus Guido provides different ideas for either deliver content, help students to process content or to allow students to create content (2017). Within the ideas proposed by Guido to deliver content he mentions running virtual field trips, using videos for lessons, coordinating live video experiences, playing podcasts, adding multimedia elements to presentations, and sending content to mobile devices (2017). Moreover, providing online activities, using social networks, studying, reviewing and critiquing content on webs, and gathering feedback are part of the proposals made by Guido to help the students processing given content (2017). Finally, Guido proposes different ideas on how technology can be used to create content, such as, launching a wiki page and setting up blogs (2017).

All of these ideas are clear examples of how technology can be used within a classroom, for the U.S. Department of Education “online learning opportunities and the use of open educational resources and other technologies can increase educational productivity by accelerating the rate of learning; reducing costs associated with instructional materials or program delivery; and better utilizing teacher time” (2018).

When talking about how technology is applied to the learning process or what the applications for it are, one of the main changes that technology has provided to the learning process is how the teacher / student roles have evolved (Purdue University, 2018). According to the Purdue University (2018),

In the traditional classroom, [...], the teacher is the primary source of information, and the learners passively receive it. This model of the teacher as the “sage on the stage” has been in education for a long time, and it is still very much in evidence today. However, because of the access to information and educational opportunity that technology has enabled, in many classrooms today we see the teacher’s role shifting to the “guide on the side” as students take more responsibility for their own learning using technology to gather relevant information.

This role shifting in which the student moves from a passive part to a more active one, even becoming the protagonist and assuming more responsibility of his or her own education is one of the most visible transformations to the learning process technology has influenced. In addition to how information spreads around, in a world where anybody with access to the internet can be connected in real time to everyone and everything at the same time, have made both, teachers and students to re-think how knowledge should be given and taken, therefore, transforming the learning process from within. For instance, “adaptive

learning software is quickly replacing the role of textbooks in the classrooms and students are tackling subjects with the aid of tailor-made computer programs that assist their needs” (Bernard, 2017).

The Purdue University (2018) wisely claims,

Technology is a powerful tool that can support and transform education in many ways, from making it easier for teachers to create instructional materials to enabling new ways for people to learn and work together. With the worldwide reach of the Internet and the ubiquity of smart devices that can connect to it, a new age of anytime anywhere education is dawning. It will be up to instructional designers and educational technologies to make the most of the opportunities provided by technology to change education so that effective and efficient education is available to everyone everywhere.

Considering how fast the world is changing and with-it society. Is the Costa Rican educational system ready to include technology within the classrooms? “Based on data from the National Council of Rectors (CONARE), CINDE found that of the 51.000 university graduates in 2016 only 16% graduated from careers in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM)” (Alvarado, 2017). According to Alvarado (2017) those careers are “the most demanded in the global market”.

Trying to answer the proposed question, MEP developed a partnership with a non-profit organization, Omar Dengo Foundation, “with the intention of training for the future and transforming the old educational practices of another era” (Organization American States, 2018). The mission of this program is “to impact positively on the quality of the

public education system in Costa Rica by providing First and Second Cycle General Basic Education students with access to information technology and services” (Organization American States, 2018). “The program is a response to the commitments undertaken in Québec City, especially with regards to the promotion of technology as an educational tool” (Organization American States, 2018). The program helps schools to equip themselves with technology to reinforce the educational program. That program along with the technical modality within the national system are part of the response from the country to update the educational system complying with the global requirements to educate the society of the XXI century.

Mobile devices have become part of the daily lives of people around the world. Companies around the world fight over the market to develop the fastest, most proficient and smallest devices. Different technologies have been developed just to satisfy the customer’s needs and requirements. Nowadays, it is common for students to own a mobile device, and with easy access to communication technologies, most of them have access to internet through them. For most teachers, mobile devices became a distraction, as they were a disruption to the status quo, therefore, they needed to be banned from class.

Once the mobile devices technologies started to evolve and with the first smartphone, mobile devices became part of the classrooms around the world as the new gadget students had. The evolution continued, and keypads were replaced by touchscreens and simple operating systems gave place to complex ones. Making possible the creation of mobile apps or applications to assist the user’s needs. And with that, experts around the world started to see the potential education had through these devices, consequently, online courses were created, virtual classes started to be given, whole platforms were costumed designed for

schools and universities around the globe to welcome this new type of education and to welcome this new type of students hooked to the world of information 24/7.

Socrative is part of the latest generation of mobile applications designed to assist teachers around the world and to make education easier for students,

Socrative is a cloud-based student response system developed in 2010 by Boston-based graduate school students. It allows teachers to create simple quizzes that students can take quickly on laptops – or, more often, via classroom tablet computers or their own smartphones. (Edsurge, 2018)

As it can be read within the description provided above, the application can be used either from a computer or from a mobile device, giving the user plenty of opportunities to have access to the activities sent through it. According to Kristin Sobotka (2016) from Common Sense Education,

Socrative is a simple, dynamic online student-response system (via website or Chrome app) that can help teachers spark conversation and learning through user-created polls and quizzes.... Properly implemented, Socrative is a formative assessment tool that allows teachers to create quizzes, quick questions, and exit slips that allow for multiple-choice, true/false, and one-sentence responses that can be graded with feedback for each student. [...] Teachers can also access data online and print through an Excel sheet or email for further planning.

The system has two different environments, one for teachers from which all the quizzes and activities are created, and from where all the collected data can be accessed, and other for students in which they will take the activities assigned to them by their teacher.

Both environments require an account which is free for basic usage, the same site offers a pro version to access different materials depending on the user's needs.

For the editorial team from EdTechReview, "Socrative is a good student response system for creating quick student engagement" (2013). Regarding the capabilities of the application to be used within an educational environment, Sobotka adds, "Socrative gives teachers the option to create content-rich quiz-type content and engage any especially nervous or timid students through quick formative assessment questions or healthy team competition" (2016). For Sobotka, one of the advantages of the application is the "good question variety and tweakable options for quizzes (including student-paced or teacher-paced)" (2016).

As any other mobile application, Socrative gives the option to have a free account, which will provide the user with basic settings and options to be used. This free account becomes eligible if the teacher does not need complex features to develop his or her class. However, if the teacher wants a full experience of the application and depending on the level he or she is teaching, yearly paid accounts are available too, these paid accounts provides everything enclosed within the free account plus some other services the platform has which make the usage of Socrative more appealing. The following picture displays the different account options within the application depending on the user's needs,

Image 8.

Socrative Account Options for Users

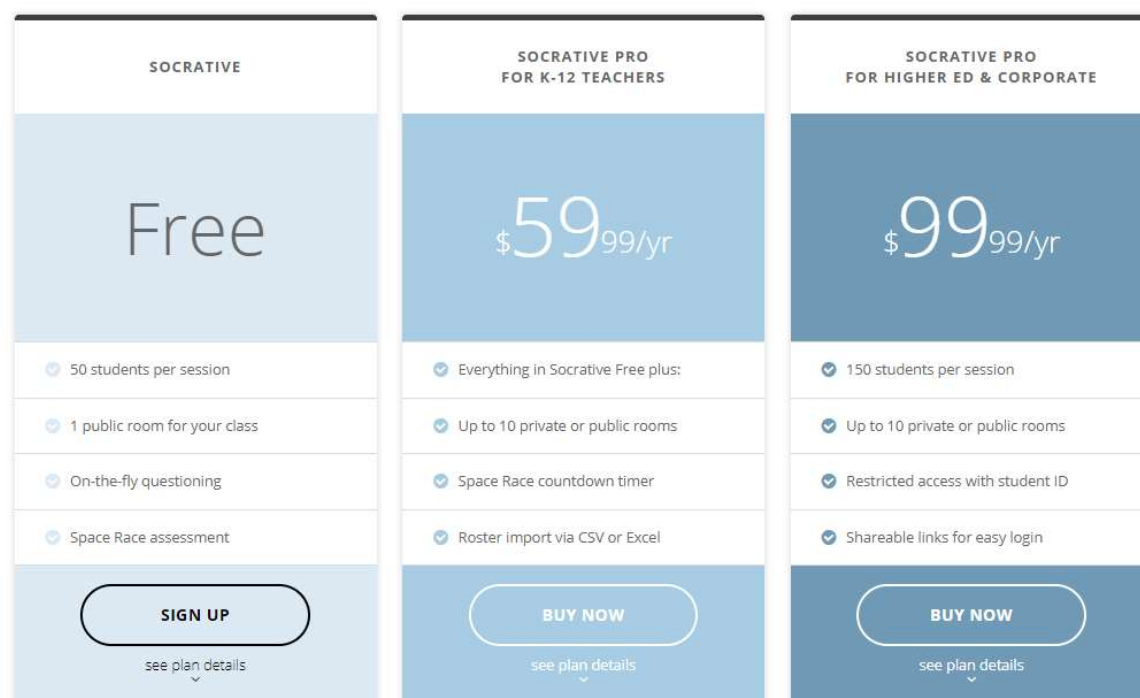


Image 8. Socrative Account Plans.

Taken from: <https://www.socrative.com/pricing.html>

“The integration of new technologies in the classrooms opens new possibilities for the teaching and learning process” (Awedh, Mueen, Zafar, & Manzoor, 2014). For Luu & Freeman (2011) and Windschitl (2009) quoted by Awedh, Mueen, Zafar, & Manzoor (2014, p. 17) “Computers and related technology become essential part of a classroom to enhance 21st century teaching and learning experiences”, moreover, Roblyer & Wiencke (2003) quoted by Awedh, Mueen, Zafar, & Manzoor (2014, p. 17) added, “Information technology provides educational institutions with an exceptional opportunity to increase student’s enthusiasm and enhance learning outcomes”.

According to Awedh, Mueen, Zafar, & Manzoor (2014, p. 21),

Student(s) feel(s) that collaborative learning significantly affect student learning performance. Collaborative learning allows students to exchange information with

classmates, and make students more excited. The students stated that these experiences have assisted them to be more active in the classes, help them to understand concepts, facilitate to work in groups and understand their level of knowledge.

Moreover, according to the results of the study conducted by Awedh, Mueen, Zafar, & Manzoor, students informed that “it helped to understand concepts; it facilitated the interaction with the classmates and teacher; and it helped them to be motivated” (2014, p. 22). This type of results would be part of the expectation of the study to be conducted, looking to reinforce the acquisition of an specific grammar construction.

Regarding Socrative and the feedback received from the study, Awedh, Mueen, Zafar, & Manzoor (2014) stated,

In spite the popularity of clickers there are many new applications arising in internet. Socrative is one of them and is a very useful tool because it helps teachers to monitor learning of all the students in real time. In addition, teachers are not required to invest money to buy the devices such as clickers. In this study, our primary objective was to identify that Socrative and smart phones are suitable tools that can facilitate active learning in classroom. This result also suggests that students perceive that Socrative supports the learning and increases the student motivation. In addition, it helped them to be aware of their level of knowledge and facilitates the understanding of the concepts and significantly increases their learning process [...] Furthermore, students feel that their answers and opinions are given value by the teacher and their classmates. Simultaneously, it easy for teachers to check how many students understands the concept. (p. 22)

It is clear then, at least for the study conducted by Awedh, Mueen, Zafar, & Manzoor, that Socrative became an important tool within the learning process of the sample population as the students participating within the study made clear how they felt the app (Socrative) helped them to understand and it facilitated the learning experience. Awedh, Mueen, Zafar, & Manzoor also agreed with some other authors about how Socrative reflects on lesser costs, as teacher do not need to invest much on it, mostly because the app offers a free account with basic settings and students use their own mobile devices (2014). Their conclusion about the use of Socrative within a classroom was that, “Socrative improve students level of interactivity, which helps student to be active in class and have collaborative learning, which also increases student’s engagement in the learning process” (Awedh, Mueen, Zafar, & Manzoor, 2014, p. 23), which is part of the baseline for the study to be conducted.

As every new incursion within the learning process, technology has its pros and cons. “On one hand, using technology in the classroom allows you to experiment in pedagogy, democratize the classroom and better engage students. On the other hand, some argue technology in the classroom can be distracting and even foster cheating” (Himmelsbach, 2017). For David Goodrum as quoted by Himmelsbach (2017),

Digital education is generating new learning opportunities as students engage in online, digital environments [...] a 21st century view of learner success requires students to not only be thoughtful consumers of digital content, but effective and collaborative creators of digital media, demonstrating competencies and communicating ideas through dynamic storytelling, data visualization and content curation.

So, it is safe to say that technology can be a very important asset within a classroom if used correctly, or, it can also be quite the challenge for the lecturer to get it under control. For Himmelsbach, “Using technology in the classroom isn’t just about digital devices in class — it relates to anything that facilitates an interaction between teacher and student” (2017).

Having the latter thought in mind, it is important to ask ourselves, what are the pros and cons of using technology within the classroom? On one hand, technology can help to ensure student’s full participation and increase their engagement. On this matter Himmelsbach says, “Online polling and other tools help to engage all students, including shy students who wouldn’t normally raise their hand in class” (2017). About this Learners Edge website adds, “teachers who use technology to present lessons can engage students more easily, because technology is a format most students are drawn to naturally” (2017). On the other hand, technology can become a distraction within the classroom, about this Learners Edge website adds, “students who have a tablet or computer in front of them during a lesson are going to be tempted to play instead of listening” (2017). Dynarski as quoted by Himmelsbach (2017) states that, “college students learn less when they use computers or tablets during lectures, [...] They also tend to earn worse grades. The research is unequivocal: Laptops distract from learning, both for users and for those around them” (2017). To avoid that behavior, teachers need to “identify specific projects, times during class, and your intentions for allowing the use of technology in the classroom. Creating expectations and guidelines for students, and sticking to them, will be important for them in respecting your boundaries” (Himmelsbach, 2017).

For Himmelsbach another advantage of using technology worth to mention is that students have “instant access to fresh information that can supplement their learning

experience” (2017), therefore, they are able to update themselves continuously. About this Ramey (2013) adds,

Technology helps students gain access to open educational resources. These resources are kept under the public domain and are freely available to anyone over the World-Wide-Web. These educational resources include electronic books (e-books), podcasts, digital libraries, educational games, educational videos and instructions, tutorials and much more.

Opposite to that idea is the one that technology “can foster cheating in class and on assignments” (Himmelsbach, 2017), as “the digital age makes it even easier — from copying-and-pasting someone else’s work to hiring an essay-writer from an online essay mill” (2017). It is a disadvantage, however, there are software created to detect plagiarism, so, we would say it will depend on the teacher’s cleverness to overcome this threat.

Another perk of using technology that it is important to mention is the possibility of students not having equal access to technology (Himmelsbach, 2017). Even though we are in the XXI century, some of our students may not have the same opportunities than the rest, for this, it is important not to make technology the focus of the class, and not making it a barrier. As a teacher, a balance needs to be created, and incorporating it in a holistic and inclusive manner could be the solution to this problem (Himmelsbach, 2017).

At the end, if technology is used or not within a classroom will not depend only on what the teacher thinks or what the students want, it will be on what is best to enhance the learning process of our future society. To reinforce this idea, here is an extract of the article *Benefits of Technology in the Classroom*,

The impact that technology has had on today's schools has been quite significant.

[...] Teachers are learning how to teach with emerging technologies (tablets, iPads, Smart Boards, digital cameras, computers), while students are using advanced technology to shape how they learn. By embracing and integrating technology in the classroom, we are setting our students up for a successful life outside of school (Cox, 2017).

For this research, technology, mobile devices and computers, will be used to implement the usage of a specific mobile application, Socrative, for reinforcing the Simple Past tense grammar structures within the sample population. It is through the exercises available within the application and the ones created by the researcher that students will get extra practice available not only during class time but also out of class, making them improve their writing skill and the grammar applied to the topic mentioned above.

Chapter III

Methodological Framework

Research should be part of the life of any professional working within the educational system, according to the American Educational Research Association (2018),

Education research is the scientific field of study that examines education and learning processes and the human attributes, interactions, organizations, and institutions that shape educational outcomes [...] Education research embraces the full spectrum of rigorous methods appropriate to the questions being asked and also drives the development of new tools and methods.

Therefore, to develop students' knowledge it is necessary to work and develop one's knowledge. As professionals in education constant learning and constant investigation should be a must for all of us. Moreover, when asking our students to research we should be prepared to guide and clarify the process for them.

A proper research requires following a series of steps to comply with all the sub-processes required by the research process to collect and analyze the data to finally prove a theory or assess a problem. Having in mind the type of research and the field of study a specific research approach will be chosen and specific instruments will use to collect the data as well as the way the analysis of it will be done, all the process is done to get an expected result from the research, this result will be used to decide the course of action of an educational program or even to position a new product on the market.

Based on the above affirmation and trying to shape up the Costa Rican learning process the researcher has designed the following study to assess the effects of using

Socratic App as a technological asset to reinforce the simple past tense learning process trying to make it more interactive for both the students and the teachers.

3.1. Research Approach

Depending on what the researcher wants to accomplish with his or her study, and what would the field of study be; a specific type of research needs to be chosen. According to Dudovsky the “types of research methods can be broadly divided into two quantitative and qualitative categories” (2018). If we were to infer over the two categories proposed by Dudovsky and several more authors, we could say the quantitative researches are based on the deep analysis of charts full of data collected using the scientific method. On the other hand, the qualitative researches are based on the interpretation of data collected through more lax options, these types of researches are based on the inferential of the data and not in the result numbers.

Knowing the difference between the two types of research will become the advantage for the researcher when deciding how the data is collected and how it will be analyzed. Moreover, having a clear idea of what the expected results are or even by being clear about the field of study will improve the pace of the research. The quantitative research is mostly used for experimental, correlational, single subject, and causal-comparative studies while the qualitative research is used for content analysis, ethnographic and historical research, and action research, this one is mostly used by practitioners of the field (Siegle, 2018).

The Business Dictionary defines quantitative research as “The use of sampling techniques (such as consumer surveys) whose findings may be expressed numerically and are amendable to mathematical manipulation enabling the researcher to estimate future events or quantities” (2018). In other words, we use a quantitative research whenever the expected

result needs to be used to predict trends on the market or field of study or forecasting future data analysis based on the data collected. The most common but not the only instruments to collect data within a quantitative research are: opinion polls, questionnaires, surveys, censuses, cross-sectional and/or longitudinal studies (British Library, 2018).

On the other hand, the qualitative research is considered an exploratory study. “It is used to gain an understanding of underlying reasons, opinions, and motivations. It provides insights into the problem or helps to develop ideas or hypotheses for potential quantitative research” (DeFranzo, 2011). As the sample group from where the data will be collected is typically small, this type of investigation is mostly used within the educational environment.

The methodology of the qualitative research as well as the one from the quantitative investigation requires a series of instruments to collect the data for proper and posterior analyzing, “qualitative data collection methods vary using unstructured or semi-structured techniques. Some common methods include focus groups (group discussions), individual interviews, and participation/observations” (DeFranzo, 2011). Some of the proposed instruments by DeFranzo will be used in this investigation.

For Crossman, the “Qualitative research is a type of social science research that collects and works with non-numerical data and that seeks to interpret meaning from these data that help us understand social life through the study of targeted populations or places” (2018). As the main idea of this study is to measure the effects of using a specific application to reinforce the grammar learning process, a qualitative approach will be used, mostly because it gives the opportunity to interpret the data collected along the investigative process.

Continuing with Crossman, the “Qualitative research is designed to reveal the meaning that informs the action.” (2018) So, based on this, and having in mind we will be working with a small sample, and the main objective is to reinforce the learning process of the sample through technology, we can affirm the qualitative research approach is the correct one for this study.

3.2. Research Method

As every other type of research, qualitative studies have different methods to research and collect the data within itself. Crossman states the following about it,

Qualitative researchers use their own eyes, ears, and intelligence to collect in-depth perceptions and descriptions of targeted populations, places, and events. Their findings are collected through a variety of methods, and often, a researcher will use at least two or several... while conducting a qualitative study. (Crossman, 2018)

As documented in the previous section, a qualitative research is based on the perceptions of the researcher from the interaction with the sample population. Therefore, it is logic and consequential the methods to collect data will be chosen having in mind not only the sample population but also the researcher’s skills. Having an idea about how the data collection works, leaves a question in the air. Which is the correct or appropriate method to conduct this study?

According to Daiute & Lightfoot as quoted by Creswell (2007, p. 53), the “Narrative research has many forms, uses a variety of analytic practices, and is rooted in different social and humanities disciplines”. To use a narrative method, we need first to differentiate the subdivisions within it. One of them suggests basing the study in differentiating the types of

Socratic App to Reinforce Simple Past Tense

narrative investigations by the analytic strategies used by each author. While the other one centers itself on “emphasizing the variety of forms found in narrative research practices” (2007, p. 55)

For Etherington, “narrative inquiry is a means by which we systematically gather, analyze, and represent people’s stories as told by them, which challenges traditional and modernist views of truth, reality, knowledge and personhood” (Etherington, n.d). With that definition, we can discard narrative research as the method to be used for this study as it centers or focuses on people’s stories and this research focuses on the effects of technology on the learning process.

On the other hand, Ferrance describes a different method, one that is more focused or specialized within the educational environment. Action research, she says, that “is a process in which participants examine their own educational practice systematically and carefully, using the techniques of research (2000, p. 1). In other words, action research will provide the necessary tools for this study to analyze the effects of technology within the learning process.

According to the Glossary of Education Reform article *Action Research*,

The term “action research” was coined in the 1940s by Kurt Lewin, a German-American social psychologist who is widely considered to be the founder of his field. The basic principles of action research that were described by Lewin are still in use to this day. (Partnership, 2015)

Following Ferrance’s thoughts, action research is done within the educational environment, paraphrasing the author, where and with the students the professional in education works. According to Ferrance, the professional in education should be a constant

researcher, and by being one and continuing posing questions and gathering answers will become a better version of himself or herself, reflecting and deciding the course of action (2000, p. 2).

Using Ferrance's words (2000), "In conducting action research, we structure routines for continuous confrontation with data on the health of a school community" (p. 9) she continues describing the phases of steps an action research should follow, see the picture below.

Image 9.

Phases of an Action Research. (Action Research Cycle)

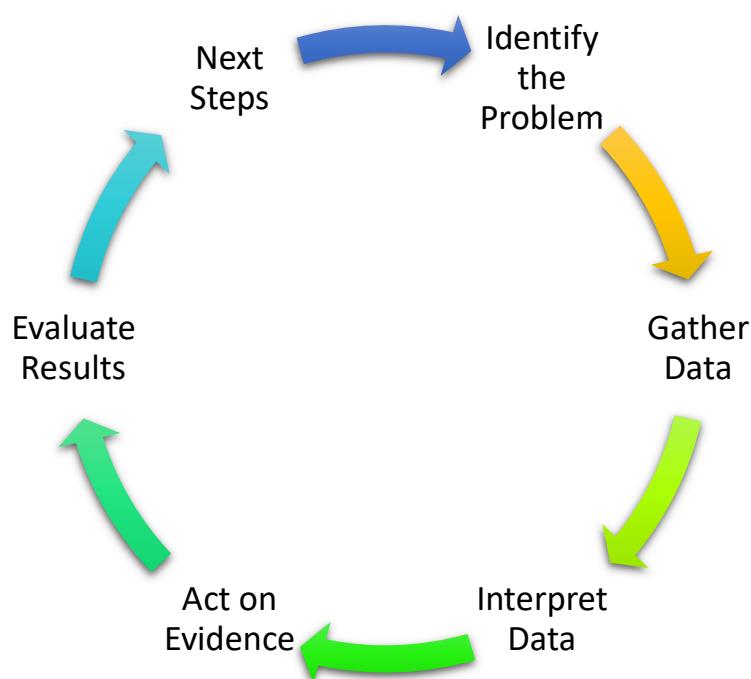


Image 9. Action Research Cycle described by (Ferrance, 2000)

This research is considered to be action research not only because it will be developed within the educational environment, but also, because the researcher will examine part of his

educational practice and will try to implement technology within it to reinforce the learning process of the students.

3.3. Information Sources

To start landing the study, definitions for key words will be the first topic to develop. Glossaries and online dictionaries will be used to gather the correct and applicable definition for words such as technology, education, learning process and even Socrative. On that matter, a proper definition using the app website will be provided to learn and understand what the app is and how it works for both students and teachers.

Previous studies about how technology is or should be used within the classroom if available will be considered, articles from online magazines from English speaking countries written for and by teachers will assist this study. The topic is quite new, mostly because technology as an educational asset has been acknowledged recently within the classrooms, even though music and videos has been used for years, however, computer and mobile devices have come to modernize the world educational systems.

3.4. Analysis Categories

One of the definitions of technology provided by the Oxford dictionary and the one applicable to this research is “machinery and equipment developed from the application of scientific knowledge” (2018). Through lots and lots of information we now have access, and we can now consider computers, mobile devices, and even mobile applications as technology.

It is through technology, that the researcher plans to measure its effects into the learning process within the Polytechnic International University education system and

curriculum for the English I course. Even though technology has been used to teach for several years now, with the easy access to mobile devices and the demand for those growing faster each day, the researcher plans to make them an asset to the learning process instead of a distraction.

Learning a language requires the learner to master four different skills, reading, speaking, writing and listening, within writing, grammar can be found. According to the Oxford Dictionary, grammar is “The whole system and structure of a language or of languages in general, usually taken as consisting of syntax and morphology (including inflections) and sometimes also phonology and semantics” (2018). In other words, it is the based structure for a language to be useful. Grammar is the beginnings of each language. It sets how the message will be delivered according to what, when and how it will be delivered. Simply put, grammar are rules to use the language correctly.

When learning a language, and mostly, when learning a second language, mastering grammar becomes a must. We will use grammar as the second foundation for the study, since by using technology to study grammar we will put together the past and the future of English learning. We might even make grammar more fun and easier for the students to learn and for the teachers to teach. For this specific research we will be focusing on the simple past tense grammar constructions.

According to Bernard in her article, *Here's how technology is shaping the future of education*,

Technology is already sweeping through classrooms as educators and developers create more and more products designed to enhance education.

New technologies like AI, machine learning, and educational software aren't just changing the field for students, they're shaking up the role of educators, creating philosophical shifts in approaches to teaching, and remodeling the classroom. (Bernard, 2017)

Following Bernard's thoughts, in 2018 both students and teachers should be developing their knowledge through technology. It is through technology that students get information for any subject or even to solve an arithmetical problem will become easier. Educators now need to determine which skills and types of knowledge their students need to develop and survive in a technology-based work environment. According to Bernard (2017), "while educational models of the past focused on providing students with the requisite skills to turn them into skilled workers, the educators of today are more concerned with teaching students how to learn on their own". Simply put, the real challenge for educators now a days is to convince their students about how technology can be useful to develop not only their knowledge but also their skills to become an important asset for their society.

3.5. Data Collection Instruments

A series of instruments were created to collect the necessary data for this study. Each instrument has been validated and has a specific purpose, here is the general description of each of them: First, an observation sheet to gather data about the sample population. Through the observation, the researcher will identify the different personalities within the group itself. Also, the group's behavior and dynamic will be noted down as it will help the researcher and teacher to understand the group and each individual, therefore, a course of action can be set once the study starts. The observation sheet will have a header with the necessary information to identify what it for is. It will have space to write down how many males and

how many females the group is conformed of. It will have space to answer questions such as: How does the group behave? Who is the positive leader and who the negative leader is?

Also, an interview will be done to all the students belonging to the sample group. Through it, the researcher will gather important information such as age, place of living, if the student has access to a smartphone or not, if the student has access to computers at home, and it will have space for them to write down their thoughts about them using their mobile devices as part of the class. All this information will give the researcher an idea about how the work should be done with the group, as well, as plan alternatives for those with zero or minimum access to technology of their own.

A rubric will be designed to gather the students' insights about Socrative app. It will be a qualitative rubric, with a range of answers from strongly agree to completely disagree, answering the questions: Do you like using Socrative App in class? Will you ask your titular teacher to use Socrative App in class? Do you think using your cellphone is improving your English learning process? The students will mark with an X on the option they will think is the one that answers correctly. being the option "Yes" or "No" and "No Answer". This rubric will be applied once within the duration of the study trying to gather as much information as possible and have a chance to analyze the student's thoughts.

Moreover, a worksheet with simple past tense exercises will be applied twice along the duration of the study. The idea is to have an overall understanding on how the students are applying the knowledge of the topic studied in a classical way, by doing this, the researcher will be able to compare the results from the app with a regular type of assessment result. Also, it will help the researcher to answer the questions behind the specific objectives 1 and 3 of the study as through it, the collected data will refer to the knowledge of simple

past tense the sample population had before and after the implementation of Socrative within the classroom.

On the other hand, the activities created and applied through the Socrative application will work not only as part of the class and the application of technology inside the classroom, but also, as a continuous assessment of the topic developed. Through them and using the application gadgets, the researcher will be able to track the sample population evolution. The data obtained through the app will help the researcher when answering the question within the specific objective 2 about the exercises applied through the app and how they impacted student's knowledge of the topic.

Finally, a quiz will be applied at the end of the study, to assess formally the knowledge acquired by the students. This short evaluation will be based on the topic used to develop the research according to the planning based on the curriculum. With this, the researcher will close the study's assessment section, and fortunately will be able to confirm if the application had an effect within the learning process of the students. This data will be also used when drawing conclusions about how Socrative app worked as an asset to the students' learning process answering directly to specific objective 3.

3.6. Collection Data Process and Data Analysis

The data will be collected both from the application as it provides a system to record the students' progress as well through paper rubrics and worksheets. Having both sources will help the researcher to have clearer and more precise data about the sample population's evolution within their learning process.

The data will be collected weekly, tabulated using MS Excel, if needed, and analyzed by the researcher according to what he is looking from the data based on the study's objectives. The tabulation will be done in two separate ways. The data will be grouped both per student to measure the individual evolution and as a group. This, will provide a better idea of the sample population behavior, as well, as to enlighten the researcher about which student is moving forward faster than the others, or which student requires more attention according to the data.

Chapter IV

Data Analysis

According to Sridhar (2018), the “Data analysis is a part of a larger process of deriving business intelligence”. For him, “Data analysis is the process of evaluating data using analytical and statistical tools to discover useful information and aid in business decision making.” (Sridhar, 2018) Even though this research is not related to business, the researcher can affirm it is related to decision making, as, depending on the results, the use of technology and more specifically, the use of Socrative app to reinforce the acquisition of a grammatical structure, in this case, the Simple Past tense, can be supported fully, or recommended to the educational society.

For Kalpesh (2013), “For any research, data analysis is very important as it provides an explanation of various concepts, theories, frameworks and methods used. It eventually helps in arriving at conclusions and proving the hypothesis.” The author continues the topic by saying, “Data analysis is a process used to inspect, clean, transform and remodel data with a view to reach to a certain conclusion for a given situation. Data analysis is typically of two kinds: qualitative or quantitative. The type of data dictates the method of analysis” (Kalpesh, 2013).

As mentioned within Chapter III, this investigation belongs to the qualitative type of research. So, the data analysis will be done using “non-numerical data such as text or individual words” (Kalpesh, 2013), however, to have a better understanding of the data collected, and if the data itself allows it, a graphical version of the data will be provided to

make sure the reader will have a better idea of the sample population and the results gathered from it based on the principles decided for the study.

4.1. Analysis and Interpretation of the Results

Talking about the collected data, the sample population belongs to the Polytechnic International University in Los Yoses which makes the campus well located. The chosen group is made of 20 people, who are taking the English I course. The students are coursing different majors and the course is part of the curriculum to graduate. Being the group made of adults, collecting data will be easier for the study, as well as the use of the application itself.

4.1.1. Observation

During the first visit to the group, an observation was made using an observation checklist created for this study (see Appendix 1). The next table provides an illustration of the observation,

Table 1.

Results of Class Observation

Institution	Polytechnic International University	
Class Observed	English I	
Total of Students	20	
Question	Researcher	Professor
How would you describe the group's behavior in class?	Quiet and Focus	Focus and Participative
Can you identify a leader within the group?	Participative and	Participative and
If so, what are his/her features?	Quiet	Quiet

What would be a general description of the group?	Quiet and Focus	Participative and Quiet
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Table 1. Results of the first observation done to the group by the researcher and the professor by the researcher. Researcher's own creation

During of this observation, 4 students were absent, so, from the 16 students present in that class, 9 were females and 7 males. The same observation sheet was provided to the professor for her to fill it, this will give a better understanding of the group to the researcher. As illustrated on the table above, the group's behavior can be described as focused, even though they do participate during the class, they only do so when asked, or at least that was the behavior perceived during the observation. Considering that, the presence of this researcher may have affected the group's natural behavior. Therefore, it is important to consider the professor's perception, identifying the group as participative instead of quiet.

Both observers agreed on the existence of a leader within the group. For Tracy (2008), "leaders are made, not born." About this he continues, "As a leader, you combine your personal competencies with the competencies of others into a smoothly functioning team that can outplay and outperform all its competitors." (Tracy, 2008) For this study, the identified leader works as a liaison between the group and the professor, and in this case, with this researcher too. Even though he is described as quiet, within the observation it was interesting how the group responded to him, following and accepting his comments and decisions without arguing. The leader identified became the most participative student, most of the time starting small discussions or making questions to stir up the class mechanics.

About the group's behavior, both viewers believe that their main characteristic is quietness. All the students maintained a calm pose during the class, paying attention to what the professor was giving them and answering questions when asked. Even though the

researcher considered the second-best feature of the group to be focused, the professor believes they are participative. This viewing disagreement serves to contrast the observers' perception of the group; which relies on time and acknowledgement of the group itself.

During the observation, it was important for this researcher to understand the students' usage of Simple Past tense. Nevertheless, the topic was being introduced and the students were in a college environment, it was expected by the researcher to confirm if the sample population had a previous knowledge about the topic or not. Moreover, as the base of this study is to reinforce the learning process of a grammar structure, knowing if previous information about the Simple Past tense was present within the group participating, it will help the researcher to decide how activities should be designed with Socrative.

Through the observation of the class, the researcher can affirm that students had a little knowledge of English which placed them on a basic level, as they were able to follow the teacher's directions through the introduction of the topic and used previous grammar structure knowledge. They understood and comprehended what Simple Past tense is and how it is used to express situations in the past form. Therefore, the investigator can affirm that the students had a beginner's usage of the Simple Past tense, making possible the conduction of the study to reinforce their learning process through Socrative application.

Regarding the use of applications, during the class observation, the teacher confirmed they have used other mobile applications in class, so, the usage of Socrative should not present a problem for the students participating in this research.

4.1.2. Interview

At the end of the first visit, an interview (see Appendix 2) was handed down to all present students. The purpose of this instrument was to gather information about the sample population participating in the study, as well as to understand the access of the students to technology and how they would feel about using it in and out class for educational purposes. Each piece of information gathered from it will be displayed in the next paragraphs. Before the interview was handed down, one of the students present left, therefore, the researcher will be presenting the results on a base of 15 individuals, placing the missing 5 students as No Answer (N/A).

Each person has a different way of learning, everyone has his or her own story, responsibilities and ambitions. In a society that calls itself inclusive, where every day different efforts are made to close the gap between genders and erase the myths around them, more women are giving themselves the opportunity to study careers labeled as male only careers, at the same time, more men are exploring those careers considered women only. Even though gender is not an important aspect neither for this research nor for the researcher, it is important to understand the group participating in the study fully. As the group's behavior not only depends on the group's range of age but also on the gender of most individuals. It also, dictates how the group should be addressed and how the class dynamic should be expected by the teacher and by the investigator.

According to the data collected, students present during the interview, classified by gender are distributed as follows, 8 males which represents a 40 percent of the sample population and 7 females representing a 35 percent, and 5 students did not answer the interview. These numbers illustrate the male number dominance within the group, which as

stated before, dictates how the group should be addressed and how the class dynamic should be expected by the teacher and by the investigator.

One important aspect to consider during the development of this study is the age range of the participants, as the sample population belongs to a college environment, the researcher can affirm each student is responsible for his or her own education, therefore, the results and the information gathered from them should be accurate and reliable. The age of the group participating in the study goes from 20 years old to 42 years old. The youngest is a female individual that is 20 years old and the oldest a male individual who is 42 years.

As the students are taking the course, English I, to complete their assigned curriculum, it is understandable each of them comes from a different major from the grill offered by the Polytechnic International University, therefore, even though the course is planned to be basic and general it will be important for both the students and the teacher to try to use a range of vocabulary for each student to relate and learn depending on their major. According to the information obtained from them, within the group, there are students from Business Management, Computer Engineering, Marketing, Accounting and even Psychology. It is important to mention that a third part of the students who answered the interview come from Business Management, and about a 10 percent of them from Marketing and Accounting.

As mentioned before, due to the location of the University as well as the career options they have, students come from different parts of the inner provinces (Great Metropolitan Area). The group is divided between San Jose, Cartago, Alajuela and Heredia. San Jose is the province from where most of the students come with 11 students representing

over a 50 percent to the group, as well as where the University is located, and Cartago and Heredia the provinces with a smaller number of students with 1 individual each.

One of the main purposes of the interview was to acknowledge and understand the access of the students to internet and technology such as computers and mobile devices. This because the research's main objective is using a mobile application to reinforce the learning process, consequently, it is important for the researcher to understand fully if the participants have access to both elements, which are key for this study, see the next figure for illustration.

Figure 1.

Do You Have a Cellphone or Mobile Device such as Table or iPad?

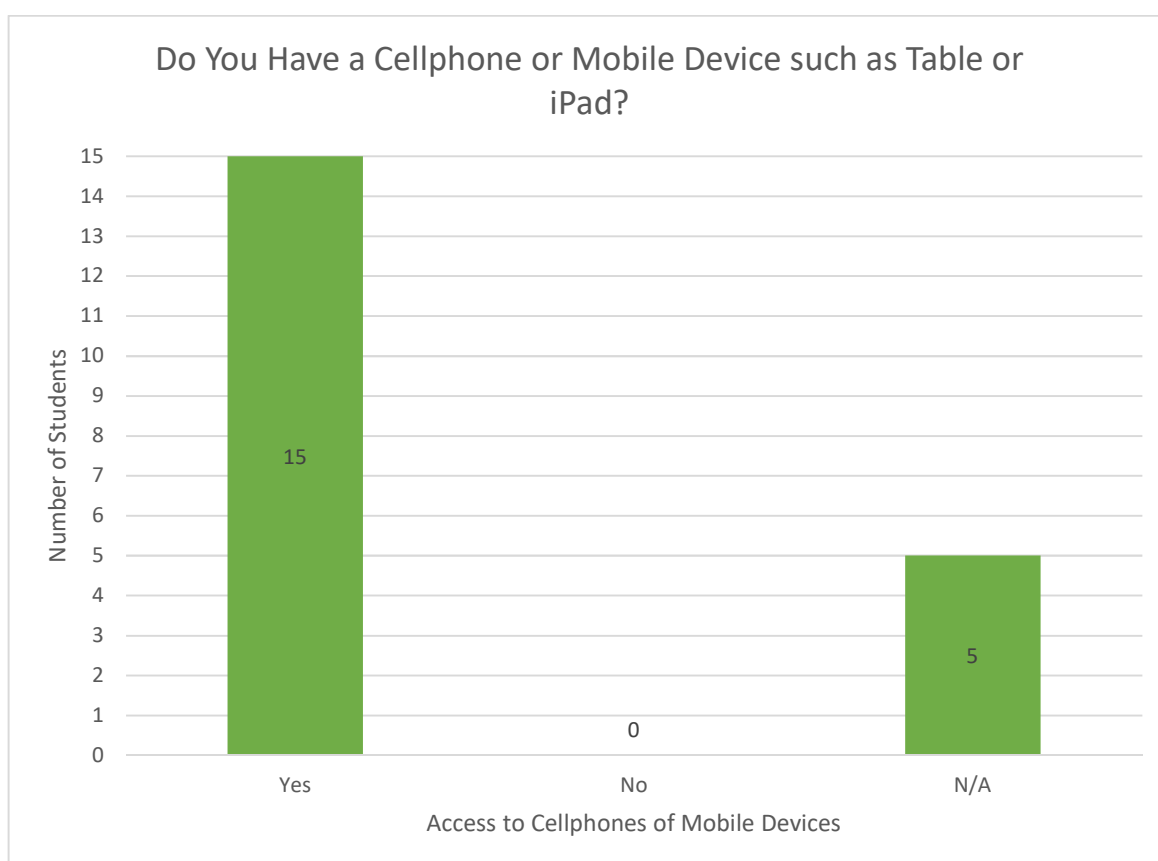


Figure 1. Students' Access to Cellphones or Mobile Devices. Information taken from Interview Applied. Researcher's own creation.

According to the results obtained through it, all the students interviewed, the 15 of them, have a cell phone or a mobile device, which will make easier the application of this study, as all of them should be able to access Socrative through their cellphones or mobile devices. Socrative has a website version for students and teachers, so this gives the option to students to use it through a laptop or a desktop computer, therefore, to know if they have access to computers is important for the researcher, as it can become a second way for the study to go through, as the reinforcement exercises can be sent through the application and the students would be able to complete them from home on their computers. See figure 2 for a better understanding of the numbers,

Figure 2.

Do You Have a Computer at Home?

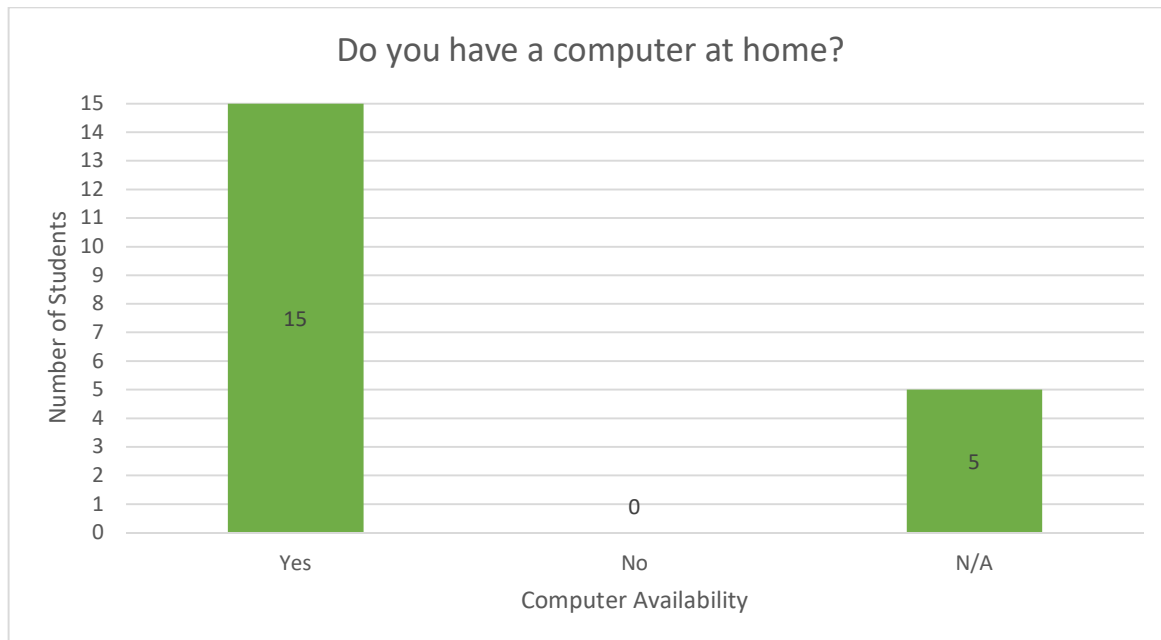


Figure 2. Students' Access to Computers. Information taken from Interview Applied. Researcher's own creation.

To the question, do you have a computer at home? All the students, that is the 15 of them answered affirmative, confirming that all of them have access to technology. Moreover,

making possible for them and this research to include data of the participants using Socrative through the website version.

To use Socrative either from a mobile device or a computer, the user, a student or a teacher, needs to be connected to internet, subsequently, knowing if the students have access to internet on their cellphones or mobile devices is important for the researcher, as it confirms the possibility of the application of the study. If by any chance the numbers were not positive, a new course of action needed to be set to either make possible for the sample population to have access to internet during the time in class, or to make the necessary access possible out of class. The next figure shows how the students answered.

Figure 3.

Do You Have Access to Internet in your Cellphone or Mobile Device?

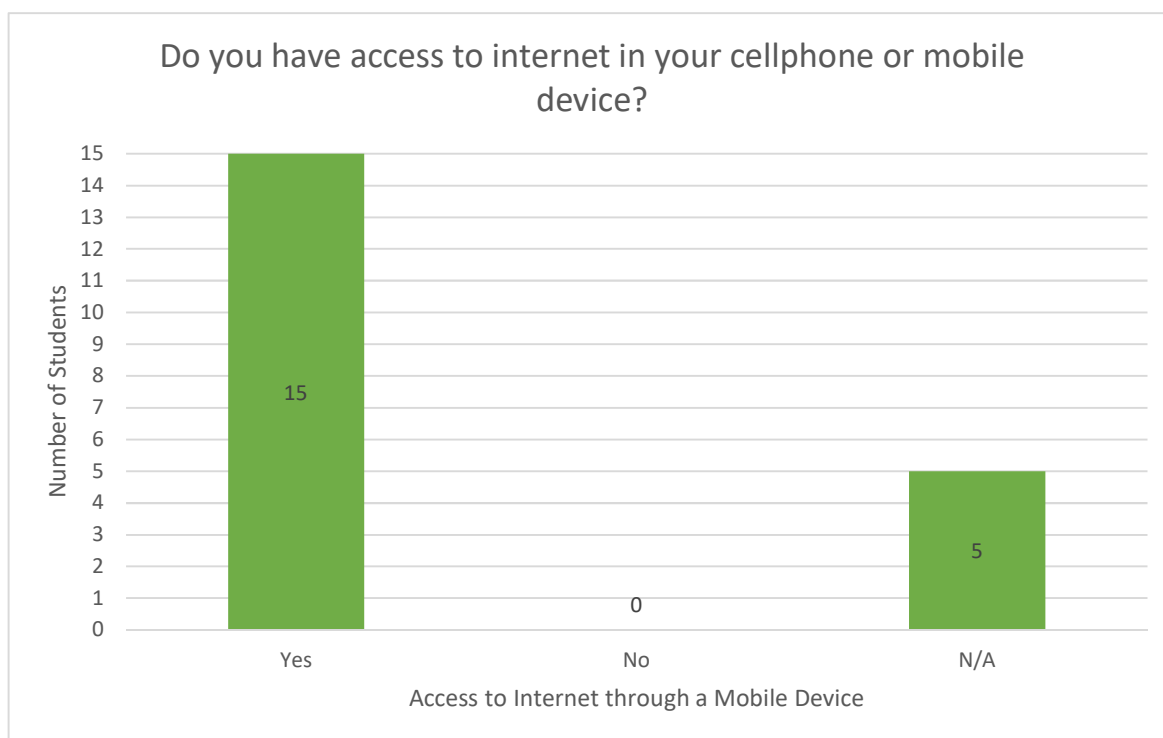


Figure 3. Students' Access to internet on their Mobile Devices. Information taken from Interview Applied. Researcher's own creation.

To the question, do you have access to internet in your cellphone or mobile device? all the students interviewed, that is 15, answered affirmatively, confirming to the investigator the possibility of all the participants to access Socrative on their mobile devices, and therefore, making this research possible.

As mentioned before, Socrative has a website version, and to be accessed internet is needed. So, it was necessary to understand and acknowledge how possible was for the students to have internet in their homes. The next figure illustrates the students' answers to the question; in other words, if they have access to internet at their places, since it was important to clarify that for this research, it was not asked if the home network is hard wired or comes from their mobile plans, what it is important is if they have access to internet,

Figure 4.

Do You Have Access to Internet at Home?

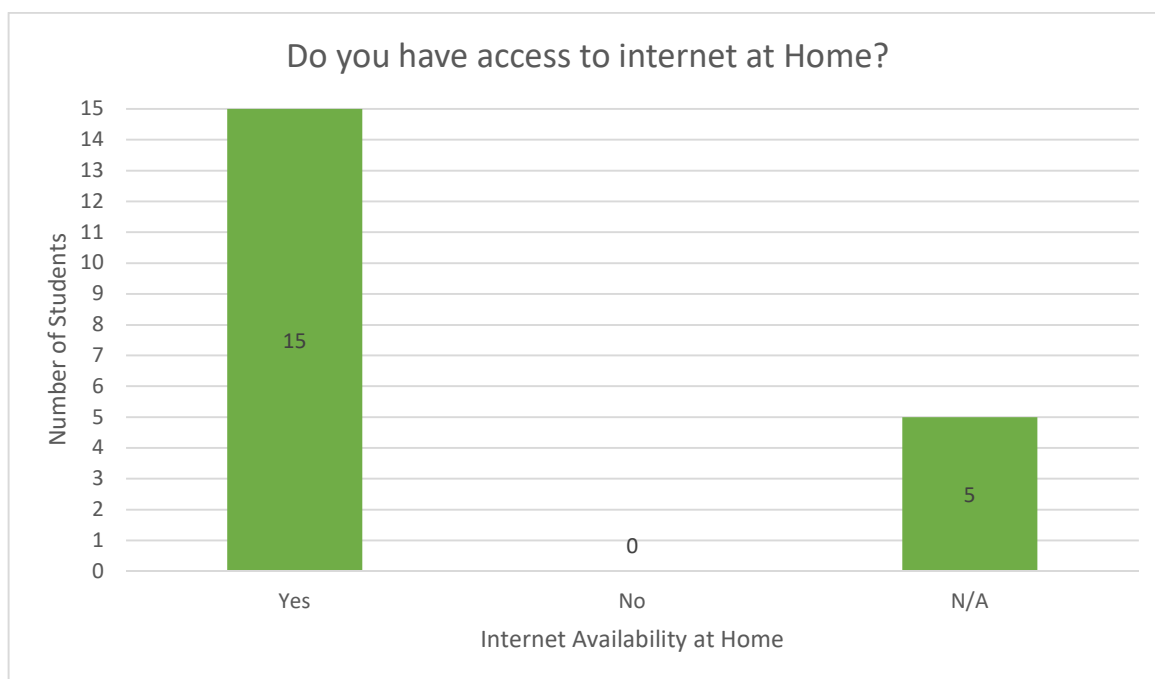


Figure 4. Students' Access to internet at Home. Information taken from Interview Applied. Researcher's own creation.

The same affirmative answer was given by the students when asked about having internet in their homes. This information confirms that all students interviewed have access to Socrative either from their mobile devices or from their computers, therefore, they will be able to complete the exercises sent through the application to reinforce Simple Past tense learning process.

During this research, Socrative was used as an asset to reinforce the students' learning process. As the present research is collaborative, meaning the sample population agreed to collaborate with it, it was necessary to know what students thought about using their cellphones to practice grammar in class. Therefore, within the interview, a question was asked about their consent using the application during classes to practice. The following figure shows the way the students answered to this question.

Figure 5.

Would You Like to User your Cellphone During Class for Practices?

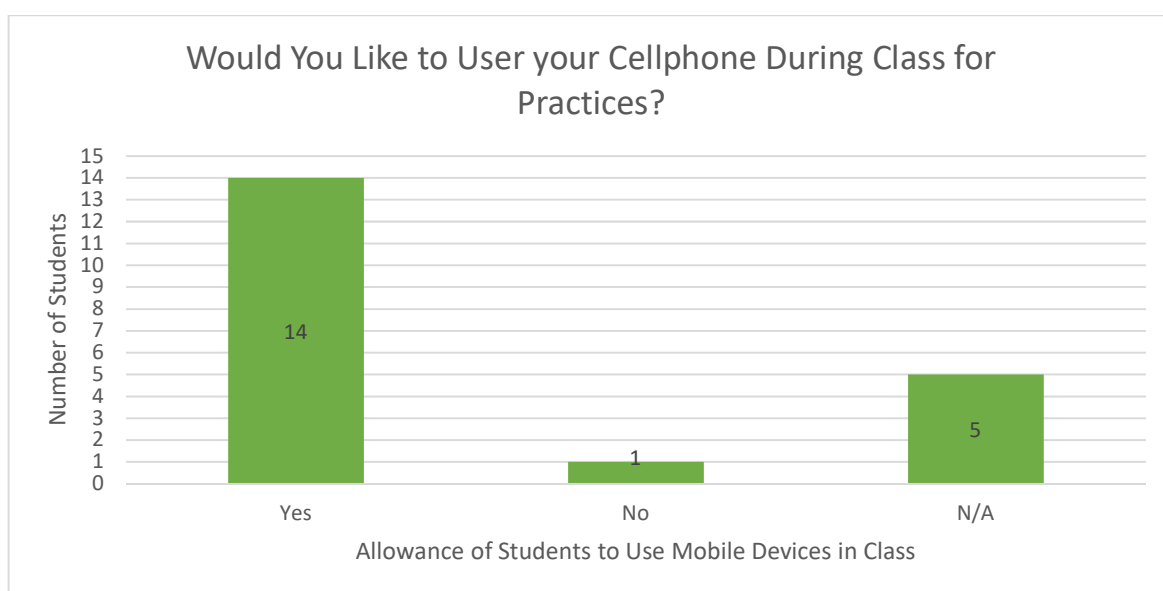


Figure 5. Students' Acceptance to Use their Mobile Devices for Practices in Class. Information taken from Interview Applied. Researcher's own creation.

To the question would you like to use your cellphone during class for practices? Almost all the students interviewed answered yes, 14 of them, which represents over 90 percent of the interviewed participants, and one of them said no, as the questions was formulated to obtain the reason or reasons behind their answer, some of them provided more information, making possible for the investigator to understand why they would or would not allow the usage of the application as part of the class. About the reasons or justifications, they made to agree or disagree using their cellphones to practice through Socratic application, the next table contains the transcription of what the students answering affirmative added.

Table 2.

List of Reasons Made by the Students to Agree about Using their Cellphones in Class.

Reasons Transcript from the Interview

- For practice in the class.
 - I like so much.
 - Because it is more interesting for me.
 - Like games or practices.
 - Because it is good for career.
 - Sometimes I use the cellphone.
 - Because learn more English and practice.
-

Table 2. Justifications Made by the Students to Agree about Using their Cellphones in Class. Information taken from Interview Applied. Researcher's own creation.

Regarding the student who answered no to this question, stated that he prefers written practices over virtual ones, as the student likes to work with books rather than using his or

her mobile device. To reinforce, the Oxford Living Dictionaries (2018) refer to “Strengthen or support (an object or substance), especially with additional material.” Moreover, it refers to “Strengthen (an existing feeling, idea, or habit)” (2018). Considering those two definitions, the researcher proposed to the sample population, the idea of sending extra material using Socrative to reinforce their learning process. The next figure shows how the students answered to the question, would you like to receive extra material to practice in your cellphone, mobile device or computer to be completed in and/ or out of class?

Figure 6.

Would You Like to Receive Extra Material to Practice in your Cellphone, Mobile Device or Computer to be Completed in and/or out of Class?

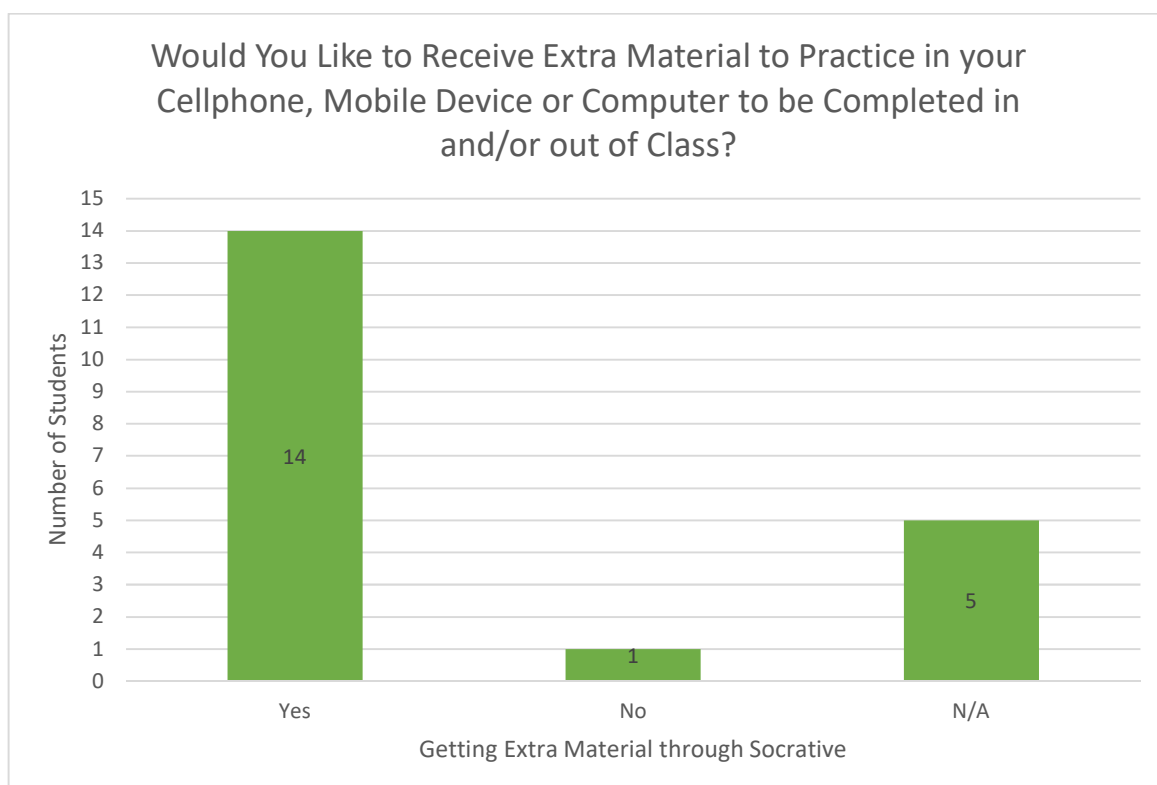


Figure 6. Students' Acceptance to Receive Extra Material in their Mobile Devices for Practices in and out of Class. Information taken from Interview Applied. Researcher's own creation.

From the students that answered the interview, almost all agreed to the idea of receiving extra material through Socrative either in and/or out of class, 14 of them which represents over a 90 percent of the total interviewed answered affirmatively, and there was one student who answered negatively, representing less than 5 percent of the total, stating that he does not like doing practices on a mobile device.

Based on the data collected through this interview and the interpretation of it, the researcher can affirm the study is viable, as the participants have access to the required technology as well as to internet either at home or through their mobile devices. Moreover, 90 percent of the group agreed to use Socrative during and out of class to reinforce their learning process by getting extra material to practice.

4.1.3. Exercises Sent through Socrative to Students

4.1.3.1. Simple Past Generalities

Once the observation of the group was completed, and during the first session with the group, and after the teacher had given an introduction to what Simple Past tense is and had explained the topic to the group, the first activity using Socrative was applied. The activity called *Simple Past Generalities* had as main purpose to review the knowledge acquired by the students through both the topic introduction and explanation and also to provide the students with the first contact with Socrative.

It is important to recall at this point that students had used mobile applications during class before, therefore, the researcher expected a better result. However, having in mind that only 15 students were present during the application of the activity, and the option to complete it at home was given, the result was still a surprise for the investigator. The next figure illustrates the number of students that completed the exercise.

Figure 7.

Percentage of Students Completing the Simple Past Generalities Exercise

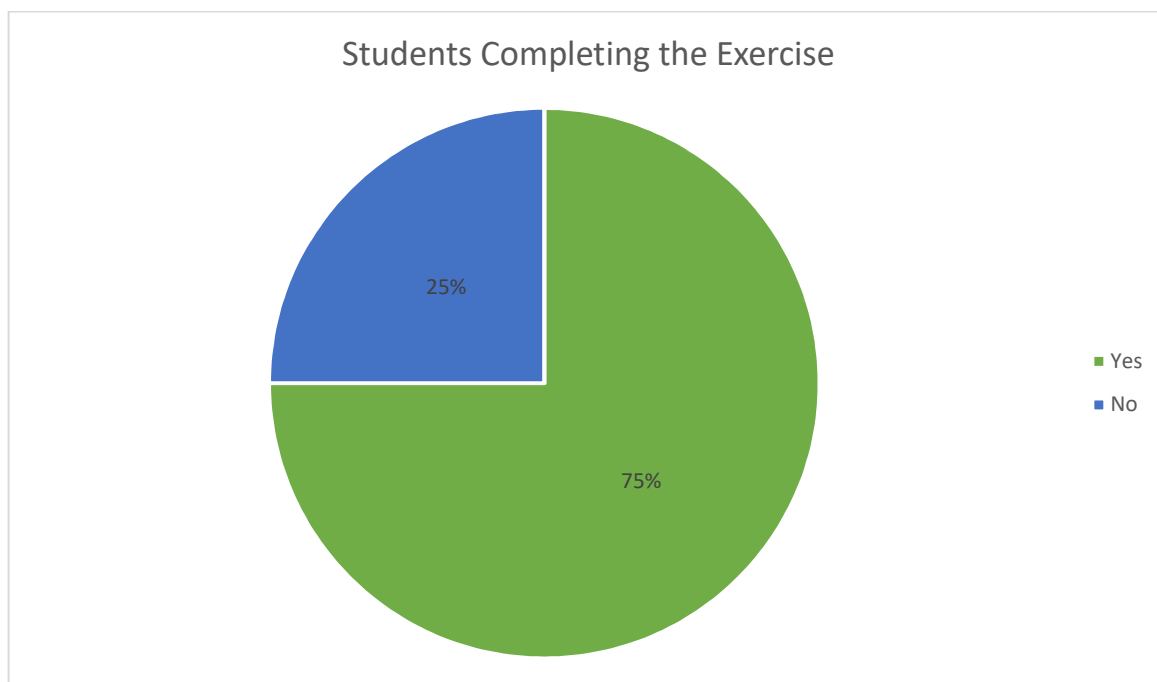


Figure 7. Percentage of students completing Simple Past Generalities Exercise. Information taken from Socrative App. Researcher's own creation.

The activity was applied on October 17th, 2018, and it was left accessible for the students who were absent or those who wanted to complete it in their computers until midnight on October 26th, 2018. As shown in the above illustration, only 67 percent of the students (14 students) logged in and completed the activity and a 35 percent of participants (6 students) did not finish the activity as required. Even though, as motivation strategy, the teacher proposed the students a change on their course evaluation, so, the average grade from the activities applied through Socrative will be taken as one of their project grades. Nevertheless, the response from the missing students was absent and not what it was expected. To make sure the students complete the activity to comply with their project, on October 31st, 2018, a paper copy was provided to the students who were absent the previous

week and did not complete the activity and were attending the class that day, as a result, only one more student complete the activity. Moving the numbers to 75 percent of the students (15 students) completing the activity through any method, either digital or on paper, and a 25 percent of students (5 students) did not complete it.

The activity consisted on 5 statements covering generalities about Simple Past tense. The students had to read each statement and decide if the information was true or false. It is important for this researcher to recall here the fact that the activity was applied after the teacher had introduced and explained the Simple Past tense. The following table illustrates the 5 statements within the activity.

Table 3.

Statements included in the Activity Simple Past Generalities

Simple Past Generalities Statements
1. Simple Past Tense is used to express actions that already happened.
2. Regular and Irregular verbs are part of Simple Past tense.
3. -ed ending is a characteristic of Simple Past tense.
4. Regular verbs are recognized because the change their written form when conjugated in past.
5. The following sentence is expressing a situation in past: Jack played soccer this evening.

Table 3. Statements included within the Simple Past Generalities Activity applied through Socrative. Researcher's own creation.

One of the features Socrative offers is the capacity to generate a report for each exercise or activity applied through the platform. However, during this study several reports

Socratic App to Reinforce Simple Past Tense

for the same exercise were provided, as the same one was opened and closed in several occasions, and as it was stated above, even applied on paper. Hence, the investigator will provide a similar analysis for each of the activities using the data obtained through the platform.

The next figure illustrates the most correct answered statement and the least correct statement.

Figure 8.

Most and Least Correct Answered Statements

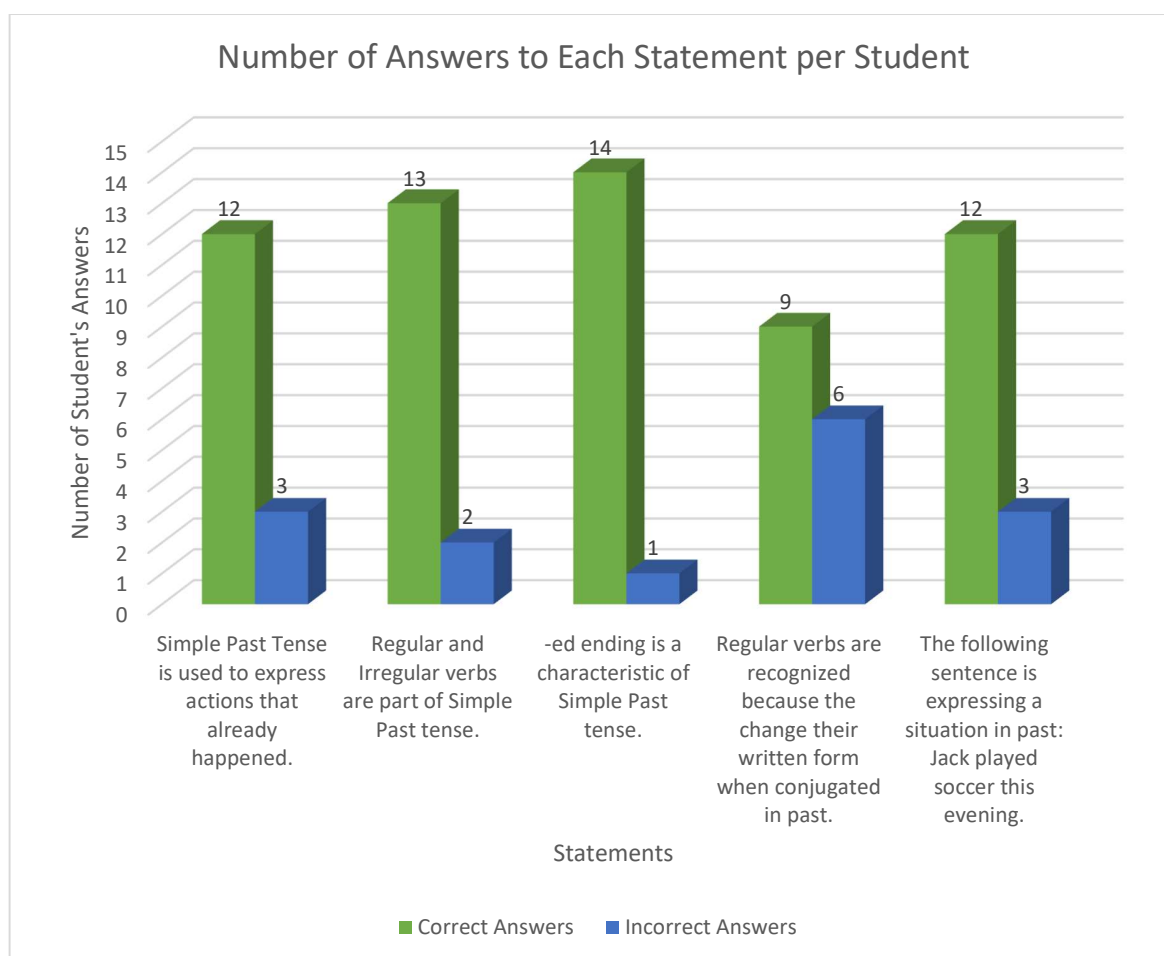


Figure 8. Number of answers to each statement included in the activity Simple Past Generalities. Information taken from Socrative and the paper version of the exercise applied. Researcher's own creation.

As illustrated within the above figure, the third proposed statement, *-ed ending is a characteristic of Simple Past tense*, was the most correct answered one with 14 correct answers which represents a 93 percent of the total of answers received. On the other hand, the fourth proposed statement, *Regular verbs are recognized because they change their written form when conjugated in past*, was the most incorrect answered one, with only 9 correct answers which represents a 60 percent of the total of answers received. This makes the researcher to consider the idea that the students focused on simple facts such as the -ed ending when learning Simple Past tense instead of acknowledging the grammar rules provided within the explanation of the topic to have a better understanding. The next picture illustrates the way the students answered each question,

Table 4.

Answers Provided by the Students to the Simple Past Generalities Exercise

Number of correct answers	Simple Past Tense is used to express actions that already happened.	Regular and Irregular verbs are part of Simple Past Tense.	-ed ending is a characteristic of Simple Past.	Regular verbs are recognized because they change their written form when conjugated in past.	The following sentence is expressing a situation in past. Jack played soccer this evening.
4	True	True	False	False	True
5	True	True	True	False	True
3	True	False	True	True	True
4	True	True	True	True	True
5	True	True	True	False	True
5	True	True	True	False	True
3	True	True	True	True	False
5	True	True	True	False	True
4	True	True	True	True	True
4	False	True	True	False	True
4	True	True	True	True	True
1	False	False	True	True	False
5	True	True	True	False	True
5	True	True	True	False	True
3	False	True	True	True	False

Table 4. Answers provided by the Students to the Simple Past Generalities exercise. Information generated through Socrative App and the paper version of the exercise applied.

The illustration above is the result of the reports feature within Socrative, as during this investigation a paper version of the activity had to be applied, so the scores provided within the report were taken out of the illustration.

4.1.3.2. Simple Past Verbs

On the second session with the group, an activity applied by the investigator and completed by the students out of class was announced. The activity called *Simple Past Verbs* had as main purposes not only to check the student's knowledge about verbal conjugation in Simple Past tense, but also, to check the capacity of the students to complete it during a specific interval of time out of school hours. The next figure illustrates the results.

Figure 9.

Number of Students that Completed the Simple Past Verbs Exercise

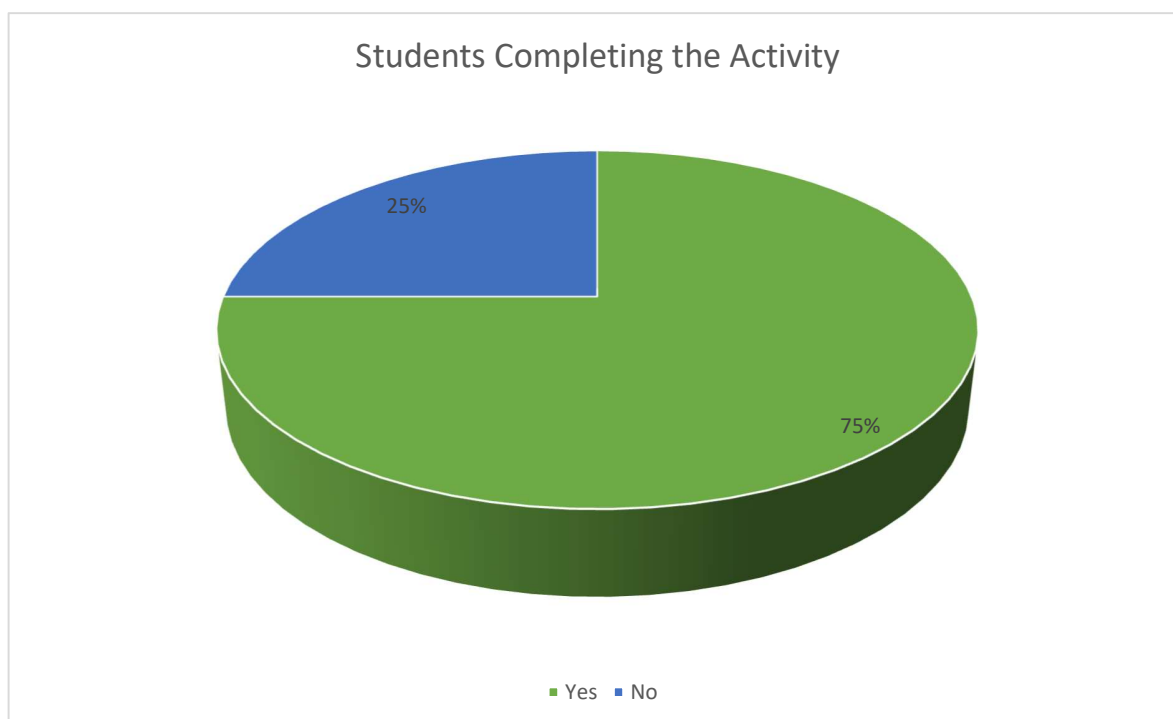


Figure 9. Percentage of students that completed the Simple Past Generalities Exercise. Information taken from Socrative App. Researcher's own creation.

The activity was opened for the students on October 27th, 2018, and it was left opened until October 31st, 2018. During that period of time, only 12 students were able to complete it through Socrative, representing an 87 percent of the total of students that completed the activity at the end. On October 31st, 2018, during the last session with the group, the 3 students who did not complete the activity informed they had problems trying to login into the application, therefore, a paper version of the exercise was giving to them, Therefore, by doing this, 15 students completed the activity either through Socrative or through a paper version of the activity, representing the 75 percent of the class population. The remaining 25 percent missing seemed to have dropped the course. *Simple Past Verbs* consisted on a filling in the blanks exercise, 5 sentences in past form were given to the students and they had to conjugate the verb given in past form to complete each sentence. The next table illustrates the sentences and the verbs given to complete each one,

Table 4.

Sentences and Verbs Given to Complete them within Simple Past Verbs Exercise

Sentence	Verb Given
1. Julian _____ Business School on May 2019.	Finish
2. Katherine _____ to be a psychologist because she wanted to help people.	Decide
3. Kevin's first job _____ at Dell, there he made his mind about studying Computer Engineering.	Be
4. John was good at Math, so, he _____ Industrial Engineer as his major.	Choose

5. Sofia _____ to speak English a while ago.

Learn

Table 5. Sentences and given verbs included within the Simple Past Verbs Activity applied through Socrative. Researcher's own creation.

Within the 5 sentences provided and the corresponding verbs to complete them, both regular and irregular verbs were present. The next figure shows the number of correct and incorrect answers from the students who had completed it,

Figure 10.

Number of Correct and Incorrect Answers per Question

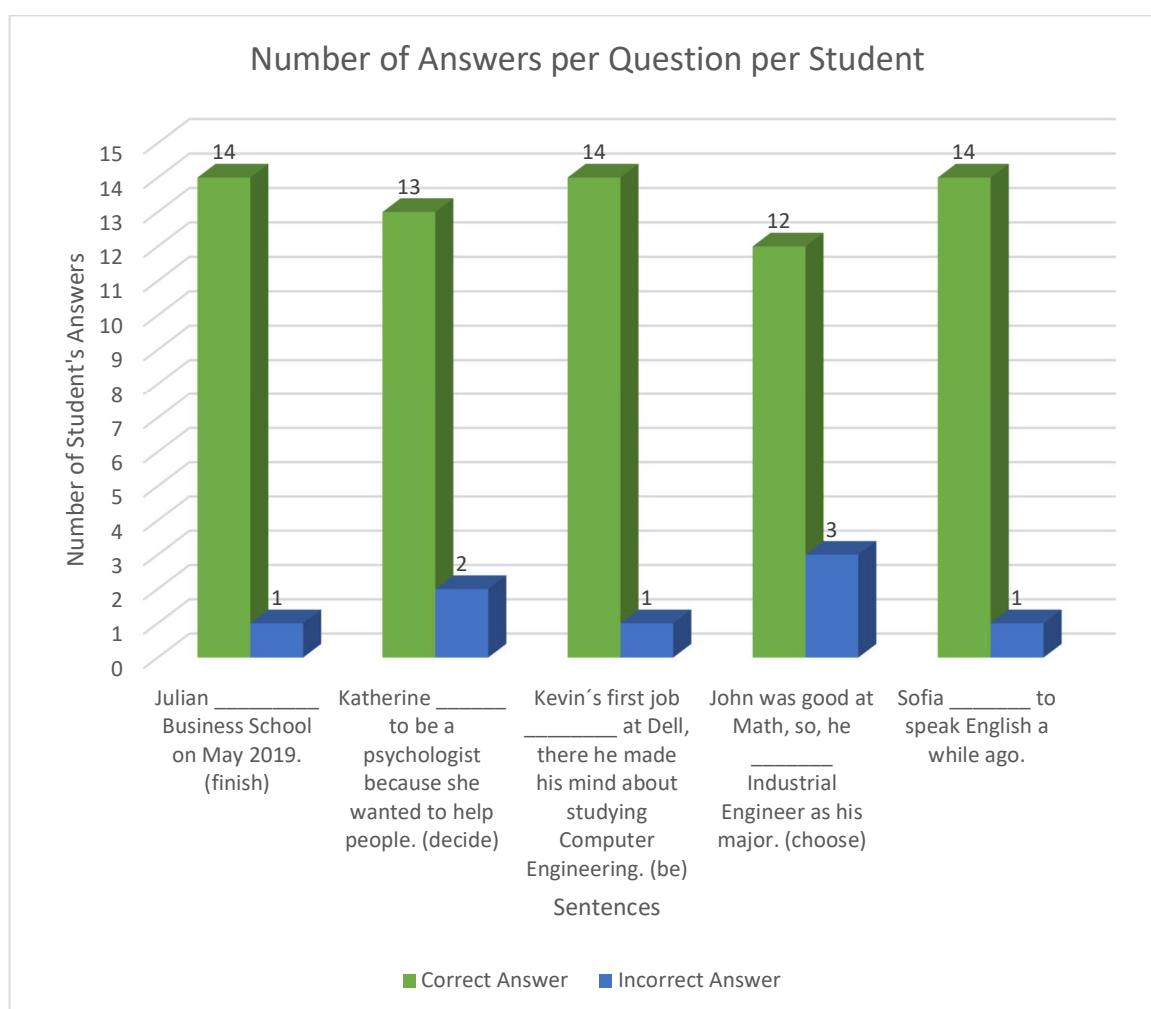


Figure 10. Number of Answers to each question included in the activity Simple Past Verbs. Information taken from Socrative and the paper version of the exercise applied. Researcher's own creation.

According to the data provided by Socrative once the exercise was closed within the application, and the data collected through the paper version of the activity, the most correct answered questions were the first, third and fifth ones, with a 93 percent of correct answers each one, that means 14 students answered correctly, and only 7 percent of incorrect answers represented with the 1 in the graphic. The first question had a regular verb in it, and the third and the fifth had an irregular verb to be conjugated. So, it is possible for the investigator to affirm that there is not a visible pattern when answering the questions correctly or on the regularity or irregularity of the verb, but, mostly within the spelling of it when keyed in through the application. Opposite to it, the fourth question was the least correct answered one with only an 80 percent of correct answers. In this case, a wrong conjugation of the verb was the reason of the incorrect answers. The following figure shows the answers keyed in by the students,

Table 6.

Answers Provided by the Students to the Simple Past Verbs Exercise

Number of correct answers	Complete the following sentence with the correct past form of the verb in parenthesis. Julian _____ Business School on May, 2019. (finish)	Complete the next sentence with the correct past form of the verb in parenthesis. Katherine _____ to be a psychologist because she wanted to help people. (decide)	Complete the following sentences with the correct past form of the verbs in parenthesis. Kevin's first job _____ at Dell, there he made his mind about studying Computer Engineering. (Be)	Complete the following sentences with the correct past form of the verbs in parenthesis. John was good at Math, so, he _____ Industrial Engineer as his major. (choose)	Complete the following sentence with the correct past form of the verb in parenthesis. Sofia _____ to speak English a while ago. (learn)
5	finished	decided	was	chose	learned
5	Finished	Decided	Was	Chose	Learned
5	Finished	Decided	Was	Chose	Learned
4	Finished	Decided	Has	Chose	Learned
4	finished	decide	was	chose	learned
5	finished	decided	was	chose	learned
5	finished	decided	was	chose	learned
3	Finished	Decided	Was	Chooses	Learning
5	Finished	decided	was	chose	learned
3	finished	decided	was	choosed	learned
5	finished	decided	was	chose	learned
4	finished	decided	was	choosed	learned
5	finished	decided	was	chose	learnt
5	finished	decided	was	chose	learned
4	finished	wanteded	was	chose	learned

Table 6. Answers provided by the Students to the Simple Past Verbs exercise. Information generated through Socrative App and the paper version of the exercise applied.

The illustration above is the result of the reports feature within Socrative, as during this investigation a paper version of the activity had to be applied, consequently, the scores provided within the report were taken out of it. Nevertheless, it worked to support the words of the researcher when saying before that most of the incorrect answers' due to the incorrect spelling of the verbs.

4.1.4. Rubric

A rubric was given to the students on October 31st, 2018 with the purpose of gathering their thoughts and insights about the usage of Socrative as a technological asset. The rubric had four questions (see Appendix 3) all related to the use of Socrative in and out of class to be answered by choosing their level of acceptance or refusal of the application and a space for the students to leave their comments or suggestions about the use of Socrative. The next figure shows the way the students answered to the four questions asked,

Figure 11.

Answers to Rubric Given to the Students

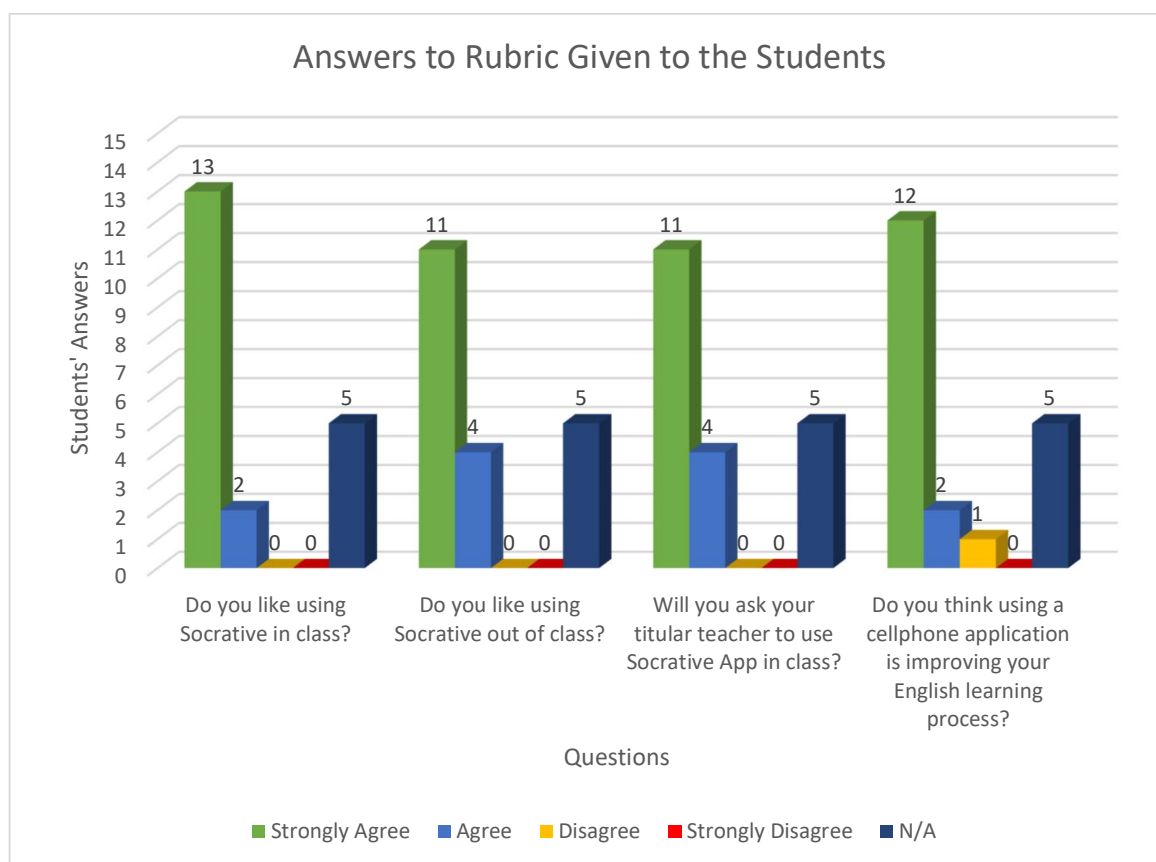


Figure 11. Students' Answers to the rubric applied on October 31st, 2018. Researcher's own creation.

As it is shown within the above figure, all the students who answered the rubric agreed about how they felt after using Socrative in class, since a 65 percent of the total (13 students) strongly liked the use of it, and the 10 percent left (2 students) only agreed about liking the usage of the application.

On the other hand, the numbers changed when asking about the usage of the application out of class, having a 55 percent of the students (11 students) strongly agreed into the usage and a 20 percent of them (4 students) only agreed to it. About it, some of the students left comments about their experience, according to what they wrote, and paraphrasing their words, they liked using Socrative because the application is useful to have the studied topic fresh and on point. Another reason mentioned was related to how fun was to

prove their knowledge through the application. Moreover, one student expressed that the application is appropriate to learn English.

The third question proposed got the same results as the second one, to the question, will you ask your teacher to use Socrative App in class? The 55 percent (11 students) strongly agreed, and 20 percent (4 students) only agreed. Some of the comments left by the sample population participating in this study were directed to the possibility of the application to be used within other subjects of their curricula, as through it they can keep the topics they are working on present and on point; furthermore, they believe Socrative makes the learning process more dynamic and appealing as the use of the application is easy and simple.

The last question proposed was related to their learning process, even though, the students, were not experts on it, they are part of it, and as adults, the researcher considered important to gather their opinion about it, when asked do you think using a cellphone application is improving your English learning process? 60 percent of them (12 students) strongly agreed to it, a 10 percent (2 students) agreed, since for them, Socrative is a good learning support as it provides feedback about what they learned, it is simple and accessible, and a good tool when they study and work. Opposite to these comments and acceptance, 1 student who represents the 5 percent of the sample population disagrees about Socrative being helpful to improve his or her learning process, for this student, Socrative required more questions within the exercises. It is important to recall that both exercises applied through Socrative consisted on 5 questions or statements, the decision on how many questions per exercise was made with the purpose of looking for a better response from the students and

time management. However, some of the students agreed they would like to have more exercises within the application.

Finally, as mentioned within this chapter, the original group list consisted of 20 people, this was the number the researcher took as his sample population for this study, however, during the sessions shared with the group, it became clear that 5 students have dropped the course for unknown reasons; those 5 students represent a 25 percent of the original group. So, that number is included in each question as No Answer (N/A), as they were part of the group at some point.

4.1.5. Simple Past Tense Quiz

A quiz was applied to the students on October 31st, 2018. The quiz consisted of 3 parts which are identification, short answer and production, each part had 1 or 2 exercises looking to measure the students' knowledge about the simple past and the vocabulary related to the family. However, as this research is focused on the Simple Past tense the exercises related to that topic will not be taken into consideration for further analysis. The quiz was designed to be finished in 30 minutes and represented a 5 percent of the students' final grade.

The first exercise related to the Simple Past tense within the quiz belonged to the identification part, in it the students were given 5 sentences expressing situations in the past, they had to read each sentence and classify the verb within each sentence into regular or irregular. The next figure illustrates the number of correct answers per student.

Figure 12.

Quiz Identification Exercise. Number of Correct Answers per Student

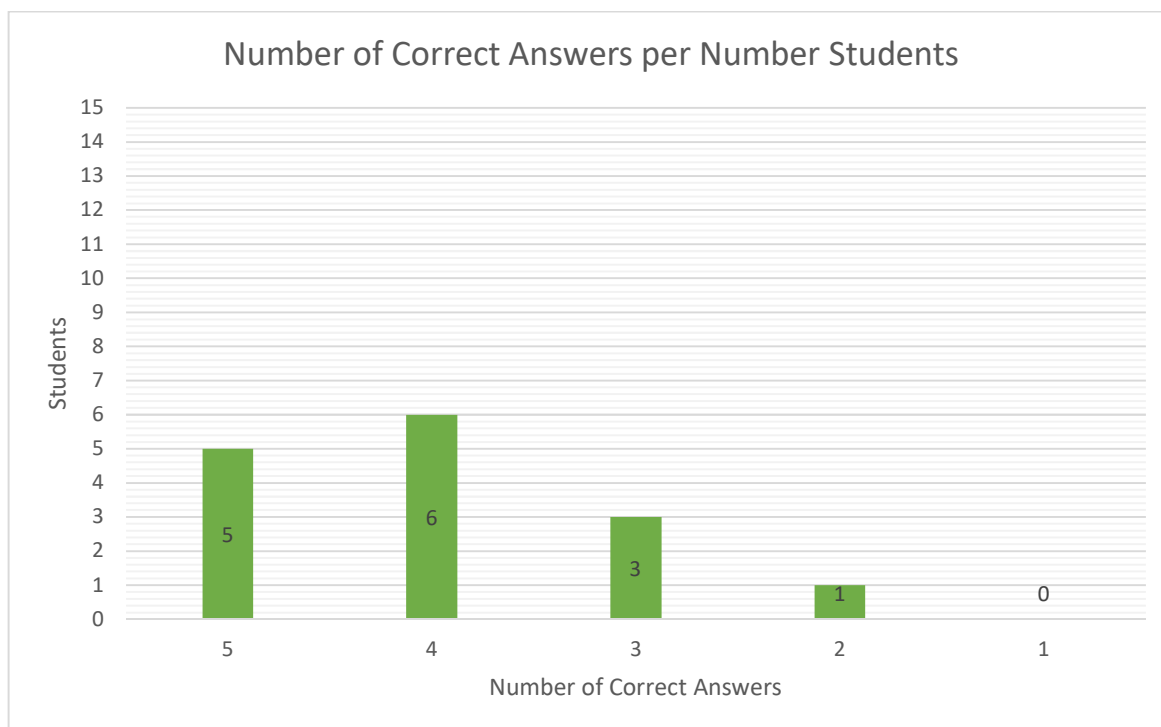


Figure 12. Number of correct answers per student at exercise B identification part from the quiz. Information taken from the quiz results. Researchers' own creation.

As shown within the figure above, 11 students had between 4 and 5 correct answers, they represent a 73 percent of the total of students placing the quiz on the assigned course calendar date. At the same time, they also represent the percentage of students with enough points as to pass the quiz exercise. On the other hand, the 4 students with 3 or 2 correct answers in this exercise represent the 27 percent of the students who did not pass the quiz exercise within the total of students who presented the quiz.

The next table illustrates how each student classified each verb, *R* means the verb was classified as regular and *I* means the verb was classified as irregular, furthermore, a color chart will be used to represent if the answer was correct or incorrect, in this case, green will

represent the correct answers while yellow will represent the incorrect answers; to protect the students' confidentiality and out of respect to them, the researcher will use pseudonyms for each of them,

Table 7.

Quiz Identification Exercise. Classification of the Verbs in each Sentence per Student

Student	Verbs to be Classified				
	Played	Wrote	Ran	Decided	Was
AE	I	I	I	I	R
AS	R	I	I	I	R
BS	R	I	I	R	R
CV	R	I	I	I	R
CK	R	I	I	R	R
CA	R	I	I	R	I
CK2	R	I	I	R	I
GF	R	I	I	R	I
GG	R	I	I	R	I
ME	R	I	I	I	R
MK	R	I	I	R	I
RJ	R	I	R	R	I
RA	R	I	I	R	R
VM	R	I	I	R	R
VJ	R	I	I	I	I

Table 7. Quiz identification exercise answers per student. Researcher's own creation

As shown in the table above most of the students failed to classify the last verb (was) as 53 percent of the students (8 students) classified it as regular, the sentence given was: *She was happy with her gift*, the second verb with more incorrect classifications was *decided*, the sentence given to the students was: *I decided to become a lawyer*, in this case, during the quiz grading it became clear for the researcher that the students misclassified the verb as they considered the infinitive *to become* as the verb to be classified within the sentence. Nevertheless, this verb is also irregular, therefore, the researcher can affirm that the mistakes within the classification of both verbs were the result of a lack of knowledge of the verbs given.

The second exercise related to the Simple Past tense within the quiz belonged to the short answer section. Here, the students had to complete the given sentences by conjugating the verb provided in parenthesis next to each sentence. The table shows the way students conjugated each given verb within the exercise

Table 8.

Quiz Short Answer Exercise. Verbal Conjugation per Student

Student	Verbs to be Conjugated				
	Wake	Finish	Stop	Be (they)	Take
AE	waked	finished	stoped	were	took
AS	waked	finished	stopped	was	taked
BS	waked	finished	stoped	was	toke
CV	waked	finished	stopped	was	toke
CK	woke	finished	stoped	was	took

CA	waking	finished	stoping	were	taking
CK2	waked	finished	stopped	were	took
GF	woked	finished	stoped	was	took
GG	woke	finished	stoped	were	toke
ME	waked	finished	stopped	were	took
MK	woke	finished	stoped	were	toke
RJ	waked	finished	stoped	was	toke
RA	woke	finished	stopped	was	took
VM	wok	finished	stopped	are	tok
VJ	woke	finished	stopped	was	took

Table 8. Quiz short answer exercise students' answers. Researcher's own creation

Following the same format of Table 7, a color chart was used to represent if the answer was correct or incorrect. Green represents the correct answers while yellow represents the incorrect ones; also, to continue protecting the students' confidentiality and out of respect to them, the researcher will continue using pseudonyms for each of them. As illustrated within the table above, the verb most correctly conjugated was *finish* with a 100 percent of correct answers, and the least correctly conjugated verb was *wake* with only 5 correct answers representing a 33 percent of the students.

Based on the data collected within Table 8, the researcher can affirm that the conjugation mistakes done by the students within the verb *wake* are the result of not recognizing the verb as irregular, and the same happened with the verb *take*. In the case of the verb *be*, the students got confused with the two forms of the verb in the past, and the main issue with the verb *stop* was related to its spelling as almost all the students missed a letter p

while conjugating the verb. This exercise was the one with less perfect scores, the next figure illustrates the number of correct answers per student.

Figure 13

Quiz Short Answer Exercise. Number of Correct Answers per Student

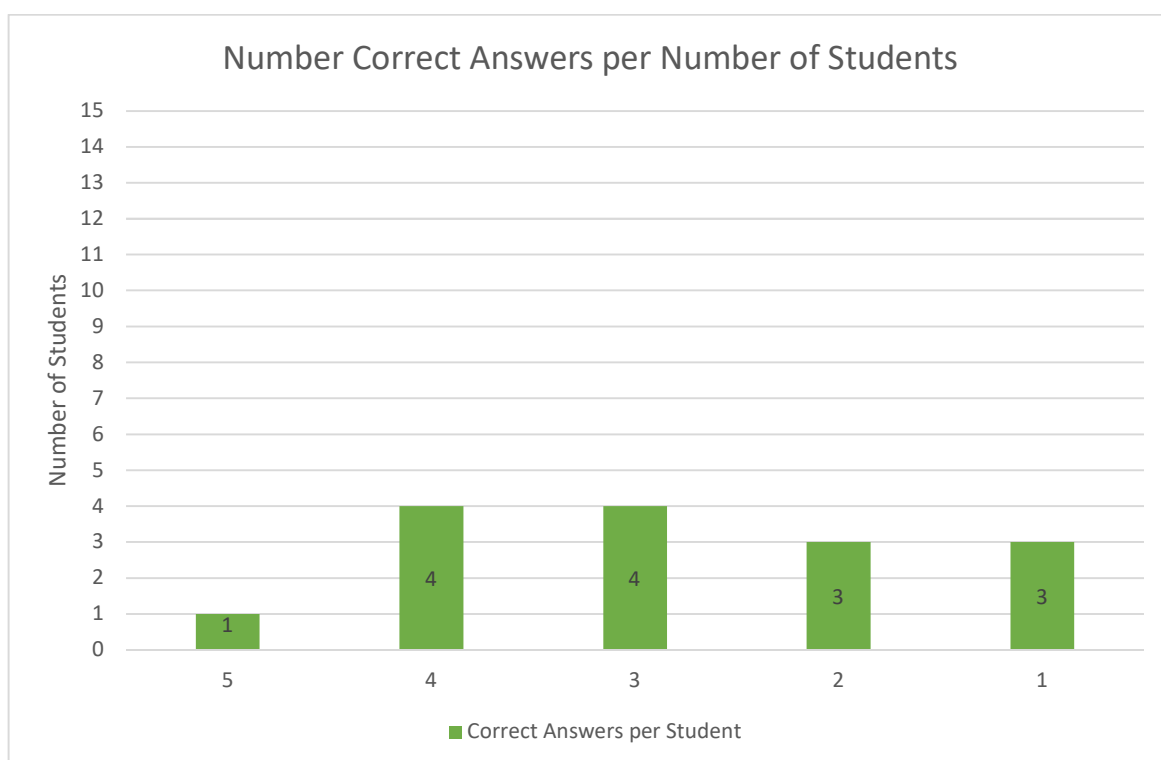


Figure 13. Number of correct answers per student at exercise 1 short answer part from the quiz. Information taken from the quiz results. Researchers' own creation

Using the data presented within the above figure, the researcher can confirm that this exercise had the lowest scores within the quiz. According to the information collected only 5 students, that represent a 33 percent of the total of individuals, passed the exercise as they answered the activity within the quiz, the other 67 percent did not get enough correct answers to pass the activity, therefore, they failed the exercise when considered isolated.

A reading comprehension exercise was included within the quiz. This activity belonged to the short answer part and required the students to read a text and answered 5 questions using the information from it. The next figure provides an illustration on how many correct answers per student there were within this exercise.

Figure 14.

Quiz Reading Comprehension Exercise. Number of Correct Answers per Student

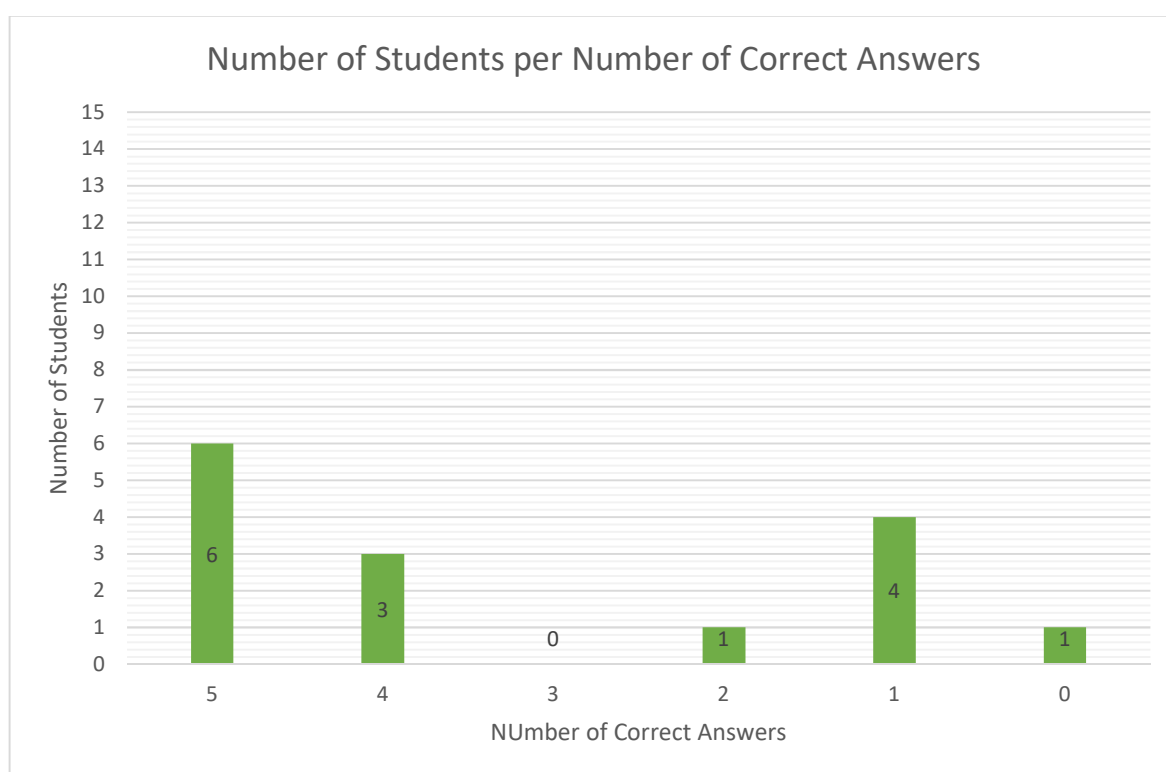


Figure 14. Number of correct answers per student at exercise 2 short answer part from the quiz. Information taken from the quiz results. Researchers' own creation

As illustrated in the above figure, 9 students, that represents a 60 percent, of those who presented the quiz, obtained enough points as to pass this exercise when considered by itself; opposite to them, a total of 6 students, representing the 40 percent, failed the exercise. As this activity was directed to reading comprehension and considering the answers given by the students who had failed the activity, the investigator can affirm the students did not

understand the questions asked, as the answers checked did not respond the questions correctly.

The last exercise in the quiz related to the Simple Past tense was within the production part. Here, the students were given 8 different verbs in their simple form (without being conjugated) and they had to write 4 affirmative sentences and 4 negative sentences. It is important to add that each construction had a value of 2 points as both grammar and spelling were graded. The next figure illustrates the distribution of points between the affirmative sentences and negative sentences construction exercises per student.

Figure 15.

Quiz Production Exercise. Distribution of Points per Student

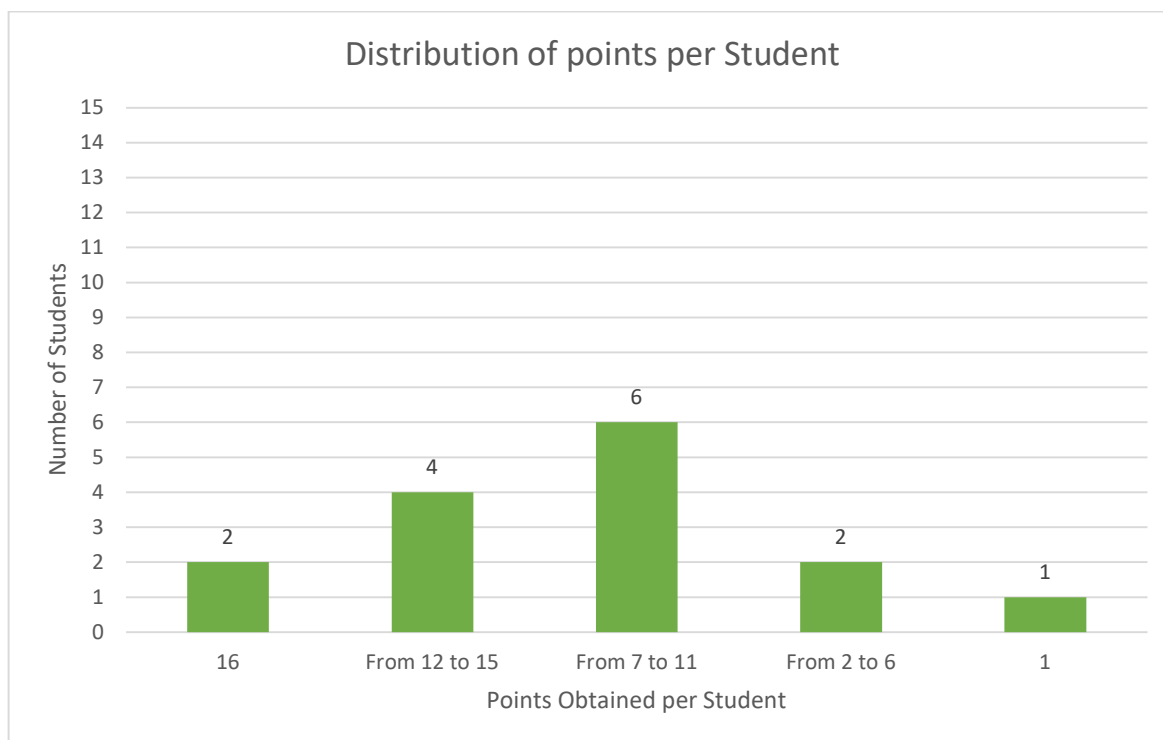


Figure 15. Distribution of points per student within the production exercise in the quiz. Researcher's own creation using quiz results.

The minimum points required to pass this specific exercise were 12, as shown within the figure overhead only 6 students were able to score that amount of points to pass the exercise, they represent the 40 percent of the total of students. This means that 60 percent of the students participating within the study and placing the quiz failed this part. The mistakes found within this exercise were related to both spelling and grammar structures created incorrectly due to a bad conjugation of the verbs.

A total of 15 students placed the quiz on the assigned date as per the course calendar. From them, 60 percent passed it and 40 percent failed it. Making a quick analysis over the exercises, the researcher can affirm that the students who failed the quiz present problems with grammar structure and the verbal conjugation, as they showed errors within the 3 types of exercises proposed. On the other hand, the students who passed the quiz, present spelling mistakes while conjugating the verbs or contracting the past auxiliary and the negative particle (did + not) in negative sentences.

Even though the quiz (see Appendix 4) included a second topic besides the Simple Past tense, it worked to analyze the learning process of the students. Therefore, the researcher will only consider the parts where the Simple Past tense was graded. As mentioned before, the quiz consisted of 3 parts that were identification, short answer and production, each part had 1 or 2 exercises such as classification of the verb, completing sentences by conjugating the verb into the past form or creating sentences using the verbs given.

For this study, the researcher will analyze two exercises, the one about classifying the verb into regular or irregular, exercise B from the identification part, and the one about completing sentences conjugating the verb in past, and exercise 1 from the short answer

section, as both are similar to the activities applied through Socrative. The analysis will be done through a contrast between the amount of correct answers in each activity.

The following figure shows the amount of correct answers per student within the identification exercise and the one applied on Socrative about generalities of the verbal tense.

Figure 12.

Simple Past Generalities versus Quiz Identification Exercise B

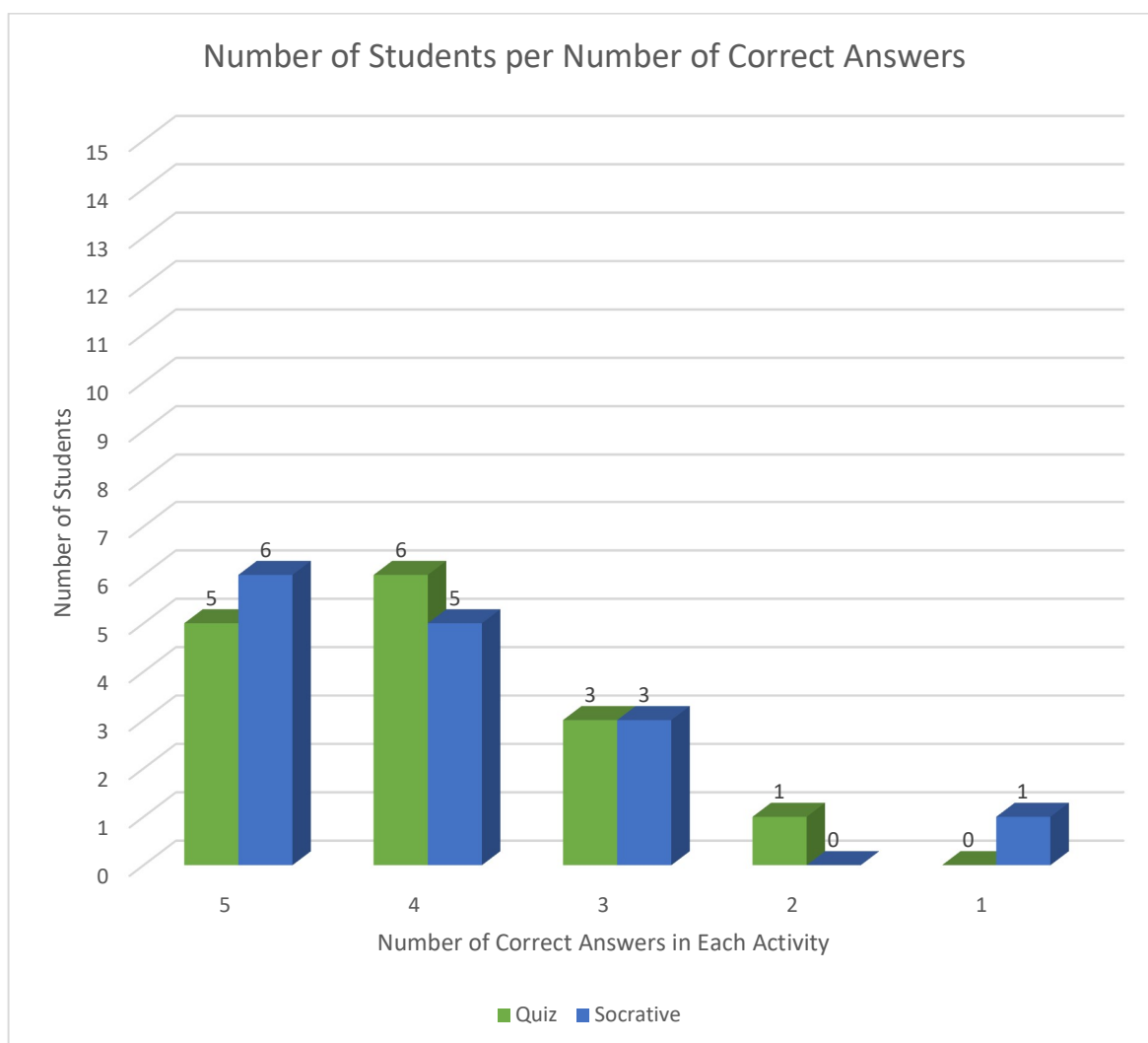


Figure 16. Contrast of correct answers between Simple Past Generalities Socrative activity and Exercise B from Quiz Identification. Researcher's own creation.

The identification exercise from the quiz required the students to classify the verb from each sentence into regular or irregular. This exercise is similar to the one applied through Socrative about the verbal tense generalities as the students had to recall the characteristics of regular and irregular verbs studied in class and that were reinforced through Socrative.

As shown in the figure above there is a slight difference within the number of students having 5 and 4 correct answers between the quiz and results obtained through Socrative, as the numbers switched between the exercises showing a small decrease on students having a perfect score within the quiz exercise. On the other hand, 1 student only had 2 correct answers in the quiz, and there were none students having 1 correct answer or less, which is an improvement compared to the student who got only 1 correct answer during the Socrative activity.

The second quiz exercise to be analyzed belong to the short answer section, according to the instructions, the students had to complete each sentence with the past form of the verb given. As mentioned above, this activity is similar to the Simple Past Verbs applied through Socrative the week before the quiz, where the students had to conjugate the verb given in the past form to complete the sentence provided, therefore, better results within the quiz were expected by the researcher due to the similarity of the activities. As it was done with the previous quiz exercise, an analysis based on the number of correct answers per students will be done with this activity too, contrasting the results obtained through Socrative and the ones obtained from the quiz exercise. The next figure illustrates the number of correct answers per student in both activities.

Figure 13.

Simple Past Verbs versus Quiz Short Answer Exercise 1

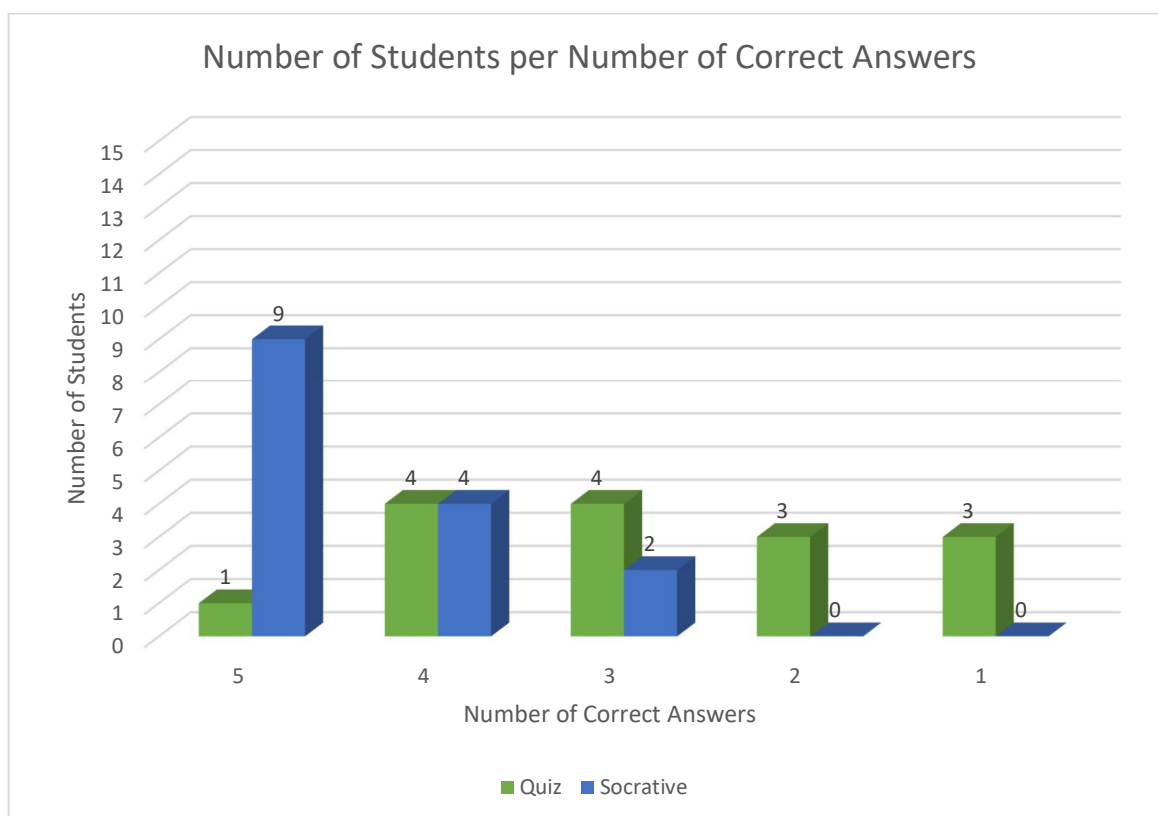


Figure 17. Contrast of correct answers between Simple Past Verbs Socrative activity and Exercise 1 from Quiz Short Answer. Researcher's own creation.

As shown in the above figure, the results obtained by the students on the quiz exercise were not the expected by the investigator. Compared to the results obtained through Socrative, it can be observed a complete turnaround on the results. As they moved from a 60 percent (9 students) of perfect scores on Socrative to a 10 percent (1 students) on the quiz exercise, there is even a 20 percent of students (3 students) who got 2 or 1 correct answers within the quiz exercise opposite to none within Socrative. When trying to understand these results, the researcher can justify the difference between them on the time to complete each exercise and the ambiance of each of them, as for the Socrative activity they had days to

Socratic App to Reinforce Simple Past Tense

finish it, and it was a reinforcing activity, but for the quiz exercise they had 30 minutes to complete the whole quiz, and even though both activities were graded, the label quiz may produce more anxiety within the students.

The next table illustrates the grades behavior of each activity applied during this study,

Table 9.

Grades Behavior per Activity

Students	Simple Past Generalities	Simple Past Verbs	Quiz
AE	60	80	56
AS	100	60	53
BS	80	100	36
CV	80	80	67
CK	80	100	89
CA	80	100	50
CK2	100	80	75
GF	80	100	94
GG	100	100	80
ME	20	80	78
MK	100	100	81
RJ	60	100	94
RA	100	100	86

VM	60	60	33
VJ	100	100	94

Table 9. Grades behavior per activity. Researcher's own creation

Based on the illustration above, the researcher can affirm that the activity named *Simple Past Verbs* showed the most stable grades among the participants with only 2 results below 70 which is the approval grade. While the *quiz* was the activity with the lowest results as 6 students did not pass it. Besides, within the *Simple Past Generalities*, it can be found the lowest score as 1 of the participants got a 20 in it.

From the data illustrated above, the investigator can confirm that an 86 percent of the students participating in this study possesses an average grade over 70, while only 14 percent represented by 2 individuals managed to obtain an average grade below 70. As VJ was the one with better scores with an average of 98, while VM became the one with the lowest score owning an average of 51.

Chapter V

Conclusions and Recommendations

Learning has been in a constant evolution since theorists started to research how knowledge is acquired. According to Shunk (2012) “Learning involves acquiring and modifying knowledge, skills, strategies, beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors [...] human learning is more complex, elaborate, rapid, and typically involves language” (p. 2). Many theories have been formed, tested and acknowledged by the educational society, each of them making use of the technology of their time. Since technology is a tangible result of knowledge and learning itself and knowing that technology has become an essential part of the society development it would be illogic to cast it out of the XXI century learning process.

In a world where everything is at hand, the access to technology has become easier, each day a new gadget is on vogue and the young generations become more skilled on them. To include technology within the classroom was the step to follow when the time requested it; consequently tape recorders, projectors and, computers were added to the classrooms and they fulfilled their purpose. However, it seems that the educational society needs to go a step further to include the latest technology developments welcoming E-Learning within it ranks. Virtual courses are offered around the world, platforms are being developed to comply with both teachers and students’ needs and intelligent classrooms are being built to immerse students on a new way of learning. Nowadays, not having technology within a classroom can be a detractor to education, however, it is important to create a balance when using technology. Otherwise, the excess of technology can become a distractor within the learning process.

5.1. Conclusions

5.1.1. Research Question

The following question enclosed the main reason and general objective for this study to happen, what is the impact of using Socrative app as a technological asset to reinforce the learning process of simple past tense at Polytechnic International University? More specifically with the English I students on Wednesday's night class. From such question, which the investigator considers the research question of this study, it is important to analyze several aspects, the first one, is the usage or application of a specific software or mobile application, in this case Socrative, within a classroom ambiance to reinforce the acquisition of language.

About it, the researcher can affirm that the results on the usage of the application are very good, since from the 20 people conforming the sample population, 15 individuals which represents a 75 percent of the total population engaged with Socrative installing the application on their mobile devices and complying with the exercises sent through it. The 25 percent missing were declared as drop outs from the course through the sessions the investigator had with the group.

The second aspect to evaluate is related to the population itself. the research was done with college students, all of them adults with a age range starting on their 20s and ending over their 40s. This specific detail let this study to confirm that technology can be used to improve the learning process of students of any age, although the results might be different if this research is applied to younger individuals. It is clear that the society of the XXI century is very engaged with technological gadgets making the application of the study easier despite the population age range and backgrounds.

In conclusion, after analyzing all the data obtained during the study, the researcher can affirm that Socrative is a valid technological asset to reinforce the acquisition of Simple Past Tense of English I students at the Polytechnic International University. Furthermore, and following the students' thoughts about Socrative and the usage given to it in this research, it is possible to affirm that if used correctly Socrative can become a very useful tool for any subject in any curriculum proposed, as it is a very flexible educational software with interesting features created to facilitate the learning process for both students and teachers alike.

5.1.2. To use Socrative App as a Technological Asset to Reinforce the Acquisition of Simple Past Tense of English I Students at Polytechnic International University during the III Quarter of 2018

Moreover, after the data was collected and analyzed by the researcher, it can be affirmed that Socrative did become an asset to reinforce the language acquisition of the sample population, specifically the grammar constructions belonging to the Simple Past Tense. This idea is supported by the data collected through the rubric applied within the last session where over 50 percent of the students agreed that a mobile application helped them to improve their English learning process. This responses to the general objective of the study, as the usage of the application was proposed once the research question was defined.

It has to be stated that the results obtained by the end of this study were not the expected by the investigator, as during the contrast between exercises the students showed a lower performance regarding verbal conjugation in the quiz opposed to the results of the exercise applied on Socrative. The comments left by the students about their experience with Socrative confirmed that not only the educational society needs to continue evolving and

moving itself to the E-Learning environment fully, but also, that the learning process of a language can be done using a hybrid between the regular teaching methods and the technological assets as teachers can find within the network and society, mobile devices included. In other words, the use of technological gadgets such as mobile devices and mobile applications are in the path to become the learning tool in the future classrooms around the world.

5.1.3. To identify English 1 students' simple past tense usage prior the inclusion of Socrative app as a technological asset to the learning process at Polytechnic International University during the III Quarter of 2018

The first specific objective of this study was directed to identify the usage of the Simple Past tense of the sample population, as stated before, through an observation performed by the researcher it was clear that the students participating in this study had a basic knowledge of the topic, and therefore, a basic usage of the grammar construction itself. Moreover, from the class development, the researcher could conclude that for most of the students, the course was their first interaction with the English Language. In other words, it is possible to affirm that during the first session of this study most of the students showed a basic usage of English and of the Simple Past Tense, nevertheless, it is important to point here that they displayed a good understanding of what the Simple Past tense is at the end of that first session.

5.1.4. To apply grammar activities reinforcing simple past tense throughout Socrative app implementation at Polytechnic International University during the III Quarter of 2018

The following step marked by the second specific objective was the application of grammar activities through Socrative application to reinforce the acquisition of the Simple Past Tense. Regarding this, two different activities were applied using Socrative, the first one collected general facts about the Simple Past tense and it was applied right after the introduction to the topic and a complete explanation of the grammar constructions, affirmative sentences, negative sentences, questions and conjugation, was done by the titular teacher of the group. The activity required the students to read 5 different statements and choose if the statement was either true or false. From this activity it was possible to understand the students' usage of the application and at the same time reinforce the acquired knowledge. The results obtained through the activity supported the fact that the sample population was able to complete the exercises using Socrative, confirming their access to it, and working on their language acquisition at the same time.

The second exercise was related to verbal conjugation. Here, the students had to conjugate the verb given into the past form to complete the sentence correctly. The results on matter of completion reflected the disposition of the sample population for the study, and their commitment to use Socrative. Based on the completion numbers from both exercises, the researcher can affirm that Socrative is a good technological asset to send grammar activities for the students to reinforce any grammar related knowledge they are working on. For this study, the researcher focused on the Simple Past tense, and the results confirmed that

the usage of the application is valid to reinforce the language acquisition in students of certain age with access to technology.

5.1.5. To evaluate English 1 students' simple past tense usage after the implementation of Socrative app at Polytechnic International University during the III Quarter of 2018

Finally, the evaluation of the knowledge acquired and reinforced through Socrative needed to be done. Responding to the last specific objective proposed for this study, a quiz was applied to the students. Two exercises from it were used to contrast the results obtained with the results produced by Socrative within the exercises applied through it. These two chosen exercises were similar to the ones applied previously using the app mentioned before.

The results obtained in the quiz showed a completely different scenario than the one obtained through Socrative. As shown in the graphics within Chapter IV, the results obtained for the first exercise contrasted to the generalities exercise were quite similar, and they even showed some improvement as none of the students got only 1 answer correctly as it happened with the exercise applied through Socrative. However, the second exercises contrasted related to verbal conjugation showed a turnaround within its results. Based on them, the researcher can affirm that even though the reinforcement was done through the application, and it proved to be positive, once the students got a formal evaluation, they were not able to comply with it. This could be the results of several factors that make a difference between both exercises such as time and the stress related to each type of evaluation. Nevertheless, from the total of students placing the quiz a 60 percent of them passed it and a 40 percent failing it.

5.2. Recommendations

The educational environment is wider than most people think, by the end of this study the researcher realized there still is space to continue working within it, leaving a door open

for future researchers. A broader topic of study through Socrative could fulfill better the researcher's needs. Instead of focusing on one grammar structure, it would be interesting to monitor the development of a group from a specific skills class either grammar or reading which are the skills that can be better reinforced through Socrative and compared it to the development of another group not using Socrative. This will provide a better understanding of the scope of the application within the learning process. It will also help to support the idea of education moving to the E-Learning mode, as it is the next objective within the educational society.

A complete evaluation through Socrative within the research group will provide more data on how the students behaved in the app. In addition, it will confirm or deny the idea that formal written evaluation produces more anxiety within the subjects of a study. Furthermore, including Socrative as the tool to evaluate the knowledge acquired will help to destigmatize E-Learning mode as easier and cheatable. Also, it will create a sense of responsibility and honesty in the students who will prove themselves against an ambiance such as the technological one that will provide shorter and easier paths to complete their education.

During this research, Socrative was used to reinforce the learning process of a second language acquisition, nonetheless, as it had been recommended, before using Socrative for evaluation purposes to use one application that provides the teacher with a set of reports that can be handed out to the students. These reports were used to analyze the performance of the sample population in the activities applied through the application. The possibility of giving the application other purposes, such as monitoring students' performance, making the learning process more dynamic, or incursion into a more technological educational approach when used on a classroom provides many options for further researches involving Socrative.

Age range is an important aspect to consider when doing research within the educational field. Even though this research did not focus on it, and the sample population had a wide age range, this research leaves open the possibility to study the performance obtained using Socrative on groups of students from different ages. Providing a better understanding on how the application should be used depending on the age range and what exercises fit with each group.

As with age, the population is very important when developing a research within the educational environment. This research was done with the participation of college students from different majors who had to take the course as part of their assigned curriculum; however, to run a research using Socrative on specific sample populations sharing the same major will provide more data about how the application should be used and what exercises should be used. Besides, it will open the use of the application to other areas of education, in addition to language, making even wider the possibilities of a future E-Learning educational mode.

Socrative is a platform created with educational purposes, therefore, it is logic to use it within educational purposes, however, in this research other applications were mentioned, these apps, were created to comply with other purposes. Social Networks such as Facebook, Instagram, and Snap Chat were created to connect people around the world, nevertheless, the use given to them depends mostly on the user, so why not trying to use them for education goals, what would be the impact?

Having enough data to analyze is key when researching. The veracity of an investigation depends mostly on the amount of data collected and analyzed. For this study, two exercises were applied using Socrative and they were contrasted with similar paper

exercises. Although it may seem to be not enough quantity of information, it helped the researcher to reach the conclusions, however, sometimes the more the merrier, therefore, collecting sufficient data through the application of more exercises is recommended as the veracity of the research will be more stable, and the results obtained will be more solid.

Going deep within the E-Learning concept is a wide opportunity for future researchers, there are online courses, even online universities, however, what would be the impact of E-Learning in public education? Are the governments around the world ready for it? Are the parents ready to accept E-Learning in lower levels of the educational system? And most important, are the students ready to try E-Learning in lower level of their education?

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Appendixes

Appendix 1.

Observation Sheet

Universidad Internacional de las Américas

Bachelor in English with Concentration in Teaching

Student: Jeffry H. Hernández Coto

Purpose: The following sheet works as an initial information gathering for the researcher of the sample population. It is a summary of the first contact the researcher will have with the sample group.

Observation Sheet

Institution name: _____

Class observed: _____ Date: _____

Total of students: _____ Male: _____ Female: _____

1. How would you describe the group's behavior in class?
 - a) Mostly noisy
 - b) Noisy but participative
 - c) Focus and participative
 - d) Quiet and focus

2. Can you identify a leader within the group? If so, what are his/her features?
 - a) Noisy and distractor
 - b) Noisy but participative
 - c) Focus and participative
 - d) Participative and quiet

3. What would be a general description of the group?
 - a) Noisy and distracted
 - b) Focus and participative
 - c) Participative and quiet
 - d) Quiet and focus

Appendix 2.**Interview to Sample Population**

Universidad Internacional de las Américas

Bachelor in English with Concentration in Teaching

Student: Jeffry H. Hernández Coto

Purpose: The following interview is done to gather information about the population participating in the study. The main idea of this interview is to understand the access of the students to technology and what would be their thoughts about using it and out class.

Instructions: Answer the following questions with the required information. You can use either English or Spanish to provide your answers. All the information gathered here will be treated under the principles of respect and confidentiality. Names will not be part of the final product after the data gathered is analyzed.

Interview

Name: _____

Age:

Gender: Male () Female ()

Date:

Career: _____

Address: _____

1. Do you have a cellphone or a mobile device such as tablet or iPad?
 - Yes () No ()
2. Do you have a computer at home?
 - Yes () No ()
3. Do you have access to internet in your cellphone or mobile device?
 - Yes () No ()
4. Do you have access to internet at home?
 - Yes () No ()
5. Would you like to use your cellphone during class for practices? Elaborate your response
 - Yes () No ()
 - _____
6. Would you like to receive extra material to practice on your cellphone, mobile device or computer to be completed in and/or out of class? Elaborate your response
 - Yes () No ()
 - _____

Appendix 3.**Rubric to Gather Student's Thoughts About Using Socrative as a Technological Asset
in and out of Class**

Universidad Internacional de las Américas

Bachelor in English with Concentration in Teaching

Student: Jeffry H. Hernández Coto

Purpose: The following rubric is done to gather the students' thoughts about using Socrative App as technological asset in and out of class.

Instructions: Mark with an X the option that reflects your thoughts about the question given.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Do you like using Socrative in class?				
Do you like using Socrative out of class?				
Will you ask your titular teacher to use Socrative App in class?				
Do you think using a cellphone application is improving your English learning process?				

Feel free to use the next space to comment about your experience with Socrative or make any suggestion about using the application in the future.

Appendix 4.**Quiz about Simple Past Tense.**

Universidad Internacional de las Américas

Bachelor in English with Concentration in Teaching

Student: Jeffry H. Hernández Coto

Purpose: The following quiz is done to measure the students' knowledge about Simple Past Tense after the topic had been covered and Socrative being used to reinforce the learning process.



**Universidad
Politécnica
Internacional**

Quiz II

III QUARTER 2018

Teacher: Karen Andrade Hernandez Total Percentage: 5%

Estimated Time: 30 minutes

Total Points: 36 pts

Points Obtained _____

% Obtained: _____

SCORE:

Name: _____

Date: _____

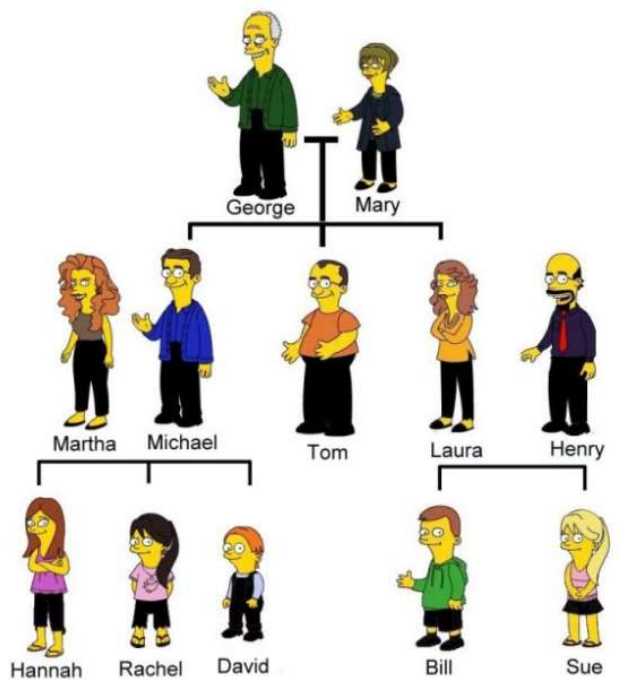
TEST GUIDELINES

1. Check that this quiz is composed of a total of 4 pages.
2. Read carefully before responding each question.
3. Work with **PENCIL** and the complete this test with **BLACK OR BLUE PEN only**.
4. Answers written with pencil will not be eligible for claims once this test has been graded by the teacher.
5. Corrections should be done by crossing out mistakes and rewriting correct answers aside. The use of wipeout avoids eligibility for claims once this test has been graded by the teacher.
6. Order, neatness, and accurate penmanship will be **highly** considered.

I Part. Identification. Follow the instructions in each part to answer the next questions correctly. **10 points**

A. Using the vocabulary from the box below, identify the members of the next family tree correctly. **5 points**

Mother	Brother	Grandparents	Brother in law	Daughter
--------	---------	--------------	----------------	----------



- Hanna is Michael's _____
- Laura is Sue's _____
- Michael is Tom's _____
- Tom is Henry's _____
- George and Mary are Bill's _____

B. Read the following sentences in past form and classify the verb in each one as regular or irregular by writing an R if regular or an I if irregular in the line next to it. **5 points**

- Mary played basketball yesterday. _____
- John wrote a 9 pages essay. _____
- Allan and Thomas ran 5 miles last Saturday. _____
- I decided to become a lawyer. _____
- She was happy with her gift. _____

II Part. Short Answer. Answer the questions completely and correctly. **10 points**

1. Complete the following sentences with the past form of the verb in parenthesis. **5 points**

- a. Dani _____ up late yesterday. (wake)
- b. Luke _____ reading the book last night. (finish)
- c. I _____ collecting cans when I was 15 years old. (stop)
- d. They _____ excited about our trip plans. (be)
- e. I _____ your notes from last class. (take)

2. Read the text below and answer the questions accordingly. **5 points**

Two sisters and the cat

Mrs. Wilson and Mrs. Smith are sisters. Mrs. Wilson lives in a house in Duncan and Mrs. Smith lives in a condominium in Victoria. One day Mrs. Wilson visited her sister. When her sister answered the door, Mrs. Wilson saw tears in her eyes. "What's the matter?" she asked. Mrs. Smith said, "My cat Sammy died last night, and I have no place to bury him".

She began to cry again. Mrs. Wilson was very sad because she knew her sister loved the cat very much. Suddenly Mrs. Wilson said, "I can bury your cat in my garden in Duncan and you can come and visit him sometimes." Mrs. Smith stopped crying and the two sisters had tea together and a nice visit.

It was now five o'clock and Mrs. Wilson said it was time for her to go home. She put on her hat, coat and gloves and Mrs. Smith put the dead Sammy into a shopping bag. Mrs. Wilson took the shopping bag and walked to the bus stop. She waited a long time for the bus, so she bought a newspaper. When the bus arrived, she got on the bus, sat down and put the shopping bag on the floor beside her feet. She then began to read the newspaper. When the bus arrived at her bus stop, she got off the bus and walked for about two minutes. Suddenly she remembered she had left the shopping bag on the bus.

Taken from:
<https://web2.uvcs.uvic.ca/elc/studyzone/200/reading/smicat1.htm>

A. Why was Mrs. Smith upset?

B. What did Mrs. Wilson do to make her sister feel better?

C. Who did Sammy the cat live with?

D. What time did Mrs. Wilson go home?

E. Where did Sammy die?

III Part. Production. Answer the next questions based on the information given by the family tree below. **16 points**

1. Write an affirmative sentence using the past form of the verb given. **8 points (2 points each. 1 point for grammar – 1 point for spelling)**
 - a. (read): _____
 - b. (eat): _____
 - c. (sing): _____
 - d. (jump): _____

2. Write a negative sentence using the past form of the verb given. **8 points (2 points each. 1 point for grammar – 1 point for spelling)**
 - a. (listen): _____
 - b. (watch): _____
 - c. (run): _____
 - d. (drink): _____

Appendix 5.**Socrative Exercise – Simple Past Generalities**

Simple Past Generalities

Score: _____

1. Simple Past Tense is used to express actions that already happened.
 A True
 B False
2. Regular and Irregular verbs are part of Simple Past Tense.
 A True
 B False
3. -ed ending is a characteristic of Simple Past.
 A True
 B False
4. Regular verbs are recognized because they change their written when conjugated in past.
 A True
 B False
5. The following sentence is expressing a situation in past:
Jack played soccer this evening.
 A True
 B False

Appendix 6.**Socrative Exercise – Simple Past Verbs**

Simple Past Verbs

Score: _____

1. Complete the following sentence with the correct past form of the verb in parenthesis.

Julian _____ Business School on May, 2019. (finish)

2. Complete the next sentence with the correct past form of the verb in parenthesis.

Katherine _____ to be a psychologist because she wanted to help people. (decide)

3. Complete the following sentences with the correct past form of the verbs in parenthesis.

Kevin's first job _____ at Dell, there he made his mind about studying Computer Engineering. (Be)

4. Complete the following sentences with the correct past form of the verbs in parenthesis.

John was good at Math, so, he _____ Industrial Engineer as his major. (choose)

5. Complete the following sentence with the correct past form of the verb in parenthesis.

Sofia _____ to speak English a while ago. (learn)
