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**APPLYING MNEMONIC TECHNIQUES FOR ENHANCING
VOCABULARY ACQUISITION OF FIFTH GRADE
STUDENTS AT AGUSTIN SEGURA SCHOOL DURING THE
FIRST QUARTER OF 2021**

INGRID JIMÉNEZ ZÚÑIGA

THESIS MENTOR: MSc. YANITH DELGADO CHACÓN

SEDE ARANJUEZ

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Chapter I

Introductory Framework

English has become an universal language and its instruction, as well as the language itself are objects of study. Around the world, to communicate nations, the use of the English language has been a common ground. Learning English scenarios are characterized by the instruction of the four main skills that are widely studied; however, vocabulary has been underestimated, and thus the cause of other problems identified directly in each skill individually. Amiryousefi (2011) states that, “One of the most challenging parts of every language learning is the acquisition of vocabulary items. Students, however, complain that they cannot remember the words they have learned. (page 181). As a way of changing the current situation, vocabulary acquisition, this investigation aims at proving that vocabulary can be enhanced through mnemonic techniques and let future researchers to use this paper as a referent and the readiness of implementing mnemonics in the class, with the ultimate goal of enhancing vocabulary.

1.1 Problem Statement

Acquiring a second language is a process that involves different learning aspects. The process of learning English as a second language focuses on four main skills: reading, writing, listening, and speaking. These skills share something in common: the more vocabulary a person has, the better each skill is developed. However, the acquisition of vocabulary represents sometimes a challenge for students who are instructed to memorize words or lists of words just to approve the subject studied. Nevertheless, in a long-term, students will forget the vocabulary. Cognitive psychology has explained the mechanisms

used by the brain to generate ideas that will become words after using mental symbols, as well as the role that emotions play during the acquisition of vocabulary. However, the use of creativity, while a person is learning vocabulary, results in a more qualified vocabulary acquisition.

From these two arguments, it emerges the necessity of providing students with new ways to enhance vocabulary effectively in order to make the acquisition of words a better experience, and that they be able to learn how to remember them. Consequently, it results very appropriate to implement mnemonic techniques to facilitate the process of enriching the students' lexicon, since it is precisely this area where students have more deficiencies, and thus, this has a negative impact on the other ESL skills. Therefore, it is important to reinforce vocabulary with the same level of priority that grammar, reading, listening, or speaking receive.

Mnemonics have been studied and practiced by many generations and are used nowadays by orators or politicians in their speeches. In addition, mnemonics are used in classrooms, but probably not enough as to make the students familiar with this technique and to take advantage of it to acquire vocabulary. It is very important to point out that mnemonics are a very valuable educational resource that pretends to enhance the recall of specific information from the lesson. Nevertheless, it has to be stated that it is not a Philosophy regarding the education field, but a strategy. As Bakken (2017) mentions,

The use of mnemonic strategies by students, including secondary and college level, shows that the implementation of these strategies helps them remember 2 to 3 times more factual information, helps them recall information over delayed

recall periods, and they report that they enjoy using them over more traditional approaches (p.001).

Based on all the information previously mentioned, the use of mnemonics as a technique to improve vocabulary acquisition becomes the main issue under study; therefore, the following is the research question of the present paper: How does the implementation of mnemonic Techniques enhance the English vocabulary of fifth grade students at Agustín Segura School? With that question, this investigation can start having a clear aim to follow, and thus the researcher has a clear idea of what to expect and that this paper can be a good source of information regarding the acquisition of English as a second language.

1.2 Objectives of the Investigation

1.2.1 General Objective

To analyze the effectiveness of implementing mnemonic techniques to enhance English vocabulary acquisition of fifth grade students at Agustín Segura School during the first quarter of 2021.

1.2.2 Specific Objectives

- To determine the areas of improvement of fifth grade students when using old fashioned vocabulary acquisition techniques
- To apply different updated mnemonic techniques with fifth grade students to improving their vocabulary acquisition
- To evaluate the implementation of different updated mnemonic techniques with fifth grade students for improving their vocabulary acquisition

1.3 Justification of the Study

As the researcher has been part of the public education system, she is conscious about the methodology usually implemented during the English lessons with the aim of increasing vocabulary; consequently, she considers that it is possible to do a suitable job by using an unconventional way to teach vocabulary and the correct techniques. Mnemonics has been the object of study of many researchers, who have demonstrated its effectiveness. Therefore, this research intends to put it in practice, as well as to teach students some specific exercises to get vocabulary, how they can apply the technique by themselves, and the possibility of use it applied to their own convenience.

Once the students understand how mnemonics work, they will be able to create their proper mnemonic techniques or exercises and have the advantage of having a new entertained experience during the process that will bring a motivation that they do not have at the moment, since they are accustomed to learn vocabulary in the monotonous way. Therefore, after the techniques are implemented, the recalling of information will be a more effective and easier process. In addition, this will allow a more pleasant experience for students regarding the acquisition of vocabulary and the understanding of the topics studied not only in classroom, but also at home. Simultaneously, other skills will be benefited through the use of a more enriched personal word bank. Consequently, the acquisition process will be smoother with the use of mnemonics and students will learn not only words, but also to organize and personalize information.

1.4 Antecedents

The background of mnemonic practices dates from hundreds of years back in history. Even though, mnemonics were used by societies and studied by many important ancient time figures, in this era the real study of mnemonic began after 50's with the works

of authors as Giordano Bruno or Giulio Camillo. They were concerned about mnemonic's role on memory. Ever since, many researchers have deepened in the effectiveness of using mnemonics to improve memory. Moreover, a large number of writers have investigated about the relation of mnemonics and the acquisition of vocabulary for second language learning.

The first thesis consulted is *for the Islamic Azad University*, and its title is *The Impact of Musical Mnemonic on Vocabulary Recalling of Iranian Young Learners* (Nikkhah et al., 2018). In this investigation, the author went deeper on the impact of musical mnemonics on learners when they were remembering vocabulary. The research was made with a group of 60 students, who were into 2 groups; a non-musical group and a musical one to develop the investigation. The results from the research are very important because demonstrated that music mnemonics are an enjoyable way to save vocabulary, students used to remember information and provided students with clues to achieve more words through the relation between the music and mental symbols or images that let them to remember more information. As a conclusion, the researcher found that those students exposed to a musical group were more able to remember the words than the others from the non-musical group and that the use of musical mnemonic improved comprehension of new vocabulary.

The second research was developed by Solivan (2016) and it is entitled *DEPICTIONS OF VIRTUES AND VICIES AS MNEMONIC DEVICES for the University of Salamanca*. This investigation explores the mnemonics practices that were carried out during the Middle Ages, probably between the 9th and 10th century, in order to create important manuscripts, specifically of Psychomachia. Solivan explains how reading was a

practice completely close to mental recognition of images because readers did not read literally, as we do in present times. They first saw images, linked them to specific words, and then developed the reading regarding the word they were reading with that image in their minds. During middle ages, this was the way people read; in fact, the study led us to see some of those pictures corresponding to the manuscripts. Solivan's investigation shows us the undeniable relationship between the mental image and the acquisition of new words and the process to remember them.

The third research is entitled *MNEMONIC OASIS: Interior architecture as a stimulus for wellbeing through sensorial experience* by Schubach (2019) for the Victoria University of Wellington to obtain the Degree of Master of Interior Architecture. According to this investigation, mind reproduces memories as a result of a fascinating combination of reactions to determine senses or emotions produced by different environments that reproduce sensorial responses. This reveals that mnemonics go beyond what we understand by academics purposes. The author highlights the possibility of stimulating our consciousness to create experiences that generate the expected results that a person intentionally requires. He focused this investigation on legating useful information to manage "interior architecture," as he called it to obtain meaningful experiences. Through the reading, Schubach emphasizes on how the effect of stress levels influence our lived experiences initiating in our mental processes.

In addition, the study explains how people, internally, has dimensions in which there occur a variety of different sensations and processes that can be stimulated. A self-regulation of those processes must be organized through each dimension and it is affected by the environment the person lives. In the second chapter, the author delves into memory

and perception as a preamble to the cases analyzed on the research. In fact, the document is even clearer on how to expose a person to senses or images that automatically bring to mind memories happening a mnemonic. Something very important that the researcher concludes about is the effect that the environment has on the mental disposition of a person; therefore, in the experience of teaching, it is important to create appropriate spaces that help to experience learning.

The fourth research belongs to Wihartati (2016). This research is entitled *THE EFFECT OF USING MNEMONICS DEVICE IN LEARNING ENGLISH VOCABULARY AT THE SECOND GRADE STUDENTS OF MTSN MALIKU and opts for the Degree of Sarjana Pendidikan*. The author initiates by making a brief and very clear explanation of all aspects that are immersed on vocabulary as a whole. Vocabulary is one of the aspects assessed in English courses; consequently, having clear how it works in students' minds is of great relevance for the researcher, who, for a better comprehension, used many examples to illustrate the study. The author carefully described the types of mnemonics, advantages, and procedures to follow. In addition, he provided the analysis of the tests done with the intention of evidencing the undoubted benefits of using mnemonics to teach and improve English vocabulary. As a conclusion, the author not only made evident the positive results of mnemonics, but also the aspects that a teacher must rethink at the time of teaching vocabulary, such as time-management and moderate the voice, just to mention a couple.

THE USE OF MNEMONIC STRATEGY TO IMPROVE STUDENTS' WRITING SKILL IN ANNOUNCEMENT TEXT is the fifth study consulted. It was carried out by Sari (2018) for English Education Department of Teacher Training and Education Faculty State Institute for Islamic Studies (IAIN) Salatiga for the degree of Sarjana Pendidikan. The main

purpose of such investigation was to increase writing skills using mnemonics, knowing the importance of writing, the way to improve it using mnemonic strategies. Using a writing test, an observation, and documentation as instruments, the researcher applied different teaching procedures to get data regarding how mnemonic strategies effected the student's writing abilities. A significant contribution of this inquiry is the fact that the teaching methodology used, went hand in hand with the strategy. Different approaches, during the experiments, gave different results showing which ones were more appropriated and beneficial. As a conclusion of the study, it was demonstrated that mnemonic strategies used to improve writing produced positive and measurable results in the students.

The research conducted by Salazar (2020) for The Universidad Internacional de las Américas for obtaining the Degree of Bachelor In English, *VISUAL AIDS TO ENHANCE VOCABULARY ACQUISITION IN FIFTH GRADERS AT LOS LLANOS DE ALTAMIRA SCHOOL DURING THE FIRST QUARTER OF 2020* mentions not only the importance of acquiring vocabulary nowadays, but also that it is important to give students another perspective about the fact that learning that vocabulary is an obligation far of something enjoyable. Salazar highlights the importance of knowing how to correctly teach the appropriate methods and techniques to a defined student population. Furthermore, she explains mistakes committed by teachers when teaching vocabulary. Her study focuses on the visual aid s' effects for getting new vocabulary. Salazar recollected information in a group of 19 students about the implementation of visual aids during the lessons to facilitate the students' acquisition of vocabulary. It was concluded that there is not a total exposition of the target language so, students do not assume the importance of learning vocabulary in class or at home. On the other hand, the meetings with the researcher were motivational for

students, who were always attentive and willing to participate in new activities, giving this better and demonstrative results on the experience of using visual aids to acquire vocabulary.

Moreover, *Soto* (2016) carried out an investigation to obtain the degree of Bachelor in English with Concentration in Teaching, entitled *Cultivating vocabulary and Increasing Reading Rate as Strategies Applied to Improve the Reading Comprehension Skills in Students of Intermediate level at Iletec Institute* for Universidad Internacional de las Américas. According to this research, reading is one of the most important skills when a person is learning a new language and to develop it there must be a well cultivated vocabulary. By using a questionnaire, a diagnostic test, and an observation, the researcher had the possibility of obtaining the information during the process of instruction and evaluation, which permitted her, at the end, to point the importance of using strategies to teach, and not only to follow structures written on books. Teachers have the responsibility of redirecting the lessons to a better point in case of detecting issues in students related to the skill; in this particular case, reading. Regarding the cultivation of vocabulary, the implementation of different strategies was very useful for students, who later were able to infer vocabulary, develop the unconscious ability of obtaining by themselves the information studied, and increase their level of understanding, especially in reading.

The research by *Crawford* (2016) for the Universidad Internacional de las Américas submitted to Obtain the Bachelor's Degree in English with Concentration in Teaching, with the title: *The Importance of Applying "Prior knowledge" and Cultivating "Vocabulary" as Reading Strategies in order to Improve Reading Comprehension Methods in Seventh Graders at Unidad Pedagógica San Diego-Secundaria During the First Trimester of the 2016 School Year*, analyzed the importance of cultivating vocabulary and

activating prior knowledge to achieve an effective reading by means of semantic mapping, word recognition, etc., being vocabulary fundamental to get achievements. The investigation was made with 24 students. This gave the reader a strategic reading format to guide teachers. At the end of the research, the progress of students was remarkable and, together with practice, it was obtained even more positive results on the student's performance.

The research titled, *Assessing Eighth Graders' Vocabulary Acquisition Using the Active Learning Approach at Colegio Técnico Profesional Mario Quirós Sasso During the Second Quarter of 2017* by Montoya (2016) submitted to obtain the Bachelor in English with Concentration in Teaching for the Universidad Internacional de las Américas is other valuable source of information to the readers on the importance of choosing the proper methods and strategies to teach vocabulary. Using the active learning approach method, after having identified issues and lacks of the students, the investigator proposed a variety of vocabulary acquisition activities in order to generate a better level of comprehension and an amount of new lexicon. An aspect to consider from this investigation is the fact that students were more confident being part of the process because they felt control was in their hands and the positive results were even more motivational for them. The ability to remember vocabulary after active learning approach activities were more successful and gave a different perspective to students about getting vocabulary and enjoy it.

1.5 Scope

The intention of this investigation is to enhance the vocabulary of the students by waking up in them the interest in learning and eliminating that idea of having a poor memory, that most of the students adopt when are trying to learn vocabulary. Poor memory represents an excuse for many students and sadly for teachers too. However, there are very

useful alternatives to teach vocabulary and give new perspectives to the students. This research insists in the possibility of changing those situations through the use of mnemonic techniques, which is a different way for them to learn and acquire vocabulary to what they are familiar with in school.

Due to the monotony that students face in their lessons and the lack of a more effective program, in which it should be given more time to ESL to have a better learning experience. Another situation that affects the acquisition of vocabulary is that students are programmed to consider that vocabulary is something boring. Consequently the researcher proposes the use of mnemonic techniques in the process of learning vocabulary to enhance student's vocabulary acquisition. In addition, mnemonic techniques are motivating for students and teachers, as they can facilitate cognitive level that the acquisition of vocabulary brings as part of the strategies of learning in the class. The implementation of mnemonic techniques can facilitate the instruction of vocabulary and improve the student's self-control during the learning process.

Chapter II

Theoretical Framework

2.1 Literature Review

Understanding the process of the acquisition of vocabulary is the best form to decide how to instruct a language. Many researchers have been concentrated on that process with the aim of creating ideal scenarios of instruction that are more effective to enhance vocabulary. The behavior, environment, and other factors influence the act of learning or acquiring. Educator's work goes beyond the board; it takes place on the active motivation and suitable techniques that allow students to go forward. Instructing vocabulary is a responsibility that teachers must assume with more effective steps for students, and the information that exists is a very valuable resource in that learning objective while teaching vocabulary.

To teach a second language requires the domain of multiple factors. Further the language, it is relevant the domain of teaching actions. An English teacher must understand the meaning of strategy and technique in order to develop them with proficiency during instruction. While investigating, it was evident that many authors use the same conception, that is the words strategy and technique, which is very important to clarify in this research. According to linkedin.com (2016), the concepts of strategy and technique could cut be understood as follows. A strategy is the plan that has been designed to achieve a specific objective, and a technique is the way to proceed when you need to complete a task or a process.

In “Developmental Psycholinguistics: Theory and Applications,” Dato (1975) considers the notion of learning strategy in a more detailed way, as the task of determining the steps that aim to contribute to the learning process of an individual permitting the learner to organize with effectiveness the information at cognitive level. In the understanding of strategy, when the aim is the acquisition of a second language, there are many strategies used during the whole process; some with an objective and others with different objectives according to the variety of subjects related to each skill. However, what is important is that a strategy never must be against or undermine other. Moreover, questioning herself about the real meaning of “strategy,” Mintzberg (1987) made an investigation that lasted around 13 years based on the perception of different institutions with the term. Eventually, during the research, there were found different kinds of strategies that are created and used with different aims like start, change, develop, etc.

Considering the real meaning of the word with learning purposes, it is understood by strategy the complete analysis of the pattern of something put in action with the specific objective of achieving something else. In other words, and being closer to this investigation, it is important to, first at all, to have clear the content, skill, and objective involved in the specific moment or cycle of the learning process. Having this clear, it is time to trace the route and construct the strategy, as it is the compass that guides the map of the learning process. Vibulphol (2016) mentions the importance of having a strategy of the strategies that are going to be used in classroom. Teachers must be balanced in the use of strategies to motivate and to generate learning and acquisition. As the researcher explains, there were cases in which students produced low level of learning despite having high level

of interest about the language, what demonstrated the lack of equilibrium regarding to the strategies.

The strategies are formed by techniques that are concrete components inside the strategy. The technique is the action to execute something in order to develop it. According to Oxford, Mohamed (2016) explains some characteristics of the strategies in vocabulary learning. First at all, she mentions Problem orientation, which are language learning strategies that aim to help students to finish a task, define objectives, and gain a goal; reasoning strategies look for understanding texts or paragraphs; memory strategies intend the recalling of information; and affective strategies pretend to optimize the trust and make the experience relaxed. The second characteristic is action basis which refers to the action that generates the acquisition of vocabulary and it is directly made by the learner. Some are taking notes, Self-evaluation, and guessing from context.

The third characteristic is involvement and suggest meta-cognition uses like planning, social and evaluation. Involvement requires an emotional balance to produce success in the acquisition. Moreover, the degree of observability is the fourth characteristic. According to Oxford, Mohamed (2016) says that in this case, it is difficult to observe important aspects such as cooperativism and memory recalling degree or associations at mental level. The next aspect is the level of consciousness, in which the learner is immersed, while he is studying a second language. The actions and, in general, the process occur with reasonableness about what the individual is looking for. With time actions become automatic during the execution, so what remains at this point is a behavior. Another characteristic is flexibility in context, which means that students are able to change their procedures with the language depending of the context they are at the moment.

Finally, the last characteristic according to Mohamed (2016) is the factors that influence strategy choice, as for example teacher expectations, personality traits, purpose of learning, nationality, and some other factors that were mentioned before.

Mohamed ends her publication by dividing the strategies into even more subcategories and classifying language learning strategies in those who are related to behavior of success, psychological functions, linguistic, language skills including vocabulary learning with evident importance degree and the learners' different styles. Of course, the meta cognitive topic regarding the acquisition of vocabulary is assumed in the investigation as fundamental to enhance vocabulary because the processes that the mind develops to achieve a language are what determine the success for the person. Consequently, the present investigation considers Mohamed's work a referent to the purposes exposed in this document, not only for the level of specification which are valuable and objective, but besides that it confirms that strategies are needed to enhance of vocabulary and that those that implicate metacognition and independent mental work produce more effective results. The development of mnemonic techniques implicate mental work to activate the recalling of information and produce, in the learner's mind, the word to favor the acquisition of vocabulary.

2.1.1 Behaviorism (acquisition and development of the language) by B.F.

Skinner

Skinner (1957) sustains that acquisition of a language is consequent to it with no rules and no grammar structures; only to be immersed into its use, far from obeying commands. Here is important to demystify the fact that a person only learns what it is

taught to him or her. The person learns and acquires from the situations faced directly. Related to vocabulary, it can be said that the daily exposition to its use through a language, is how a person really acquires and increases vocabulary and produces the language. As a psychologist, Skinner studied deeply human behaviors and considered language, a behavior as well, sustaining that behaviors follow a pattern of stimulus-response and are conditioned to consequences.

Psychologists naturally tend to look more outside the world than the inner mind. When some specific behavior produces a satisfactory consequence, the person will repeat it; that is what the author defined as “operant conditioning.” In the case of language by Skinner’s theory, the imitation and the interaction with the environment are fundamental for the acquisition of a language. The studies about behaviorism that Skinner developed, show that the operant conditioning is produced in a learning situation when the learner receives feedback. That means that the response of the teacher to his or her students will stimulate new behaviors on them. Therefore, to ignore, to congratulate, to assent, or to praise could be teaching actions (reinforcement) that generate behaviors in favor of the acquisition of the language and, of course, of the student. Something really interesting is that Skinner recommended to avoid as much as possible techniques centered on learning because knowledge is lost.

Certainly, there have been thousands of investigations on this theory that have tried to go deeper into it. In the education field, this theory represents a paradigm. Regarding the operant conditioning and its relationship with the language acquisition, Sturdy and Nicoladis (2017) published a work in which they agree with Skinner about the role of imitation in the acquisition of a language. The authors expand the topic ensuring that

imitation, as Skinner mentioned in his behaviorism, further implies the use of selective social learning by children, in this case. Little learners are more likely to imitate those they trust, the ones who seem more consistent when giving them feedback and those who look more knowledgeable; therefore, children are going to imitate them the most. This is key in this investigation, as the work to be done with children will follow that approach, doing as much as possible to generate in them, trust and credibility.

Sometimes, priority is only given directly to the student, but, what about teachers? Samkange (2015) explains how Skinner postulates are assumed by teachers. To be teachers directly involved with the students in the teaching-learning process and to condition imitation and reinforcement are principles that must be understood and developed. The environment of the class is definitively in the teacher's hands, as the model to imitate is the teacher. Consequently, credibility must be constructed by the teacher to expose children to the language. Having clear those aspects, the understanding has to be executed during the learning process. Pretending to be a model to imitate, a teacher must produce the language with proficiency to be worthy of imitation. The exposition to the language will be developed using learning resources such as role plays, storytelling, or music, depending on the context of the students and the objectives teachers have. On the other hand, a good teacher must be careful about reinforcements used in class to generate good behaviors to promote the acquisition of the language. With this reflection, the present research will guide the development of the actions in favor of the acquisition of vocabulary respecting and valuing the power of the applications of Skinner's theory during the English lessons.

2.1.2 Acquisition of the second language by Stephen Krashen

Having a limited vocabulary will limit the use of any language not only academically, but also to achieve the main objective of the language, which is communication. In this era, communication is more important because there are less limits than ever to establish it with others, no matter the distance. As English is a universal language, it is a common goal for societies to acquire English vocabulary. As Krashen (1982) explains in his acquisition of the second language theory, the acquisition of vocabulary occurs as the person is unconscious about what is really happening; consequently, instead of using the word *learn*, it is used the word *acquire*, as the person naturally picks up a language. The same happens with the mother language, as the person just acquires and does not pay attention to mistakes or rules. Nevertheless, the opposite happens in schools most of the times. Students are stressed about quantitative results and they learn with no quality. On his hypothesis called “Differentiation,” the appropriation of a second language has two different elements to consider. One is the acquisition and the other one is the learning process. The first one just happens spontaneously as an answer to the natural need of communication, and the second one is something programmed and structured with the presence of specific rules. Many investigators have made multiple analysis about Krashen’s fundamentals applied to different fields of education.

Many unconvinced researchers have deeply explored Krashen’s theories by disclosing the weaknesses in his arguments. One of those researchers is Zafar (2010), who described those fragilities by quoting personal comments from Krashen affirming that his theory offers postulates difficult to measure, test, or prove. The fact of each individual has different levels of understanding complicates the evaluation of this theory to prove its

effectiveness. Besides that, Krashen underestimated the interference of L1 in the L2 just mentioning that there existed a personal variation of language in every person. However, many investigations have demonstrated a real interference on L2 provoked by L1 that affect in different ways the acquisition of a second language. Zafar shows that the arguments used by Krashen are too general and insufficient to explain how a person acquires a language better. Consequently, he says that there exist many variants that let without validity the theory; however, considering that Krashen's arguments do not negatively affect the students or the learning process, this investigation continues its course inspired in the model of acquisition that Krashen sustains.

On the other hand, Yuan (2018) conducted an experimental work applied to language multimedia teaching model based on Krashen's theory, reinforcing that it is totally feasible to the teaching process, entrenched in Krashen's arguments, to obtain measurable advances in students. Yuan demonstrated that the combination of English multimedia teaching style based on Krashen's theory improved significantly the students' understanding and the quality that they got from their language instructor. Another aspect that the author punctuates is that communication is more ensured and fluid between teacher and students because students tend to participate more, aspect that ignited English thinking during his investigation. Considering all the above mentioned, the implementation of mnemonic techniques on fifth grade students looks for similar results. Therefore, having better communication with students probably be a good trigger for the acquisition of vocabulary.

Going back to Krashen, he asserts that when a learner is studying a foreign language and feels anxiety regarding the process, the acquisition becomes complicated. For

Gökcan and Çobanoğlu (2018), anxiety is one of the focuses of their study based on Krashen's theory. They carefully examined their study group concluding the negative impact it has on students learning a foreign language, as their anxiety increased when they were instructed and received the knowledge on English through a program. However, the opposite happened when they were exposed to the language more frequently. They achieved a more proficient level of the language supporting the claims of the second language theory. Relating this information to the present investigation, results convenient the postulates of the second language theory to be implemented together with mnemonic techniques, hoping to increase the students' success in the acquisition of vocabulary.

Recently, the Cambridge University published a fascinating article wrote by Robert Patrick (2019). Patrick states how his methodologies as a teacher changed after having experimented the effect of being immersed into Krashen's theory. That experience (at that moment he was a student) motivated him to think what was different in his own way to teach and to rethink how to be a better language teacher. He knew he was well prepared to teach, had the knowledge and preparation required, but actually he was unable to think in the language he was teaching. Therefore, by using Krashen's theory, as his framework, he redirected his methodology as a teacher. Adopting pedagogical practices following Krashen's principles Patrick directly perceived-positive results from his students. Having a more solid perspective about teaching a language efficiently, Patrick defends and promotes the use of Krashen's language acquisition theory after years of applying it in his lessons and confesses that he also has acquired the language he teaches thanks to that. The author ended his article affirming that a language will not be forgotten if was acquired, which is different to be learned. With this perspective and this firsthand testimony, it is

expected to complement the acquisition of vocabulary using mnemonic techniques with Krashen's language acquisition fundamentals in order to benefit the students involved in this investigation.

2.1.3 The natural approach by Stephen Krashen & Tracy Terrell

The natural approach that Krashen and Terrell (1983) published, made the readers to remember or refresh those postulates made by Krashen a year earlier and added new ways of organizing and managing the classroom in order to teach a second language using the principles of the Acquisition of Second Language theory. Both authors agree that using more common perspectives when teaching vocabulary produce better situations of communication. If a learner is not focused on theory and just lets the language to flow in every day contexts, he will stimulate more the acquisition. Regarding to that, some teachers get confused with the idea and think that following the natural approach would imply to forget or ignore the instruction or grammar, reading and writing, speaking, listening, evaluation, and, of course, the correction of mistakes. Due to such possibility, the writers clarify how to work the natural approach considering all aspects for the input. The importance given to vocabulary is highlighted in this theory when it is pointed that lexicon is the essence of a language and a priority. Grammar can be organized after the acquisition of vocabulary in order to produce correct messages as Krashen and Terrell affirmed. When talking about the English courses, it is said that its purpose will be defined by those needs and attractions that students have.

Some of the suggestions the authors give to input the language are mime, group work activities, command-based activities, and use of context, just to mention some. In

addition, the natural approach is based on three roles. The first one says that the role of the teacher is to be the main source of introduction to the target language. The second one is the role that the teacher produces in the environment of the classroom, which must be interesting. The third one is the role of the activities that are used in context and respecting the contents. Moreover, Raju and Joshith (2018) emphasize the importance of a well understanding of Krashen and Terrell proposals and explain the reality that teachers have today regarding the effect of the natural approach in the classroom and how to develop a good and effective environment for the students using as much as possible short stories, novels, chat with native speakers, language games, videos, movies, cartoons, audio recordings, free readings, cooperative learning group activities, audio book, and recordings.

From that perspective, it is important to accommodate theories to the present times and take advantage of the facilities that technology offers, as in general terms, are a valuable resource that teachers can use to determine the environments to input the language in present times and catch the student's interest and attention in the classroom. Through the exposure to the language that globalization by itself generates, teachers are able to use the natural approach in a more effective way than ever. For example, regarding the objectives of the present investigation and related them to the contributions of the natural approach, results can be beneficial for students acquiring vocabulary through the implementation of mnemonic techniques to consider the environmental aspect as an important complement for the interests of this inquiry.

Moreover, Nava and Pedrazzini (2018) delve into the natural approach reinforcing Krashen and Terrell's work when they mention that vocabulary understanding is indispensable for the acquisition itself. The optimal order to teach is first to instruct

speaking and listening and then with less frequency, grammar. They defend the use of instruction stages. First of all, there is personalization in which students are motivated to talk about their lives, interest, family, etc. The second stage is about common topics like holidays. Finally, the last stage is the discussion that happens when involving all members of the group; it could be talking about society, friends, believes, and so on.

The authors make an adaptation of the natural approach theory to provide current readers with some activities that promote the acquisition and divide them into four different types: affective-humanistic, problem-solving, games, and content activities. For the first type, the use of imagination or conversation are some suggested examples. Regarding the second type it uses tasks, as to develop stories using, for example, images as references and maps are good options. All kind of educational games exemplify the third type, and the four and last type propose every kind of presentations, the use of music, drama or reporting activities. Referring to this investigation, the information provided evidence that the natural approach is a qualified theory that enhance the acquisition of the second language starting from the acquisition of vocabulary, which is a priority for the present research.

2.1.4 The Input Hypothesis

During the Round Table on Languages and Linguistics in Georgetown University (1991), in which obviously Krashen participated; the Input Hypothesis was widely discussed, compared with other theories, and analyzed to conclude that the Input instruction results more efficient during the acquisition of vocabulary and to avoid the stress that other methods represent to the students (p.417). Some specific observations made around this approach and others, suggest that memorization of texts, self-corrections, and reading out loud are ineffective practices against the proposals that input hypothesis addresses to

acquire vocabulary (p.423). Once again, Krashen's investigations strengthen and guide the aim of the present research, as it will adopt the natural instruction suggested in the input hypothesis to teach vocabulary to the group by introducing the natural environment of learning, while mnemonics are applied to enhance vocabulary.

2.1.5 Teaching Vocabulary

For teaching vocabulary, it is mandatory to have enough knowledge. A good teacher requires to understand concepts and words in context, grammar rules, and culture to be able to teach others in a good way. By having an open view of the language, it is probable key for transmitting vocabulary to the students, but also it is important to transmit that knowledge for a better understanding and usage. Teaching vocabulary is not just about words; it involves lexical phrases and knowledge of English vocabulary and how to proceed when learning and teaching it. Mukoroli (2011) states that teaching vocabulary is a real challenge. Moreover, he expresses that it also represents a challenge to students when forced to produce plenty of the words or at least what is expected from them. Nevertheless, it can be said that the acquisition of vocabulary seems something related to magic, because vocabulary is not taught in classrooms.

Mukoroli's fascination with the acquisition of vocabulary started when he learned a word that represented something important to himself. After he learned that word that was meaningful for him, he discovered that his mind started to recognize it in ads, movies, articles, and the meaning was easier to understand and was able to relate with other words. Completely sure that the meaning of a word could be different depending on the person, he realized that the instruction of vocabulary can give better results to people when the

meaning matters for them. The more interesting teachers can make the vocabulary, the better the acquisition will be. Consequently, boring lessons are antecedent to bad results. Nobody can feel interested in lists of words printed on papers. The mind will be more receptive if the content of the information is attractive and important to the learner. The instruction of vocabulary must be strategic and wake up the interest of the student. Using visual stimulus as videos, pictures, or apps as warm-ups before instruction will awake the interest of students. For a warm up, it is necessary the contextualization to adapt the topics to the reality of the students.

The interest not only will facilitate learning, but it will motivate expanding the concept of words learned. Therefore, the students will want to learn more about a topic or a word that has a personal meaning for them and that simplifies the final and most valuable product, the acquisition. If the instruction is attractive since the very beginning, the next step will be more efficient and productive. Mnemonic techniques could be the next step to follow after a good instruction without weakening the interest of the individuals.

What about the instruction of vocabulary itself? After having understood the importance of warmup activities to catch the attention of students and achieve their interest, Mukorolli provides the readers with some aspects to go further in the analysis of the instruction. Chunks, collocation, background, restatement, similarity, and surrounding words are some of those aspects to study to have a better comprehension of vocabulary. In addition, Mukoroli (2011) emphasizes the real comprehension of a word as very functional and advantageous, depending on its grammatical function and refers to Carter (2000) using as an example a chart that lets reader to better understand the function of a word. Of course,

with this image, teachers have the possibility to structure the instruction of vocabulary and, on the other hand, students have the chance to learn vocabulary qualitatively.

Figure 1 Function of words according to Carter (2000)

WORD FORM CHART

NOUN	VERB	ADJECTIVE	ADVERB
OBSESSION	OBSESS	OBSESSIVE	OBSESSIVELY
QUALIFICATION	QUALIFY	QUALIFIED	
COMPETITION	COMPETE	COMPETITIVE	COMPETITIVELY
ION, -TION	-E, -ATE, EY	IV, -ED	LY

(Carter, 2000)

The figure above is an example of the different functions that words have.

In Costa Rica, there is no vocabulary approach to develop instruction that can guarantee the correct acquisition of vocabulary, at least in the public system. That is why

this investigation will consider Mukoroli's suggestions to adapt them to the implementation of mnemonic techniques in order to have a different vision that permits students to enhance their vocabulary and that could be used by teachers in their lessons. In addition, it is undeniably that internet plays a relevant role and it is a strategy by itself used by many teachers for the instruction of vocabulary. In fact, it can be used to learn vocabulary, since there are many online options that can help teachers and students to improve the acquisition of new words. Dhaif, I.et. al (2020) explain that using websites can be useful for teachers to help their students to better acquire the language. Moreover, it is an important aspect to change old fashioned techniques and to include online new strategies while teaching a second language. Even though, students are familiar with those kind of tools, this investigation will take them as a reference to develop material to work in the classroom. However, they will not be used directly to respect the school rules that do not allow the use of cell phones during the lessons.

The first internet tool considered in this investigation as a source of information is an app named Visual Mnemonics Dictionary that provides the word and an illustration to make the relation with the meaning of the word. The second app that will be used is Learn English Vocabulary Words Offline Free. This one also uses images and sounds to relate then with the word. The third option is online word games that stimulate the recognition and learning of new vocabulary. This can be found in the following website:

<https://learnenglishkids.britishcouncil.org/word-games>. With the three options, it is possible to stimulate the visual relationship that exist between words and images. In this case, the image will be the mnemonic to help recalling the final product or information, which is the word.

2.1.6 Mnemonic

In Greek mythology, Mnemosyne was the goddess of memory. Therefore, this gives to the reader an immediate connection between her name and the word mnemonic. In addition, in Greek history, there is a popular legend that says that mnemonics were discovered by Greek poet and (wise man) Simonides (c.556-c.468 B.C.E.), who experimented an important event in which he used a previous mental image to remember some specific details after that event. The tell from the Greek literature says that Simonides had to recite an ode in a banquet offered by a nobleman, the poet began as usual dedicating some words to the divinities, Castor and Pollux who represented two young gods. After that dedication, Simonides was ready to start talking about his host, but he was distracted and so was deducted half of the payment. The host told Simonides to ask the gods for the rest of the payment. After that, Simonides was required outside by two young men, Simonides went there but there was no one. Meanwhile, the hall collapsed behind Simonides' back, and the host and his guests died. The scene was terrible, the bodies were unrecognizable and the only one who was able to recognize them was the poet Semonides who remembered the places where the people have were seated and identified each one. Thus, it was born the loci method also called locations or placement, which later was used as a referent for many orators from Rome to memorize incredible speeches.

Nowadays, there are many variants about mnemonic techniques such as spelling mnemonics, keywords, and acronyms just to mention some. Yates (1966) defines mnemonics as an art technique that prints pictures and locations in the memory. She called it mnemotechnic and she considered it a practice of vital importance that permits manipulating the memory in favor of recalling words. The author as historian bequeathed

humanity the closer analysis ever made to understand what mnemonics were in history and established a precedent to researchers. The Greek philosophers considered that the most intelligent intellectuals of ancient times used to practice mnemonic techniques with specific purposes. Consequently, in Rome its use was fundamental. Later, as a consequence of the effectiveness of mnemonics, Europe implemented its use in different ambits contributing to the development of the language.

Yates considers scientifically proved the effect of mnemonics in the memory and explains why other figures call them the “method word,” as the principal way to bring words to mind. The writer explained that a person with experience in the use of loci can easily supply his/her mind with as many locations as needed. This last mentioned is just an example related to places. Concerning words’ recalling, it happens with the image that represents the object in the memory, which is the word and the construction of a memory that results more difficult than the construction of a memory for images. In addition, Yates could not understand why the use and practice of mnemonics was lost and devaluated over the years, considering that for the last years of the 20th century, its use would have been very useful to learn and acquire certain things such as vocabulary.

Understanding more the function of mnemonics in history and its utility in the learning processes and its proven effectiveness on the mental recall of words and, in accordance to the author regarding the devaluation of mnemonics; this investigation considers essential the implementation of mnemonics to reactivate its benefits, as currently much information need to be remembered. One of the main changes between this generation and those from last century is the necessity of mastering the universal language, which is impossible without the acquisition of vocabulary. Therefore, why not to use again

mnemonics? Why do not better the level of English vocabulary of students using mnemonics? And finally, why do not to begin using mnemonics from an early age if children are potentially receptive to new techniques? At this point, the investigation is focused on implementing mnemonics with the group selected by the research. The importance of the enhancement of vocabulary is the principal motivation to get down to work expecting positive results in favor of learners and teachers, as well.

Paivio (1990) sustains that mental level representations are related to physical representations to develop the interpretation of those mental images or representations. Referring to mnemonics, the author is clear and explains that encoding is the way of associating and transforming information provided by images, which are then turned into a final product, which could be a word. Specially for learning purposes, mnemonics are located in an important place, as the author considers verbal and imaginary symbols the key to access the information required to remembering vocabulary when the individual is learning a language. The author of the original “Dual Coding Theory” has been investigating mnemonics for decades and considers absolutely appropriate to use them as immediate resource to improve vocabulary acquisition because just an image can work as a retrieval of additional information. Mnemonics can catch the complete organization of a reading sequencing of the information to allow the mind to remember it. Of course, the imagery, as mnemonics are called in the book, have a direct relation with the emotions that an image can provoke in the person and that must be considered for the instruction of vocabulary, as well.

Nowadays, the contributions of the dual coding theory have being object of critic, objections, and analysis by many researchers. However, probably the most interested in the

opponents' fundamentals, critics, and continuous analysis of the theory, has being its own creator, who has developed a large amount of books from the original theory.

According to Paivio (2013), the evolution of the language is linked to the mind images that conceptualize linguistic terms in the brain. Those images can be taken from reality or from abstract illusions, which are part of the imaginary developments naturally present in individuals. Mnemonics, as it was said before in this paper, are imaginary and natural practices of the brain system to acquire new vocabulary. The mind just needs stimulus to conceptualize or symbolize inside the brain objects in form of words using mental images. Taking into consideration that children's minds work easier to store and learn information, the dual coding approach definitely will be considered as a referent in the present study. The teacher's strategies for vocabulary input could include mnemonic techniques more than basic lists; however, it is necessary the knowledge about the function of the brain to develop those strategies in lessons. Dual coding approach is an explanatory document in that sense. For the present investigation, dual coding approach is a fundamental resource that allows the development of this research based on scientific bases offering the group under study quality implementation of mnemonic techniques. When students are receiving information during the instruction of a second language, the fact of understanding represents additional motivation to them that in turn creates a better academic performance, while the opposite reduces that possibility. By having enough and reliable information from previous investigations, this chapter concludes with sufficient literary support as base for the present inquiry that will be carried out by looking for improving the amount of vocabulary in the students.

Chapter III

Methodological Framework

Conducting an investigation allows the researcher to obtain information and take the necessary steps to fulfill its aim. Besides the methodology applied is a way of demonstrating in detail not only the reasons and purposes, but also the instruments used during the process and the final results obtained from the investigation. At the end it will be possible to know if the objectives set were achieved as the investigator expected or not and what aspects mediated for it. This chapter will explain carefully the process developed in the present research, as well as who are the participants that will be part of the analysis and each activity carried out following the objectives to obtain results.

3.1 Research Approach

In every investigation the researcher defines the type of approach that he or she will follow during the complete process. Once the approach is defined the plan is clear to start working under specific procedures. There are three different approaches that can be used in an investigation; quantitative, qualitative and mixed. Regarding mixed method, Halcom, E. and Hickman, L. (2015), emphasize that the combination of the components of qualitative and quantitative approaches are what sustains and form mixed methods and later justify the analysis of data considering both approaches.

In that line the researcher will conduct a process expecting to evaluate the impact of the application of mnemonic techniques to fifth graders considering their previous knowledge, observation during the execution of the implementation of mnemonic techniques, the interaction with the participants and the results achieved after the process.

All these aspects that be validated by the instruments designed by the researcher. The participants observed will provide important data to understand the effect of mnemonic techniques to enhance vocabulary as being part of their usual learning environment during the natural development of the events. Moreover this investigation is going to be developed following the mixed method due to the analysis of the data that will be collected through observations during the application of mnemonic techniques to enhance the vocabulary of fifth graders at Agustín Segura School that pretends to measure the improvement of the students according to the punctuation of the tests and rubrics created for this investigation. In addition, facts, specific learning situations and the data analysis are the reasons why this investigation has a mixed approach.

3.2 Research Design

Once the approach is defined as mixed it is time to explain the type of research design used. Firstly this research will be carried out as an action research because its intention is to better the cognitive capability to acquire vocabulary and to help students to manage the way they learn it. The researcher will have a notorious participation in the action aspect as she is the one who develops the inquiry and provides new learning experiences to the participants efficiently to generate knowledge. Additionally this research will be defined as a descriptive phenomenological considering the individual experience that participants are going to have during the process as it is going to take place in their natural daily routines at school. Considering the fact that the process is going to be documented, as it is going to take place and the procedures of the techniques will be implemented as they occur.

With the above definitions clear it is easier to comprehend this investigation as a mixed one because it pretends to analyze the information obtained from the experiences lived by individuals regarding vocabulary instruction, during the application of the mnemonic activities, the interaction with the teacher and the interaction with vocabulary as well as, their understanding and the scores obtained by the students in the different learning activities. Moreover the research is open to the idea of flexibility during the implementation of the mnemonic techniques according to eventual student's needs.0020

3.3 Information Sources

The information used during a whole investigation is essential to give form, credibility and support to the investigation. Moreover, information sources provide the researcher with the necessary and adequate implements to communicate accurately to the readers concepts, data, facts, etc. Those sources are divided into three categories: primary, secondary and tertiary sources. According to Chatterjee (2017) the very first time an information appears in an information media it is considered as a primary source, but if the publication appears later on in another media it is a secondary source, and publications as bibliographies are denominated tertiary sources.

RUSA, (n.d), compares the primary sources with the steps that construct a research and give base to any reasoning. Starting from that analogy in the particular case of this inquiry primary sources are the valuable tools that allows an investigation to have reliable support. The institution, the current English teacher and the students will be that foundation in this case.

Furthermore the University of Minnesota Crookston (n.d) defines the secondary sources as those that analyze the primary ones. It is possible to find secondary sources in books, websites and dissertations consulted by the researcher during the investigation. Finally when referring to tertiary sources, Professional University (n.d) explains that they were created to facilitate the process of finding information, and are the ones made by primary and secondary sources. From that perspective it is understood that dictionaries, encyclopedias, abstracts, libraries and directories exemplify the tertiary sources. At this point, it is important to give relevance to internet as the main tertiary source used by the researcher.

3.3 .1 Description of the Institution

The Agustín Segura School is a public institution founded in 1913 and it is located in Jericó Desamparados, San José. The institution belongs to circuit 04 of the regional education of Desamparados and follows the guidelines of the Ministry of Education. A student population of around 116 individuals that live in the area or in nearby towns, attend to the institution. In the school there is only one group per level and each one receives: the main four subjects, music, religion, English as a foreign language, physical education and educational informatics.

The institution faces some difficulties as lack of security in the nearby area town and water scarcity, however it is well managed by the principal who makes everything possible to give quality to the students during their stay at the school. With the pandemic the lessons were received virtually and for the current year probably the course will be part virtual and part in face. Regarding the students the majority belong to middle-or low-

income families that have lived for decades in the town. Moreover, the students eat their lunch in the school and some of them receive economical support by the government.

3.3.2 Description of the Community

Jericó was founded by the Segura family about 1900. It is a very small rural town located in the south of Desamparados. The main economic activity is agriculture mainly coffee cultivation. The town is in a mountainous area that provides a very natural environment to live. There are basic services in the community as Ebais, a small supermarket, sport place, a school, a church and two restaurants.

3.3.3. Selection and Description of the participants

This investigation will be developed with the fifth graders at Agustin Segura School. The group is made up of 17 students; 11 men and 6 women between the ages of 10 and 12. This group has been the same since the first level, so they are very confident with each other. There are 2 men and 2 women that have non-significant curricular accommodations. Since the first level the students have received 3 English lessons per week. They work with the book series called “Tic Tac Toe”.

Due to the pandemic context the current year will be part in face and in part virtual. However following MEP’s indications fifth grade, since the beginning of the school year will be in face as much as possible. This will benefit the investigation that pretends to implement mnemonic techniques in a natural environment that students are used to as it is the classroom because this is a group with important gaps produced by the interruptions occurred last two years in the public education of Costa Rica. It has to be stated that vocabulary has been affected, as well as the way of learning. Therefore this research is looking to help students to learn and increase their vocabulary in English through the use of

mnemonics and by giving them new techniques to learn in a comfortable way. At this point, it should be noted that these students have a low level of English as a result of the teachers strike occurred back in 2019 and the pandemic produced by Covid-19 in 2020 as it was mentioned before; both creating important gaps in the students learning process.

3.4 Analysis of Categories

A good qualitative investigation has to let clear to the reader the different aspects or categories to be considered or studied independently, as those aspects are linked and form a whole in the investigation. A category is a fragment of something bigger. Zicus Cognitive Procurement (n.d.) defines category analysis as general description of one specific aspect, later explores it deeply and finally develops a concluding analysis. The importance of this research will be better understood by the reader thanks to the explanation of some of those categories as they are the base of the investigation.

Since the beginning the aim and the main motivation has been to enhance vocabulary by implementing mnemonic techniques. At this point it is necessary mention again that mnemonic techniques are bridges that help the person to recall information by easily remembering something; in this case the aim is to recall vocabulary. Whitescarver (2018) defends the use of mnemonics claiming that it tends to be greater ranges of vocabulary when mnemonics are used than when traditional methods of memorization are used, since it is more feasible to incorporate new objects using objects already known to bind the information and produce the acquisition of new words.

On the other hand another aspect to consider is the population that will participate in this investigation. The fifth graders at Agustín Segura School that are formally coursing the second cycle of the Elementary Education of Costa Rica. Moreover they are in a

process of preparation to get into high school in a couple of years. Therefore, it is relevant to develop this study harnessing the potential of the students and bequeathing them the use of mnemonic techniques as a tool useful and applicable according to their needs of study.

Additionally as another category this paper signals vocabulary as the object of transformation when the researcher claims that it is precisely the factor to enhance during the investigation with the implementation of mnemonic techniques. Of course vocabulary is given a notorious and highlighted place through the complete investigation to the vocabulary as it is absolutely essential for learning. According to Susanto (2017), the scope of vocabulary should go beyond and directly affects other areas of language learning. Especially thinking in the accustomed education system it is understood when Susanto refers to other aspects that are not successful because of the lack of vocabulary of students so it is the immediate consequence of the lack of a better approach and techniques.

3.5 Data Collection Instruments

There are many instruments to collect data, but to choose the appropriate ones in an investigation is fundamental to obtain the information required and make a good analysis. Regarding to qualitative research Groenland, E. & Leo-paul, D. (2019) explain data is the real content to analyze and it is made by branches of feelings, behaviors or thoughts from real individuals who are giving form to the reality the researcher is analyzing. Certainly to obtain all the information, it is required using instruments of data collection. As it is well known in the qualitative research the primary instrument is the researcher who will provide as stated by Clark, R. & Vealé, B. (2018) the optimum interpretation of the data collected and his or her own analysis of the study. Additionally there are other instruments that help to collect information in a qualitative research as for

example: rubrics, questionnaires, tests, observations and interviews. For the present research the researcher has established the instruments mentioned below as those that will provide her with the required data for this investigation.

3.5.1 Interview

One useful tool that investigators use to explore in detail the participants, the environment, subject and some other factors is the interview as it provides a background of the scenario being analyzed. Adhabi E. & Blash, C. (2017) suggest that a person who manages an interview can deepen in the aspects faced by the participants in a determined situation, in this case the acquisition of vocabulary. For this investigation the current English teacher of the group is undoubtedly a great source of information: therefore, she will be interviewed in order to obtain from her a clear panorama about the way fifth grade students are used to learn vocabulary during English lessons at Agustín Segura School.

This will be a brief face to face interview in a short meeting at the school with 5 simple questions about the group and its interaction with vocabulary in general. The researcher will take notes to write the main ideas from the answers provided by the teacher. Evidently the information provided by the teacher will be important data to consider in this document to later develop a well-founded in the reality of the context of the participants studied. The teacher's testimony is the first impression that the researcher has about the interaction of the group with the vocabulary.

3.5.2 Observation

Commenting about language education Canals, L. (2017) sustains that researchers can use observation to help themselves to define what students need to learn and how they will better learn it. Consequently the present study pretends to take advantage of the

observation that will be applied twice; each of them will last 40 minutes. The first one will be useful to guide the next step in the research which is the implementation of mnemonic techniques with the fifth grade group. The second one will determine if there are changes in the group after receiving the instruction of vocabulary using mnemonic techniques.

In the first observation it will be necessary for the researcher to consider all the relevant information present in the classroom environment that somehow may affect the learning process of the students. Therefore the researcher will use a checklist with the aim of obtaining an overview of the student's behavior when they are receiving the instruction of vocabulary, their attitude towards the vocabulary, their interaction with the teacher and with the environment and factors that influence the learning of vocabulary like practices or homework. That observation will take place on February 24, 2021. For the second observation it will be used the same checklist to determine if the group shows changes regarding the first observation. The students will be observed on March 12, 2021. Moreover, before the implementation of mnemonic techniques it is essential by the researcher to observe the dynamic of the students in the classroom, their attitude while learning, their level of knowledge, their interest on the subject and everything related to their learning experience. The expected result of the observation is not only to establish a relationship with the group but also to define the procedure to follow and the specific mnemonic techniques to use with them.

3.5.3 *Pre-test*

One of the most methods used to evaluate student's knowledge level is the pre-test. The expectation is to get information at the beginning of a course or procedure as Boyas et al. (2012) point out. According to Kulasegaram, K. (2018) et al. assessment and learning

are connected and assessment is precisely what manages learning. By using a pre-test the researcher finally will finally have concrete data about the real cognitive level in terms of vocabulary that students have before applying the mnemonic techniques. The pre-test will be based on vocabulary that is familiar to the students as they have studied it previously at school; for example: adjectives to describe appearance, character and personality and emotions.

The pre-test will be a test with a matching exercise in which the students will relate the word with the corresponding image. The second part of this pre-test is an oral exercise with some indications to use adjectives orally to describe themselves and someone else. This exercise will be answered individually as it will allow the researcher to have an overview of the level of retention of words that students have. The present pre-test applied in the investigation will follow the next steps that are basically the development of activities designed specially to this group of fifth graders at Agustín Segura School to obtain important data according to the targets established in this inquiry maintaining as main objective to improve the vocabulary acquisition of the students by using mnemonic techniques.

In the following sessions the researcher will implement mnemonic techniques using adjectives to describe personality and appearance. The first activity will be using soldier's images. Each soldier has a determined expression which represents his name. The initial letters of the names form a specific word. To continue it will be used an image of a house divided into 4 rooms; each room has four adjectives. The idea is that the students relate the words with the location to retrieve the information. Additionally, in the activities, it will be included the construction of acrostics. Therefore, the researcher will provide the

students with informative worksheets and a deep explanation in order to motivate them to create their own acrostic. More activities will be developed using colors and patterns to promote the recalling of words. Finally the researcher will give a list of adjectives to the students that will allow them to create acrostics expanding their vocabulary. Basically, all the worksheets created by the researcher contextualized the use images that are meaningful for the students.

3.5.4 Post-test

For the researcher the post-test is an essential instrument to collect data which will provide the results obtained after the implementation of mnemonic techniques. Rifqi, A. (2020) states that a good evaluation of the results in any learning experience depends of a well testing design. Hamza, S. (2018) considers that the importance of assessment in vocabulary must have the same level of importance than the other skills have and at the same time the evaluation must be directly related to the objectives of the instruction; that means that the evaluation should be contextualized. In this paper assessment will define the possible effectiveness of the implementation of mnemonic techniques to enhance vocabulary. The post-test will be validated through a test applied to the group after having received the instruction of vocabulary using the different mnemonic techniques that the researcher proposes.

3.6 Collection Data Process and Data Analysis

The collection of data in this research will be possible through the interaction of the researcher and the students and the instruments and activities used by the researcher.

The aim is to develop the observation, the interview to the current English teacher, the pre-test and post-test and the implementation of the chosen mnemonic techniques to enhance vocabulary in 5 sessions. The first session will allow the researcher to observe the group, the lesson dynamic during the lesson, the environment, the interaction that the group has with the teacher and possible techniques she uses during the lesson. In this first session it will also be developed the interview to the teacher who is the person indicated to facilitate firsthand information about the group and their vocabulary acquisition. This first session will be developed on February 24th, 2021. The second session will be for applying the pre-test to the students. With that pre-test the researcher will have knowledge about the level of retention of words that students have regarding to specific vocabulary that they learned in previous English lessons. Additionally in this session the researcher will explain some vocabulary through the use of mnemonic techniques based on images. The activities will be carried out on March 2nd, 2021.

To continue with the development of the activities during the third session that will take place on March 3rd, 2021 the researcher will implement another mnemonic technique with the students. The first part of the activity which will be about physical appearance and will be developed using colors, images and patterns to help the students to recall the information. The second part will be about the creation of acrostics to remember words. In addition, it will be suggested the use of an app to practice the same vocabulary at home.

On the other hand, during the fourth session the vocabulary worked will be about emotions and will be carried out using key words or short phrases and color patterns as to help students to retrieve the words and after that, the students will be invited to create by

themselves a key word or acrostic as it was explained in the previous session using the vocabulary provided by the researcher. It is expected to develop these activities on March 12th, 2021. Finally the researcher will apply the post-test which will be the last opportunity to collect information and analyze the effectiveness of mnemonic techniques in the instruction of vocabulary as a different alternative to help students to acquire new words. The post-test will be applied on March 15th, 2021 and it will be based on the vocabulary studied and the exercises made during the previous sessions. It will follow the same order in which they were studied.

The instruments used for this investigation are going to be deeply explained later in this document to facilitate the understanding about the work made during the present investigation. Moreover, it is important to mention that considering the level of English that students have the instruments are going to have a basic level to promote the understanding of the participants.

Chapter IV

Data Analysis

This chapter is dedicated to the explanation of the results obtained during the application of the instruments. A clear interpretation of those results and the actions done will allow to the researcher to determine if the objectives of this investigation were achieved. Thorne (2000) states that the investigator can implements different ways of getting data and his comprehension of the most important information to answer the research question, as for example the analytic procedure that affects data. For Miles, M. & Saldaña, J. (2020), the analytic dare in qualitative investigations is to give reasonable explanations, even when there is lack of consistency or disagreement. Each instrument used in this investigation to collect data will be explained by organizing the information generated and the boundaries that might be present in the results. Considering any relevant circumstance and the phenomenological development in the process, the researcher will analyze the data carefully following a logical order during the examination of the data.

4.1 Analysis and Interpretation of the Results

This investigation was developed using some instruments such as a teacher interview, an observation checklist, a pre-test, and vocabulary instruction activities after the pre-test and before the post-test, which was the final instrument used. Undoubtedly, the importance of this part of the present dissertation, in which all the results are analyzed one by one, is understood through the deeply inspection of the events around each instrument.

4.1.1 Interview

This important instrument is implemented with different purposes. In this case, the main objective of the interview was to acquire firsthand information concerning the

relationship that the fifth grades have with vocabulary, the techniques that the teacher uses to teach, the knowledge of the vocabulary used in the investigation, and their experience with mnemonic techniques. The conversation sustained with the teacher revolved around 5 very punctual questions that provided the researcher with the initial collection of data in the present study. McGrath et.al. (2019) explained that the interview is the opportunity that a researcher has to understand in a deep way the perspective of the interviewee about the context in which he is involved in the investigation. The interview made took place on March 2nd, 2020. It was a face-to-face meeting in the school between the current English teacher of the institution and the researcher.

Question number one allowed the researcher to have a glimpse related to the behavior of the students when dealing with vocabulary and to understand according to the answers of the teacher, that they have a good attitude about vocabulary instruction, practice, and performance. Consequently, the researcher deducted that the experience will be positive taking into account that the group has already knowledge about adjectives to describe personality and appearance, as the interviewee expressed. Moreover, something relevant from the conversation with the teacher was the confirmation of the use of vocabulary lists to teach lexicon to the students, as the only method she implements to teach vocabulary. The teacher uses a book in which some units give lists of words with images. Nevertheless, the students have a list with vocabulary there is used a list and it is their responsibility to study the vocabulary at home because the time of the lessons is insufficient. Besides, the teacher explained to the researcher that to comply with the MEP's program does not allow the implementation of different techniques or methods to teach

vocabulary. As she stated, “teaching is a race against time and teachers have to comply with the schedule.”

Later on in the interview, she was questioned about the use of mnemonic techniques to teach vocabulary to the fifth graders. She was clear to say that they never have received that kind of instruction. Regarding that, the researcher understood that it is a good scenario to proceed with the implementation of mnemonic techniques to enhance the vocabulary of the fifth graders and thus, to make the experience novel and attractive for them. Additionally, the effectiveness of mnemonic techniques can be well analyzed by the researcher, as this particular group that is not familiar with them. In this case, the emotional response of the students to the new mnemonic techniques, their efficacy, and the level of acquisition after the instruction will be aspects to consider in the analysis, as the investigator will interpret the information providing the readers with an appropriate explanation. Finally, the researcher considers important the way in which the teacher categorized different teaching vocabulary techniques according to their level of importance showing once again her priority to the use of lists of vocabulary over the other techniques. Such categorization is shown in detail below.

Figure 2 Effectiveness of different techniques to teach vocabulary

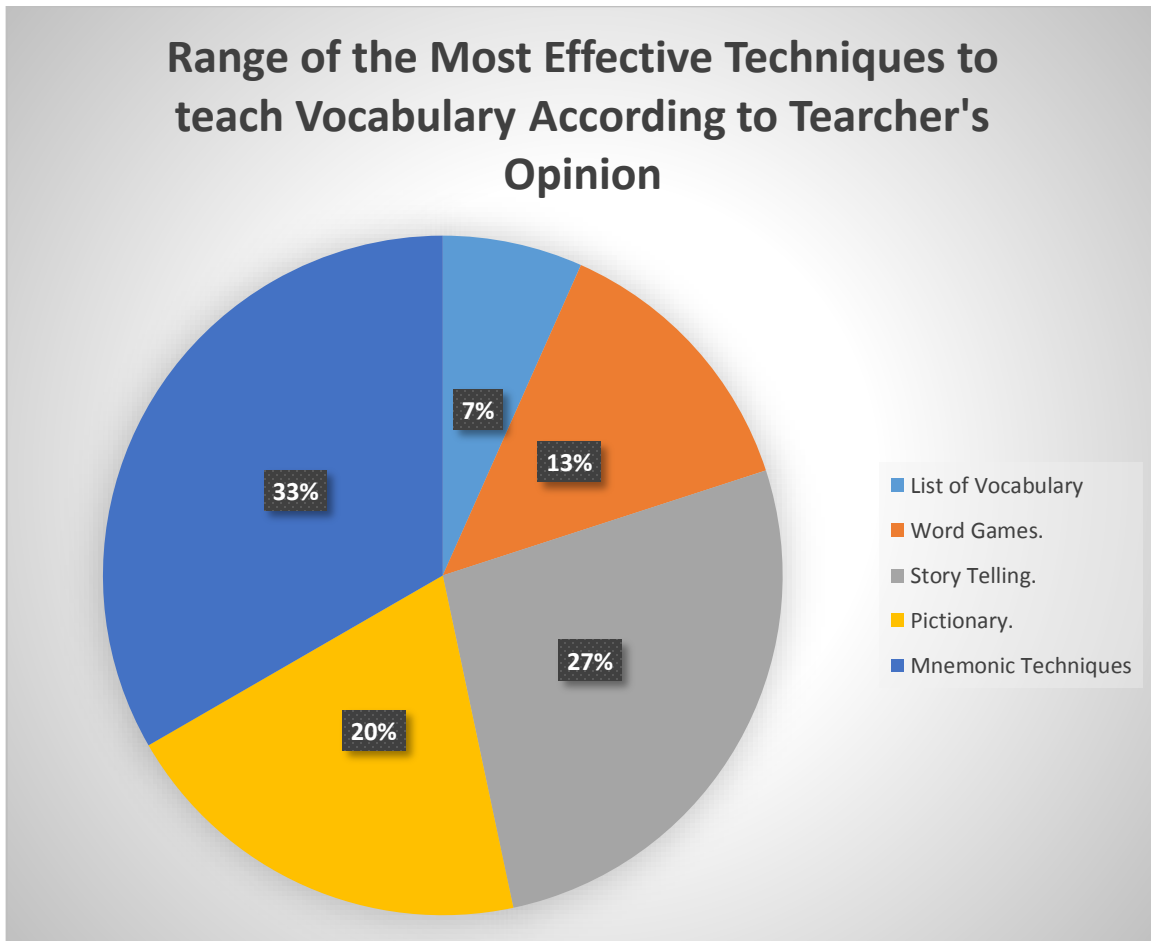


Figure 2 represents an arrangement of the most effective techniques used to teach vocabulary according to teacher's opinion. Source: Researcher's own creation.

This figure represents the answer provided by the teacher when was questioned about the range of effectiveness of the techniques presented in the illustrative image. From her perspective, she considers the list of vocabulary, a priority in MEP's system, as is the most effective technique and mnemonic techniques the less effective one.

4.1.2 Observation

The observation was a fundamental step in the initial part of the actions took by the researcher before implementing mnemonic techniques to the fifth graders group and to create a personal concept about it. Arseven (2018) states that the observation includes aspects such as inspection, explanations made from a determined perspective, approach, and concrete facts or events always contemplated by someone's opinion, his or her position with reference to a specific situation. The first observation carried out occurred on February 24, 2021 and allowed the investigator to create her own perspective about the fifth level group. There were no absentees during the lesson. Through a checklist, the investigator obtained detailed data about different characteristics regarding the group during an English lesson. For example, it was possible to establish the level of participation of the students in the lesson as the appropriate or expected from fifth level children. Although, not all of them were engaged since the beginning, most of them participated at some point. In addition, it was evident their connection with the teacher. The group trusted her to make questions and express opinions and comments not only related to the subject, but also to non-academic topics.

On the other hand, a dominant feature that caught the researcher's attention was the use of Spanish in a reciprocal mode between teacher and students and the translation of every single word mentioned in the lesson and on the printed materials used that day. Moreover, the students made questions and received answers from the teacher in Spanish. This particular situation is considered by the researcher as unfavorable to the educational purposes and motivated her to make a difference and use only English to implement mnemonic techniques to this group. For this reason, colors and images related to their

interest and patterns were used in the activities with the target to catch the attention of the participants and promote the use of English during this experience.

In concrete, the lesson started with a prayer and a short conversation between the teacher and the students. Due to health protocols, students receive all subject in the same classroom to avoid moving around several places. Therefore, the classroom did not have visual aids or any decoration related to English. The teacher worked that day using worksheets about rainforests around the world. Her tone of voice was appropriated, and the organization of the lesson permitted her to explain the subject. However, practice was assigned as homework because of time. Lastly, the researcher had the opportunity to introduce herself to the group and have a little ice breaker conversation with the students. The lesson was about 40 minutes.

Later on this investigation a second observation was performed by the researcher with the aim of observing and analyzing the attitude of students towards the experience of receiving vocabulary instruction through mnemonic techniques. The observation was carried out on March 12rd during the fourth session of activities. At the end of the session, the researcher used another checklist created for the second observation. There were 14 out of 17 students in the classroom for this second observation. This time, the role of the researcher was of an instructor and a bystander that documented the behavior, performance, and any important data that day. For example, the investigator concluded that during the activities the students were willing to pay attention and learn because the vocabulary used was contextualized and represented by things meaningful to them, as in the case of the use of the name “Agustín” as acrostic, which is the name of the school’s cat. The adjectives

used for that acrostic also were related to Agustín's characteristics and the motivation to learn them was noticeable among the students.

Besides that, the use of acrostics was attractive for the students, as they commented that they were enjoying the lesson. Concerning participation, when the researcher asked about the vocabulary the participants were very engaged and participated actively. There were some students that made questions about the meaning of vocabulary or other adjectives that were not studied that day. In general, the researcher observed a motivated group with an enormous learning capability. In both observations, the researcher put special attention to the problems that existed in the group and that prevented a good acquisition of vocabulary. From the researcher's perspective, the environment, techniques implemented, time spent teaching lexicon, ability to retrieve information, translation and writing production are some of the most evident problems in this group. Moreover, it was never observed an attitude of rejection in students towards learning.

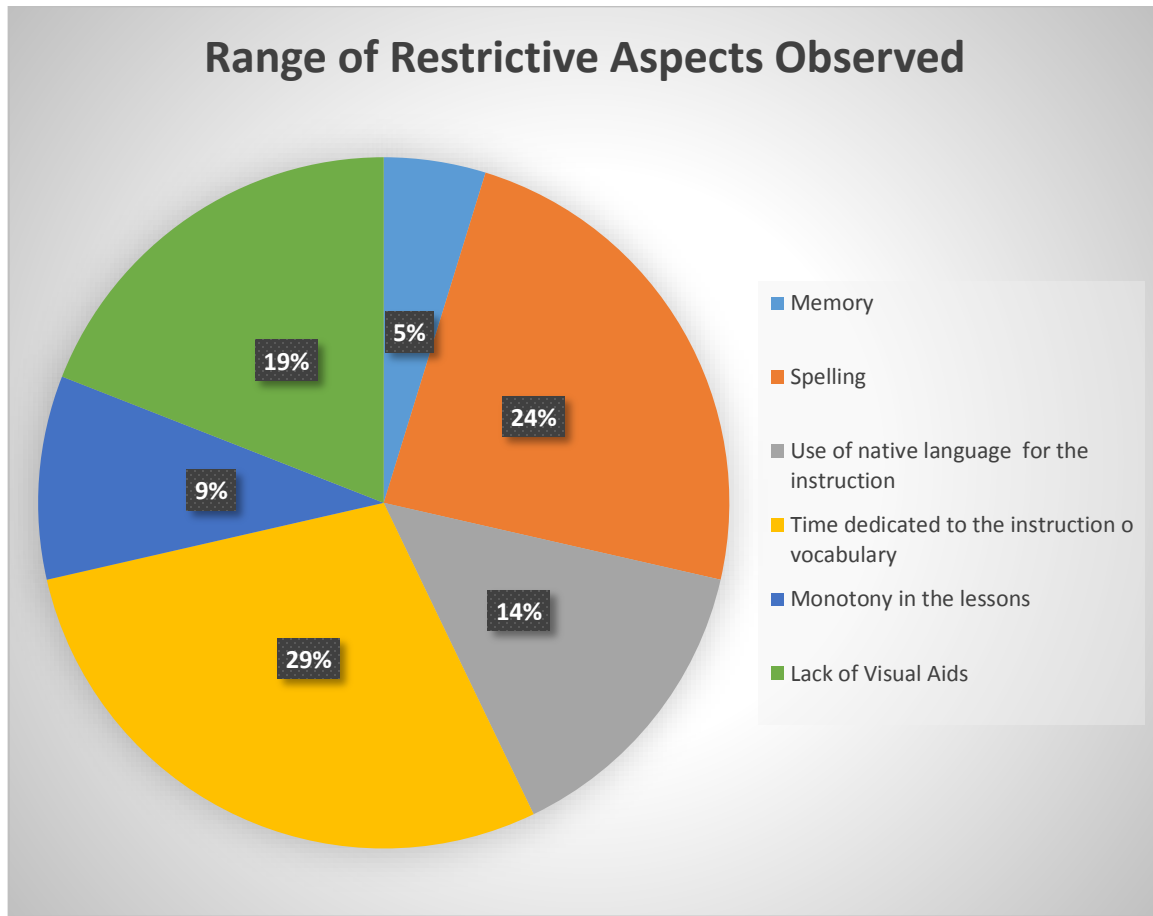
Figure 3 Aspects that restrict the acquisition of vocabulary

Figure 3 shows the main issues in the acquisition of vocabulary in the fifth-grade group.

Source: Researcher's own creation

From the researcher's perception obtained from the observations, the figures were created to show the percentage of each problem that prevented the acquisition of vocabulary in the fifth graders. It is noticeable that the biggest problem is the little time invested on teaching vocabulary. Moreover, the less perceived problem is the memory capability that may be due to the lack of study.

4.1.3 Pre-Test

The objective of any pre-test, according to Pulliam & Stawarski (2008), is to determine the degree of mastery that the students have in something specific. In this case, that specific aspect is the vocabulary of adjectives studied in. In this investigation, the evaluation was key to measure the level of knowledge of the vocabulary that students had at the beginning of this study. Therefore, the pre-test was applied on March 2nd, 2021. Three students were absent that day. Moreover, the group only had 15 minutes to deliver the exam. The pre-evaluation consisted on a short exam with 10 items in the first part, so the students had to match the written adjectives with the illustrative images. The second part was a descriptive writing exercise in which the students had the opportunity to choose one of three images and to describe it. Furthermore, in the third part, a fill in the blanks exercise was developed by the students; for this exercise, a word box was a resource present in the test to guide them. Finally, the last part was a writing exercise in which the students had to express the way they were feeling that day by using adjectives. The researcher used a rubric to evaluate the pre-test. The criteria specifically assessed the vocabulary that students had in each part of the pre-test. For example, one of the aspects of the rubric refers to the knowledge of vocabulary shown by the student. Moreover, another aspect looked to evaluate the capability that the student had to express an idea using adjectives, and also the lack of vocabulary mentioned as part of the criteria. All these aspects added up a total of 15 points, where 1 point was the minimum score for each criterion. At this point, it is important to clarify that the minimum grade obtained according to the rubric is 5 points, which is equivalent to 33 in the final grade of the pre-test.

Table 1. Results obtained in the pre-test applied to a total of 14 students out of 17, equivalent to 82.35 % of the group.

Source: Researcher's own creation

Participants	Points Obtained	Final Grade
Student # 1	11	73
Student # 2	7	46
Student # 3	7	46
Student # 4	6	40
Student # 5	5	33
Student # 6	5	33
Student # 7	5	33
Student # 8	5	33
Student # 9	5	33
Student # 10	5	33
Student # 11	5	33
Student # 12	5	33
Student # 13	5	33
Student # 14	5	33

Table 1 shows the grades obtained by students in the pre-test applied for the researcher.

In the above table, it is distinguished the real knowledge of vocabulary that students had when they made the test. Therefore, it is perceptible that most of the students did not obtain a good grade. The highest grade was 73 and only one student obtained it. Two students grade obtained a 46, one student a 40 and the rest of the students that is 10

participants had a 33, which represents the minimum grade and it is equivalent to a 71.42 % over the total of participants that made the test. According to those results, the problem regarding vocabulary that the fifth graders group had, was clearly exposed with the application of the pre-test, as students did not have the possibility of completing the exercises or develop them correctly as consequence of the lack of vocabulary. It has to be stated that the vocabulary was related specifically to adjectives to describe appearance and personality. In addition, when analyzing the pre-test, it was perfectly evident other gaps that students had and might affect the vocabulary acquisition; for example: spelling, pronunciation, and grammar structure. However, those aspects are not the focus of this investigation. In this stage of the investigation, the investigator obtained important data to continue with the mnemonic activities taught and designed for the fifth graders. Moreover, the researcher had clear the level of vocabulary of the students, which was the aspect that she pretended to improve when using mnemonic techniques.

Table 2 Results obtained in third session activity made by 14 students out of 17, equivalent to 82.35% of the group.

Source: Researcher's own creation

Participants	Points Obtained	Final grade
Student # 1	20	100
Student # 2	19	95
Student # 3	19	95
Student # 4	18	90
Student # 5	17	85
Student # 6	16	80
Student # 7	15	75
Student # 8	15	75
Student # 9	13	65
Student # 10	13	65
Student # 11	13	65
Student # 12	12	60
Student # 13	12	60
Student # 14	9	45

Table 2 shows the scores obtained during the activity of third session

The activities carried out during the third session were based on color pattern to promote recalling the words, and besides there that were introduced two acrostic activities. 21 words were studied during the third session. Moreover, at the end, the level of retention of the information, the motivation towards the exercise, the interpretation of the color patterns, and the knowledge of the words studied, were evaluated. It has to be stated, that the total score of the rubric was 20 points, and that only one student obtained such score. The lowest score obtained a 45, which was equivalent to 9 points. According to the rubric, none of the students got the lowest possible grade that was a 20, equivalent to 4 points.

4.1.4 Post-test

The evaluation of mnemonic techniques applied with the objective of enhancing vocabulary. It took place on March 15th and represented the final step to determine the effectiveness of using those mnemonic techniques with the fifth graders. Beckett & Slater (2020) declared that evaluation is a fundamental piece in any strategy of the language education syllabus. The researcher agrees with that point of view and confirms through the application of the post-test, the importance of assessing the students after the instruction of vocabulary using mnemonic techniques. During the realization of this activity, two students were absent.

The post-test done by the students was basically based on the previous session's activities, considering that mnemonics are appropriate to recall information; in this case, the adjectives studied. The vocabulary was linked to images that were the bridge between the mental conceptualization of the words finally produced in the different exercises carried out by the students. This post-test was evaluated through a rubric, in which the lowest possible score to obtain was 5 points equivalent to a grade of 25. It has to be stated that a better performance was evidenced by the students in their scores in relation with the pre-test. The criteria of the rubric analyzed aspects such as the number of words recalled in each part of the test. The highest score obtained in the post test was a 90 and the lowest was a 25; this last result was obtained by 2 students. Even though, the grades were mostly low, the researcher noticed a better retention of words after the implementation of mnemonic techniques, the participants were acquiring the vocabulary, there was motivation towards the vocabulary, and students did a good interpretation of the mnemonic techniques taught by the researcher.

Table 3 Results obtained in the post-test applied to 15 students out of 17, equivalent to 88.23% of the group

Source: Researcher's own creation

Participants	Points Obtained	Final Grade
Student # 1	18	90
Student # 2	17	85
Student # 3	17	85
Student # 4	15	75
Student # 5	14	70
Student # 6	13	65
Student # 7	13	65
Student # 8	11	55
Student # 9	10	50
Student # 10	10	50
Student # 11	8	40
Student # 12	8	40
Student # 13	7	35
Student # 14	5	25
Student # 15	5	25

Table 3 shows the breakdown of scores obtained by students in the post-test applied by the researcher.

In this opportunity, the post-test let the researcher to evidence the improvement in the scores obtained, as a result of the implementation of mnemonic techniques to teach vocabulary. Only two students got the lowest grade according to the rubric, they represent 11.76% of the group.

Figure 4 Comparison of the Scores obtained in pre & post-test by the students. Source: Researcher’s own creation

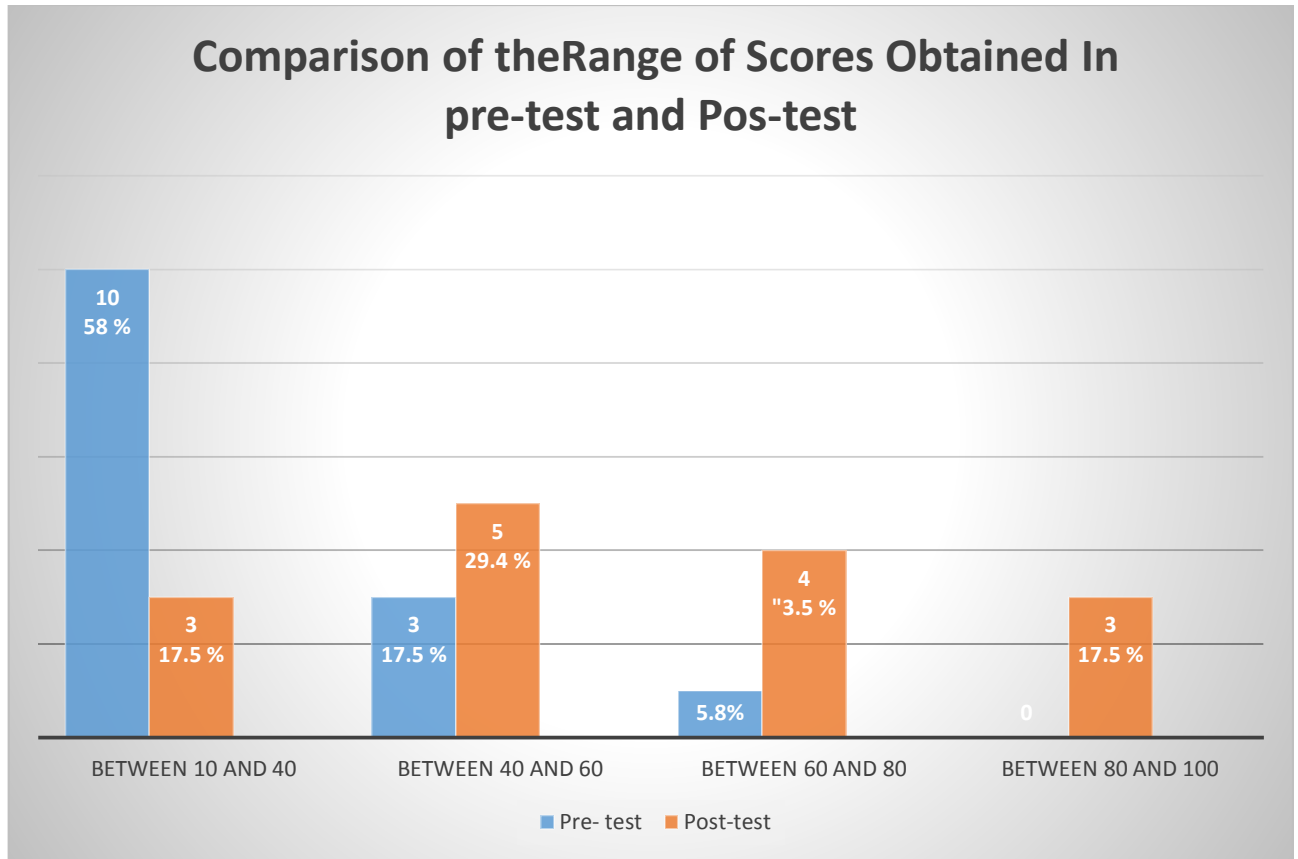
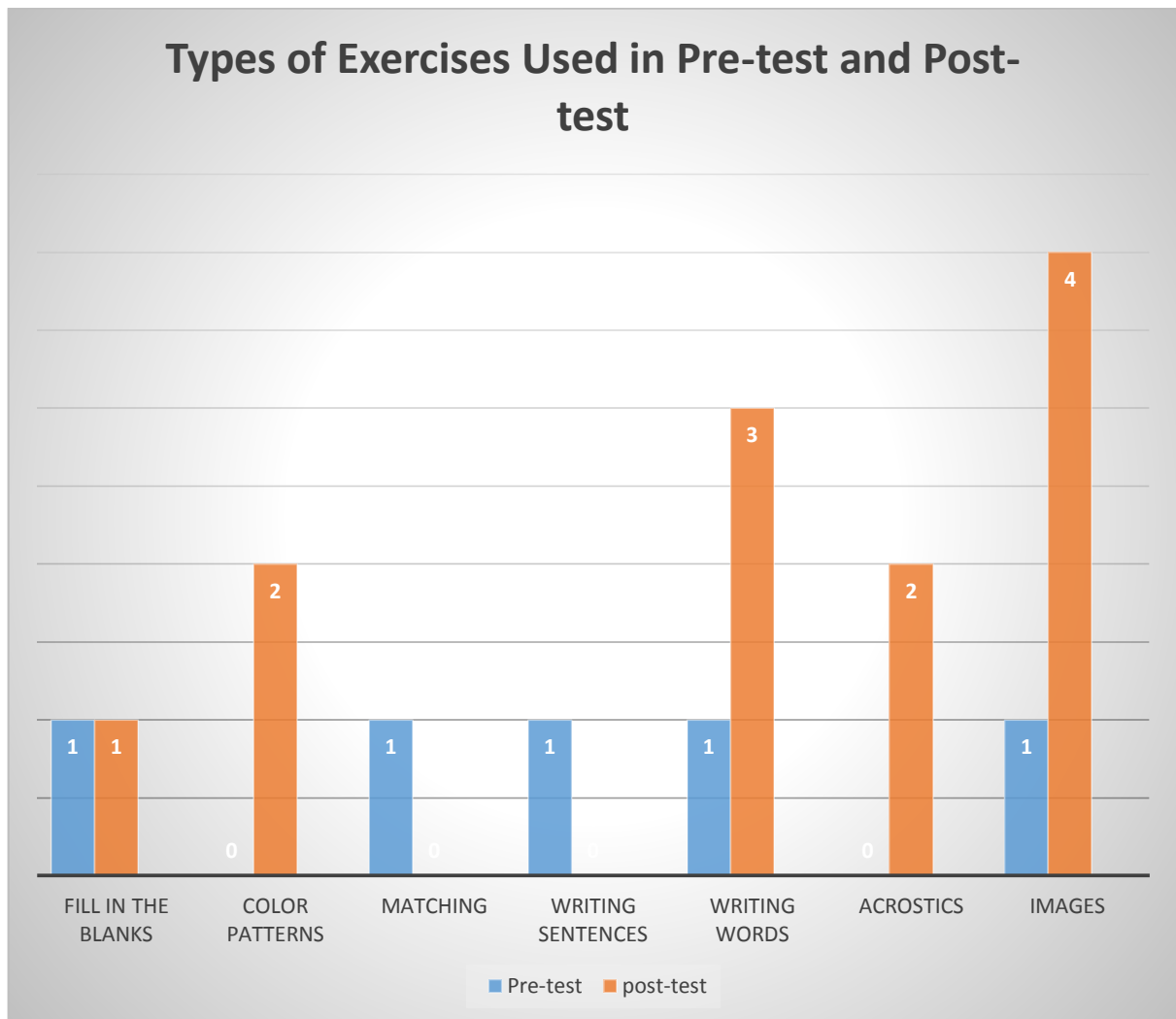


Figure 4 makes evident the range of scores obtained by the students in pre-test and post-test

This figure presents a comparison of the range of scores obtained by the fifth graders before and after the implementation of mnemonic techniques. It is exposed that the results of the post-test applied after the implementation of mnemonic techniques showed an improvement on the student’s scores and an increase in the range of scores obtained.

*Figure 5. Types of exercises implemented in pre-test & post-test**Source: Researcher's own creation**Figure 5 shows the type of exercises used by the researcher for pre-test and post-test.*

The figure above shows the type of exercises used in the tests applied to the students. The images were the most used type of exercise, especially in the post test. All this is due to the analysis made by the researcher during the 3 previous sessions to the post-test, regarding the capability of students to recall information when images were involved. The researcher also decided test do not to use exercises about writing sentences in the post

test because the grammar structure level that students have, was not the appropriate for that activity.

The data analysis permitted to the researcher through the application of the instruments selected, to determine the purview of the objectives defined by the researcher in this thesis. Each instrument was described and explained following the order in which it was accomplished. The organization of the instruments allowed the researcher to analyze the results and to determine if the main objective was achieved. Through the interview and observation, it was possible to know the weaknesses when vocabulary was instructed and the reaction of the students when using mnemonic techniques. On the other hand, with the application of the pre-test, it was possible to measure the level of competence that students had around vocabulary at the beginning. Lastly, the post-test was the tool that researcher used to assess the effectiveness of the mnemonic techniques implemented in the Agustín Segura School to fifth graders to enhance their vocabulary.

Chapter V

Conclusions and Recommendations

5.1 Purpose of the Conclusion

This section of the investigation is the last report of the results obtained by the researcher during the complete inquiry. As Murillo, et.al (2017) stated, the educational research is made to provide contributions to other investigations, since it is precisely in the conclusions where the researcher has the opportunity to do so. After having the opportunity to develop this investigation with the fifth-grade students at Agustín Segura School, the researcher was able to identify the obstacles in which the group was immersed to recall vocabulary. Consequently, she implemented different mnemonic techniques to enhance vocabulary in the students, and thus to accomplish the main objective of this investigation. Besides, the researcher used the appropriate instruments to obtain the information in order to carry out the final analysis of this study.

5.2 Conclusions

The specific objectives formulated at the beginning of this investigation aimed at using mnemonic techniques with fifth grade students and helped them to learn more vocabulary; consequently, to obtain this information some actions were carried out to get the results that will be explained below and that will answer the scope of those objectives.

5.2.1 To determine the areas of improvement of fifth grade students when using old fashioned vocabulary acquisition techniques

In this investigation, the first objective was to determine the areas of improvement of fifth grade students when using old fashioned vocabulary techniques. Therefore, it was

possible to analyze the scope of this objective through three instruments, as for instance the interview, observation, and pre-test. The researcher decided that her first task would be to interview the current English teacher of the group. Consequently, the researcher concluded that the only method to learn vocabulary that students were familiar with was the list of vocabulary, due to the lack of time, as the teacher explained during the interview. Additionally, the investigator confirmed that students already knew the adjectives of personality and appearance that researcher used later to implement the mnemonic techniques. In addition, through this instrument it was collected information about the students' behavior or attitudes when dealing with vocabulary.

Another useful instrument used was the observation. It has to be stated that the researcher made two observations. The first one was carried out at the beginning of the study and allowed the investigator to have a personal point of view about the group's behaviors, their organization while working, their interaction with the teacher and classmate during in the class and their participation. In the first observation, the researcher understood that the group was very accessible and willing to learn information, as well as that the participants were educated and respectful. Regarding their performance in the language, it was noticed the overuse of Spanish and the lack of vocabulary related to the topic they were studying that day, as well as some spelling problems. The second observation made during the implementation of mnemonic techniques, allowed the researcher to witness that the group was very assertive about receiving new information and they felt comfortable with the vocabulary, the activities, and the researcher. Moreover, it is necessary to say that their attitude permitted the researcher to consider that the interaction between the group and teacher is not a problem to learn new vocabulary. Motivation was

evident when students were doing the exercises with a familiar component in comparison to unfamiliar components. Therefore, this established the importance of contextualization while teaching vocabulary. Finally, the observation allowed the investigator to differentiate between the effect of using images as a motivational incentive in children between 10 and 12 years old, as is the case in the fifth graders.

The third instrument used was the pre-test, which revealed the real problems of the students regarding vocabulary. The problems observed were lack of vocabulary, even when they had studied it in the past, poor grammar structure, and misspellings. The majority of the students failed the test with the minimum grade established by the rubric used to assess it. Even, most of the students were not able to deliver it complete.

Some reasons that the researcher considers generated the underperformance are the absenteeism experienced during the last two years due to the teacher's strike and the pandemic. The situations experienced in those two years prevented the students from acquiring the necessary knowledge and improving their academic level; and even though, they did receive lessons the approach was not optimal. The second reason that the researcher considers important to mention is the indisputable denial of a space for vocabulary in the curriculum not only in fifth grade, but also in the previous years. Moreover, it can be stated that the students failed the test is because they used of list of vocabulary as the only technique to improve vocabulary before this investigation took place. Therefore, this is a way of blocking the understanding of the students that need more creative strategies and techniques. Students requires instruction that teaches them to learn, in the case a second language.

After properly using the instruments to get information and to decide the following actions, the researcher considers that students can improve their vocabulary through the implementation of mnemonic techniques. Therefore, they can better remember the words corresponding to specific categories or groups of vocabulary, as in the case of adjectives of personality and appearance. In addition, it can also be improved the motivational aspect that it is directly linked to academic purposes to the betterment and increase of the lexicon. If a student is motivated when learning, the more words he will learn and produce. Furthermore, the development of vocabulary through the use of patterns of colors, positions or acrostics allow students to access to the information learned previously to generate a better level of mental retention of the words.

The explanation made in the previous paragraphs clarifies how the first objective of determining the areas of improvement of fifth grade students when using old fashioned vocabulary acquisition techniques was achieved by the researcher using the instruments explained before and their order when applied.

5.2.2 To apply different updated mnemonic techniques with fifth grade students to improve their vocabulary acquisition

Once the first objective was achieved, the goal of the researcher was to accomplish the second one that was to apply different updated mnemonic techniques with fifth grade students to improving their vocabulary acquisition, which was established in Chapter I. Consequently, in other to implement mnemonic techniques, the researcher had the opportunity to teach four lessons of about 30 and 40 minutes. The materials created by the researcher to implement mnemonic techniques were about topics that were familiar to the students and thus, to allow them to develop a mental connection between the topic and the

contents in this case adjectives of personality and appearance taught via mnemonic techniques. Although, two of the lessons were used to develop the pre-test and the post-test, there was a space in each lesson dedicated to the instruction of vocabulary and mnemonic techniques. In the present investigation, the researcher considered many possible mnemonic techniques; however, there were used only those that were functional and manageable by the group. Consequently, their aim was producing a positive effect in the acquisition of vocabulary which could be observed and measured through the tests and the activities. The mnemonic techniques used were acrostics, patterns of colors to retrieve words, words placement, and use of images in order to generate representative mental connections with vocabulary.

This time, the researcher had in her hands the responsibility of managing time, creating interesting materials for the students, and teaching them not only the vocabulary, but also teaching them how to make mental bridges or connections, which is the main function of mnemonic techniques. All without forgetting the motivation required when working with children. The worksheets created were provided to each student. In addition, they were explained first and then, reinforced individually if needed, especially to students with accommodations. During the experience, the researcher was able to compare the effect of using of images, colors, and patterns associated to mnemonic techniques and the existing contrast when those characteristics were not present in the mnemonic techniques. Particularly, this group expressed more disposition and enjoyment to learn when the information had images included.

In specific, the analysis made by the researcher on the role of mnemonic techniques represented a mental support for students learning vocabulary. Consequently, it

reduces the stress in students because it is a friendly way of learning and performing the tasks related to the subject in a different to what they have experimented in the past. During the sessions devoted to the instruction of vocabulary, the positive results were evident in the betterment of the recalling process. Therefore, this experience allowed the researcher to consider the second objective of this investigation as reached. At this point, the researcher highlights the role of the teachers, who can construct a good learning environment, good experiences, good materials and good decisions when choosing the techniques to be implemented.

5.2.3 To evaluate the implementation of different updated mnemonic techniques with fifth grade students for improving their vocabulary acquisition.

The third objective was accomplished thanks to the fourth instrument. The post-test which was designed following the guidelines used during the previous sessions. This instrument meant the last opportunity to collect the data and to carry out a proper being explained in this chapter after the analysis. The post-test was developed with enthusiasm by the participants of this investigation. They had good expectations at the moment of the application of the test and the researcher also shared that feeling with the group. The main objective of the researcher was to measure the capability of retrieval of vocabulary of the students after have been instructed and prepared by the researcher.

The results obtained were quite different to those obtained during the pre-testing experience. Indeed, there was a range of betterment in the recalling of vocabulary. Even though, some of the students did not passed the exam, this time only two of them got the minimum score represented in the rubric, that a grade of 25. More students passed the exam and those who did not were able to retrieve more words than in the first assessment. It has

to be stated that before starting the test, the investigator asked the students if they had studied, and some of them admitted that they did not do it. In this context, the researcher considers satisfactory the experience, as well as the effectiveness of using mnemonic techniques.

5.3 Restatement of the Research Question

The aim of the present investigation was to develop a study that could help to analyze, to improve, and to make visible a forgotten or ignored aspect in language teaching; vocabulary. With that scenario, it was born the general objective that is to analyze the effectiveness of implementing mnemonic techniques to enhance the English vocabulary acquisition of fifth grade students at Agustín Segura School during the first quarter of 2021. Consequently, in order to reach such objective, it was carried out an investigation on mnemonic techniques through the application of some instruments such as: interview, observation, pre-test, and post-test.

After having analyzed the instruments and the results, the conclusion by the researcher was satisfactory when she realized that the success of the implementation of mnemonic techniques regarding the student's performance. Thus, at this moment, the researcher has the security of having answered the research question set at the beginning of this paper: How does the implementation of mnemonic Techniques enhance the English vocabulary of fifth grade students at Agustín Segura School? The answer is positive, as when the analysis was made, it was evident that mnemonic techniques did enhance the acquisition of vocabulary of fifth-grade students, as they were able to remember more words when using the different mental images learned to recall them. Fact that was demonstrated in the post-test.

5.4 Unexpected Results

When this investigation began, the situation due to the COVID-19 pandemic had changed the methods of teaching. The lessons were carried out through virtual scenarios and the mediation of teachers had changed completely. The researcher was expecting to apply the instruments virtually. In that context, the researcher, at the beginning of the investigation, had some concerns about the experience like: the internet connection and unexpected interruptions, the tools used to teach, and the commitment of parents and students, among others. However, the decrease in the COVID-19 cases in our country, allowed some schools to return to in-face sessions.

Therefore, this permitted the researcher to apply the instruments in person at the school. The researcher was eager because she considers that face to face interaction between teacher and students was a better opportunity to collect the information with more veracity and thus, to develop a better interpretation of data and analysis of the results. Considering that last year students did not receive classroom lessons and internet issues affected in an important way the virtual interaction and the fulfillment of the objectives, it was noticeable the lack of use of the English language vocabulary and grammar structures that could have allowed more use of written mnemonic techniques during this investigation.

5.5 Recommendations

The researcher realized that vocabulary is not a priority to our educational system, in the syllabus, and in the lesson plan of most institutions. Therefore, she recommends to meditate about the importance of understanding that vocabulary has the same relevance of the four main skills considered in English as a second language learning programs.

Being a teacher implies having the responsibility of doing things properly; consequently, the researcher recommends to create good environments to work the student's memory abilities and to carefully contextualize the topics to permit the students to establish meaningful relationships with the vocabulary. Besides, it is important to take into consideration that teaching children requires creativity to catch their attention, just as the researcher did in this investigation, when she used representative images to facilitate the retrieval of data. Subsequently, teachers can use decorations, sounds, or any creative resource to make more attractive the vocabulary and capture the students' attentiveness. Finally, the researcher makes an exhortation to the teachers of including vocabulary in their lessons plans, to dedicate more time to the instruction of lexicon and the creation or application of effective strategies and techniques such as mnemonics to stop the monotony regarding to vocabulary instruction.

This investigation considers important to implement different mnemonic techniques not only with language acquisition purposes, but also in all subjects, so the students can be more familiarized with its use.

The teacher has to give more relevance to vocabulary, so there needs to be a way of changing the methodologies implemented in the classrooms and rethinking the effectiveness of monotonous techniques used to teach vocabulary. This issue is fundamental to be analyzed; therefore, the researcher advocates for finding new ways of teaching vocabulary.

Another recommendation for future investigations in the education field is considering this investigation on the implementation of mnemonic techniques to enhance vocabulary acquisition, as a referent to better the mediation strategies in the classrooms,

and thus, to go beyond the scope of this investigation and develop new investigations around the technique, its applications, its effectiveness when adapted to other skills or subjects, its effectiveness for teachers as part of their strategies, and any other possible application of mnemonic techniques in the educational field.

Regarding the MEP's English programs, the researcher suggests the institution to make an in-depth analysis of the lack of importance that vocabulary receives in the current programs, situation that affects the other main four skills of the second language learning. Moreover, the same recommendation is to the institutions that prepare professionals of the education field, and urge them to provide future teachers with strategies to teach vocabulary properly.

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Appendixes

In this part of the document the reader can find all the instruments applied in this investigation to collect data which are: Interview, observation, pre-test and post-test. In addition there are included the lesson plans, rubrics and evidences of the work made at the school by the researcher during the investigation.

4. Rank the 5 techniques according to their effectiveness from 1 to 5, being 5 the most effective.

5. Had you have the experience to apply mnemonic techniques to teach vocabulary with fifth graders? If so, what type of vocabulary did you covered?

Universidad Internacional de las Américas

Inglés con Énfasis en Enseñanza

Student: Ingrid Jiménez Zúñiga

Date: February 24th, 2021

Institution: Agustín Segura School

First Observation Checklist

Attendance _____

Aspects to be Consider	Observed	Not Observed
1. It is noticed that students have a confident relationship with their teacher.		
2. During the lesson students receive some minutes dedicated just to the instruction of vocabulary.		
3. Students have visual aids in the classroom to reinforce vocabulary studied during the lesson.		
4. Students participate actively during the lesson making questions related to vocabulary during the lesson.		
5. Teacher clarify properly doubts formulated by students.		
6. There is use of Spanish by the teacher during the lesson.		
7. Students use Spanish to ask questions related to vocabulary to the teacher.		
8. Students received a worksheet to practice in class the vocabulary studied during the lesson.		
9. Students receive homework to reinforce vocabulary at home.		
10. Students show evidence of stress regarding vocabulary.		

Comments:

Universidad Internacional de las Américas

Inglés con Énfasis en Enseñanza

Student: Ingrid Jiménez Zúñiga

Date: March 3rd, 2021

Institution: Agustín Segura School

2nd Observation Checklist

Attendance _____

Aspects to be Consider	Observed	Not Observed
1. Students have a confident relationship with their instructor.		
2. Students produce orally the vocabulary studied with proficiency.		
3. Students dominate the concept of acrostic and its objective		
4. Students participate actively during the lesson making questions related to vocabulary or expressing comments.		
5. Students use English during the lesson.		
6. Students require translation to understand the meaning of the words.		
7. Students try to create their own acrostic before the teacher gives the instruction.		
8. Students analyze acrostic examples that do not have an image to illustrate them.		
9. Students are able to retrieve words studied during the lesson without making use of the illustrative worksheet for remember.		
10. Students evidence stress regarding vocabulary.		

Comments:

Universidad Internacional de las Américas

Inglés con Énfasis en Enseñanza

Date: March 3rd, 2021

Evaluation Rubric

Student: Ingrid Jiménez Zúñiga

Institution: Agustín Segura School

3rd Session Rubric

Student: - _____

Total 20 Points

Notes _____

Points obtained _____

Grade _____

Aspect	Excellent (5 Points)	Very good (4 points)	Good (3 Points)	Acceptable (2 Points)	Requires Improvement (1Point)
New Vocabulary Comprehension	Student understands the meaning of the word based on the image	Student understands the meaning of the word after teacher makes gestures	Student understands the meaning of less than 10 words	Student understands the meaning of less than 5 words after watching the images	Definitely student does not understand the meaning of the words
Comprehension of color patterns	Student makes an appropriate relation of words with color	Student relates the color with the word after some confusion	Student seems to understand but mistakes when practicing	Student understands the relation color- word just after the explanation	Student does not understand the relation of the color with the word

Retention capability	Student retrieves all the words studied	Student can't remember less than 5 words	Student can't remember more than 5 words	Student can't remember more than 10 words	Student can't remember almost the complete vocabulary studied
Motivation while practicing Mnemonic techniques	Student communicates his/her motivation directly	Student seems very motivated but does not communicate it	Student is motivated a while but gets distracted easily	Student shows motivation only when gives a good answer	Student is not motivated with the lesson

Universidad Internacional de las Américas

Inglés con Énfasis en Enseñanza

Student: Ingrid Jiménez Zúñiga

Date: March 2nd, 2021

Institution: Agustín Segura School

Pre- test #1

Appearance and Personality Adjectives Diagnostic

Student: _____

Total 15 Points

Comments _____

Points Obtained _____

Universidad Internacional de las Américas

Inglés con Énfasis en Enseñanza

Student: Ingrid Jiménez Zúñiga

Date: March 10th, 2021

Institution: Agustín Segura School

Post-test Rubric

Student _____

Total 20 Points

Points Obtained _____

Final grade _____

Comments:

Evaluation Test (Adjectives)

Evaluation Criteria	Excellent (3Points)	Good (2 Points)	Needs Improvement (1Point)
I Part. Identification	Student evidence excellent knowledge of the vocabulary	Student does not recognize some of the adjectives in the test	Student does not know most of the words
II Part Short Answer	Student is capable to generate at least 5 different words to describe the image	Student provides no more than 3 words to describe the image	Student gives only 1 word or even does not give any word for the description
III Part. Fill in the blanks	Student Completes correctly the exercise	Student fails at least 2 options	Student Fails 3 or more than 3 options
III Part Oral Expression	Student is able to express the idea using at least 5 adjectives	The vocabulary is poor	Student can't develop the exercise.
Exam Completion Status	Student delivered the test complete.	Student delivered the test with at least 5 incomplete items	Student delivered the test with more than 5 incomplete items.

Evaluation Criteria	Excellent (4points)	Good (3points)	Acceptable (2points)	Needs Improvement (1point)
---------------------	---------------------	----------------	----------------------	----------------------------

I Part	21 words recalled	Between 15 and 20 words recalled	Between 10 and 15 words recalled	Less than 10 words recalled
II Part	25 different descriptive words used	Between 15 and 20 descriptive words used	Between 10 and 15 descriptive words used	Less than 10 descriptive words used
III Part	20 words retrieved	Between 15 and 20 words retrieved	Between 10 and 15 words retrieved	Less than 10 words retrieved
III Part	20 words in the correct category	Between 15 and 20 words in the correct category	Between 10 and 15 words in the correct category	Less than 10 words in the correct category
IV Part	The student wrote 1 word for each of his/her name letters	The student wrote only 3 words	The student wrote only 2 words	The student wrote only 1 or less words

Lesson plans

The following lesson plan were created and used by the researcher for the sessions in which the she implemented mnemonic techniques, the pre-test and post-test to the fifth graders at Agustín Segura School. Instructor: Ingrid Jiménez Zúñiga
 School term: First semester

Subject: Mnemonic Techniques investigation Session 2

Date: March 2nd, 2021

(Pre-test, 1st Instruction of Vocabulary)

Agustín Segura School

Level 5th

Estimated Time: 40 minutes

Linguistic Objectives At the end of the lesson SS will be able to	Mediation Strategies Topic: PRE-TEST Adjectives	Evaluation of learning outcomes Ss will be assessed through
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Remember some adjectives they already knew and have an idea of what the instruction is going to be about. Remember some adjectives through the use of the house image and the acronyms present in the paper. 	<p>WU: T. will ask the following question: Do you know what an adjective is? After getting some answers from the students, teacher will make a brief explanation about adjectives (3min)</p> <p>PRS 1: T. Will provide the students with a diagnostic test (PRE-TEST) (17min)</p> <p>MI: Visual, interpersonal, verbal linguistic, logical</p> <p>PRS: 2 Teacher will explain mnemonic activity 1 base on a house image. Then , the second explanation will be using Soldiers images and their emotions(20 min)</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> The rubric created for the pre-test. The doubts, questions or evidence of understanding that students show.

Instructor: Ingrid Jiménez Zúñiga

School term: First semester

Subject: Mnemonic Techniques investigation Session 5

Date: March 15th, 2021

POST-TEST

Agustín Segura School

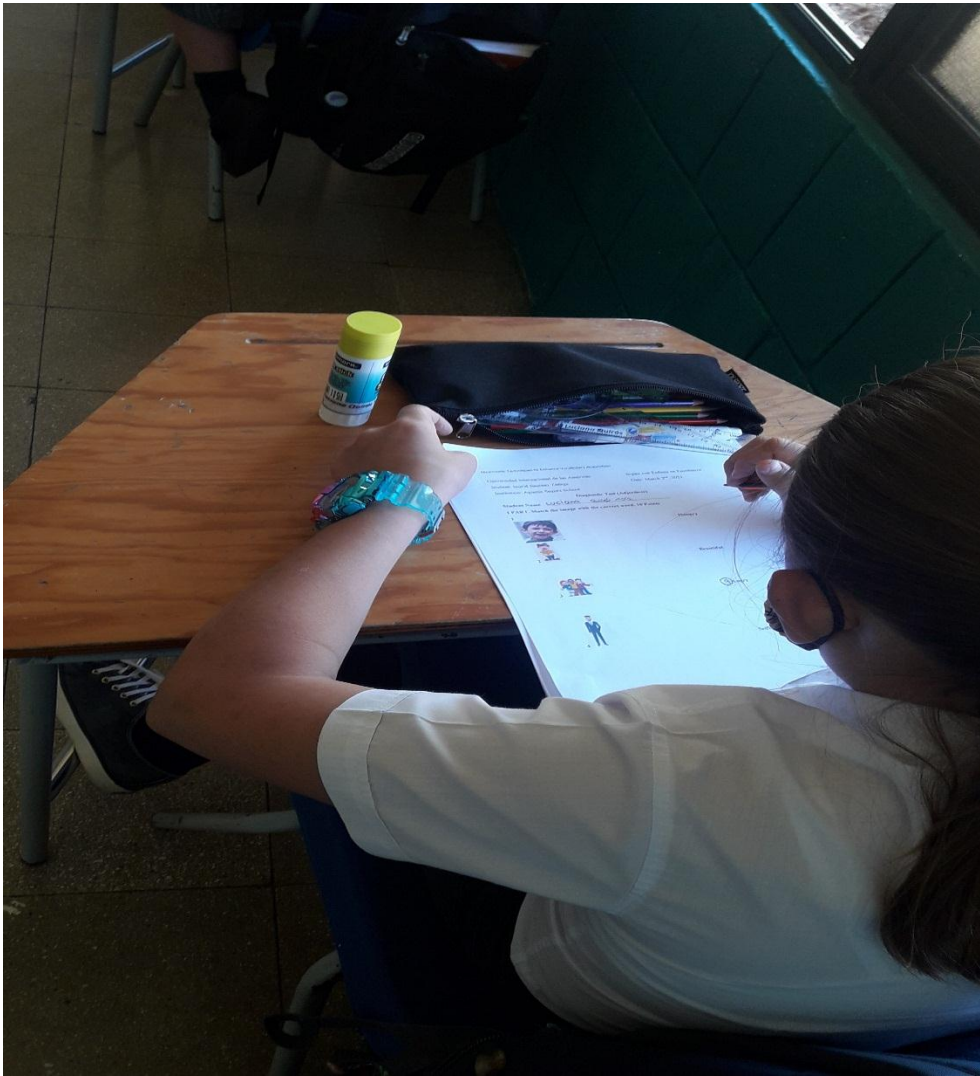
Level 5th

Estimated Time: 30 minutes

Linguistic Objectives At the end of the lesson SS will be able to	Mediation Strategies Topic: Post-test	Evaluation of learning outcomes Ss will be assessed through
1. Apply the knowledge acquired remembering words regarding adjectives vocabulary studied using mnemonic techniques.	1 PRS Teacher will make a brief oral summary of the topics studied during the 3 previous sessions. (10min) PRT. Students will develop individually the test. (20min) MI: Visual, interpersonal, verbal linguistic, logical, intrapersonal	The rubric created for the post-test

Evidences











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San José. Viernes 19 de febrero de 2021

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Universidad Internacional de las Américas

La suscrita, MSc. Karen Sánchez Flores, en calidad de directora de la Escuela Agustín Segura, certifica que la estudiante Ingrid Jiménez Zúñiga, cédula 1-0245-05-154, cuenta con el debido permiso para realizar actividades como parte de su trabajo final de investigación, en esta institución.

MSc. Karen Sánchez Flores

Directora.



Transformación curricular una apuesta por la calidad educativa

Escuela Agustín Segura, Jericó, San Miguel, Código: 0516

Teléfono 25000757 Circuito 04

esc.agustinsegura@mep.go.cr