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SUPPORTING INCIDENTAL VOCABULARY LEARNING BY MEANS OF STRATEGY TRAINING AND ONLINE RESOURCES

Running head: Supporting Incidental Vocabulary Learning by Means of Strategy Training and Online Resources

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SUPPORTING INCIDENTAL VOCABULARY LEARNING BY MEANS OF STRATEGY TRAINING AND ONLINE RESOURCES

Supporting incidental vocabulary learning in young learners by means of strategy training
and online resources while reading e-storybooks

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Abstract

This study on vocabulary learning strategy training as a practice to promote autonomous learning of incidental vocabulary when reading e-storybooks was conducted with a group of 28 first graders at Saint George's School, a private institution in Bogota, Colombia. Strategy training is an instructional technique aimed to empower learners to acquire new words in English on their own, especially during extensive reading, when it is believed learners incidentally acquire a large amount of vocabulary. Data collection instruments involved teacher's field notes and learner and parent questionnaires. The information gathered was analyzed following grounded theory procedures.

As a result, it was evident that training learners on looking up words in an online dictionary, mnemonics and verbal repetition strategies boosted their learning of incidental vocabulary as observed in the vocabulary pre- and post-tests. Additionally, learners displayed a high degree of positive motivation towards the use of strategies. Finally, learning how to use online tools to complement the strategies has helped – and will continue helping – learners become more autonomous when encountering unknown vocabulary.

***Key words:** Incidental Vocabulary through Reading, Vocabulary Learning Strategy Training and Autonomous Learning, Young Learners, and E-storybooks*

Resumen

El presente estudio sobre la formación en estrategias para el aprendizaje de vocabulario como práctica para promover el aprendizaje autónomo de vocabulario incidental a la hora de leer cuentos electrónicos se llevó a cabo con un grupo de 28 estudiantes del grado Primero en el Colegio San Jorge de Inglaterra, una institución privada en Bogotá, Colombia. El instruir estrategias para aprender vocabulario es una técnica orientada a empoderar a los estudiantes para que adquieran nuevo vocabulario en inglés por sus propios medios, más específicamente, cuando hacen lectura extensiva, cuando se cree los estudiantes incidentalmente aprenden una gran cantidad de vocabulario. Los instrumentos de recolección de datos incluyeron notas de campo y encuestas a padres y alumnos. La información obtenida se analizó siguiendo los procedimientos de Teoría Fundamentada que dieron origen a las categorías y subcategorías que dieron respuesta a la pregunta de investigación.

Como resultado, se evidenció que instruir a los estudiantes en estrategias para buscar palabras en el diccionario, relacionar una palabra con un dibujo (mnemotecnia), y repetición verbal estimuló el aprendizaje de vocabulario como se pudo observar en el pre y post test realizado. Esta ampliación de su vocabulario fue corroborada igualmente por las positivas opiniones de los estudiantes frente al uso de las estrategias. Finalmente, haber instruido a los estudiantes en cómo usar las herramientas para poner en práctica las estrategias mencionadas anteriormente contribuyó y continuará contribuyendo en el desarrollo de un proceso de aprendizaje más autónomo, especialmente, en el aprendizaje de vocabulario nuevo.

***Palabras clave:** Vocabulario Incidental a través de la Lectura, Entrenamiento en Estrategias para el Aprendizaje, Autonomía, Libros Electrónicos*

Chapter One: Introduction

“Without grammar, very little can be conveyed. Without vocabulary, nothing can be conveyed.” –Wilkins (1972, p.111)

Vocabulary is the key to a learner understanding of what s/he hears and reads at school and, naturally, to communicate successfully with other people. As McCarthy (1988) notes, “no matter how well the learner learns grammar, no matter how successfully the sounds of L2 are mastered, without words to express a wider range of meanings, communication in L2 just cannot happen in any meaningful way” (p.23). Therefore, it is essential for a learner of English as a Second Language (ESL) to build up a large bank of words to which s/he can rely on when receiving or conveying a message. This is why, the teaching and learning of vocabulary has been of keen interest for scholars and teachers considering its role within the communication process.

Teaching new words in the ESL classroom is a challenge for all teachers. “As a teacher we not only feel responsible for our own use of language, we also feel compelled to focus on vocabulary study so that our learners are exposed to rich, expressive language” (Allen, 1999, p.1). It is easy to assume that by teaching vocabulary in the classroom, or even by the simple exposure to the language, learners will learn and remember the words taught. Notwithstanding, word knowledge involves recognizing the meaning for the word, its written form, its spoken form, its grammatical behavior, the collocations of the word, the register of the word, the associations of the word, and the frequency of the word.

Although part of the vocabulary learning occurs intentionally, in the classroom, research on vocabulary instruction indicates that, “except for the first few thousand most common words, L2 vocabulary is predominantly acquired incidentally” (Huckin & Coady, 1999, p.27). In other words, learners build their bank of words through listening to adults, oral language and reading extensively. In this order of ideas, the number of words that

learners can acquire from a vocabulary class is minimum compared to that acquired when reading for pleasure, for example. Thus, promoting extensive reading not only in the ESL classroom but also in all classrooms becomes a huge advantage for learners if they need to learn a wide variety of words in order to be competent in the language.

Since it is impossible for learners to learn all vocabulary from books, it is essential for teachers to assist them in building their own vocabulary through the learning of language strategies, defined by O'Malley and Chamot (1990) as "special thoughts or behaviors that individuals use to comprehend, learn or retain new information" (p. 1). Thus, by instructing learners with the strategies available and raising their awareness of the strategies that suit them best for learning words, they can gain independence and become responsible for their own learning, enhancing their vocabulary development. Therefore, designing a pedagogical intervention where learners are instructed on certain vocabulary learning strategies to implement when reading could trigger their vocabulary knowledge.

Being a competent learner in English is essential. Indeed, being aware of the importance of graduating bilingual professionals in order to be competitive in today's globalized world, Colombian Ministry of Education launched the *2004 Colombia Bilingüe* program for the purpose of establishing English as an important element in the educational curriculum. Colombia's educational model includes, in accordance with the CEFR¹, basic standards to be competent in English as a foreign language so schools, learners and parents have knowledge of the related guidelines. Designed to develop the communication competence, the criteria are outlined according to school grades and skills: receptive (listening and reading) and productive (writing and speaking). Vocabulary development is essential in grades 1 to 3 (Beginner or A1 in CEFR) in which learners are expected to

¹ CEFR stands for the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages, designed in 2001 as a way to provide a common criteria in Europe about what learners are expected to learn and the skills they would need to communicate in a second language.

recognize and convey simple messages as well as to maintain a simple conversation with others. Although these criteria have helped to standardize the English level that learners from private and public schools should attain, little has been said about the methodology involved in order to accomplish these objectives, especially in regards to building vocabulary.

As stated before, reading is an important skill to be developed in both first and second languages considering the impact on vocabulary development. However, statistics from the Colombian Educational Ministry show that Colombian learners exhibit poor reading habits (MEN, 2011). Therefore, the role of current teachers and institutions is to encourage learners from an early age not only to read for pleasure, but also to provide them with a wide variety of strategies applicable when reading, bearing in mind its benefits to vocabulary acquisition and its positive impact on the communication in English and learner autonomy.

Thus, this study is focused towards training young learners in vocabulary learning strategies as means for gaining autonomy when dealing with unknown vocabulary while using online tools as they read digital texts.

In this research you will find five more chapters. Chapter two considers the main constructs that support this research. Chapter three offers the design of this research in which context, participants and data collection instruments are considered. Chapter four depicts the steps that were followed in order to plan and implement the pedagogical intervention. Chapter five exhibits the analysis of the data gathered through the intervention stage and the categories emerged from this data. Finally, chapter six presents the conclusions, pedagogical intervention and further research.

Statement of the problem

In my experience as an EFL (English as a Foreign Language) teacher at Saint George's School, reading is considered an important practice from pre-kinder to eleventh

grade, learners are encouraged to develop reading habits not only in Spanish (learners' mother tongue) but also in English. In first grade, learners attend the library once every 6-day cycle to develop a Reading Plan throughout the year. This consists of learners reading a selection of four mandatory books at school and another six titles from the Oxford Reading Tree series (Stage 7) accessible at school or at home in learners' spare time. Additionally, a classroom library is available with a variety of titles that can be read in leisure time. This approach towards reading has established for learners a culture of reading for pleasure to the extent that they read at least one book a week or even one a day either at school or home where they have easy access to reading materials.

The group of first graders who are the object of study is between 7 and 8 years old; they have been studying at Saint George's School for four years. This implies that these learners should be able to use English for oral communication and very simple written tasks such as filling forms with personal details and writing simple sentences, characteristics of A1 level learners according to the CEFR. These learners are in the process of developing their oral and written skills, although listening and reading abilities are slightly more developed than speaking and writing production. In sum, these learners are able to understand readings and recordings with simple content and to produce simple sentences.

Nonetheless, after informal observation of learners in the classroom and through discussions with other first grade teachers and the English department chair (who also teaches first graders), it was detected that although being widely exposed to English through different sources, especially reading – as was formerly described – these learners exhibited having a poor range of vocabulary use. Indeed, in a questionnaire conducted (Appendix A) during the

needs analysis stage², 90% percent of learners expressed a lack of necessary vocabulary to communicate; they said the vocabulary learned was not enough to convey meaning.

Additionally, when I prompted learners to produce sentences spontaneously, their vocabulary limited to the words learnt in previous years – words that describe body parts, animals, colors and other simple topics introduced – and the repeated use of common words supported in occasions with their first language. Hence, learners seem not to learn, recall and make use of new vocabulary easily. As a matter of fact, when these learners were asked about the strategies employed to understand unknown vocabulary when reading for pleasure, their responses hinted to no particular use of strategies. This may suggest a lack of knowledge about the strategies that help them learn new vocabulary best when reading books or to a lack of awareness of the strategies available to help them learn new vocabulary. The above elements also suggest a significant lack of control of learners related to their vocabulary learning.

Another significant issue revealed in the needs analysis questionnaire is learners' motivation towards the use of new technologies such as computers for reading. Nowadays, learners have the possibility to read books printed or digital, the latter being more popular among young learners given the interaction provided with motion pictures and audio books (Ciampa, 2012). In fact, learners expressed they have been acquainted with e-storybooks, referring them as their preferred means due to their ease at using different features such as customizing text size and the turning of pages which facilitates the reading process. In

² A questionnaire was applied to learners in order to understand their needs and what could be improved through this research. In this questionnaire learners were inquired about their reading habits and their knowledge on the strategies they used when encountering new vocabulary. Additionally, they were asked about the use of technology when reading. Results showed that 85% of learners are constantly engaged with reading whether at home or at school by expressing reading at least one book a week for pleasure. Moreover, 54% of learners exhibited awareness on strategies to learn new vocabulary being asking someone for the meaning of the word the most used and looking up the word in the dictionary the least used. In regards to the use of technology when reading, 90% of learners exhibited a strong engagement towards reading through the use of a computer.

addition, it was evinced that e-storybooks engaged them through the motion and audio support features.

Thus, reading books on a digital version appears more motivating for this group of learners, resulting in a meaningful means to read books. As Ausubel (1968) states, “any learning can be meaningful if learners have a meaningful learning set, that is a disposition to relate the new learning task to what they already know and the learning task itself is potentially meaningful to learners” (p. 108). Thus, using e-storybooks, or reading electronic books, could be a successful tool to gain learners’ attention when reading given that it represents an appealing resource for learners.

Poor or limited vocabulary repertoires at this young age poses difficulties for learners since vocabulary is considered as the building blocks that help ESL learners to label objects, actions, and ideas without which people cannot convey the intended meaning (Karami & Barekat, 2012). As stated by Nation (2008), “many of the difficulties in both receptive and productive language use result from an inadequate vocabulary” (p.2). Therefore, and bearing in mind that learners at Saint George’s School are expected to graduate with a minimum C1, I was challenged to find appealing and accurate manners to equip learners with vocabulary learning strategies that help them meet this goal successfully.

Following Corbin and Strauss (2008) qualitative analysis procedures, the results of the needs analysis stage confirmed that learners are in need of more vocabulary repertoires to feel comfortable when communicating in English. Besides, they displayed strong interest in the use of technological means. Therefore, in my identity as teacher-researcher, I decided to formulate the following questions and objectives in order to approach the aforementioned issue.

Research Question

How does the use of vocabulary learning strategies (mnemonics, verbal repetition and use of online dictionary) implemented through online tools impact the autonomous learning of incidental vocabulary when reading e-storybooks in first grade learners from Saint George's School?

Main Research Objective

To determine the impact of instructing vocabulary learning strategies as (mnemonics, verbal repetition and use of online dictionary) implemented through online tools in the autonomous acquisition of incidental vocabulary when reading e-storybooks in first grade learners from Saint George's School.

Specific objectives

- To analyze the efficacy of mnemonics, verbal repetition and use of online dictionary strategies to learn incidental vocabulary.
- To determine the effectiveness of vocabulary strategy implemented through online tools training in the development of autonomous learning in young learners.

Rationale

Bearing in mind that it is the third most widely spoken native language in the world and the official language most spoken (Lewis, 2009), English is the first choice as a second language around the world. To speak English, therefore, not only permits its users to interact with hundreds of others speakers all over the world but also causes sensitive learners towards the social, cultural and economic background. Thus, it is constitutive for young learners at

Saint George's School to earn and master a communicative competence in English to become more competent citizens of the world.

As an educator, I have seen the impact of technology in the field of education and the enrichment and enhancement in the learning process owed to new digital tools and resources. Nowadays, teachers cope with learners that interact easily with computers and other electronic devices; resources that have discretely blended into the classroom. "They have spent their entire lives surrounded by and using computers, videogames, digital music players, video cams, cell phones, and all the other toys and tools of the digital age" (Prensky, 2001, p.1). Acknowledging the significance of vocabulary for communication purposes through extensive reading and considering learners' needs and interests, the present study offers both teachers and learners the possibility to enjoy reading through the use of technology. Additionally, it provides information on tools facilitating the implementation of vocabulary learning strategies as the first step to develop their learner autonomy based on the fact that using strategies stimulate independency and self-direction for the future of the learning process.

The present project might have implications not only for the learners involved but also for educators, who may broaden their understanding on the knowledge regarding the use of electronic tools for teaching vocabulary. Firstly, the use of e-storybooks may be more motivating and engaging for learners since it offers innovative features such as video, animations and sounds. Thus, learners' learning of vocabulary may be more enjoyable.

Secondly, multimedia sources offer tools such as word pronunciation pages, online dictionaries and bank of images, among others. These features support learners in their acquisition and implementation of vocabulary learning strategies within just a click away when using online resources. Thus, learners will learn techniques to make their learning more effective and efficient turning them into better learners.

Thirdly, this study might enrich the teaching vocabulary practices through reading e-storybooks. Through the use of e-storybooks teachers may improve vocabulary teaching and learning by taking advantage of other electronic resources such as online dictionaries and pictures, enhancing their teaching practices and fostering learners' acquisition of vocabulary.

Finally, this study will open the possibility to conduct future research to explore in depth the phenomena of strategy training young learners, considering the impact of learning a wide range of vocabulary on the future performance of any language learner.

Chapter Two: Theoretical Framework

This chapter will describe in detail the main constructs considered in the current study. It reviews second language vocabulary acquisition, extensive reading, vocabulary learning strategies and online tools. First, it addresses technology as the motivator means to encourage learners not only to read but also to practice the strategies learned for language learning. Second, it presents generalities on the learning of incidental vocabulary through reading and the influence on vocabulary learning when reading e-storybooks. Finally, it discusses overviews of strategy instruction and its impact on learners' autonomy, developing vocabulary-learning strategies such as mnemonics, looking up words in an online dictionary and verbal repetition.

Technology and Language Learning

Technological developments have the capacity to change every field of study, and the language-learning field is not an exception. Among those developments the computer appears as the provider of opportunities combining educational needs and technological means for language learning process. Numerous researchers have addressed the effectiveness of this medium and its application on language learning.

Computer Assisted Language Learning (CALL) was once defined as any process in which a learner uses a computer and, as a result, improves his or her language (Beatty, 2010). However, as this field progressed its principles aligned with the ones of the communicative approach in language learning reaching fields named pragmatics. CALL is, therefore, a multidisciplinary field since its evolution is the result of the contributions of other fields aiming to shape the different perceptions of the role of computers in the language learning process. CALL permeates numerous sub-areas and has a direct and intrinsic relationship with the accelerated, enhanced and effective teaching of languages mediated through computers

(Cuesta, 2012). CALL in this project will be understood as the term enclosing the concepts of teaching, learning and technology.

It has been claimed that CALL programs stimulate and enrich classroom applications (Greene, 2000; Fu, 2002; Chen, 2005). In their study, Baş and Kuzucu (2009) list some of the reasons to use CALL in language learning process, “experiential learning, motivation, enhancement of learners’ achievement, authentic materials for study, greater instruction, individualization, independence from single source of information and global understanding” (p. 8). Therefore, using computers and Internet to support language learning is a huge advantage for teachers, given that it offers a variety of resources that can meet learners’ individual needs, and for learners, since this means maintains their attention and raises their levels of motivation.

According to Hwere (2007), the technologies used in CALL instruction fall into two categories: software and Internet-based tools. Both approaches have been object of study, specifically in the field of vocabulary learning given its importance for proficiency in the language. On one hand, some researchers have tried to create computer programs that can facilitate vocabulary learning (Groot, 2000; Boers, Eyckmans & Stengers, 2004; Bekleyen & Yilmaz, 2011); findings indicated a substantial increase in learners’ scores in the post vocabulary test. On the other, online tools have also been addressed for vocabulary learning purposes. Internet provides learners with rich sources, increasing its popularity in L2 teaching and learning (Dalton & Grisham, 2011). The research of Horst, Cobb, and Nicolae (2005), reported success in the familiarization of learners with a variety of research-based strategies for learning and retaining new vocabulary. Additionally, it highlighted the importance of online tools such as dictionaries, among others, for vocabulary learning. Finally, it concludes that vocabulary learning through on-line resources offers rich input and encourages deeper mental processing of words.

Therefore, for purposes of this research computer use and online tools will be the main means of implementation for both reading and strategy use methods proposed to enhance vocabulary development in young learners.

Incidental Vocabulary Learning through Reading, and E-books

Vocabulary is an essential feature of any language; communication can occur knowing the grammar even if the structures are used appropriately, but little can be communicated if there is no knowledge of vocabulary. L2 learners know how critical vocabulary is to L2 success, and they consistently cite their lack of vocabulary knowledge as an area in which they are deficient (Folse, 2004; Nation, 1990). Learners frequently acquire impoverished lexicons despite years of formal study (Hunt & Beglar, 2005). Therefore, vocabulary has received special attention in recent years among researchers interested in the teaching and learning in the classroom.

Reading has long been considered a powerful source for the acquisition of vocabulary for L2 learners. Indeed, by developing a wide range of lexicon learners enrich language skills such as listening, speaking, reading and writing. A large body of research has explored the elements in the process of vocabulary learning and pedagogical implications for teaching and learning of vocabulary, including the role of frequency of exposure in vocabulary development (Gass & Mackey, 2002; Rott, 2007), strategies of vocabulary learning (Nassaji, 2004), and vocabulary acquisition through reading (Wesche & Paribakht, 2000).

A special focus in research has been directed towards the type of vocabulary learning, in which there is a debate between explicit and implicit learning on one hand, and incidental learning on the other. Incidental vocabulary learning occurs when the focus of attention is not on the main cognitive activity (Coady, 1999, Roar & Schmitt, 2002). This process may take place in different contexts among which extensive reading is continuously recommended as

learners are exposed to “large quantities of material within their linguistic competence” (Grabe & Stoller, 2002, p. 259), developing readers’ fluency by rapidly accessing to L2 words through the frequency they are found.

Several investigations have been carried out regarding this issue (Brown, Waring, & Donkaewbua, 2008; Krashen, 2004; Kweon & Kim, 2008; Laufer, 2001; Lehmann, 2007; Lee & Hsu, 2009; Ponniah, 2009). Findings support the evidence that reading with no planned vocabulary learning results in incidental vocabulary learning. As learners read and encounter unknown words, they acquire part of the meaning that is later reinforced with the repeated exposure to such words increasing the amount of vocabulary learned. Kweon and Kim (2008) confirm in their research that second language learners acquire vocabulary incidentally through extensive reading and the acquired vocabulary is retained without much attrition because the subjects acquired lexical knowledge when they focus on meaning. Therefore, this method prompts learners to develop vocabulary learning only by exposing them to reading books in their spare time, method used in the present research as the means for increasing vocabulary development.

Reading and vocabulary development occur in two stages: as Nation (1990) states, the partial meaning of a word occurs from the first exposure, which is referred to as fast mapping, and the complete knowledge of a new word (full mapping) happens when encountering the word repeatedly in different contexts. This is confirmed in a Vagovich and Newhoff (2004) study in which children acquired partial word knowledge in just one-exposure to words encountered and an increase in word knowledge after reading the same story three times. With a sufficient amount of written language exposure, vocabulary learning can be substantial (Waring and Takaki, 2003; Pigada and Schmitt, 2006; and Pellicer-Sánchez and Schmitt, 2010); the results have confirmed that a word appearing frequently within a text or through reading results in the learning of a word knowledge in form and

meaning. In a Mason and Krashen (2004) study, a story-only group acquired meaning more efficiently than the story-plus study group, which focused more on traditional vocabulary exercises. Thus, through extensive reading young learners can access a wide range of vocabulary since they begin to learn a word from the first encounter and later extend it with the frequency of encounters through different texts.

Despite the evidence gathered throughout research on the impact of incidental vocabulary learning through reading, it has been claimed that incidental vocabulary learning is more effective when supplemented with some intentional learning. Any increase in vocabulary size must be the result of the combination of both approaches (Nation 1990; Pigida & Schmitt, 2006). The former argument is further supported by a Peters, Hulstijn, Sercu and Lutjeharms (2009) study which concluded that incidental learning is not adequate unless learners are engaged in additional activities, namely paying attention to words deemed to be important, marking down new words or reviewing new vocabulary regularly. Hence, the teaching of vocabulary in this study will be focused to help learners expand the knowledge of words through the teaching of strategies that can be implemented when reading, issue that will be address later in this chapter.

Regarding online reading, computers offer special features that are more appealing to learners than the designed materials used in traditional education. Digital materials feature interactive multimedia, which include sound animation and motion video. Different researchers have focused on the impact of these features on language learning process (Kayaoglu, Dag Akbas & Öztürk, 2011; Bekleyen & Yilmaz, 2012; Kun 2011, Naraghizadeh & Barimani 2013). The results of these studies agreed that exposing learners to multiple modalities of presentation such as printed text, sound picture or video triggers the connections between the verbal and visual system, resulting in an improved retention of words in learners. In Colombia, multimedia and vocabulary acquisition in English has been

also object of study. In her research, Moreno (2013) noted that the use of multimedia resources and images concurs with Krashen's input hypothesis, according to which people acquire a language by comprehending the message. In other words, it is through understanding a written or an oral message that language is acquired.

E-books

One of the materials evolving into electronic media is the *book*, available now in digital version. Electronic books or (e-books) are characterized by the inclusion of any type of texts in digital form that can be accessed through the Internet, a computer or any device designed for this purpose. This emergent technology has become relevant in educational contexts given the advantages it offers over traditional books. E-books not only present features such as audio, animations, songs, and videos, which are not only more appealing for learners, but have also changed the nature of information and how ideas can be shared, recorded and explored (Beatty, 2010). Indeed, Korat (2008) found that young children respond well to these enhanced features what, in turn, make learners to be more engaged and motivated in their learning process. Thus, researchers are using e-books as tools to do their research in order to understand its role and effectiveness in the process of teaching and learning in L2.

Teachers attempt to make learners more knowledgeable by providing them with critical thinking skills and teaching them lifelong learning strategies. According to Beatty (2010), "CALL helps in this process by increasing the resources available to learners outside the classroom through the search tools for finding that information and the presentation of that information in multiple media" (p.52). Therefore, it is viable for children to transfer the strategies to learn vocabulary when reading online given that e-books offer digital features that support the implementation of the strategies.

The above has been of keen interest in research as well as suggesting that e-storybooks may represent facilitating tools of vocabulary learning since the sound and animations in 3D can help illustrate meaning to young learners. In addition, they provide learners with easy and instant access if they need help defining or pronouncing the words; these features eventually make them more autonomous and responsible for their own learning. In 2008, Korat investigated whether learners exposed to electronic books showed improvement in word meaning, recognition and phonological awareness. The results suggested that children improved their understanding of words' meaning after working with electronic books. Indeed, the learners who improved the most were the ones who chose the mode of "read story with dictionary" given the fact they were able to have instant access to the definitions of words that were unknown to them.

Although electronic books may facilitate vocabulary acquisition through their digital features, this may be also a disadvantage for the learning process. In 2004, De Long concluded that learners could get easily distracted and miss important elements while reading. Indeed, in her study on children's understanding of stories presented to them electronically, she exposed that additional features such as sound effects and animations actually can interfere with children's comprehension of the text. These findings should be taken into consideration as possible limitations for the present study given that participants access to the features that were previously referred to as possible distractors. Thus, these findings are useful for the present study in order to anticipate these constraints during the implementation stage when e-storybooks are used.

As a conclusion, for the purpose of this study, incidental vocabulary will be considered as that vocabulary learned through reading for pleasure. It has been claimed that extensive reading is a powerful practice that provides learners with storage of a wide range of vocabulary given the naturalness and easiness in which this is acquired. Moreover, it is

evident that reading e-books expands learning, more specifically the learning of vocabulary supported by multiple media sources such as audio and images. Notwithstanding, research has also indicated that vocabulary learning could be enhanced with teacher involvement towards the instruction of learning strategies, empowering learners to be more autonomous in their learning of words.

Fostering autonomy through vocabulary learning strategy training

Since it is impossible for teachers to equip learners with all the vocabulary they need within the classroom, it is imperative that learners are engaged in extensive reading given its benefits to the broadening of vocabulary size. Notwithstanding, Nation (2005) notes that there is no evidence indicating that incidental learning of vocabulary provides learners with better word knowledge than through explicit instruction. Likewise, this knowledge cannot be fully taught through direct instruction, indicating that there must be more responsibility on the part of the learner in order to be more competent with vocabulary knowledge. Therefore, it is important for teachers to instruct learners on how to become more autonomous in their process of learning.

It is commonly recognised in today's world that autonomous and self-regulated learners will be at an advantage in continuing to learn and adjust throughout their lives as technology and information develop rapidly and continuously. To foster learner autonomy, then, is a profitable practice, yet teachers are sceptical about teaching learners to become more autonomous, especially at a young age. Indeed, Cameron (2001) points out that teachers tend to underestimate the potential for self-regulation in children, since learning arises from interaction and interaction is characterized by interdependence, the development of autonomy in learners presupposes the development of autonomy in teachers. Nevertheless, "scholars and practitioners have connected teacher autonomy to learner learning" (Usma, 2007, p.246).

Therefore, in this research, it was crucial for me as the teacher to reformulate the way in which children are taught in order to incorporate practices that lead to autonomy development by both being examples of autonomy myself and planning classes that provide learners with the necessary tools to become more independent and take charge of their own learning.

CALL is a field closely related to other areas of study within applied linguistics such as autonomy in language learning (Beatty, 2003). Technology is considered to be the approach that provides opportunities for autonomy and self-directed learning. A great number of authors have addressed the relationship between computer, computer-based learning and strategy training (Peterson, 1997; Kojic-Sabo and Lightbrown, 1999; Kilickaya & Krajka 2010). Results of these studies have strongly suggested time and learner independence as the two most closely related successful elements for a high level of achievement in vocabulary learning. Kojic-Sabo and Lightbrown (1999) indicated that strategy use played a significant role in language learning, especially in learning vocabulary words.

According to Benson (2011) in order for learners to take greater control of their own learning, the provision of the needed skills to take advantage of opportunities is essential in the process. One approach that relates directly to this is instructing learners with vocabulary strategy use. In the Griva, Kamaroudis and Geladari (2010) study, it was found that effective vocabulary development is a complex process, which requires a combination of instruction and encouragement of learning strategy. Thus, it is necessary to implement cycles of strategy use practice to encourage learners to become skillful and become effective while using them.

Learning strategies are modes or methods that learners use to give solution to a problem or accomplish certain objectives (Chamot, Barnhardt, El-dinary, & Robins, 1990; O'Malley & Chamot, 1990). Oxford and Ehrman (1998) defined second language learning strategies as "specific actions, behaviors, steps, or techniques . . . used by learners to enhance their own learning" (p.8). Teaching learners strategies to acquire vocabulary, then, may

enhance their acquisition of incidental vocabulary and trigger some level of independence and autonomy when learning vocabulary. Learning strategies instruction can help EFL pupils become better learners since they are finding approaches to optimize the path (Griva et al., 2010; Heidari, Karimi & Imani, 2012). In addition, skill in using learning strategies assists learners in becoming independent, confident learners (Chamot, 1999, p.1). “Other strategies such as paraphrasing, using word parts, dictionary use and mnemonics techniques make learners independent from the teacher” (Nation, 1990, p.6).

Strategy instruction, therefore, relates directly to learner development and provides helpful coaching for learners to identify the factors that influence their learning process and realize which of those strategies work best for them. According to Cohen (1998), strategy learning encourages learners to find their own pathways to success, and thus promotes learner autonomy and self-direction. Nonetheless, research has also demonstrated that strategy training is more effective when it is integrated into a normal teaching programme (Dorney, 2005). Hence, the goal of strategy training is to promote learner autonomy and learner self-direction by allowing learners to select their own strategies, and to do so spontaneously without continuous prompting from the language teacher.

It has been proved that training is successful when teacher incorporate it into their normal classroom behaviour, which exposes the importance of incorporation between explicit learner development and language tasks and materials (Macaro, 2001; Nalkesen & Özek, 2011). “Learners need to receive training in order to use strategies effectively and appropriately, as simply knowing a strategy does not guarantee that the learner will employ that strategy, or will be able to use it effectively” (Vann, & Abraham, 1990, p.192). The most efficient way to raise learners’ awareness is through explicit instruction. According to Macaro (2001), teachers need to model strategies explicitly and repeatedly within the language-learning programme. The research of Nalkesen and Özek (2011) is particularly

informative here, citing that *Thinking Aloud* protocol sessions served as a very effective tool to understand the mental processing of the learners, the type of the strategies the learners employed to recall and learn the target words. Thus, in this research I play a major role in explicitly explaining, defining, demonstrating and supporting learners with a variety of strategies they learn in class for learners to use them appropriately.

Activities for learner development should be, then, those aimed at enhancing language learning based on the factors of the context, learning preferences and styles, unlimited number of strategies instructed and integrated with language tasks. The activities, which comply with the characteristics aforementioned and enhance autonomy as well, are those that are open-ended and accompanied by a reflection. Indeed, Kolb (2007) pointed out that reflective activities could be used with children as young as 8-9 years old who she considers are remarkably aware of the learning process and hold elaborate language beliefs.

Having charted the relevance of strategy training in young learners, it is pertinent here to direct the attention towards the strategies that are the object of study: mnemonics, looking up words in an online dictionary and verbal repetition. Early in 1997, Schmitt conducted a study to gather information on the learning strategies used for learning unknown words and to rate their effectiveness. Results suggested that the most popular strategies among learners were the use of bilingual dictionaries, verbal repetition and written repetition although it did not correlate strongly with English proficiency or vocabulary size. Gu and Johnson's (1996) study, suggested that learners could benefit from training on strategy option and use. Nonetheless, the aforementioned strategies – as they could seem less complex than others – could lead to better decoding of the vocabulary learning.

According to Oxford (2003) use of dictionary, mnemonics, and verbal repetition are subsumed under different taxonomy of vocabulary learning strategies. Each of the strategies is under a major category of strategies that enables learners to find a word's meaning through

different practices. The first strategy chosen is the use of dictionary framed under the discovery-type of strategies in which a learner finds a word's meaning through reference materials, mainly dictionaries. There have been various studies directed at analysing the impact of dictionary use as a strategy to learn new vocabulary. Studies have focused on determining the effectiveness of both monolingual and bilingual dictionaries in vocabulary learning (Luppescu & Day, 1993; Knight, 1994; Laufer, 1997), concluding that bilingualized dictionaries were found to be more efficient for comprehension of new words. Golavar, Beikian, Nooramin, & Firoozkoochi (2012) is an illustrative research of these conclusions. The study indicated that the group using the bilingual technical dictionary performed better in the final vocabulary test.

Additionally, Hulstijn et al. (1996) suggest that electronic dictionaries are easier to use than traditional dictionaries and the learners will be more likely to use them. An increase in the use of online dictionaries has been reported (Nesi, 2002; Boonmoh, 2010; Dashtestani, 2013; Marmol & Sánchez-Lafunte, 2013). Among the benefits found were: fast searches, input provided, support of individualized learning, speed at finalizing reading tasks and autonomy. Conversely, previous research has illustrated obstacles and challenges in the use of electronic dictionaries, although (Stirling, 2003; Yu-Lang, 2005) evinced distraction (I think you want to say that the results from these authors... "...dictionaries, although Stirling (2003) and Yu-Lang (2005) evinced distraction, ...) , lack of access to appropriate electronic dictionaries and complexity involving the look-up process seem to be underestimated by language teachers and thus learners fail to be proficient in the use of this strategy. As a result, incorporating dictionary use training in teaching practices to develop independent learning among language learners outside the classroom is of utmost importance for teachers.

The second strategy is mnemonics that is enclosed in the memory-type of strategies that aims to relate the target word with a previous knowledge. Indeed, Schmitt (1997)

acknowledges that new words can be learned by pairing them with pictures of their meanings instead of definitions; this process considered as a key-word mediation method is well-known in the educational literature for its effectiveness in accelerating learning speed and in boosting immediate recall of second language vocabulary.

As a matter of fact, Levin & Pressley (1985) and Cohen (1998) suggested that mnemonics was more effective than direct methods such as rote rehearsal. This is recognized among learners as a consolidation strategy given that it helps learners achieve high levels of proficiency based on the fact that using images favours vocabulary acquisition through photographs or drawings that reinforce retention of words (Vivanco, 2010). Different authors have focused their attention towards the effects of training learners on using mnemonics to enhance vocabulary learning (Barbosa 2001; Requena 2010; Moreno, 2013), findings indicated that memory strategies are important resources in the process of learning vocabulary. In the Griva, Kamaroudis and Geladari (2010) study, it is suggested that learners showed preference for visual techniques such as flash cards, pictures, photos, etc. as a successful approach to learning vocabulary.

The third strategy is verbal repetition, framed under the cognitive-type of strategies. It consists of repetition and use of mechanical means to study words. A number of researchers have concluded that repetition is valuable when learning vocabulary and thus practicing taught vocabulary is important (Nation, 1990; Schmitt, 2000; Waring, 2001). According to Schmitt (2000), words are learned from numerous exposures causing the increment in word knowledge; nonetheless, the author indicates as well that forgetting is natural.

Although a great amount of research include the use of strategies for enhancing vocabulary learning, few have focused on using computers for the implementation of the strategies for learning vocabulary provided the benefits for language learning. Dalton and Grisham (2011) characterized these resources as *eVoc* strategies, electronic or technology-

based strategies that teachers can use to develop vocabulary and deploy technology in the service of vocabulary learning (Chamot, 2004; Atay & Ozbulgan, 2007; Spiri, 2008, Corpas, 2010). The research of Atay and Ozbulgan (2007) especially contributes to this statement, concluding that strategy instruction for vocabulary acquisition in the computer-assisted environment helps learners become more effective by individualizing the language learning experience and raising their awareness of the strategies learners can use to learn on their own after they leave the language classroom. Most research to date underlines the effectiveness of multimedia tools supporting the strategies to learn vocabulary including the strategies of mnemonics, verbal repetition and looking up words in an online dictionary (Nation 2001; Raigón & Gómez, 2005; Horst, Cobb & Nicolae, 2005; García & Ferreira, 2013; Moreno, 2013). Results in these studies showed that the use of strategies supported by multimedia helps learners improve vocabulary knowledge not only in form but also in meaning.

It is important to mention here that although several research studies have been carried out at an international level regarding: strategy training, learning incidental vocabulary, reading, young learners and or the use if technology as means, only a few had been conducted in Colombia. Consequently, this research study is pioneer in determining the impact of integrating these different approaches to develop vocabulary learning.

In sum, the rapid evolution of technology and its positive influence in the process of teaching and learning prompt teachers to find innovative ways to enhance not only the process of learning a language, but also to the development of autonomy while learning. Thus, teachers are to be not only models of autonomy, but also leaders in the design and/or adoption of multimedia materials that suit learners' cognitive and affective needs in order to improve their language learning, leading them to become more responsible of their own learning. There is empirical evidence advising that using strategies aided by computers enhances the learning and recalling of vocabulary, helping learners to be more effective

vocabulary learners. This, in turn, justifies the reason why teachers should begin strategy training at an early age. All of the above, nonetheless, could not be attained if the school is not committed to provide learners with the appropriate environments such as computer labs or smart boards to support this mainstream beneficial approach of teaching and learning.

Given that Saint George's School favors technological support for the process of teaching and learning, my aim was to take advantage of this philosophy and take a step ahead in the use e-storybooks and online tools supporting vocabulary strategies as the means to develop autonomy and to improve vocabulary learning in young learners. Chapter three is aimed at explaining the methodological design of the present study.

Chapter Three: Research Design

This chapter offers a description of the procedures followed throughout the project. The chapter is divided into six sections as follows: section one refers to the type of study and the methodology employed in this research; section two describes the researcher's role and performance; section three explains the context, participants and the place the project was conducted; section four is about the data collection instruments, a rationale and objectives of the instruments proposed and, lastly, the data collection procedures, explaining the manner in which these instruments were used to gather the data.

Type of Study

This is an exploratory study of mixed method type aiming to examine, understand and answer questions about the impact of teaching vocabulary learning strategies by means of online tools and e-storybooks in order to enrich vocabulary size in first graders at Saint George's School. As the teacher-researcher, I seek to discover the meanings that participants attach to their behavior, how they interpret situations, and what their perspectives on particular issues are.

Action research has been of special interest in the educational field since it allows teachers to address particular issues in the classroom by providing their own solutions and conclusions. In 2010, Burns highlighted the fact that the major focus of action research is on concrete and practical issues of immediate concern to particular social groups or communities. It is conducted in naturally occurring settings, primarily using methods common to qualitative research (Nunan, 1992; McKernan, 1996) such as observing and recording events and behaviors.

Considering the views of Somekh (2005), this action research includes characteristics such as: focus in a particular situation, collaboration among participants and external observers, data collection, analysis emerging theory and new changes in practice.

In that order of ideas, the main purpose of this type of action research was to analyze the impact of teaching vocabulary learning strategies through the use of online tools and e-storybooks in order to enrich vocabulary in first graders at Saint George's School. Hence, through some classroom observations and a survey it was possible to collect data to determine a phenomenon and provide possible solutions, which might lead to a new theory in the field.

Context

This research was conducted at Saint George's School, a traditional British-based educational institution located in Bogotá, Colombia. The school was established in 1958 with the objective of accompanying learners in their human and spiritual growth for a successful performance in life from the development of work ethics, self-discipline, tolerance towards difference and respect for all forms of life on the planet. The school begins in pre-kinder and has learners up to eleventh grade (internationally – twelfth grade). First grade is considered a transitory grade from preschool to primary sections, so most of the abilities established are consolidated at this level. Additionally, first graders are in the process of developing productive and receptive skills in both their mother tongue and the target language, although strong emphasis is placed on latter. Indeed, most of the classes are taught in English, signifying that learners are in constant contact with it.

As stated above, Saint George's School is catalogued as a bilingual institution; understood here as the context in which two languages are used as the media of instruction for the same group, receiving instruction in one language or another varying according the

program and instructional goals (Celce-Murcia, 2001). First grade level follows *Brainstorm*, a textbook series from Macmillan Publishers, which provides learners with challenging content and systematic development of all skills providing young learners with a solid foundation in English and building skills. This six-level course contains extensive development of grammar, vocabulary, and focuses on critical thinking and cooperative learning. Learners use both the Student and the Language Activity Book, however, some worksheets are designed as supplemental material to complement and adapt the program to learners' needs. In order to certify the level of English and initiate in the path of international certification of English level, first graders present the *Cambridge Young Learners English Starters Exam*, measuring learners' language level up to Pre A1 according to the CEF.

Committed to support and enhance learning process, the school has numerous and varied technological resources such as computer labs and audiovisual rooms as new learning environments. First grade classrooms have been equipped as well with e-beams, a portable device and powerful software helping teachers plan, prepare and deliver compelling lessons while keeping learners involved and motivated. In addition, the school offers continuous access to a Moodle LMS™ platform adopted and adapted to assist blended type courses which teachers design and upload with activities aimed to develop learner autonomy, critical thinking and creativity. Learners also have access to an additional resource, a first grade English online course exhibiting a box in which e-storybooks are uploaded so learners have the opportunity to read in their spare time or when attending the computer lab.

Participants

Participants involved in this research include a first grade group of 28 learners between 7 and 8 years old. All of the learners have been studying at Saint George's School for four years. According to the CEFR, learners are at a pre-A1 level that involves the

understanding of simple present and past structures, basic content readings and recordings as well as the production of simple written and oral utterances. Also, attending a bilingual school requires them to communicate in English at all times with the majority of their teachers and peers. Hence, they need to learn the basic structures in simple present, allowing them to express their needs, perform actions daily and discuss different topics. Finally, at this low level, learning vocabulary is essential since it is the basis for the development of literacy in the target language; the more vocabulary they read the better access they will have to different type of texts and improve their reading comprehension.

The researcher's role

Being this an individual action research project, I was a participant observer during the different stages of the whole process. According to Burns (2010), the participant-observer adopts different levels of active involvement in the research situation. Hence, I adopted, on one hand, the role of observer and, on the other, the role of participant. As an observer, I watched, recorded and self-evaluated my practice in order to reflect upon my own pedagogical performance when planning, developing materials and implementing activities. As a participant, I became part of the social context and will be involved in its culture and activities in order to collect the needed data to cope with the chosen phenomena.

Data collection instruments

The instruments chosen to conduct the present study were vocabulary pre- and post-test, learners' interview and questionnaire, parents' questionnaires and teacher's field notes. The selection of these instruments relies on accomplishing the objectives set for this project which lead eventually to answer the question. In the section below the reader will be informed of the instruments that were used during the length of the research.

Tests

Tests are used to assess the learners' performance. Based on Shohamy (1997), "a test is used to collect data about the subject's ability and knowledge of the second language in areas such as vocabulary" (p. 87). For the purpose of this study, a Vocabulary Test (Appendix B) was used in order to measure the vocabulary improvement. It was implemented during the pre-stage as well to make a diagnosis of the amount of vocabulary each participant recognized and during the post-stage to gather information about learners' improvement and to find out how much learners enriched their vocabulary. This facilitated my analysis the improvement in the learners' size of vocabulary.

Questionnaires and Interviews

This instrument was selected based on Wallace (1998), who noted that questionnaires "involve eliciting something from informants: usually factual information about themselves and their teaching situations, or attitudes/opinions on some issue" (p. 24). Thus, by designing and implementing the Learners' Interview on the Strategies (See Appendix C), Learners' Questionnaire (See Appendix D) and Parents' Questionnaire (See Appendix E) the teacher researcher was able to: a) gather learners' impressions and opinions about the usefulness of the strategies for learning vocabulary, b) raise learners' awareness on the most useful strategy for them to learn vocabulary and c) determine learners' level of autonomy in their process of learning vocabulary by using the strategies taught.

Field Notes

The choice of this instrument relies on the fact that field notes are useful to periodically capture considerable thoughts that are a product of reflections and events. Field notes are contemporaneous notes of observations or conversation taken during the conduct of

qualitative research. In other words, they contain observations, feelings, reactions, interpretations, reflections, hypothesis, and explanations about new material learned, different classroom activities and teaching materials such as tests, exams and homework. Through the implementation of the Teacher's Field Note Log (See Appendix F), I noted learners' implementation of the strategy and reflected about their reactions towards the strategy training process and the implementation of these strategies when reading. Additionally, field notes provided anecdotal pieces of evidence helping the researcher to better evaluate the effectiveness of the strategies implemented.

Data collection procedures

This project prompts incidental vocabulary learning when reading e-storybooks through the training of mnemonics, verbal repetition and use of an online dictionary. Therefore, it was necessary for the teacher to design and implement a chronogram presented in Table 1.

SUPPORTING INCIDENTAL VOCABULARY LEARNING BY MEANS OF STRATEGY TRAINING AND ONLINE RESOURCES

Activity/Date	Feb 2012	March 2012	April 2012	May 2012	Aug 2012	Sept 2012	Oct 2012	Nov 2012	Feb 2013	March 2013	April 2013	May 2013
Step 1: Initiation Look for an interest topic based on the students' needs.	16-28											
Step 2: Preliminary Investigation Look for the bibliography for the project	16-28	2-30	6-13									
Step 3: Literature review Theoretical framework Paper about topic, research question and justification			6-27	1-31		1-30	1-31	1-30	1-28	1-31		
Step 4: Design of action plan Learning about data collection instruments Designing an action plan							12-26	1-30	8-29	1-9		
Step 5: Implementation									12-28	1-31	1-12	
Step 6: Monitoring/data collection									12-28	1-31	1-12	
Step 7: Analysis and interpretation of data									12-28	1-31	1-30	
Step 8: Reflection & decision making									12-28	1-31	1-30	
Step 9: Sharing findings												29-30

Table 1: Action Research Project Timeline.

The collection of data took place in three specific moments throughout the project with the implementation of specific instruments in order to gather the information systematically. Table 2 specifies the instrument and the time allotted for each stage.

Implementation stage	Objectives	Allotted Time
Pre-stage	<p>Learners' Questionnaire: to analyze student's needs and interests.</p> <p>Vocabulary Pre-test: to measure the amount of vocabulary students have.</p>	2 hours
During-stage	<p>Teacher's Field Notes: to write down reflections and descriptions.</p> <p>Learners' Interview on the Strategies: to gather learners' impressions on the learning and use of strategies to learn vocabulary.</p>	16 hours
Post-stage	<p>Vocabulary Post-test: to measure the amount of vocabulary learned.</p> <p>Learners' and Parents' Questionnaires: to gain insights on the overall strategy training and results project.</p>	4 hours

Table 2: Project stages and data collection instruments.

Carrying out observations of participants is a substantial threat to their privacy and could cause them harm, especially if participants are underage. Therefore, I requested school director and parents' permission through a consent letter (Appendix G), allowing me, and First Grade C members, to participate in the present research project. In this letter, parents were guaranteed that the information obtained through the project was confidential and that under no means the performance of the children during the project would impact their grades.

Transparency and credibility of the Instruments and Procedures

Qualitative studies take place in natural settings where the researcher collects a variety of empirical material that describes the situation being object of study. This empirical material is of interpretative nature and depends on the skills and the methods used by the researcher in order to ensure that the data collection instruments and analysis are accurate and adequate. Therefore, the piloting of instruments and triangulation of the information gathered were useful in order to guarantee the validity and reliability of the study.

Piloting is an effective practice in order to guarantee the adequacy of the instruments. It is a method used to test the instrument prior to carrying out the research. Thus, questionnaires and tests in this study were presented to learners of similar characteristics to those of the participants so the teacher researcher could identify and eliminate possible difficulties and produce the pertinent adjustments before applying them.

In qualitative research, triangulation aims to enhance the credibility and validity of the results. Therefore, the data collected through the tests, field notes, interviews and questionnaires were triangulated aiming to validate the study by generating more rounded and supported conclusions. Indeed, as Burns (2010) stated, “then you can compare, contrast and cross-check to see whether what you are finding through one source is backed up by other evidence” (p. 96). Thus, by correlating the information gathered from the different data sources, the teacher researcher enhanced and assured the evaluation of the findings and at the same time the validity of this research.

Apart from the method of triangulation carried out among the instruments, there were other methods guaranteeing the objectivity of the present study and relating the information from different perspectives on the same phenomena. On one hand, time triangulation was implemented since the data was collected at different points in time and, on the other, theory triangulation was considered through the gathering and analyzing of theoretical perspectives of the different aspects framing the issue of study. This process of triangulation aids researchers as well to better explain the phenomena studied and guarantees the validity of the study.

Chapter four explains in depth the pedagogical intervention and implementation stage of the current study.

Chapter Four: Pedagogical Intervention and Implementation

This chapter aims to provide an account of the pedagogical intervention and implementation proposed to address the need of the group of learners' object of this study to hopefully increase their vocabulary acquisition and, therefore, their communication in English at a young age. With that in mind, this project prompts vocabulary learning through the explicit instruction of vocabulary learning strategies by means of online tools while reading e-storybooks. In order to accomplish the aforementioned, one of my challenges was to design lessons through which learners could be trained on three different strategies (mnemonics, verbal repetition and use of online dictionary), supported by online tools to possibly enhance the acquisition of incidental vocabulary when reading online.

Strategies have been used for thousands of years; in the ancient times memory tools facilitated narrators remembering their lines. Since the 1960s, language-learning strategies have been of special interest for researchers, especially in the field of second language learning strategies (O'Malley & Chamot, 1990 & Oxford, 1990). Oxford (2003) defined language learning strategies as "specific actions taken by the learners to make learning easier, faster, more enjoyable, more self directed, more effective and transferable to new situations" (p.8). Thus, strategy training in how to acquire new words in the second language was the approach used to address the issue of poor vocabulary building in first graders at Saint George's School.

Vision of Language

Vocabulary is of great significance to language learners, especially because by learning words they label objects, actions and ideas without which people cannot convey any intended meaning. Cameron (2001) asserts that children's vocabulary development grows significantly as they begin to name as well as to interact with the world around them.

According to Piaget's stages of cognitive development, children at this young age (7 to 8 years old) are at a Concrete-Operational stage, being able to deal with abstract concepts such as numbers, establish relationships and to reason. Indeed, children at this age are to understand not only concrete concepts but also words and topics that are more abstract and distant from their immediate experience. Therefore, in this study vocabulary learning is seen as the foundation for the building of strong language skills in order to be effective when communicating with others in L2.

Vocabulary development is an ongoing process. As children first encounter a great amount of words, it is the frequency in which they meet the words that expands and deepens the world knowledge. According to Coady (1997) children are observed to expand their vocabulary knowledge progressively through repeated exposures in various discourse contexts. Thus, exposing children to as much vocabulary input as possible is of keen importance since they will be able to use words accordingly, once they have learned them in form and multiple functions.

Acquiring vocabulary for these learners will not only improve their communicative skills but also their comprehensive ones. Owning a wide range of vocabulary, on one hand, will allow learners to turn into the appropriate words to convey meaning and, on the other, it will enable them to have access to comprehend what they read. Reading comprehension depends on the meaning readers give words; the more vocabulary words learners know the better they are able to comprehend. Therefore, a large vocabulary range opens learners up to a wider range of reading materials and will also improve learners' ability to communicate through speaking, listening, and writing. Given that at Saint George's School a strong emphasis is placed on the learning of English as a second language, the more vocabulary children are in contact with for their academic success, the better.

Vision of Learning

The purpose of English instruction at Saint George's School is to provide learners with the needed knowledge and tools in order to be competent in the second language given its profits and advantages in today's globalized world. Therefore, instruction of vocabulary begins at a very young age, from preschool, and the vocabulary competency is expected to grow as learners are more immersed into the language learning for developing an appropriate communicative competence in English. Framed under the constructivist perspectives, foreign language learning is perceived not only as the predictable developmental process but also as the creation of meaning through interpersonal negotiation among learners (Brown, 2007). The above presupposes that learners have to become more responsible for their own learning while teachers act as the facilitators of that learning (Beatty, 2010). By promoting learner-centered lessons learners will become more independent and self-regulated and more autonomous in their process of learning. Lambert and McCombs (2000) show that successful learners are actively involved in their own learning, monitor their thinking, think about their learning, and assume responsibility for their own learning what at the same time may increase their motivation and self-satisfaction with school.

Vision of Curriculum

Saint George's School's curriculum aims towards knowledge building through challenges and fostering attitudes of lifelong learning (Beatty, 2010). It is characterized as well for (a) being meaningful, which emphasizes active participation in real-life experiences so that all learners find purpose in their studies and see the connections between subject areas; (b) being socially responsible, which develops a sense of responsibility to others by having learners learn to work together and become aware of their obligations and duties in a democracy and, (c) being grounded in each subject, which develops basic skills, knowledge

and abilities. It is the aim of the school as well to graduate technology-skilled learners. By integrating the new technologies into the curriculum, learners are able to develop a competency in the use of computers, Internet, and software that might help them enhance their language learning process.

Instructional design

The pedagogical intervention plan and data collection were carried out in different stages: pre-stage, during stage and post-stage (Appendix H). The intervention consisted of 20 to 22 hours in school time. Lessons were 45 minutes in length and the intervention was held three times a week. The lessons followed ICELT³ (Appendixes I and J) format, outlining teacher and learners' actions during lessons.

Complying with ICELT format was appropriate for lesson planning considering it requires a complete and enriched description of class objectives and demanding the teacher to plan based on the linguistic, cognitive and affective needs besides exhibiting the array the activities to be carried out throughout the stages of the class during specific times. As a result, the lessons planned were realistic, enjoyable and productive, leading to a smooth intervention plan.

During the pre-stage, I selected "Viking Adventure" e-storybook as the book to be read during the pedagogical intervention (this book is included in the list of extra readings of the reading plan for first graders at Saint George's School). After careful reading, a corpora of the learnable words was gathered after the strategy training sessions. The selection of these words relied on the distinction made of the words that learners already were in contact with and knew the meaning of and the words that were new to learners and represented a certain

³ ICELT is a teacher training course for those who already teaching English to speakers of other languages. The course, deepens the knowledge and develops the ability to reflect on and improve teaching.

level of difficulty. With the collection of the potential target words (Appendix K) the teacher designed the test, which was applied before and after the pedagogical intervention, with the objective of analyzing if there was some improvement in the vocabulary size of the learners. The vocabulary test includes different techniques to measure if learners learned the concept of the unknown vocabulary they encountered while reading the e-storybooks. This test was applied at the beginning and at the end of the intervention plan.

Since the aim of the study was to determine the impact of vocabulary learning strategies, as mnemonics, looking up words in an online dictionary and verbal repetition strategies, it was necessary for the teacher to design a familiarization session so that learners could raise their awareness on the strategies already being used. “The first step in explicit learning strategy instruction is to help learners become aware of what strategies are and what strategies they are already using” (Chamot, 2009, p. 70), leading learners to reflect upon their own learning process. Next, it was necessary to design three cycles of five lessons each (see Table 3) with the purpose of conducting the training process and allowing learners the time to practice the strategies with both paper based books and e-storybooks.

Cycle	Lesson	Objective of the lesson	Activities
0	Familiarization Session	To raise awareness on learner’s previous use of strategies.	Learners will complete KWL chart in order to activate previous knowledge of learners regarding Vocabulary Learning Strategies.(Appendix M) By thinking aloud, following the steps to use a strategy when encountering new words, teacher will model how to use a strategy and then, she will ask questions in order to understand what, when and how to use a strategy. Appendix I for lesson plan on this session.
1. Use of dictionary	A	To instruct learners on how find the word in a dictionary as a strategy to learn unknown vocabulary.	Teacher models the use of the strategy and how to collect the words in the record log. Appendix J for sample of lesson plan on this session
	B	To scaffold learners in the use of the strategy when reading physical books the corresponding recording log.	Learners logged the unknown words using the strategy of online dictionary use.
	C		
	D	To practice the strategy with an e-storybook and the corresponding recording log.	Learners logged the unknown words using the strategy of online dictionary use.
2. Use of mnemonics	A	To instruct learners on how to use mnemonics as a strategy to learn unknown vocabulary.	Teacher models the use of the strategy and how to collect the words in the record log.
	B	To scaffold learners in the use of the strategy when reading physical books the corresponding recording log.	Learners logged the unknown words using the strategy of mnemonics.
	C		
	D	To practice the use of mnemonics with e-storybooks and the corresponding log.	Learners logged the unknown words using the strategy of verbal repetition.
3. Verbal repetition Strategy	A	To instruct learners on how to use verbal repetition as a strategy to learn unknown vocabulary in the corresponding record log.	Teacher models the use of the strategy and how to collect the words in the record log.
	B	To scaffold learners in the use of the strategy when reading physical books the corresponding recording log.	Learners logged the unknown words using the strategy of verbal repetition.
	C		
	D	To practice the use of verbal repetition with e-storybooks and the corresponding recording log.	Learners record the unknown words using the strategy of online dictionary use.

Table 3. Strategy Training Cycles

The procedure to record the new words encountered for each strategy was as follows. For the log corresponding to the mnemonics strategy, learners: a) wrote the unknown word in the *word* column and b) used the online resource <https://www.google.com.co/imghp?hl=en&tab=wi>, which provided them with a number of samples of the image associated with the word they searched for and c) they drew a picture that represented the meaning of the word in the *drawing* column. For the log looking up words in an online dictionary strategy, learners: a) wrote the word in the *word* column, b) searched the word in the online dictionary <http://www.wordsmyth.net>, which offers definitions for beginner's level, and c) wrote the meaning in the *definition* column. Finally, in the log corresponding to verbal repetition strategy, learners: a) wrote the unknown word in the *word* column, b) used the online resource <http://www.howjsay.com/> to find the pronunciation of the word and played it five times until they get the sound of the word and c) wrote how they would pronounce the word they heard in the *pronunciation* column. For example, if the word was car, they would write /kar/.

I exposed learners to three different practice sessions in the computer lab. During this practice session learners had online access in the Moodle LMS™ virtual classroom to the First Grade English Course and accessed a section called First Grade E-storybook Library, assembled for online extensive reading. In this section, I had previously uploaded the e-storybook, "Viking's Adventure"⁴, from the series Oxford Reading Tree: Oxford Owl⁵. As previously stated, this book was selected with the purpose of testing if learners were using the strategies being trained on and if its use improved the size of their vocabulary. After the teacher noted that they were using the three strategies confidently, she proceeded to have them read the "Viking's Adventure" e-storybook.

⁴ Retrieved from: <http://www.oxfordowl.co.uk/EBooks/Viking%20Adventure/index.html>

⁵ Retrieved from: <http://www.oxfordowl.co.uk/Library/Index/?AgeGroup=1>

Learners brought the recording logs with them to fill in as they read the e-storybooks. The teacher modeled once more how to complete the log and exhorted them to use the strategy or strategies they felt more comfortable with to learn. During the post-stage, learners were handed a copy of the vocabulary test applied in the initial session of the pedagogical intervention. Afterwards, I administered the Learners' Questionnaire (Appendix C), containing closed items in order to facilitate its completion.

Through the description of *the pre-stage, the during-stage and post-stage* it was possible to underline the different actions conducted during the research project, in which participants had played an important role. The pre-stage showed the first action plan to start with after identifying the learners' needs. The during-stage encompassed the actions taking place in the middle of the research process, and in the time the training was being carried out. The post-stage exhibited the actions that were proposed at the end of the research process, so it is the stage where the results began to emerge.

Additional Materials and Resources

KWL chart

KWL charts (Appendix L) are graphic organizers designed to help learners to systematically record, during and after a unit or a lesson. These are commonly used to engage learners in a new topic, activate prior knowledge, share unit objectives, and monitor learning. The letters stand for: what I **K**now, what I **W**ant to know and what I **L**earned. According to Ogle (1986), "to help teachers honor what children bring to each situation and model for their learners the importance of accessing appropriate knowledge" (p. 564), a fruitful procedure that can be used in any content learning situation not only to help children use their previous knowledge on certain topic but also a tool that helps them remember and recall the topic easily. Therefore, this tool was used with the purpose of activating prior knowledge of learners regarding Vocabulary Learning Strategies (Appendix L).

Logs

Classroom documents, according to Burns (2010), are full of all kinds of written documents – syllabus guidelines, lesson plans, textbooks, readers, learners’ written texts, exercises, illustrations, maps, dictionaries and so on. I designed three logs (Appendix M, N and O), one for each of the strategies in order to gather evidence of learners’ implementation of the strategies taught and the impact it had on learners learning process. This instrument was useful since it allowed me to collect evidence of the vocabulary being learned and the rate of use of the strategies. The logs were used during the practice lessons and made part of a learner’s vocabulary learning portfolio.

This chapter offered a complete description of the data collection instruments and procedures that were followed in order to collect the data throughout the pedagogical intervention. Chapter five depicts the information collected through these instruments and the categories that emerged providing answer to the research question.

Chapter Five: Results and Data Analysis

This chapter presents the analysis and interpretation of the quantitative and qualitative data gathered from the participants' vocabulary pre- and post-tests, learners' interview and questionnaire, parents' questionnaire and my field notes. Additionally, the chapter displays the category that emerged from the analysis of this information and the sub-categories responding to the research question and the provision of facts that illustrate them.

The purpose of this study was to examine the impact of training first graders at Saint George's School on mnemonics, looking up words in an online dictionary and verbal repetition strategies in order to improve incidental vocabulary learning when reading e-storybooks spontaneously. In addition, my goal was to identify how the learning of these strategies engaged learners with a certain level of autonomy when encountering unknown words.

Following a three-month period assigned for the pedagogical intervention stage, different procedures were held so I could organize the information adequately to optimize the analysis of the data gathered. Bearing in mind that the analysis for the present study is based on the grounded theory approach, signifying that theory emerges from the constant and systematic review of data (Corbin & Strauss, 2008), the analysis procedure began with the implementation of a matrix designed in MS Excel™, in which participants were assigned the letter S (Student) followed by a number corresponding to that of their list number. Next, a revision of the vocabulary pre-tests of learners was held in order to activate learners' previous knowledge before the training stage on mnemonics, looking up words in an online dictionary and verbal repetition strategies to establish the improvement of vocabulary range in the vocabulary post-tests. The analysis continued with the examination of learners' reflections on the use of each of the strategies. In the interview related to the use of the strategies, learners were asked about their impressions on the use of each strategy after the

training; their reflections were recorded. Their remarks were labeled and simplified into codes by using an open coding procedure; breaking information down into pieces to examine it closely and find relations, similarities and dissimilarities with the purpose of categorizing data. According to Corbin and Strauss (2008), the above is accomplished by the constant reading, reviewing and reflecting upon the raw data. In this coding some features that constantly emerged from data were grouped into categories. Learners' reflections were categorized by assigning a color to each code: green for positive views on the strategy, red for negative views on the strategy and blue for views that represented autonomy fosterage.

I reviewed my field notes in order to identify teacher's impressions on the use of the strategies by learners, motivation towards the learning of the strategies and improvement of vocabulary on daily interaction with peers. For this analysis color-coding was also used as follows: green for positive views on the strategies, red for negative views on the strategies and blue for views that represented autonomy fosterage.

Afterwards, responses from learners' and parents' questionnaires, administered at the end of the intervention stage were reviewed and color-coded. The colors set for learners' and parent's impressions included the colors assigned for the codes in the interviews and questionnaires adding aquamarine color to analyze the rate of usage of the strategies and pink color for views that compared the use of the strategies.

Finally, the emergent codes from the instruments were triangulated, compared and grouped to corroborate the issues raised from the data, and for validity purposes. The above procedure was carried out in order to avoid subjectivity as well. As a result of this process, one main category was found. In the following chart the category and subcategories that arose from the data analysis are shown.

Research Question	Category	Sub-categories
<p>How does the use of vocabulary learning strategies (mnemonics, looking up words in an online dictionary and verbal repetition) impact the autonomous acquisition of incidental vocabulary when reading e-storybooks in first grade learners from Saint George’s School?</p>	<p>Improvement of incidental vocabulary through the autonomous use of mnemonics, looking up words in online dictionary and verbal repetition strategies.</p>	<p>Incidental vocabulary development by means of engagement and adequacy on the use of the strategies being trained on for individual learning processes.</p>
		<p>Fosterage of autonomy through the independent use of the online tools to implement the strategies.</p>

Table 4: Category and Subcategories

Table 4 depicts, the category *Improvement of incidental vocabulary through the autonomous use of mnemonics, looking up words in an online dictionary and verbal repetition strategies* is supported by two sub-categories: on one hand, *Incidental vocabulary development by means of engagement and adequacy on the use of the strategies being trained on for individual learning processes*, which focuses on the engagement towards the use of the strategies, positive and negative views, and raise of awareness on the strategy or strategies that favor individual processes of learning. On the other, *Fosterage of autonomy by means of using online tools to implement the strategies independently*, which deals with the extent to which learners have internalized the use of the strategies on their own to improve the learning process of new words in different contexts.

The samples below, gathered from the data collected, illustrate the theory emerged from the categories.

Incidental vocabulary development by means of engagement and adequacy on the use of the strategies being trained on for individual learning processes.

In response to the main research question, this subcategory refers to the impact of the use of mnemonics, looking up words in an online dictionary and verbal repetition when reading an e-storybook. As research has proven, in terms of language acquisition, incidental learning is considered an effective way of learning vocabulary from context (Day, Omura, & Hiramatsu, 1991). It has also been found that training learners on the tools they can use to improve their learning process helps learners to achieve their goals (Griva, Kamaroudis & Geladari, 2010). Therefore, it was very likely that by combining these two theories learners would increase their size of incidental vocabulary provided that they were trained with the strategies mentioned and exposed to reading through a computer. The results of the present research reinforce the fact that when learners are taught how to implement and use these strategies to learn new vocabulary while using a computer, an improvement in the size of learners' vocabulary occurs.

In order to analyze the learners' vocabulary size after the intervention, a comparison between the pre- and the post-test was carried out. This assessment showed learners' improvement in vocabulary size after being trained on the use of the strategies and implementing them while reading an online e-storybook. Graphic 1 illustrates learners' previous vocabulary knowledge when reading the "Vikings Adventure" e-storybook. In this case, 40% of the learners had previous knowledge from zero to five words, 40% knew from six to eleven words and 20% of the learners' marked more than 11 words known. It is valuable to pinpoint here that those learners who scored the highest number of words known in the test were the learners who were seen regularly engaged with reading in their spare time in the classroom.

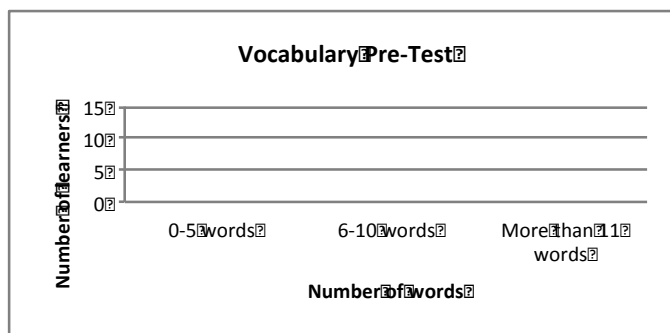


Figure 1. Previous knowledge

After the strategy training in mnemonics, looking up words in an online dictionary and verbal repetition strategies, learners improved their vocabulary knowledge as it is shown in the post-vocabulary Graphic 2. In order to obtain this data it was necessary to compare the words each learner scored on the pre-test and reduce this number from that of the words they had actually learned as new. In here, it was evinced that all of the learners improved their vocabulary knowledge. It was found that 11% of learners increased their knowledge from one to five words, 41% increased from six to ten words and 48% of the learners increased their knowledge on 11 or more words. It is valuable to mention here that those learners who marked the highest number of words previously known, consistently showed a higher increase in their development of vocabulary. The above analysis reinforces (Nation, 1990) that the more learners are involved in reading practices for pleasure the greater amount of words they will learn after being trained on the use of online dictionary, mnemonics and verbal repetition strategies.

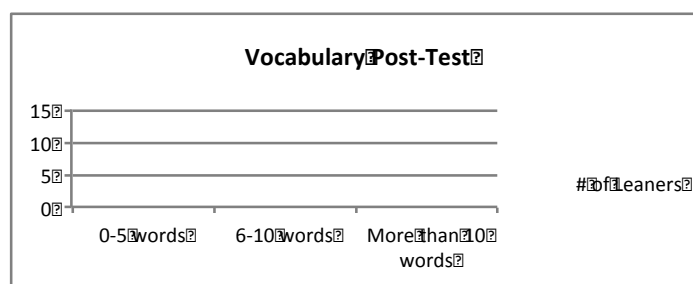


Figure 2. Increase of Vocabulary

Table 5 shows in detailed the consistent improvement on vocabulary size for each of the learners. It deploys the previous score of correct words in the pre-test compared to the one of the post-test and the number of new words learned after being trained on the strategies. Learners increased an average of 10 words taken from the mean of words learned after the pedagogical intervention. Nonetheless, as it is recorded in the table, two or three learner's word increase was not as significant as the rest of the group. The above could be due to the fact that engagement and instruction understanding during the implementation stage and/or at the time when the post-test was applied could played as determinant factors in the performance of learners.

Increase from 0-5 Words			Increase from 6-10 words			Increase of more than 10 words					
<i>Correct answers in Pre-Test</i>	<i>Correct answers in Post-Test</i>	<i>New words learned</i>	<i>Correct answers in Pre-Test</i>	<i>Correct answers in Post-Test</i>	<i>New words learned</i>	<i>Correct answers in Pre-Test</i>	<i>Correct answers in Post-Test</i>	<i>New words learned</i>			
8	10	2	3	10	6	4	15	11			
3	6	3	7	13	6	6	17	11			
4	10	4	11	18	6	12	32	11			
			8	18	7	3	15	12			
			4	11	8	6	18	12			
			8	16	8	12	24	12			
			3	12	9	4	17	13			
			11	20	9	8	21	13			
			3	13	10	3	17	14			
			6	17	10	7	22	15			
			21	13	10	8	25	17			
									3	21	18
									7	27	19

Table 5. Increase of words per student after the post vocabulary test.

Vocabulary acquisition was the most important effect in the implementation of the use of mnemonics, looking up words in an online dictionary and verbal repetition strategies to learn unknown words when reading an e-storybook for pleasure. Hence, the training in and implementation of these strategies by means of online tools engaged young learners to acquire new vocabulary. This acquisition suggests that young learners feel more confident and prepared to face the bilingual process at school and may continue to be engaged with the process of learning English language.

In addition, the positive effect of strategy training was not only perceived through the vocabulary post-test but from learners' point of view according to which there was also an improvement in vocabulary. It was evident that being trained on the strategies contributed to the learning of unknown vocabulary encountered when implementing the strategies through online tools and reading the e-storybook as the samples below illustrate.

T: ¿Aprendiste vocabulario nuevo usando estas estrategias? ¿Recuerdas alguna palabra que hayas aprendido con estas estrategias?

“Sí aprendí nuevas palabras porque cuando leí la historia otra vez entendí mejor la historia y la pude leer más rápido entendiendo más.” (Excerpt No. 1. [sic] S1.

Learners' Interview on Strategies)

“Sí, me acuerdo de la palabra “sponge” que significa algo que recoge agua.

¿Puedo dibujarla en el tablero?” (Excerpt No. 2. [sic] S6. Learners' Interview on Strategies)

“Sí porque usando estas estrategias me acordé de palabras que ahora sé qué significan.” (Excerpt No. 3. [sic] S19. Learners' Interview on Strategies)

From my perspective, there were also situations in the classroom that suggested the effectiveness of providing learners with the strategies implemented through online tools for learning unknown vocabulary while reading e-storybooks. Excerpts below, I describe the classroom context in which learners proved to be learning new vocabulary.

“Today we began with the training in the second strategy (mnemonics). Since we did not finish reading the e-storybook from the first strategy, I decided to use the same story to begin the training in the second strategy. When I began reading the text again, found a word we searched for in the dictionary to know its meaning. As a matter of assessing if learners had learned it with the strategy of looking up words in an online, I asked: ‘Let’s see if you learned a new word.’ Do you remember what errands mean? Three learners raised their hand and S6 answered: it means adventure. This was a nice surprise! It evinced that the use of an online dictionary to learn the meaning of errands really helped learners to understand the meaning and remember it.” (Excerpt No. 4. [sic]. Teacher’s Field Note 3, February 24th, 2013)

“Today it was a surprising day. We were reading a book about Green Lantern and I was explaining to learners the different characters there were in the book. One of the characters, said the description, was foolish. I was trying to find words so learners understood what foolish meant. S17 raised his hand and said: Miss, Miss, like solly (the learner begins to look into his vocabulary portfolio looking for the word he was trying to say). Like silly, Miss, silly. He had learned this word while the project was being carried out and he remembered the meaning.” (Excerpt No. 5. [sic]. Teacher’s Field Note 5, March 11th, 2013)

Parents also perceived benefits in learners' process of learning vocabulary after being trained and implementing the strategies. It is important to remember here that given some technological and time constraints parents were asked to supervise the last stage of the pedagogical intervention what allowed them to play the role of "passive" participants in the research, since they acted only as supervisors of the task; nonetheless, this role allowed them to gain insights on the impact of the trainings of the strategies. Additionally, parents acknowledged the relevance of fostering independent learning (Kilickaya & Krajka 2010), in this case, supported by the use of technology for both reading and implementing tools, contributing to learners' path of becoming more autonomous as it is depicted in excerpt no. 6.

"Q2. ¿Qué tal le pareció el proyecto de entrenar sus hijos en estrategias para aprender vocabulario nuevo cuando lee libros electrónicos? ¿Por qué?"

PS18. Excelente. Porque es una forma de enseñarle a ser independiente y que vea que sí puede hacerlo solo y bien. Adicionalmente ayuda a incrementar su vocabulario e interesarlo más por la lectura al poder entender mejor lo que lee. El vocabulario se graba más fácil."(Excerpt No. 6. [sic]. PS18. Parents' Questionnaire)

To sum up this subcategory, training learners in looking up words in an online dictionary, mnemonics and verbal repetition to learn unknown words when reading e-storybooks for pleasure boosted learners' acquisition of incidental vocabulary since they were able to remember the words easily and they demonstrated not only through the post-test that their vocabulary was improved, but also that they began to integrate this new vocabulary into their daily interaction with the teacher in order to communicate their ideas.

A description of the evidence supporting the increase of the size of the learners' vocabulary has been depicted. Now, an account on the factors that supported learners in this project will proceed.

Throughout the project learners demonstrated a high degree of engagement to learn these new ways in which they can expand the size of their vocabulary, even more when they identified that the more vocabulary they learned the better they could communicate with their teacher.

The following excerpts exhibit learners' engagement from the perspectives of the teacher-researcher, learners and parents towards the learning and use of the different strategies gathered from the *Interview on The strategies, Parent's Survey and Teachers' Field Notes*.

“Now that I have finished the stage on the training of the strategies I decided to have a practice lesson in order to observe their interaction with the online tools and strategies. Before going to computer lab S18 asks me: Can I use all of the strategies Miss? This is an interesting question since I can deduce that learners are engaged and motivated to use the strategies simultaneously in order to learn vocabulary. This can suggest as well that they have identified that by combining the use of the three strategies their learning of vocabulary is better than if the only use one of the strategies. (Excerpt No. 7. [sic]. Teachers' Field Note 7, April 3rd 2013)

T. ¿Aprendiste vocabulario nuevo usando estas estrategias? ¿Recuerdas alguna palabra que hayas aprendido con estas estrategias? ¿Por qué?

“Me gustó usar esta estrategia porque era fácil de usar para mi.” (Excerpt No. 8. [sic] S13 Learners' Interview on the Strategies)

“Me gustó esta estrategia porque aprendí cómo decirla en inglés.” (Excerpt No.9. [sic] S26 Learners’ Interview on the Strategies)

Q3. ¿Cómo describiría la actitud de su hijo al utilizar las estrategias? ¿Por qué?

PS1. “Me pareció buena motivación, ella lo realizó en general, con agrado, entusiasmo, curiosidad e interés.” (Excerpt No. 10. [sic] PS3. Parents’ Questionnaire)

“Estaba motivada, se interesaba por hacerlo, le gustaba enseñarme.” (Excerpt No. 11. [sic] PS13. Parents’ Questionnaire)

According to the views provided by learners and parents on the positive disposition towards the use of mnemonics, looking up words in an online dictionary and verbal repetition, it was also suggested that engagement had to do with the fact that tools supporting the implementation of the strategies was achieved by means of, requiring learners to interact with a computer. Given that these participants are actively engaged with technological devices, using these online tools to implement the strategies and the e-storybook were supported by technology was definitely an advantage given the fact that they can use computers easily and they are motivated to do all the activities that imply the use of computers. As Cuesta (2012) suggests, Computer Assisted Language Learning permeates numerous sub-areas and has a direct and intrinsic relationship with the accelerated, enhanced and effective teaching of languages mediated through computers. Excerpts 12-16 give an account of how learners were actively engaged with the use of the technology during the use of the strategies what indicates that having used computers to carry out the project triggered learners’ learning of vocabulary.

S5. *“Si me gustó mucho porque es más fácil y rápido buscar una palabra o una imagen en internet. Encontré imágenes, diferentes imágenes coloridas.”* (Excerpt No. 12. [sic] S5. Learners’ Interview on the Strategies).

“Si me gustó. Buscando en el computador como decir una palabra fue muy fácil y podía repetirla cuantas veces quisiera.” (Excerpt No. 13. [sic] S11. Learners’ Interview on the Strategies).

“Le gustó sobre todo porque interactuó con herramientas de Internet.” (Excerpt No. 14. [sic] PS9. Parents’ Questionnaire)

PS25. *“El estaba motivado porque era una forma de aprender muy entretenida.”*(Excerpt No. 15. [sic] PS25. Parents’ Questionnaire)

PS27. *“Se mostró siempre muy interesado y dispuesto, pues para el era un momento de estar al frente del computador. Además que le ayudó a manejar esta herramienta mucho mejor.”* (Excerpt No. 16. [sic] PS27. Parents’ Questionnaire)

These excerpts suggest as well that the tools used to support the implementation of the strategies were appealing to learners, increasing their motivation towards the implementation of the strategies what in turn triggered their learning of words in an enjoyable way. It means that the training in the strategies mentioned was a significant approach to foster young learners’ engagement towards the second language acquisition in terms of vocabulary. It provided meaningful input by integrating different strategies that favored improvement in the process of second language learning. This approach also helped them to maintain attention, interest in the stories by gaining confidence in their English vocabulary acquisition.

Another aspect that was analyzed under this category was the convenience of the use of the strategy or strategies that best helped learners to acquire as many words as possible

while reading the e-storybook. Graphic 3 depicts the strategy most used among the group of participants while reading the e-book “Viking’s Adventure”.



Figure 3. Usage of the Strategies

It is evident that the choice on the strategies had to do mostly with the accessibility to the online tools that supported the implementation of the strategy and learners’ perception of how each of the strategies (looking up words in an online dictionary, mnemonics and verbal repetition) helped them remember the words. In order to have a better understanding on the usability of the strategies learned, these have been analyzed separately.

Looking up words in an online dictionary

Although the tool which supported the implementation of the strategy was not the most appropriate for learners to access since the definitions offered by the *wordsmyth.net* dictionary were complex in language which impeded learners from understanding definitions accurately, learners found this strategy nice and easy to use through the computer given that they could understand the meaning of the words. In excerpts 9 and 10 learners’ engagement with this strategy is evinced.

“Sí me gustó porque podía entender lo que significaba la palabra.” (Excerpt No. 17. [sic] S14. **Learners’** Interview on Strategies)

“Escribir la definición. Porque lo hacía pensar un poco más.” (Excerpt No. 18. [sic] PS1. Parents’ Questionnaire)

Mnemonics

This was the strategy that definitely worked best for most of the learners. As they referred to it as the strategy helping them remember the word and the meaning the most. In addition, as seen in Graphic 3, this was the strategy they used the most when they were reading the e-storybook. As Levin and Pressley (1985) and Cohen (1998) suggested: mnemonics is more effective than direct methods such as rote rehearsal. Excerpts 19, 20, 21 disclose some learners’ opinions in view of the effectiveness of this strategy to understand new words and to remember them.

T: Te gustó usar ésta estrategia? ¿Por qué? ¿Entre la estrategia de buscar la palabra en el diccionario y dibujar, cuál fue la estrategia que te ayudó a aprender mejor el vocabulario nuevo?

“Me gusto ésta estrategia. Utilizaría ésta más esta porque entiendo más dibujando que escribiendo. Cuando escribo hay algunas palabras que no entiendo y no podía preguntar.” (Excerpt No. 19. [sic] S2. Learners’ Interview on the Strategies)

“Me pareció fácil, me gustó y la palabra que entendí fue Stone. Usaría más ésta estrategia porque entendía más los dibujos.” (Excerpt No. 20. [sic] S5. Learners’ Interview on the Strategies)

“Me gustó mucho esta estrategia, estuvo muy fácil para mí, pero no recuerdo ninguna palabra. Usaría más esta estrategia porque es muy fácil para mí aprender viendo el dibujo que leyendo palabras.” (Excerpt No. 21. [sic] S21. Learners’ Interview on the Strategies)

Parents who helped learners carry out the project and who took the role of supervisors of the work, agreed as well that for their children the strategy of mnemonics helped them to understand and remember better the concepts when they associated the word with a drawing, as it shown in the excerpts below.

Q.4. ¿Cuál fue la estrategia más efectiva para su hijo?

“Dibujar. Le parecía más fácil para poder memorizar su significado.” (Excerpt No. 22. [sic] PS9. Parents’ Questionnaire)

“Dibujar. Le permite desarrollar las habilidades de relación nombre-objeto.” (Excerpt No. 23. [sic] PS18. Parents’ Questionnaire)

“Dibujar. El dibujo y los detalles del mismo siempre lo entretiene más y genera una mayor recordación.” (Excerpt No. 24. [sic] PS29. Parents’ Questionnaire)

For me, it was clear as well that the strategy of drawing to associate the word with a drawing to understand the concept was the strategy that was more appealing, engaging and successful for learners to use. This was perceived not only during the practice stages but also when learners were reading in the computers lab. In excerpt 25, teacher describes the usefulness of the strategy.

“Today we went to computers lab to practice the mnemonics strategy by reading “The Monkey’s Pirate” e-storybook. Learners are really engaged in using Google Images as the tool to support the mnemonics strategy, they were amazed by the pictures they found and for them it is really easy to go to the finder box and write the word they are looking up. Since they are able to see a variety of images, they have the opportunity to produce enriched drawings supporting the word and establishing successfully a relationship between the word and the object.” (Excerpt No. 25. [sic] Teachers’ Field Note 5, February 24th, 2013)

Although this was a successful strategy, it may also hinder learning because of the vast amount of images, some inappropriate, that are displayed by the online tool (google images). Indeed, in some cases, learners took considerably time choosing the correct image, preventing a smooth reading and comprehension. As in the De Long (2004) study, it was concluded that learners could get easily distracted online features, interfering with children’s comprehension of the text, constraint that should be tackled in further projects. Samples 26, 27 and 28 are some views from both learners and me that expressed the impact of the online tool in the implementation of mnemonics strategy.

“Google Images is a tool that although offers a wide variety of images for learners, there are many of those who are not appropriate for their age which required a constant supervision of an adult when learners were using the online tool (check this fragment for clarification). In addition, it may happen that there are different images, which refer to the same word so learners got confused with which image to use for the drawing.” (Excerpt No. 26. [sic] Teachers’ Field Note 5, February 27th, 2013)

“A mí me gusto la estrategia aunque a veces ponía una palabra y salían dibujos que no eran para niños.” (Excerpt No. 27. [sic] S3. Learners’ Interview on Strategies)

“A veces ponía una palabra y otra y salían dibujos que no eran para niños. Prefiero esta estrategia porque la otra es más demorada” (Excerpt No. 28. [sic] S23. Learners’ Interview on Strategies)

Verbal Repetition

Although learners seemed to be engaged in using this strategy and it helped them realize the pronunciation of words, they felt they could not get information about the meaning. As it is portrayed in excerpts no. 29, 30 and 31, learners and I refer to this strategy as not useful in the sense that only by repeating a word is learned. Stahl (2005) cautioned against “mere repetition or drill of the word,” emphasizing that vocabulary instruction should provide students with opportunities to encounter words repeatedly and in a variety of contexts. Additionally, there was no meaning associated with the repeated word causing learners not to find it meaningful to learn.

“Fue chévere repetir la palabra, pero no entendía que significaba. No recuerdo ninguna palabra que aprendí con esta estrategia.” (Excerpt No. 29. [sic] S16. Learners’ Interview on Strategies)

“No me gustó. No entendía bien la pronunciación. Repetía la palabra, pero no la recuerdo porque no entendí lo que significaba.” (Excerpt No. 30. [sic] S19. Learners’ Interview on Strategies)

“This strategy seemed not to be as successful as the others since for learners it was very easy to repeat the word 5 times and write their pronunciation down. However, during the practice strategy when I asked them at the end of the class how to

pronounce certain words they did not remember their pronunciation correctly.

Although this strategy helped them develop their phonological awareness on the pronunciation of the word, this did not provide information of the meaning, what could make them lose the purpose of the strategy.” (Excerpt No. 31. [sic] Teachers’ Field Note 7, March 4th, 2013)

This may be due to the fact that by using it learners only retained form but not meaning. According to Vivanco (2001), mental associations are fundamental in the retention of vocabulary indistinctively the language being learned. Therefore, using a strategy that only supports the knowledge of a word in terms of pronunciation rather than in meaning was not successful to learners given that it did not help much in the retention process.

As a conclusion, training learners on the strategies helped them develop different skills, which supported their learning for new vocabulary while reading an e-storybook. For learners the training in these three strategies offered them the opportunity to develop their vocabulary size not only by reading but implementing strategies to understand its meaning but also to raise awareness on tools that facilitate the learning of vocabulary on their own. Additionally, they developed some self-regulation skills by assessing the pertinence of the strategies that accommodate to their learning styles enhancing their learning process.

Fostering of autonomy through the independent use of the tools to implement the strategies

This subcategory emerged from analyzing participants’ responses obtained from the interview, the survey, and from the parent’s survey and class observations. In general, the information gathered suggests that being trained on the strategies supported by technology helped learners become more autonomous when learning new vocabulary on their own while reading storybooks for pleasure. This pattern was evident during the implementation stage.

Learners were able to develop autonomy in two ways: on one hand, they were able to use the online tools on their own and, on the other; they were able to transfer the knowledge gained on the use of the strategies to other contexts. Regarding independent use, understood as the use of the tools without any support from an adult, to implement the strategies, learners were able to develop the autonomous use of the online tools that supported the implementation of the strategies as well as the use of the online features that e-storybooks offered them. The first situation is revealed in excerpts 32-35:

“Sí. Usaría la de dibujar y la de buscar el diccionario porque me parecieron que son muy fáciles de usar y es más rápido conocer palabras si lo hace a través del computador.” (Excerpt No. 32. [sic] S16. Learners’ Interview on Strategies)

“Me gustaría usarlas para buscar otras palabras que sean desconocidas para mí porque me sirvieron. Siento que así aprendí más vocabulario.” (Excerpt No. 33. [sic] S23. Learners’ Interview on Strategies)

“Porque había sido instruida previamente en clase y las herramientas de evaluación fueron muy amigables. Realmente, no requirió mayor intervención del adulto.” (Excerpt No. 34. [sic] PS13. Parents’ Questionnaire)

“El solo sabía todo el proceso, desde el ingreso al aula virtual y ubicar las ayudas. siempre hacía solo los ejercicios hasta terminarlos, sin interrupciones.” (Excerpt No. 35. [sic] PS21. Parents’ Questionnaire)

Regarding the autonomous use of the strategies, by carrying out the questionnaire learners were able to raise their awareness by identifying which strategy helped them gain more vocabulary. After becoming knowledgeable about the strategies that boost their vocabulary learning, they could transfer this information to different contexts that do not necessarily have to do with reading e-storybooks; for example, when defining technical

words in Math or Science. Nation (1996) confirms that when learners are trained on strategies like paraphrasing, using parts of the speech, dictionary use and mnemonics, they make learners independent of the teacher. Also, since learners used computers to implement the strategies that they had been previously taught, they were able to develop autonomy and therefore better equipped for life-long learning. According to Benson (2011), technology places the learner as a controller of both the learning device and of key aspects of the learning process. Besides, it allows access to authentic target language sources and use. The above could be perceived somehow through learners' and parents' opinions regarding the use of the strategies in other contexts.

“Sí, las volvería usar más la de dibujar porque me ayudó mucho a entender las palabras que no conocía.”(Excerpt No. 36. [sic] S8. Learners' Questionnaire)

“Google Images (dibujar)” (Excerpt No. 37. [sic] S6. Learners' Questionnaire)

Q6. ¿Has usado estas estrategias para aprender vocabulario nuevo en otras materias (Matemáticas, Ciencias, Sociales, etc.)?

S1. Si No ¿Por qué?

“Porque me ayudó en matemáticas a conocer el significado de la palabra ‘meter’.” (Excerpt No. 38. [sic] S1. Learners' Questionnaire)

These excerpts illustrate as well that learners have raised awareness on how strategies can help them learn new vocabulary on their own, for example when working with a computer.

To summarize, the analysis of the data collected show that training learners in mnemonics, looking up words in an online dictionary and verbal repetition boosted their

learning of incidental vocabulary as it could be observed in the vocabulary pre- and post-tests. This was also displayed in learners' perceptions and comments on the use of the strategies, rating mnemonics as the most used one given its accessibility and the easiness for children to remember visual cues. Finally, learning how to use online tools to support strategy training has helped and perhaps will continue helping learners to become more autonomous to learn when dealing with unknown vocabulary.

Chapter Six: Conclusions, Pedagogical Implications, Limitations and Further Research

This chapter presents the most salient conclusions that emerged from this research study, the limitations encountered throughout its implementation, as well as some recommendations for further research.

As to the research question on how the use of vocabulary learning strategies (mnemonics, verbal repetition and use of online dictionary) implemented through online tools impact the autonomous learning of incidental vocabulary when reading e-storybooks in first grade learners from Saint George's School, it was concluded that strategy training enhanced their vocabulary acquisition. By teaching them how to use three online tools, which supported the implementation of looking up words in the dictionary, mnemonics and verbal repetition, they were able to improve their vocabulary knowledge thanks to their engagement not only towards the use of the strategies, but also because of the fact that it involved their interaction with a computer.

After training learners on the strategies and observing the results, I could conclude that this practice is a beneficial way to engage learners in the learning of new vocabulary while they are reading e-storybooks because it gives learners the opportunity to learn by doing, taking into account that technology facilitated and supported learners' access to the implementation of the strategies simultaneously. In other words, training learners with this set of strategies explicitly gives them the tools they need to face their learning process of a second language what may in turn improve their proficiency in the different skills.

Allowing learners to practice with the strategies and reflect permitted them to raise their awareness not only of the strategies they were already using, but also of the strategies that best suit their learning style. They were able to understand that there are properties that facilitate or complicate their process of learning new vocabulary while reading e-storybooks.

Learners were also able to identify that if they used the strategies systematically, their learning of new words was enhanced even more.

The practice of training learners to look up words in an online dictionary, mnemonics and verbal repetition allowed learners to realize that there are tools they can use to enhance their learning process of vocabulary through the reflection of their use and the ease of access to the tools; once trained on the functionality of the tools to implement the strategies, learners needed no further instruction or help to use the tools. By doing so, they were able to take this strategy knowledge and transfer it to other contexts that allowed them to be more autonomous and will eventually contribute to their life-long learning. Another aspect that contributed as well to initiate learners in their path of becoming autonomous when learning new words was the use of self-access tools that allowed them to work on their own on their own time.

Through the development of this research study, I gained knowledge about the importance of training learners explicitly on some of the strategies available to enhance their process of learning vocabulary so they can apply them while reading not only e-storybooks but other types of texts that, as research proves, will enhance their vocabulary development by taking advantage of the range of words they gain by reading for pleasure. It also contributed to raising the awareness on the part of the teacher-researcher on the appropriate methodology to instruct strategies within a classroom of learners of this age. “In the quest to maximize learners’ academic growth, one of the best tools available to educators is explicit instruction, a structured, systematic and effective methodology got teaching academic skills” (Archer & Hughes, 2011).

Thinking aloud modeling and reflecting practices are significant in learners’ development of strategy use. Therefore, these should be included in daily planning. Finally, providing learners with looking up words in an online dictionary, mnemonics and verbal

repetition strategies in the language class was an excellent opportunity to teach learners the needed strategies, to boost their vocabulary size while reading for pleasure through a computer. Furthermore, it promoted autonomy in learners because they not only could self-access the tools that supported the implementation of the strategies, but also gain awareness on the use of these.

Pedagogical Implications

There are some issues in this study related to teaching and learning English as a foreign language that teachers can bear in mind. First of all, it is more beneficial for learners when strategies are taught explicitly. By doing so, teachers are assured that learners become conscious of the functionality and purpose of the strategies, since simply knowing them does not guarantee their applicability, besides guaranteeing their effective use while being implemented. Therefore, it is valuable for teachers to plan strategy training sessions in order to provide learners with strategies not only directed to enhance their vocabulary but also other strategies that facilitate their learning process of a second language. This training can be supported by the incorporation of technological tools that are usually accessible to learners' age, learning styles and interests.

Another aspect is to encourage learners to reflect upon the known strategies with the purpose of raising their awareness of the tools they already count on. This could enhance their learning process in relation to their learning styles and needs. Although learners can become more successful if they are able to carry out this process, there is not the space for teaching the strategies, nor room for this reflection on a daily basis in the classroom. Therefore, it would be interesting to see the effects of becoming engaged in this practice in the classroom once it has been incorporated to the curriculum.

Personally, this research helped me realize that being an elementary level teacher requires an open mind with regard to the different practices applicable to young learners; practices I believed were not possible for me to implement. As teachers of young learners, we are skeptical about what they can achieve in terms of raising awareness and autonomous learning. This project definitely demonstrated that even with young learners we could implement practices that can eventually lead them to be more responsible for their own process of learning and how they can take advantage of their digital knowledge to achieve it.

Additionally, reflecting upon the practices and tools supporting more learner-centered classes, I have been able to become more creative and innovative in order to plan classes in which learners are the protagonist to understand, learn and create knowledge. As a researcher, I gain insights on the importance to be engaged in investigating classroom issues for the advancement and evolution of teaching practices, more specifically, when learning a second language.

The present study may contribute to the teaching field as it was conducted with a first grade class. Thus, it can provide other teachers with hints about the protocols used to teach strategies explicitly, to develop learners' autonomy by using technology supporting the implementation of the strategies and the significant impact of these practices along with reading practices derives from the development of vocabulary in a second language.

In sum, this is a call to all EFL teachers to consider strategy training in their daily practice as a tool to provide learners with the needed skills to improve their vocabulary knowledge and thus help them become more proficient users of the English language. In addition, this practice is not only helpful for the purpose of improving vocabulary but for giving learners the opportunity to become more responsible of their learning process and eventually become autonomous learners what will help them be more successful in their academic life. Finally, it is important that teachers of young learners begin to take more

advantage of what technology can offer to these young learners and integrate the different tools, applications and other online resources that are available to support their process of learning.

Limitations

During the implementation of the strategies supported by online tools while reading an e-storybook, there were three main constraints: technical, technological and time-related. Regarding the technical issues, these were related mainly to the equipment and availability of computers at school. On some occasions we went to the lab and learners work was delayed because there were not enough headphones for the whole class or if there were they did not work properly. In addition, on occasion, the Internet connection was very slow. Given these circumstances, during the practice stage of the strategies, I had to organize learners to work in pairs on the same computer and during the final step of the intervention, for the sake of the schedule, she had to ask parents to help carry out the project at home under the condition of acting only as supervisors of the work their children did.

Technological limitations had to do mainly with the online tools used to support the implementation of the strategies. *Wordsmyth.com* and *Images.google.com* surfaced as the most adequate sources to be used. Notwithstanding, it could be concluded that these were still not appropriate for learners' level of English and age. On one hand, although the dictionary offered definitions for beginners' level, these were often difficult for young learners to understand. On the other, the tool used for the mnemonics provided learners with inappropriate images forcing the teacher to request parents to supervise its use besides training learners how to filter the images by writing in the search engine the *unknown word +coloring*, prompting more appropriate images suitable for learners' age. Additionally, being presented with a vast amount of images for each word caused learners to become distracted

and use more time than given and to draw the picture as it appears in the bank of images for further implementation of the online dictionary strategy, it would be valuable for teachers to assemble an online glossary (build up with the words that arise from reading the books) presenting one appropriate image per word.

Finally, time constraints definitely limited the opportunities to practice the strategies use, a central stage for learners when they are beginning to use the strategies on their own. Therefore, I decided to take advantage of any opportunity of any class in order to practice the strategies with any unknown word that arose during the classes.

Issues for further research

After carrying out this project, some further issues to be explored include analyzing the rate of words gained only by extensive reading compared to that after being trained on the strategies. Likewise, the impact of the strategy training in different classes, subjects or areas, for instance in classes that are taught in English. It is believed that it would help to boost the acquisition of specialized vocabulary used in the subjects such as Science and Math, what could enhance learners' understanding of key concepts and, consequently, their performance.

Pointing out the characteristics of action research in relation to its continuity, I would like to invite my colleagues to be involved in further research regarding, not only the training of other types of strategies regarding vocabulary development, but also the systematic implementation of strategies – selecting strategies that can be taught as a system. Thus, it would be interesting to analyze the impact of this practice for both the enhancement of vocabulary acquisition as well as for other language skills.

Regarding reading practices, it would be beneficial to continue exploring in the field. For example, analyzing what parts of speech are being learned most when reading for

pleasure and proposing a strategy to help learners boost the improvement of these types of words while reading given the effects of strategy training in vocabulary improvement.

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[%20Digital%20Natives,%20Digital%20Immigrants%20-%20Part1.pdf](http://www.marcprensky.com/writing/Prensky%20-%20Digital%20Natives,%20Digital%20Immigrants%20-%20Part1.pdf)

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
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Appendix A

Needs Analysis Questionnaire

 Saint George's School 

Date: Septiembre 2012 Grado: Primero

Lee y responde las siguientes preguntas. Colorea!

1. ¿Sientes que te hace falta conocer más palabras para poder comunicarte mejor en Inglés?

2. ¿Te gusta leer?

3. ¿Lees a menudo en tu tiempo libre?

4. ¿Cada cuanto lees un libro en tu tiempo libre?

☆ Todos los días

☆ 2 a 3 veces por semana

★ Una vez por semana

☆ Sólo leo cuando me toca. Por qué?

5. ¿Sientes que aprendes vocabulario nuevo cuando lees en tu tiempo libre?

6. ¿Qué haces cuando encuentras palabras desconocidas cuando lees? Marca la casilla o casillas que correspondan.

Buscas el significado en el diccionario Buscas imágenes relacionadas al significado

Deduces el significado de la lectura Le preguntas el significado a quien se encuentra contigo


Buscas sinónimos


No haces nada, continúas leyendo Escribes las palabras en un cuaderno

7. ¿Sabes lo que es un libro electrónico?

8. ¿Alguna vez haz leído un libro electrónico?

9. Escoge la imagen que mejor representa la manera como te gustaría leer libros.





© Alex Bannykh image: 59222 Illustrations: Qi.com

10. ¿Por qué escogiste esa imagen?

Porque me gusta el computador

Appendix B

Pre and Post Vocabulary Test

Saint George's School

Vocabulary Pre-Test

Name: _____ Date: _____

1. Look at the words and pictures. Match the word with the picture that best represents it.

cold



hall



row



glow



oars



smoke



frightened



sail



blanket



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2. Read the sentences. Fill in the circle of the sentence that best describes the meaning of the word that is underlined.

A. Maria began extracurricular music classes.

- This situation is today.
- This situation will happen tomorrow.
- This situation happened yesterday.

B. Children put up their hands.

- Children raise their hands.
- Children cut their hands
- Children eat their hands

C. The monkey heard the bell.

- This situation is today.
- This situation happened yesterday.
- This situation will happen tomorrow.

D. The students liked the class.

- This situation happens today
- This situation will happen tomorrow.
- This situation happened yesterday.

E. The dog helped the woman.

- This situation is today.
- This situation happened yesterday.
- This situation will happen tomorrow.

F. Bill and Cliff said they were happy in the party.

- Bill and Cliff talked yesterday.
- Bill and Cliff are talking it right now.
- Bill and Cliff will talk tomorrow.

G. Daniela showed the ball to Camilo.

- This situation happened today.
- This situation is going to happen.
- This situation happened yesterday.

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H. Alyson gave her mother a cupcake.

- This situation happens today
- This situation will happen tomorrow.
- This situation happened yesterday.

3. Complete the sentences with the words from the box.

liked	upset	lived	dressed up	sat
wet	believed	crossed	wanted	dark

- Today it was raining. The floor was all _____.
- I was tired of standing in the line, so I _____ down on a chair.
- Carolina did not like her birthday present. She is _____.
- In the story, the characters _____ happily ever after! They were so in love!
- In Houses theater competition we were all _____ with costumes and glowing clothes.
- We got into the bears' cave. It was big and _____.
- Thank you for yesterday's party. I really _____ it.
- Yesterday, I waited until the traffic light went green before I _____ the street.
- My teacher _____ the story the student told her this morning because he was crying and scared.
- My father _____ me to move the box from my room to his room.

4. Match the words with the corresponding meaning.

- a. noise _____ To act to the pleasure or satisfaction of.
- b. throw _____ The land beside an ocean, sea, lake, or river.
- c. shore _____ Furiously eager or intense. Dangerously wild, hostile, or vicious; ferocious.
- d. torch _____ Weak-minded or lacking good sense; stupid or foolish.
- e. shield _____ Sound or a sound.
- f. fell _____ Glow or be bright with reflected light, past tense of shine.
- g. fierce _____ A big piece metal to protect the body, usually carried on the left arm, as a defense against swords, lances, arrows, etc.
- h. pleased _____ A light to be carried in the hand, a stick or rod with a flammable material fixed on one end, ignited and carried as a portable light.
- i. silly _____ To send through the air with some force, especially by a sudden straightening of the arm and wrist.
- j. shone _____ Cut down (a tree) in the past.

SUPPORTING INCIDENTAL VOCABULARY LEARNING BY MEANS OF STRATEGY TRAINING AND ONLINE RESOURCES

5. Draw or write what you understand for:

slide	sweets	rowed
attack	raiders	viking
In hurry!	longship	villagers
landed	thick	looked

6. Write other words you learned reading Viking Adventure.

_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

Appendix C

Learners' Interview on the Strategies

Students' No.	Did you like the strategy?	Did you learn a new word?	Would you use it again?

Appendix D

Learners' Questionnaire

Bienvenido! Por favor tómate el tiempo para responder estas preguntas sobre las estrategias que has aprendido en clase.



*

1. Escribe tu nombre:

Escribe tu nombre:

*

2. Leyendo el libro "La Aventura Vikinga", ¿usaste alguna de las estrategias que aprendiste en clase?

Si

No

Buscar la palabra en el diccionario

*Leyendo el libro "La Aventura Vikinga", ¿usaste alguna de las estrategias que aprendiste en clase?
 Buscar la palabra en el diccionario Si

Buscar la palabra en el diccionario No

Asociar la palabra con un dibujo

Asociar la palabra con un dibujo Si

Asociar la palabra con un dibujo No

Repetir la palabra

Repetir la palabra Si

Repetir la palabra No

*

3. ¿Crees que aprendiste nuevas palabras usando estas estrategias?

Si

No

Buscar la palabra en el diccionario

*¿Crees que aprendiste nuevas palabras usando estas estrategias?
 Buscar la palabra en el diccionario Si

Buscar la palabra en el diccionario No

Asociar la palabra con una imagen

Asociar la palabra con una imagen Si

Asociar la palabra con una imagen No

Repetir la palabra

Repetir la palabra Si

Repetir la palabra No

¿Por qué?

*

4. Cuenta el número de palabras que aprendiste con cada estrategia y escribe el número al frente.

Buscar la palabra en el diccionario

Asociar la palabra con una imagen

Repetir la palabra

*

5. ¿Cuál fue la estrategia que más usaste?

Buscando la palabra en el diccionario

Asociando la palabra con una imagen

Repitiendo la palabra

*

6. ¿Consideras que con esta estrategia aprendes más vocabulario? ¿Por qué?

Si

No

¿Por qué?

*

7. ¿Usarás esta estrategia(s) u otras cuando leas libros de ahora en adelante?

Si

No

*

8. Desde que aprendiste estas estrategias, ¿las haz utilizado en otras materias o cuando lees otros textos?

Si

No

*

9. ¿Te gustaría aprender otras estrategias para aprender vocabulario nuevo?

Si

No

[Desarrollado por SurveyMonkey](#)
[¡Cree su propia encuesta gratuita en línea ahora!](#)

Appendix E

Parents' Questionnaire

Estimado padre de familia,
Durante este año su hijo ha sido entrenado en el uso de estrategias de aprendizaje (buscar la definición, dibujar, pronunciar la palabra) de vocabulario en inglés con el objetivo de optimizar el aprendizaje de vocabulario cuando leen libros electrónicos. Agradezco su colaboración dando respuesta a las siguientes preguntas con el objetivo de valorar el proyecto realizado.

*

1. Nombre del estudiante:

Nombre del estudiante:

*

2. ¿Qué tal le pareció el proyecto de entrenar sus hijos en estrategias para aprender vocabulario nuevo cuando lee libros electrónicos?

Excelente

Bueno

Malo

¿Por qué?

*

3. ¿Cómo describiría la actitud de su hijo motivado a realizar el proyecto? ¿Por qué?

*

4. ¿Cuál cree Ud. fue la estrategia más efectiva para su hijo? ¿Por qué?

*

5. ¿Fue autónomo su hijo en el uso de las herramientas para aprender nuevo vocabulario?

¿Por qué?

*

6. ¿Su hijo ha usado en casa algunas de las herramientas propuestas para buscar vocabulario, en otros contextos diferentes a cuando está leyendo libros electrónicos? ¿Cuáles usó?

Wordsmyth.com (definición)

Google Images (dibujar)

How you say (pronunciar la palabra)

No las ha usado en otros contextos

Appendix F

Teacher's Field Notes Log

Date:	Field Note No.:
Pedagogical intervention stage:	
Date:	Field Note No.:
Pedagogical intervention stage:	
Date:	Field Note No.:
Pedagogical intervention stage	

Appendix G

Consent Letter

Bogotá, Septiembre de 2012

Familia García Morán
E. S. M.

Estimados padres de familia,

Actualmente me encuentro realizando la maestría Didáctica del Inglés con Énfasis en Medios de Aprendizaje Autónomos- Master in English Language Teaching Autonomous Learning Environments- en la Universidad de la Sabana.

Este programa requiere llevar a cabo un proyecto de Investigación-Acción, razón por la cual estoy interesada en realizar, con los alumnos de Primer Grado, un estudio titulado "Fostering Autonomous Learning of Incidental Vocabulary through the use of E-storybooks" que pretende enriquecer el vocabulario de los estudiantes enseñando y aplicando estrategias de aprendizaje del mismo e implementando el uso de recursos electrónicos a la vanguardia de la educación moderna.

Por lo anterior, comedidamente solicito su consentimiento y colaboración para realizar mi propuesta de investigación, que se llevará a cabo durante el año escolar 2012-2013. Para hacer el seguimiento del desarrollo de este estudio se realizarán algunos cuestionarios, audiograbaciones y entrevistas, los cuales servirán como colección de datos y soporte para analizar la incidencia de las nuevas tecnologías y estrategias de aprendizaje autónomo en el vocabulario de los estudiantes. Los resultados no sólo beneficiarán el proceso de aprendizaje de su hijo(a) para el futuro sino que también permitirá adoptar en la práctica docente nuevas estrategias de aprendizaje de vocabulario vanguardistas para las generaciones futuras.

Por otra parte, a su hijo(a) se le garantizará estricta confidencialidad con la información que se obtenga. El proyecto no tendrá incidencia alguna en las evaluaciones y notas parciales y/o finales del curso.

Atentamente,

Angela Maria Charria Gómez

Directora de Grupo 1C

Autorizamos a nuestro hijo(a)
a participar en la investigación
use of E-storybooks" que se llevará a cabo durante el año 2012-2013.

Firma de los padres



Appendix H

Pedagogical Intervention Timeline

Stage	Month	Week (Dates)	Activity	Data collection Instrument
Pre-stage	August 2012	August 17 – Sept 1	To get the institutional permission to apply the AR. Consent letters Design the instrument: initial survey. Introductory session for parents.	Initial Survey
		Sept 14 -15	Survey Piloting To identify learners' needs and language interests. To refine the first instrument.	Survey
	October 2012	Oct 3- 12	To design the recording logs for each strategy learners will fill in as they find unknown words. Design of logs Design of post-stage questionnaire To design the questionnaire that will be applied to analyze learners' use of strategies, raise learner's awareness of their use of strategies and determine if they are becoming more autonomous.	Logs Questionnaire
	January 2013	Jan6-11	To choose the three e-storybooks suitable for learners to read in order to analyze the use of the strategies taught to learn incidental vocabulary. To gather the corpora of the three e-storybooks chosen to design the vocabulary pre and post test. To design the pre and post vocabulary test I order to analyze learner's increase of vocabulary size.	Pre and Post Vocabulary Test
	February 2013	Feb 8-28	Vocabulary pre and post test piloting. To refine the first instrument.	
While-stage	February 2013	Feb 13	To identify the amount of vocabulary learners have. Implementation of vocabulary pre-test	Vocabulary Pre-test.
		Feb-11-15	Familiarization session Strategy Training Cycle 1. (Session A) Strategy Training Cycle 1. (Session B)	Teacher's Field Notes Learners' Interview on the Strategies
		Feb 18-22	To allow learners to practice mnemonics with physical book and electronic books. Strategy Training Cycle 1. (Session C) Strategy Training Cycle 1. (Session D) Strategy Training Cycle 1. (Session E)	Teacher's Field Notes Learners' Interview on the Strategies
			To raise learner's awareness on the strategies they already use to learn vocabulary. To model learners how to use mnemonics strategy and log use. To allow learners to practice mnemonics with physical book.	

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		<p>Feb 24-March 1</p> <p>Strategy Training Cycle 2. (Session A)</p> <p>Strategy Training Cycle 2. (Session B)</p> <p>Strategy Training Cycle 2. (Session C)</p>	<p>To model learners how to use verbal repetition strategy and log use.</p> <p>To allow learners to practice verbal repetition with physical and electronic books.</p> <p>To monitor and analyze the learners' response.</p>	<p>Teacher's Field Notes</p> <p>Learners' Interview on the Strategies</p>
	March 2013	<p>March 3-8</p> <p>Strategy Training Cycle 2. (Session D)</p> <p>Strategy Training Cycle 2. (Session E)</p> <p>Strategy Training Cycle 3. (Session A)</p>	<p>To allow learners to practice mnemonics with physical book and electronic books.</p> <p>To model learners how to use mnemonics strategy and log use.</p> <p>To monitor and analyze the learners' response.</p>	<p>Teacher's Field Notes</p> <p>Learners' Interview on the Strategies</p>
		<p>March 10-14</p> <p>Strategy Training Cycle 3. (Session B)</p> <p>Strategy Training Cycle 3. (Session C)</p> <p>Strategy Training Cycle 3. (Session D)</p> <p>Strategy Training Cycle 3. (Session D)</p>	<p>To allow learners to practice mnemonics with physical book and electronic books.</p> <p>To monitor and analyze the learners' response.</p>	<p>Teacher's Field Notes</p> <p>Learners' Interview on the Strategies</p>
	March-April 2013	<p>March 31-April 5</p> <p>Review of strategies taught use.</p> <p>Computers Lab1: "Olympic Adventure"</p> <p>Computers Lab 2: "Submarine Adventure"</p>	<p>To review the understanding of the vocabulary strategies taught.</p> <p>To monitor and analyze the learners' use of the vocabulary strategies taught.</p>	<p>Teacher's Field Notes</p> <p>Learners' Interview on the Strategies</p>
	April 2013	<p>April 7-12</p> <p>Computers Lab 3: "Viking Adventure"</p>	<p>To monitor and analyze the students' use of the vocabulary strategies taught.</p>	<p>Parents' Questionnaire</p>
Post-stage	April 2013	<p>April 7-12.</p> <p>Vocabulary post-test</p>	<p>To identify the amount of vocabulary learners learned.</p>	<p>Vocabulary post-test</p>
				<p>Teacher's Field Notes</p>
		<p>Post-stage Questionnaire</p>	<p>To analyze learners' use of strategies, raise learner's awareness of their use of strategies and determine if they are becoming more autonomous.</p>	<p>Learners' Questionnaire</p>
		<p>Feb-April 2013</p> <p>Data Analysis</p>	<p>To analyze the data collection to conclude the effects of working on a blended course.</p>	<p>Questionnaire, journal, Vocabulary Portfolios, tests.</p>

Appendix I

ICELT Lesson Plan

Name of teacher: Angela Maria Charria Gomez		Candidate Number: 201213976	
Institution: Saint George's School			
Date of Class: 18 02 2013		Time of observation:	
		Length of class : 45 mins	
Class/grade: First Grade		Room: 1C	
Number of students: 28		Average age of Students: 7	
Number of years of English study: 4 years		Level of students	
		Elementary	
Main Aim(s):			
By the end of the lesson learners will raise their awareness on what and why strategies they use to learn vocabulary.			
Materials:			
- KWL chart			

Appendix J

Strategy Training Lesson Plan

Stage	Aim	Procedure Teacher and student activity	Time and interaction	Tutor's comments
<u>Normalization and presentation of the objectives</u>	Organize learners and anticipate them to what will happen during the class.	Teacher organizes the classroom and briefly outlines the plan for the lesson.	5' T-Ss	
<u>Warm up</u>	To focus learner's attention and activate schemata.	Teacher will hand in the KWL chart, and will display it on the board to present a model to students on how to use the chart. Teacher will write the word, "Vocabulary Learning Strategies" on the board, and will ask learners to complete the chart. Teacher will ask learners to put it aside.	5' T-Ss	
<u>Presentation</u>	Teacher will model what a strategy means and how to use it.	Teacher will display on the board a short text. Teacher will begin to read and when she finds a word, she says "I don't understand this word" and will elicit learners what should she do when this happens. Teacher will write on the board all students ideas then, teacher will ask learners who uses which strategies.	5' T-Ss	
<u>Evaluation</u>	Check students' comprehension of what a strategy mean	Teacher then will ask the following questions: what is a strategy?, why do we use it for? and what are some strategies they know?. Teacher, then, will ask learners to finish completing the chart.	10' T-Ss-Ss	
<u>Warm down</u>	To wrap up the class by reinforcing one last time the structure and key vocabulary.	Some learners will pass to the front and read what they wrote in the L column in the KWL chart.	5' T-Ss-Ss	

SUPPORTING INCIDENTAL VOCABULARY LEARNING BY MEANS OF STRATEGY TRAINING AND ONLINE RESOURCES

Stage	Aim	Procedure Teacher and student activity	Time and interaction
<u>Normalization and presentation of the objectives</u>	Organize learners and anticipate them to what will happen during the class.	Teacher organizes the classroom and briefly outlines the plan for the lesson.	5' T-Ss
<u>Warm up</u>	To focus learner's attention and activate schemata.	Teacher will show a picture of a worried student. She will tell the story that he is very worried because he was reading there were lots of words he did not understand. Then, teacher asks, "What would this student do or use to find the meaning of the vocabulary he doesn't know?" Teacher will write on the board the strategies learners name. If the use of an online dictionary is named, she will point out that this will be the strategy they will learn how to use today.	5' T-Ss
<u>Presentation</u>	Teacher will model what a strategy means and how to use it.	Teacher will display on the board an e-storybook and she will begin to read. She will stop when she doesn't know and she will say, "Oh, there is word I don't know this word, maybe if a go and look in the dictionary I can understand what it means". Then, she models using her computer how to use the log for this strategy (Appendix I), she says: "I write the unknown word in the <i>word</i> column and then, I open the window of http://www.wordsmyth.net/ . Next, I look for the definition, you will find many but we will take as a reference the first one, and you write the definition in the <i>definition</i> column." Then she says, now that I have understood this word, I will continue reading".	5' T-Ss
<u>Evaluation</u>	Check students' comprehension of how the strategy works.	After the modeling by thinking aloud, teacher will ask learners to recall what she did first, second, etc., and why she did it. The teacher then says, "Ok this is the strategy of looking in the dictionary when you don't know a word" and she will explain, when, why and how.	10' T-Ss
<u>Practice</u>	Allow learners to implement the strategy they have just learned.	Teacher will hand learners the log she used during this strategy and will elicit learners what they will be doing next. Teacher will ask learners to come to the classroom library and take a reading book. She will ask learners to use the strategy of looking in the dictionary for the unknown words they will encounter.	T-Ss Ss
<u>Warm down</u>	To wrap up the class by reinforcing one last time the strategy learners learned to use.	Some learners will pass to the front and read the words and definitions they learned through reading.	5' Ss-Ss

Appendix K

Corpus of Unknown Words form E-storybooks for Pre and Post Tests

E-storybook's Title		
Viking's Adventure		
Believed	Looked	Smoke
Liked	Wonder	Slide
Made	Torch	Attack
Model ship	Blanket	Shone
Sort	Thick	Torch
Put up	Sat	Frightened
Showed	Pulled	Fell
Viking	Began	In hurry
Oars	Rowed	Had
Sail	Across	Gave
Lived	Suddenly	Longship
Said	Blow along	raiders
Crossed	Heard	Villagers
Helmet	Noise	Sweets
Shield	Jumped back	
Helped	Fierce	
Hall	Pleased	
Dressed up	Tossed up and down	
Row	Waves splashed	
Pretended	Cold	
Came	Wet	
Wanted	Landed	
Glow	Carried boxes	
Upset	Throw	
Dark	Waded	

Appendix L

KWL Chart

K-W-L CHART

TOPIC:

<u>K</u> _{now}	<u>W</u> _{ant to Know}	<u>L</u> _{earned}

NAME: _____

DATE: _____

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Appendix M

Use of Dictionary Recording Log

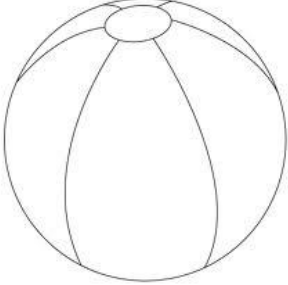
Write the word!

Write the definition of the word!

Word	Sentence
<i>face</i>	

Appendix N

Mnemonics Recording Log

Word	Drawing
<i>ball</i>	

Write the word!

Draw what it represents!

Appendix O

Verbal Repetition Recording Log

Write the word!

Write what you hear!

Word	Pronunciation
<i>car</i>	<i>kar</i>

