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Facultad de Filosofía, Letras y Ciencias de la Educación

Maestría en Lingüística Aplicada a la Enseñanza del Inglés como Lengua Extranjera

Título: The effects of the TPRS Method on the Students' English Vocabulary Acquisition at  
the Catholic University of Cuenca

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## Resumen

Este estudio indaga los efectos que el método la enseñanza del idioma a través de la lectura y la narración de cuentos (TPRS por sus siglas en inglés) tiene en la adquisición de vocabulario del inglés en los estudiantes de segundo nivel en la Universidad Católica de Cuenca, extensión Cañar. Como también indaga sobre las percepciones que los estudiantes tienen cuando son enseñados con este método. La enseñanza del idioma a través de la lectura y la narración de cuentos es un método que utiliza diferentes recursos para la enseñanza de lenguas, proveyendo información de entrada comprensible y personalización en situaciones imaginarias o reales derivadas del contexto social de los estudiantes y sus necesidades cognitivas y afectivas. El método se encuentra dentro de la Enseñanza Comunicativa de Lenguas en tanto que ofrece oportunidades para la interacción social de los estudiantes. El método fue utilizado con 56 estudiantes del segundo nivel de la universidad antes mencionada. Un grupo de 30 estudiantes formaron parte del grupo de intervención y 26 estudiantes tomaron parte del grupo de control. Los datos se obtuvieron a través de la prueba de vocabulario de Cambridge en las fases de pre y post prueba para establecer diferencia entre los grupos. Adicionalmente, una encuesta fue administrada a los estudiantes del grupo de intervención para conocer sus perspectivas sobre el método. La prueba estadística t independiente se utilizó para el análisis de datos. Los resultados muestran que los estudiantes del grupo de tratamiento obtuvieron mejores resultados que los estudiantes en el grupo control en las medidas de adquisición de vocabulario. Adicionalmente, resultados de la encuesta demostraron que los estudiantes perciben que las estrategias derivadas del método fueron de gran apoyo para adquirir vocabulario en inglés.

**Palabras claves:** enseñanza-aprendizaje de vocabulario de inglés, la enseñanza del idioma a través de la lectura y la narración de cuentos, percepciones de los estudiantes.



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## **Abstract**

The present research investigates the effects that the Teaching Proficiency through Reading and Storytelling (TPRS) method has on the second level students' English vocabulary acquisition at the Catholic University of Cuenca, Cañar Extension, as well as, the perceptions learners have when being taught by means of it. TPRS is a method that makes use of different resources to teach languages, providing comprehensible input and personalization under social real or imaginary situations coming from the students' social context, and cognitive and affective needs. It falls within the Communicative Language Teaching Approach since it offers opportunities for social interaction between the learners and the teacher. The method was applied to 56 students in two classes; the students belonged to the second English level at the aforementioned university. Thirty participants were part of the experimental group and twenty-six took part in the control one. Data from both groups were collected in the pre and post-test stages through the Cambridge Vocabulary Test in order to compare results and establish their relationships. Additionally, a survey was administered to the participants in the experimental group to gather information about their perceptions towards TPRS. An independent sample t-test statistical analysis was conducted to compare the means from the two participant groups. Results indicated that the learners from the experimental group outperformed the ones in the control one on measures of vocabulary acquisition. Additionally, results from the survey questionnaire indicated that learners strongly agreed that the TPRS strategies supported them to acquire the English vocabulary.

**Key words:** English vocabulary teaching and learning, teaching proficiency through reading and storytelling method, students' perceptions.



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**DEDICATION**

This piece of work is devoted to my beloved husband, Diego, who gave me the strength and courage to pursue this dream, and, who has been the warm light in my heart. To our precious children Alexander, Samuel, and Ariana for their tolerance, affection and sacrifice throughout the process of the master's program. I also dedicate this work to my dad, Papi Libo, and my parents-in-law, Diego and Yolanda, for their encouragement and care. This study is likewise devoted to my mom Rocio, who although is no longer by my side, has always been my guide and inspiration.



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## **INTRODUCTION**

English teaching has become a subject of great importance in Spanish-speaking countries for many decades. They have developed projects with creative and innovative strategies to spread access to language learning opportunities in order to appropriate English as an integral learning tool.

Nowadays, English proficiency becomes more and more necessary at all educational levels, that is, elementary, secondary, tertiary, and technical because it facilitates international communication, globalization, and international economic exchanges. This state has provoked the interest in learning the language in a continuous and dynamic way. Thus, Latin American countries have made innumerable efforts to improve English instruction through both educational policies and innovative programs; subsequently, more people have access to learning it.

Accordingly, some authors have offered several reasons or assumptions to sustain the teaching and learning of English all over the world. Richards (2006) and Menezes de Oliveira e Paiva (1996) state some of them:

- English as a practical tool for communication.
- English as a world commodity to facilitate international communication.
- English learning as a way to keep social justice and peace.
- English teaching as a resource of international cooperation and friendship.
- English as a way to enrich and enlighten people's culture.

According to the authors, English is considered a dynamic, practical, and integrative tool of mass communication, which helps to maintain direct communication among people from different countries, and from different languages. Additionally, it fosters



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social values, enriches a person's vocabulary, and enhances the potential of the human being.

Additionally, Emerson stated "The English language is the sea which receives tributaries from every region under heaven. The English language surrounds us like a sea and like the waters of the deep, it is full of mysteries" (as cited in Acosta, Pérez & Vasconcellos, 2016, p. 48). Accordingly, it is a universal language spoken in most countries around the world. Consequently, English proficiency becomes a necessity. Moreover, McCrum, Cran, and MacNeil (2003) stated "...it has become the language of the planet, the first truly global language" (p.21).

Due to the idiosyncrasy of the English language all over the world, its teaching and learning has also gained greater significance in Ecuador. Recently, the Ecuadorian Government has implemented a number of reforms to advance the English Curriculum and expand teachers' professional development. Consequently, as Merinnage De Costa (2015) remarks, learning institutions are being required to review their teaching methodologies in order to enhance foreign language instruction. Moreover, Ecuadorian English teachers face the challenge to meet better their learners' needs by adapting efficient foreign language teaching methods that will improve language acquisition (British Council, 2015). This article discusses the importance of including English instruction in the curricular contents of learning institutions in Ecuador. They must use teaching strategies that on one hand lead students to the language proficiency and on the other develop autonomous readers who are able to approach research articles in English, and, at the same time, seek students' insertion in their professional fields.

Whereby, the footing assumption of this work recognizes that vocabulary is one of the components of the language together with pronunciation and structural patterns, and the



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biggest of them since it is an open system. Without vocabulary, the basic language skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing would not become speech. No matter how well the student acquires grammar; no matter how effectively the sounds of a Second Language (L2) are mastered, without words to express a wide range of meanings, communication just cannot happen in any meaningful way (Gass & Selinker, 2008).

Additionally, Wilkins (1972) states “without grammar very little can be conveyed, without vocabulary nothing can be conveyed” (as cited in Milton, 2009, p. 3). Moreover, Hinkel (2006) suggests that foreign language students require acquiring significant terminology knowledge for them to become proficient in all L2 skills (as cited in Lin, 2012). Therefore, for learners to attain English proficiency, it is essential that they feel success in their studies of the language (Chung, 2012). Besides, research displays that vocabulary acquisition plays the most critical role in both English learning and school successful achievement (August, Carlo, Dressler, & Snow, 2005).

This situation led to Teaching Proficiency thru Reading and Storytelling (TPRS) to be established in 1990 with the purpose of making foreign language teaching and learning meaningful in context. Accordingly, Ray and Seely (2012) describe TPRS as a method to train teachers to do repetitive, interesting comprehensible input through stories. It is an extension of the Total Physical Response (TPR) method created by James Asher, which combines discourse with movements; that is, teachers’ commands with students’ responses by body movements. It entails giving to students instructions that imply movement. TPR will not force students to utter the language prematurely because the only answer expected from them is a certain movement as a reaction to a given order.





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This thesis is structured as follows:

The first chapter encompasses the justification, problem statement, purpose of the study, research questions, and objectives. The second chapter includes the referential theoretical frame of the research, TPR and TPRS methods, as well as the antecedents of vocabulary acquisition, and the review of literature. The third chapter shows the methodology of the research followed; also, it comprises the setting, participants, instruments, data collection, and intervention. The fourth chapter describes the data analysis and the study's findings. The fifth chapter shows the discussion, conclusions, recommendations, and suggestions for further research.



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## CHAPTER I

### 1.1 Justification

It is essential to highlight that currently in Ecuador proficiency in English becomes a fundamental need in order to face the challenges demanded by the XXI century because it is an important tool for globalization and competitiveness among the educational systems, the internationalization of careers, and the scientific & technological advance (British Council, 2015). Therefore, if a person is fluent in English, many doors will be opened in the communicative and working world, improving life opportunities.

Consequently, this study called The effects of the TPRS method on the students' English vocabulary acquisition at the Catholic University of Cuenca, Cañar Extension at the present time is justified because it will generate an analysis on the impact of TPRS on English vocabulary acquisition, based on the identification of the method's benefits by evaluating whether TPRS improves or not English vocabulary acquisition. Additionally, the study analyses students' perceptions when TPRS is used.

Subsequently, the study focuses its importance on the fact that universities must encourage English learning through creative and effective methods. They must foster constructivist teaching strategies and innovative didactic resources. Therefore, a university professor is considered as students' learning mediator. Moreover, he/she is responsible for planning, and he/she is the designer of meaningful and relevant situations to create a favorable environment for discussion and confrontation of ideas in the classroom, where each student is perceived as a different being, who learns at his or her own pace.



## 1.2 Problem Statement

English teaching has served as an effective tool in developing countries to promote their growth, not only economically, but also socially, educationally, and professionally. Many advances have been made in respect to the subject; nevertheless, there are still gaps at the university level regarding English teaching and learning. It is required to implement educational policies that propitiate in students of different social classes the acquisition of linguistic knowledge, not only Spanish, being their mother tongue, but also other languages such as English in order to provide them with practical linguistic tools to achieve intellectual development; which promotes a greater labor insertion of this population.

For this reason, nowadays, in Ecuador's Tertiary Educational System the study of a foreign language is compulsory. The new Regulation of the Academic Regimen (2015) demands that university students must demonstrate B1 foreign language level proficiency, according to the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR), before finalizing sixty percent of their academic programs in order to advance with their studies. Thus, to conform to this regulation, the Catholic University of Cuenca created its own Language Center on September 2014. Henceforth, all of its students after demonstrating CEFR A1 level must successfully complete four English levels. Nevertheless, it was perceived that most learners at the Catholic University were not able to use English effectively, due to, among many other reasons, the lack of vocabulary. The author of this thesis has gone through a pre-study and has confirmed on her own teaching experience, as well as the observation and the interview research tools used with both teachers and students, that learners do not acquire the stock of words taught in the English courses as it is expected, being this a fact that hampers students' communication



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in English. Consequently, the learners are unable to take part in the classroom actively, and worse use it outside. Moreover, they are not able to get good grades when they are evaluated in their English skills. Additionally, language teachers still feel the persistent frustration of English learners who have accomplished many levels of study, and who yet are not able to use the language proficiently as they rapidly forget what they have been taught (Beal, 2011).

These weaknesses related to English vocabulary teaching and learning were identified at the Catholic University of Cuenca, Cañar Extension as shown by the outcomes from a pre-study carried out. Besides, the listed weaknesses were also revealed in the study, which influenced negatively on the second level students' vocabulary acquisition:

- Students do not always participate actively in deciding what words and phrases to learn, how to learn them and why.
- The meaning of the word is not always learned in context, which is the factor that determines largely its real and precise meaning.
- Learning a word is not often a reflective process about its meaning, formation, and use. Therefore, metacognition in vocabulary acquisition happens mechanically without students' reflection on learning strategies, preventing them from making generalizations and conclusions.
- The students do not have a culture for vocabulary learning and they still think that it is a matter of knowing the meaning of words from dictionaries, without understanding them in context and using them systematically in communication.
- Most of the time words are taught in isolation, instead of learning phrases in context through listening and reading.



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- Learners are unable to design their own English vocabulary learning.
- Teachers do not know much in practice and theory about innovative methods that could be used for teaching English vocabulary.
- Students have got a very low level of English skills; therefore, most of them are unable to listen to or read on their own, as well as, to look for resources to learn the language.
- Many students are not well motivated due to several reasons: low progress in learning the language, forgetting words already taught, unable to use the language, bored with traditional methods and teaching procedures; consequently, they feel uneasy, tense, bored, without emotions, will, and energy for learning vocabulary.
- Students' actual English vocabulary retention is weak; they soon forget the words they learn through traditional procedures.
- Most of students do not speak any English, due to, among other factors, the weak stock of words.

Currently, the teaching of vocabulary includes traditional procedures such as visual techniques: visuals as flashcards, photographs, board drawings, wall charts and realia (real objects), mime and gestures; verbal techniques: use of illustrative sentences, use of synonyms and definitions, contrasts, opposites, and translations (Takac, 2008). Besides, technology has played a key role in vocabulary learning since it shows a virtual world that offers many opportunities to interact in it easily and quickly.

### **1.3 Purpose of the Study**

Based on the above stated, this study is carried out in order to investigate the effects that TPRS has on English vocabulary acquisition in second level students at the Catholic



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University of Cuenca, Cañar Extension. In addition, it seeks to inquire about the perceptions students have when they are taught by means of TPRS, emphasizing that it is a method that uses different strategies for language teaching. It provides comprehensible input as well as personalization in imaginary or real situations derived from the students' social context and their cognitive and affective needs.

The above described leads to propose the educational use of TPRS in English learning in order to improve vocabulary acquisition for university students and to promote reading and writing processes, focusing on the analysis of the TPRS as a pedagogical tool to develop potentialities in these students through research, innovation, and creativity; thus, encouraging the development of critical thinking, promoting research, and participatory action in a globalized world.

### **1.4 Research Questions**

The research questions that lead this study include the following:

- Do English vocabulary scores for students taught with the TPRS method differ significantly from English vocabulary scores for students taught without it?
- What perceptions do second level students have when being taught English vocabulary using the Teaching Proficiency through Reading and Storytelling instruction?

### **1.5 Objectives**

#### **1.5.1 General objective**

The general objective of the study has been formulated as follows:

To determine the impact of the TPRS method on the English vocabulary acquisition of second level students at the Catholic University of Cuenca. Cañar Extension.



### 1.5.2 Specific Objectives

The specific objectives of the study comprise the following:

- To identify the benefits of TPRS on second level students' English vocabulary acquisition.
- To assess to what degree the TPRS method enhances the second level students' English vocabulary acquisition.
- To evaluate students' academic performance in English vocabulary after applying the TPRS method.
- To analyze the students' perceptions towards the use of the TPRS method to teach and learn English vocabulary.



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## **Chapter II**

### **THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND LITERATURE REVIEW**

This chapter presents the main theoretical references of the scientific problem associated to the teaching and learning of vocabulary in second year students at the Catholic University of Cuenca, Cañar Extension. The chapter comprises four parts:

- a) General remarks on the teaching of English to view the problem inside the main theories, trends, and approaches in English language;
- b) TPR and TPRS for the teaching of foreign languages to know in depth the role of these models in language teaching, particularly in vocabulary learning;
- c) Vocabulary learning to review the current state of this language component in English teaching, and
- d) Review of Literature.

#### **2.1 General Remarks on the Teaching of English**

Language teaching has undergone many variations in thoughts about syllabus design and methodology throughout its history. Richards (2006) groups trends in language teaching into three phases:

- Phase 1: Traditional approaches
- Phase 2: Classic communicative language teaching
- Phase 3: Current communicative language teaching

The transition from one phase to another is deeply connected to the ideas about the role of the linguistic system and the communicative skills as well as the epistemological views about language and communication.





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The most radical change in language teaching came in 1972 with the concept of communicative competence created by Hymes (1972). Which gave rise to Communicative Language Teaching (CLT). According to Acosta and Hernández (2011) CLT has its roots in the epistemological historical-cultural approach of Vygotsky and his followers about knowledge, language, thought, and communication based on the following ideas: The active and social character of the human psyche and the theories of meaning, social interaction, and reflective learning.

Two outstanding definitions of communicative competence that could be useful for the present research, for they both refer to the language, the cultural, and the speech aspect involved in communication are: "communicative competence means to know when to speak and when not, what to speak and about what, with whom, where, and how" (Hymes, 1972, p.11), and "communicative competence includes the knowledge that the speaker-hearer has of what constitutes appropriate as well as correct language behavior and also of what constitutes effective language behavior in relation to particular communicative goals, it includes linguistic and pragmatic knowledge" (Ellis, 1994, p. 13).

Communicative competence is composed of the following directions or dimensions: linguistic (or grammatical), sociolinguistic, strategic, discourse, and cultural (Canale & Swain, 1980). Vocabulary falls within the linguistic dimension, but it is present in all directions and skills of language.

Nowadays, some important ideas that support language teaching includes the following:

- a) The primary function of language is communication, social interaction (Vygotsky 1978, as cited in Choul, 2008, p.245).



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- b) “Interaction is the key factor in understanding a text: as a cognitive, complex, interactive, and strategic process” (Brubacher, Payne, & Rickett, 1990; Van Dijk, 1982).
- c) There are rules of language use without which the grammatical rules would be useless and inoperative (Hymes, 1972, p. 11)
- d) Studying the concrete language in its socio-cultural changing contexts (Van Dijk, 2000)
- e) Emphasizing the social function of language by means of interaction so that, as Halliday (1976) says:

It serves to establish and maintain social relations...and also for getting things done, by means of the interaction between one person and another’, and he adds that through social function and interaction, ‘...the individual is identified and reinforced, by enabling him to interact with others, language also serves in the expression and development of his own personality. (p.45)

These ground notions lead us to consider the following pedagogic ideas in the teaching of English or any other foreign language:

- Student-centered teaching.
- Attention to both the process and the result of learning.
- Attention to the students’ diversity.
- Emphasis on meaning.
- Learning from the whole to the parts, to the whole again.
- Learning as a long-life process: learning to learn and to teach.
- Unity between text and context.



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From a Vygotskian standpoint Acosta, Pérez, and Vasconcellos (2016) have claimed the following methodological implications for interactive and communicative language teaching:

- a) Both interactional competence and communicative competence are objectives of language learning, the former being the way for the latter.
- b) Communication is a socially constructed interactional process.
- c) Learning a language takes place in social interaction.
- d) Verbal interaction helps to show both the system and its use.
- e) Social interaction is a mechanism of mental reorganization.
- f) The focus is on meaning when teaching or learning a language.
- g) Students need to be affectively motivated to interact in learning a language.
- h) Interactive learning tasks should be meaningful for the learner.
- i) Both fluency and accuracy are objectives for language learning.

At present, and under the big umbrella of the CLT, according to Acosta, Pérez, and Vasconcellos (2016) the following views and procedures have gained strength:

- Learning in multiple scenarios, that is, both outside and inside the classroom.
- Project work, interactive task and cooperative learning.
- Integral analysis of the text (both semantically and pragmatically).
- Use of the internet, softwares, and e-mail.
- Students' interaction with native speakers.
- Simulation and role-play.
- Use of art: drama, music, cinema, painting.



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- Presentation of public speeches.
- Learning real English use (Casual English).
- Oral and written reports.
- Brainstorming sessions.
- Use of semantic mapping.
- The use of the portfolio.
- Collective and personal drawings.
- Spontaneous and natural dialogues.
- The focus on the attitude of the learner rather than on the method.
- The learner's own connection with the world and himself through English.
- The focus on the learner's psychological factors (the psychology of success).
- The teaching of vocabulary through listening and reading, to let the learners expand the general and the specific vocabulary, group words according to their meaning, choose the appropriate word in a given context, use the word-building processes: affixation, compounding, shortening and conversion, make use of a variety of words and phrases, paraphrase the meaning of words, and use the dictionary, among other skills.

The role of the Communicative Language Methodology has been of great importance since its very beginning in 1972, that most of the courses, materials, and models that have appeared since then are said to be communicative.

### **2.2 TPR and TPRS for the Teaching of Foreign Languages**

Freeman and Jensen (1998) mention some influential models of language teaching, which are all based on language acquisition theories related to brain research and the framework for language learning Lozanov's Suggestopedia Approach (1988), Krashen's



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Language Model (1982), Terrell's Natural Approach (1977), and Asher's Total Physical Response (TPR) Approach (1986), they also explain their own model Joyful Fluency (1998).

Asher's TPR has the following qualities it parallels first language acquisition, memory retrieval through physical body, language imprinted through movements, comprehension precedes speech production, and never forces speaking. Additionally, Richards and Rogers (2001) perceive TPR as a language teaching method that specializes in teaching a target language by the coordination of speech and actions. TPR is built around several conducts such as developmental psychology, learning theory and humanistic pedagogy in addition to some teaching language procedures suggested by Palmer (1925). Asher maintains that adults' language acquisition is similar to children's first language acquisition. Therefore, he explains that children develop listening competency before they are able to produce speech. Additionally, they respond to verbal stimulus by physical movements.

Accordingly, Piaget (1977) held that a child is able to understand before he or she is able to speak; body movement or sensory activity demonstrates his or her understanding. Likewise, Asher (1993) stresses that when adults learn a second language priority must be given to input rather than output. Moreover, he suggests that learners should reply to understanding by body movements. Hence, learners should respond to commands such as "erase the board" by actually erasing the board due to the association between language and body movement. TPR gives emphasis to teachers' verbal commands, which are responded by learners' sensory motor activity.

Similarly, TPRS, which was developed by Ray (1990) (as cited in Coxon, 2016) is based on the language learning theories of Asher and Krashen. The theories refer to long-



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term memory strategies, constant comprehensible and meaningful input and personalization, where learners are exposed to natural and abundant language in minor periods of time (Rodas, 2011).

Ray and Seely (2009) state that TPRS was also influenced by Krashen's Second Language Acquisition theory, which suggests five hypotheses which include: the acquisition-learning distinction, the natural order, the monitor hypotheses, the input hypothesis, and the affective filter hypothesis. Krashen (1985) discusses that the input hypothesis implies that the path to language acquisition is by understanding messages, that is, learners must be capable to comprehend what is being communicated to them by the instructor easily. This means that the messages being conveyed must be just a bit more difficult than what learners can effortlessly comprehend which he calls it 'i+1'; where 'i' is the student's current understanding level and '+1' is the new knowledge (Krashen, 1985).

Depending on one's view and the role that TPRS plays in each case, TPRS can be a model, a system, a method, a strategy, and a theory since it voices a view of how to teach and learn languages. This method finds its concrete way in the classroom through a set of principles, procedures, and tasks depending much on the interpretation made by the teacher. It is a brain-compatible method because it corresponds to the way human brain operates going beyond the mind to the body and the social context. This method for language learning fits well the way students learn a language. The method is based on different resources of human beings, social progress, technology, and developing skills. These include establishing meaning for comprehensible input and personalization, signing and gesturing. Besides, the approach uses the following resources the link between movements and words, kinesthetic and auditory learning, actions and reflection,



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creating stories and meaning, understanding and saying, gesturing, acting, reacting, drama, slow tempo, chants, personal questions and answers, opportunities for interaction in speech, using all word qualities, and encouraging creation, imagination and communication.

In addition, Beal (2011) emphasizes that TPRS is appealing to language instructors because a classroom teacher developed it.

Slavic (2015) makes a sound comprehensive account about the way to teach foreign languages using TPRS strategies. In his book, he states the processes to follow in order to establish meaning, ask the story, and reading being these the three basic steps of TPRS. Slavic (2008) explains each of a list of 49 skills grouped into three categories: Step One Skills: Establishing Meaning and Personalizing, Step Two Skills: Asking the Story, and, Step Three Skills: Fun Skills.

Additionally, Slavic (2015) shortens the skills to fourteen, and introduces twenty-seven strategies, eight classroom management tools and three assessment tools.

As Slavic (2008) states TPRS involves effort on the part of the instructor. It entails a passionate as well as an intellectual responsibility. Yet, as he says, the benefits for those who use it are significant. He adds that, TPRS takes a sense of dynamism into the teaching space. Additionally, he expresses that some teachers do not perceive themselves as dynamic; however, TPRS is so strong and bendable that it effortlessly adapts to singular teacher tastes. Furthermore, TPRS may be adjusted to fit anybody and anything, even the teaching textbook. In addition, whenever it is applied to traditional instructional methods, TPRS continuously reinforces these methods.

Slavic (2008) asserts that to truthfully attain the necessary skills to master the method rapidly, the best choice is to get a tutor and come to be a learner. The teacher needs to be



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trained. Unquestionably, the most effective TPRS instructors are those who have other TPRS instructors near them and who watch and tutor each other frequently. Regarding this, Slavic (2015) states that educators who try to use TPRS from a place of command and authority will notice that the method is much more abstract than when it is used from a place of collective effort, of coming together towards a mutual aim. This happens when the teacher along with the learners construct a story.

### **2.2.1 The Skills**

Slavic (2015) states how a teacher progresses his/her personal abilities in TPRS is entirely his/her decision. He adds some instructors who feel devoted to the method, practice many of the skills while others practice a few of them. He suggests that teachers try out each skill for a week or two and maintain the ones that improve their students' language learning. Whenever the teacher chooses a TPRS skill, indisputably, he/she must take into account the basic three steps of TPRS: establishing meaning, asking a story, and reading.

Some of the skills suggested by Slavic (2015, 2010, 2008) to establish meaning includes:

#### **2.2.1.1 Signing/Gesturing**

It refers to asking students to suggest a sign or gesture in accordance to the vocabulary that is going to be taught.

#### **2.2.1.2 PQA (Personalized Questions and Answers)**

PQA includes asking questions to students and taking their answers in order to personalize the lesson according to what students suggest.





### **2.2.1.3 Extending PQA**

Slavic (2015) says that it is simple to turn PQA into something greater, to create a little scene or story. Extending PQA allows the instructor to learn more about the learners as well as to get repetitions of the structures for the day. It is also a manner to direct the comprehensible input all the way into a significant story. It can be practiced straight after the explanation of the structures at the beginning of the lesson, or it can come right after either signing and gesturing or PQA.

### **2.2.1.4 Point and Pause!**

It means that whenever the teacher says a word or phrase he/she must point to them as well as to their respective translations. Slavic (2015) suggests that every time the teacher uses any new words or phrases he/she should point to both and pause for a few seconds in order to allow the new information to stick in the learner's mind. He adds that even after the teacher has established meaning and started the story, he/she must continue to highlight meaning by pointing and pausing throughout the whole lesson. The author also suggests that the teacher should likewise point to the question words whenever he/she uses them. He states that question words need to be translated and posted on the classroom wall. He advises that the teacher should not assume that his/her students already identify the question words. Accordingly, Slavic (2010) adds in the case the teacher perceives that the learners do not acquire the words/phrases, he/she must not continue with the lesson. Instead, he/she repeats the words/phrases until he/she feels that the learners have acquired them.



### **2.2.1.5 Circling**

It refers to asking students many questions in context using the words/phrases the instructor needs to teach. It includes the following order: Statement, Question Either/or Negative

Optional are: Throw In, Ask a detail, Who, What, When, Where, Why, etc.

An example of circling has been stated as follows:

Statement: "Class, there is a boy!" (ohh!)

Question: "Class, is there a boy?" (yes) You add: "That's correct, class, there is a boy."

Either/Or: "Class, is there a boy or a girl?" (boy) You add: "That's correct, class, there is a boy."

Negative: "Is there a girl?" (no) You add: "That's correct, class, there is not a girl. There is a boy."

Throw In: "Is there a monkey?" (no) You add: "That's correct, class, there is not a monkey. There is a boy."

What: "Class, what is there?" (boy) You add: "That's correct, class, there is a boy."

Who: Class, what is the boy's name? (David) You add: "That's correct, class, the boy's name is David." (Slavic, 2015, p. 12-13)

### **2.2.1.6 Slow**

It refers to whenever the teacher is speaking to the students he/she must do it very slowly so students are able to understand what he/she says.

### **2.2.1.7 Teaching to the Eye**

It focuses on eye contact between the teacher and the students as a useful manner to involve the learners visually in their learning development, and as a way to reduce discipline problems.



### **2.2.1.8 What did I just say?**

It is widely used across the whole lesson. In some stages of the story, when the teacher perceives an absence of understanding or a lack of answer from the learners, the teacher just asks, "What did I just say?" It is helpful if the teacher pretends that the responsibility for the lack of understanding is his/ hers, as in fact it is in the majority of occurrences. This skill is done to assure that every learner comprehends what was just said and to keep learners involved in the lesson.

### **2.2.1.9 Reactions**

Reactions involve the teacher asking his/her students to react to what is being said during the lesson. Teachers might encourage students to react to the story in different ways. Slavic (2015) paraphrases some thoughts from Ray:

- a) Make a statement. Students respond with any expression of interest. (Oh!)
- b) Ask a question that everyone knows. You get a choral response.
- c) Ask a question that no one knows. Students then guess the answer. Teacher chooses the most creative guess or says "No". Then the teacher gives their own answer to the question. Students react to that.
- d) Make a statement that requires a negative reaction. Students respond with Oh No, Oh No!

The teacher should insist on a reaction from all of the learners in the class to almost everything that occurs throughout the construction of the story. This skill makes the TPRS instructor to deliver the lesson slowly.

### **2.2.1.10 Recycling**

It refers to summarizing what has occurred so far in the development of the lesson. It is somehow like a mini -retell during the lesson. Recycling does not require lasting more



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than a minute or so. What is important about recycling is that it provides to the learners a chance to comprehend many sentences. It is likewise rewarding for the instructor to notice the gains in instruction up to now. A proper recycling should be done every five to ten minutes. Most importantly, recycling just implicates a few seconds.

### **2.2.1.11 Staying in Bounds**

It means that every time the instructor utters a structure that the learners do not recognize, they begin to feel lost in the lesson. Therefore, the teacher must employ structures that the learners already recognize; the teacher must avoid using new structures that the learners do not know their meaning at all times. In the case that the teacher uses new words, it is crucial that he/she writes them and their respective translations on the board and point to them. The teacher must make sure that he/she builds most of his/her comprehensible input for that day only around the target structures for that day.

### **2.2.1.12 Comprehension Checks**

It refers to request the learners to raise their hands with ten fingers in order to show 100% understanding. It is one more way of the mental framework reflecting the central role of the instructor to tie to and involve the learners.

Taking into consideration the above skills, Slavic (2008) proposes that in order to establish meaning, the teacher can do the following actions:

a) The instructor may start each lesson by writing the words or vocabulary for the story on the board with their equivalents in the learner's native language. They are known as structures. Then, the teacher clarifies these structures to the learners making sure he/she does not provide any kind of explanation nor he/she gives any detail about grammar.



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b) Next, the teacher signs and gestures the structures, the reason for signing and gesturing them is providing the learners with some rehearsal of the structures. The rehearsal can comprise TPR, word association games, both visual and auditory, or any activity that aids the students to immediately trigger the structures into their minds.

c) Following, comes the stage known as Personalized Questions and Answers (PQA). Slavic (2015) asserts that PQA not only enhances the structures via dynamic and personal interaction with the learners in the target language, but it builds a link into the stories, assuring their personalization.

d) Then comes Circling that refers to Statement, Question either/or, Negative, What, Who, When, Where, Why, Ask a detail. If the instructor is able to circle correctly, this skill can support to deeply involve the learners in the lesson. It is believed that a vigorous relationship between learners' engagement and effective circling is established (Slavic, 2015). In the initial phases of acquiring this skill, the teacher will perhaps find himself/herself frequently relying on his circling poster, which displays the question words above. Additionally, it is recommended that the instructor maintains his circle poster on one of the classroom walls for a while.

Step One skills aim to provide learners with listening repetitions of the structures that were recently presented to them. Whenever the structures are practiced, learners are much more capable to comprehend Step Two (the story). On any given lesson, the teacher selects to use as many or as few of the Step One skills as he/she wishes. The skills of signing/gesturing and PQA are considered elective rehearsal activities that are intended to trigger the structures in the learner's mind. In addition, they serve the purpose of setting up the telling of the story. Furthermore, its practice gives the vocabulary written on the board a sort of "auditory life" before the instructor begins the story. Slavic (2015)



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stresses that the target structures are difficult for the learners because they have never been exposed to these sounds before, they have only seen the structures written on the board; thus, it is crucial for the learners to have some practice listening to them before the telling of the story.

When choosing from the skills proposed for TPRS, it is advisable the instructor interrogates himself/herself whether such skill aids to attain comprehensible input (CI) and personalization (P) as CI and P are the two pillars on which all TPRS lessons encounter a robust support. Some TPRS professionals claim that CI and P are enough requisites for learning the target language. In the situation that a skill does not assist to attain comprehensible input and personalization, it is unquestionably not worth doing it. On the other hand, Slavic (2015) maintains that with CI, the instructor touches the learners' minds while, with personalization he connects with the learners' hearts, two elements that are essential for accomplishment of understanding in the target language classroom.

The determination to practice PQA is completely up to the personality of the instructor. Many instructors elude it since they are able to establish meaning rapidly and straight while others prefer to use it a lot, PQA usually comes right after the explaining of the written structures on the board unless the instructor gestures the words; in that instance, it comes right after this activity. It is worth mentioning, that even when the instructor gestures the structures, he has used up only a few minutes of the lesson. In contrast, PQA can be expanded for as long as it is dynamic and appealing to the learners. It can even last during the whole lesson period. On the other hand, if PQA fails dynamism, the instructor takes the lesson right into the story.



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One of the further advantages of performing PQA is that it provides learners with repetitions in first and second person singular verb forms, whereas stories are mostly spoken in the third person. Additionally, during this stage the instructor may assign every learner in the class an identity that they wish. Once every learner in the classroom has been assigned his or her own identity as a soccer player, a guitar player, a teacher, a doctor, a dentist, etc, the instructor will be able to relate them to each other.

The teacher will be able to return to the learners' identities repeatedly throughout the stories, relating the learners to the characters in the stories, famous people, sports celebrities, artists, etc. Slavic (2015) suggests that a great tip to boost the class talk is to tell learners that the teacher performs such activity as well but without a doubt, the learner is much better at it than the teacher is, and in fact, learners are the best in the world at it. Establishing identities during the lesson is one of the main secrets of effective PQA. The personalization between the instructor and the learner certainly generates abundant comprehensible input. Ever since the conversation is concentrated on the learners' interests, learners rapidly cultivate a solid hold of several verbs, which after all are the cores of sentences. Consequently, establishing meaning can be carried out in various manners.

The second step of TPRS is asking the story. In TPRS, there is no precise manner to establish meaning (Step One) nor is there precise manner to request learners for the story (Step Two). The instructor makes his/her own decision about how to best carry out these two steps.

Some of the skills suggested by Slavic (2015, 2010, 2008) to create the story comprise:



### **2.2.1.13 Asking the Story**

It refers to the teacher asking students to contribute to the creation of the story. Slavic (2010) suggests teachers to maintain the story flexible in order to allow learners to express the suggestions they desire to make the story interesting and appealing to them because suggestions from the students are enormously more appealing to them than the instructor's. Therefore, the instructor does not tell the story, he asks his/her students. Slavic (2010) cites Ray saying TPRS teachers do not tell the story; instead, they make questions, pause, and wait for cute responses from their students.

### **2.2.1.14. Three Locations**

Slavic (2010) offers some tips for asking the story. He recalls Neilson's words who said that all he has in mind at the beginning of a story is a general plan involving three locations: Someone wanted to go on a date with someone, went somewhere where they were thwarted, then went to another place where they solved the problem.

Accordingly, the teacher modifies the scripted story via circling to come up with three original locations for the story. The author emphasizes to value the use places that carry meaning to the students such as local places where students hangout, the rival school nearby, favorite restaurants, local malls, etc. because there is a visible heightening of interest in the story when this is done. TPRS teachers are always making lists of local hangouts, restaurants, funny names and places, etc. to keep the story interesting to the students, because they know that such locally important places will significantly increase the quality of the story. Shortly, a teacher needs a general plan involving three locations and be flexible enough to drop a second and third location.





### **2.2.1.15 Pop – Ups**

This skill deals with the treatment of Grammar. This is best taught in short bursts of a few (3 to 5) seconds avoiding all the explanation that is characteristic of grammar instruction. The teacher limits grammar explanations to pop-ups of 3 to 5 seconds

### **2.2.1.16 Synchronizing actions with words**

The teacher should synchronize, that is, connect the structures of the story to actions of the story. This skill certainly benefits stories to work well. The action must be associated to the structure. Some teacher are afraid of performance or they find fooling showing actions to link them with words or they may think that translation or explanations are faster and more direct techniques to learn word meaning.

### **2.2.1.17 Chants**

It refers to the repetition of chants. They can bring new language into the learners' minds better than practically anything else. Slavic's view is that chants are better than songs because they are shorter and more visceral. The teacher probably wants to chant high frequency words, to reinforce them.

Concerning the role of the story, according to Slavic (2015) many expert TPRS instructors do not give importance whether they ever get to tell a story. They mainly concentrate on giving learners comprehensible, compelling, and repetitive input thru PQA. They involve the learners in class dialogs about themselves. Thus, in this step, learning about the students is the main objective.

Ray Blaine has stated the following about personalizing the lesson:

...I believe people who are the most effective at TPRS don't tell stories. They ask questions, pause, and listen for cute answers from the students. The magic is in



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the interaction between the student and teacher. TPRS is searching for something interesting to talk about. That is done by questioning. Interesting comprehensible input is the goal of every class. If we are there to tell a story, we will probably not make the class interesting. We will be so focused on getting the story out that we won't let the input from the kids happen... (as cited in Slavic, 2015, p.55).

Therefore, if a learner in the class plays soccer, or is playing in the next championship, the instructor makes this a finding of extreme relevance, keeping in mind that the structures must be repeated as many times as possible for the planned story to work fine. The teacher aims to get as much information as possible such as when the match is going to be, how long the person has played, what color their team uniform is, whether the person often has practice, etc.

The third step of TPRS is reading. Learners are encouraged to read the reading materials that have been created during the lessons.

Summing up, it is evident that TPRS is a practical and theoretical model with a sound assumption based on a humanistic view of language learning: love, play, happiness, motion, language, and action. In theory, it could work well when teaching vocabulary to students in the university learning context of universities in Ecuador.

Finally, together with the use of TPRS there goes a process of creating a new culture of teaching and learning in teachers and students who have been working with old traditional methods and procedures when dealing with English and with vocabulary in particular.

### **2.3 Vocabulary Learning and Teaching**

Second and Foreign language learning mainly rely on vocabulary as the building blocks on which learners fund their target language skills development. Therefore, their



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importance embraces fundamentally the beginning phases of the acquisition of any language (Restrepo, 2015). Vocabulary means a list or collection of words, or of words and phrases. Words have meanings, which are the reason for language to exist. If language did not express meaning, then it would not exist. A word gets its real meaning in context.

The common core of all definitions given to the concept of vocabulary is that it is associated to a list or set of words for a particular language or a list or set of words that individual speakers of a language might use. Two key words are the cell of all definitions: words and phrases. This last term, phrases, has been gaining ground in the teaching and learning of vocabulary. Arguments about vocabulary learning are often classified as intentional learning and incidental learning.

Hatch and Brown (1995) explain intentional learning as being designed, planned for, or intended by the instructor or the learner. On the other hand, they describe incidental learning as the kind of learning that is an outcome of doing or learning something different. There is consensus among first language vocabulary experts that intentional learning helps in the grasp of vocabulary. However, numerous investigations have demonstrated how few words are learned or taught by direct instruction compared to how many students need to know, and the many entries a dictionary like Webster's Third International Dictionary has, more than 450, 000. Besides, claims are made that university students in the United States know at least 200, 000 of them, most of which have not been intentionally taught. On the other hand, few words are learned in the foreign language compared with the words people know in the first language.

According to Gairns and Redman (1986) learners in an English-speaking country (and without the aid of formal instruction) will eventually uncover the vocabulary relevant to



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learners' individual needs. Nevertheless, in a formal learning situation with restricted time, differing learner interests, and the limitations forced by other syllabus requirements, instructors cannot assume that vocabulary will take care of itself in an arbitrary manner and expect that learners will develop the words that best suit their necessities.

These authors claim that when planning the curriculum, instructors must choose vocabulary cautiously in order to assure that high important words are incorporated, as well as to offer diverse opportunities for practice to compensate for the lack of repetitive exposure available to the incidental learner.

On the other hand, since there is a definite gap between what is taught and what is known, more consideration must be given to the matter of incidental vocabulary learning. Most of the work with incidental learning has concentrated on the vocabulary that is acquired via reading. There is also the division between receptive vocabulary and productive vocabulary.

Haycraft (1978) explains receptive vocabulary as words that the learner identifies and comprehends when they occur in a context and productive vocabulary as words that the learner comprehends, can utter correctly, and use positively in speaking and writing. The relation between these two types of vocabulary is seen as a continuum of knowledge rather than as a dichotomy, due to the fact that students may absorb elementary or basic meanings of words appropriately to understand what they hear or read, without knowing enough so as to produce the words on their own. The receptive/productive discussion tells us that there are diverse ways "to know" a word. The specificity of any individual's knowledge about a word depends on the person and his or her motivation, desires, and needs for the word. Acquisition does not seem to be a simple throwing of a switch between knowing and not knowing; rather, there seems to be a continuum of knowledge



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about any word and a learner can be anywhere along the continuum. Knowledge about words may include information that may cause learners to choose not to produce them.

### **2.3.1 Five essential steps in vocabulary learning**

Language instructors have always been concerned about the way learners attain vocabulary. When instructors know more about learning strategies and what activities work better, they are able to aid learners get tactics that are more beneficial for them.

Brown and Payne (1994) carried out an analysis that showed a strong model where vocabulary learning strategies fall into five important steps: a) having sources for encountering new words, b) getting a clear image, either visual or auditory or both, for the forms of the new words, (3) learning the meaning of the word, 4) making a strong memory connection between the forms and meanings of the words, and 5) using the words.

The first essential step means having different sources for encountering words. The learning strategies here comprise acquiring new words by reading books, listening to TV and radio, or reading newspapers and magazines. Living with speakers of the language one is trying to learn is also important. In addition, we have known learners with the personal strategy to go out and speak with natives speakers until they have encountered a certain number of new words every day. Other strategies may not be as personally interactive and interesting, but they do serve learners.

For example, textbook or teacher-assigned word lists are sources where learners may encounter new vocabulary. As far as incidental vocabulary learning concerns, this phase is clearly the most crucial. According to Payne (1988), the number of words that pass this step may vary due to several learner aspects. For example, natural learner interest or motivation may provoke learners to focus on some words more than others. In addition to



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interest, real necessity may have an effect on whether encountered words are learned.

Students appear to absorb words more quickly if they have felt a necessity for them somehow (p.33).

Encountered words may be more effective if they are directly associated to interactive video resources. When learners have observed an object or an action, their desire to discern the label (word) for it may rise so that, when the word for it is met, it is absorbed very fast. The amount of repetitions that a word is met may also affect whether it is learned. The need learners feel for a word would increase as they continue to encounter it. Learners are sensitive to the frequency with which they encounter words. They say such things as “I don’t know what that word means, but I’ve seen it a lot,” or “I’ve never seen that word before”.

Nagy and Herman (1987) argue that even a sole encounter with a word in context, might assist to rise learners’ knowledge about that word and its meaning. Learners may also need numerous times coming across the same word in various sources rather than in just one source.

The second step important to vocabulary learning appears to be the grasp of a clear image, visual or auditory, or both, of the form of the vocabulary item. The learners do this by linking target words to words that sound similar in their first language.

Additionally, writing the sounds of words using sound symbols from their first language, connecting words that are similar to words in other languages they have acquired, associating a word with a parallel sounding English word they know and seeing a word that looks like another word they already know. Students often make mistakes that are obviously related to confusions of the form of one word with the form of other words. Several of the errors appear to be provoked by or related to the confusing of words alike



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in form either to a first language word or to another English word. In a lexical error analysis, Teemant (1988) also found form confusion to account for about one fourth of all errors. The author felt that this aspect of vocabulary learning was harder for the learners whose language used the Roman alphabet because of confusions with words and spellings in their native language.

The third essential step in the learners' reported strategies is the one that is vastly related to vocabulary learning: getting the word meaning. This stage comprises strategies such as questioning native speakers what the word means, making pictures of word meaning in one's mind, and explaining what one means and requesting someone to tell one the target word.

The grade of distinctions that must be made in word definitions appears to differ both with the requirements of the assignment or situation and with the level of the learner. Although beginning learners appear contented with quite general meanings, more advanced learners often require definitions that are more specific in order to distinguish between close synonyms. Doing feature analysis might help learners in their attempt to get the meaning of the words they are learning. One very popular way and practically the single manner in incidental learning for students to grasp the meaning of words is via context. Students estimate the meaning of words from the situation, discourse, and or context in which they are used, and from the structure of words themselves. Students read passages and estimate the meaning of unfamiliar words. For example, the box of the book was heavy (not strong or hard, nor pierce nor heaviest). The only way students could tell what the words meant would be through context and word structure.

The fourth necessary step suggested by Brown and Payne's (1994) analysis requires the link of form and meaning in memory. Various forms of vocabulary learning such as



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drills, flashcards, matching exercises, crossword puzzles, etc., reinforce the form-meaning association. Additionally, almost all of the ten memory strategies Oxford (1990) mentions consolidate the connection between word form and meaning in memory. Oxford divides these strategies into four general categories: creating mental linkage, applying images and sounds, reviewing well, and employing actions. Nine specific memory strategies Oxford mentions along with the general categories in which they fall includes:

- a) Grouping language material into meaningful units (category 1)
- b) Associating new language information to concepts already in memory (category 1)
- c) Placing new words in a context, such as meaningful sentence, conversation, or story (category 1)
- d) Using semantic mapping (category 2)
- e) Using keywords with auditory and/or visual links (category 2)
- f) Representing sounds in memory in such a way that they can be linked with a target language word in order to remember it better (category 2)
- g) Reviewing the target language material in carefully spaced intervals (category 3)
- h) Acting out a new target language expression (category 4)
- i) Using mechanical techniques, such as writing words on cards and moving cards from one stack to another when a new word is learned (category 4)

Many of these strategies specifically mention vocabulary, expressions, or words. Those that do not mention vocabulary explicitly still can be applied to vocabulary study.





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Hatch and Brown (1995) mention the keyword method as a way to consolidate form and meaning. This method calls for the word to be learned in a sentence that links contextual cues to the meaning of the word while relating the form to forms the learner already knows.

The method has two stages: in the first, students are taught to link an unfamiliar word with an acoustically or visually similar word. Next, students are shown a picture, which contains both concepts in an interactive display, using a story if possible. If the class has heterogeneous language background, the keywords and sentences must be in the L2. The difficulty of generating keywords may discourage learners, or they may simply choose more traditional ways of consolidating word forms with word meanings.

Probably the most traditional way of doing this is to memorize word and their meanings from lists. There are variations on this method. The variations include using flashcards, covering one side of the pair lists (words and their meaning) and trying to guess the other, drawing lines between words in one list and their meanings in another list with a different order, but many cultures or educational systems simply call for students to memorize a list with the word and its meaning paired. Which method learners use for this step does not seem to be as crucial as that they do it. The more words learners can get through this step; the more words they will know overall.

The final step in learning words is using the words. Some would argue that this step is not necessary if all that is desired is a receptive knowledge of the word. However, if the goal is to help learners move as far along the continuum of word knowledge as they can, word use is essential. Furthermore, use seems to provide a mild guarantee that words and meanings will not fade from memory once they are learned. Possibly, because the use of a word tests the learner's understanding of the word, learners feel more confident about



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their word knowledge once they have used a word without undesired consequences. Use of the word may simply be a form of hypothesis testing allowing learners to see if the knowledge gained in the other steps is correct. Using the word, says the author, should be a parameter to measure vocabulary learning.

Vocabulary learning depends greatly on the students' vocabulary learning strategies. According to Oxford (1990) learning strategies are the way students learn a wide range of subjects. She states that one commonly used technical definition is that learning strategies are operations employed by the learner to aid the acquisition, storage, retrieval, and use of information. On the other hand, Gear (1994) focuses on strategies for building vocabulary, and mentions the following read extensively use notecards use a dictionary learn prefixes, suffixes, and roots, use a thesaurus use a dictionary of synonyms and antonyms, and make word diagrams.

Gairns and Redman (1986) suggested that to understand a word fully a student must know not only what it refers to, but also where the boundaries are that separate it from words of related meaning. These authors offer importance not only to the conceptual meaning, but also to the affective meaning, style, register and dialect, translation equivalents and sense of relations (synonymy, antonym and hyponymy, cause and effect, part-whole relations as well as items commonly associated with). They also refer to the importance of learning multi-word verbs, that is, English verbs consisting of two, or sometimes three parts: get over, call off, and put up with. Grammatically, students need to know whether a transitive multi-word verb is phrasal or prepositional. This is because phrasal verbs are separable: take off your hat: take it off. They also include the need of learning idioms, that is, a sequence of words which operates as a single semantic unit, and like many multi-word verbs, the meaning of the whole cannot be deduced from an



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understanding of the parts: ass-kisser, number one, first class, all that meat and no potatoes. Collocation is worth knowing too. It happens when two items co-occur, or are used together frequently. Items may co-occur simply because the combination reflects a common real world state of affairs. English speakers have chosen to say: she bites her nail (and not eat), fully understood (and not totally). This is one of the reasons why it is better and easier to learn English phrases than isolated words.

On his part, Seal (1991) divides vocabulary teaching into planned and unplanned activities. Unplanned vocabulary teaching happens when the students requests a meaning for a vocabulary item during a lesson or when the teacher realizes that a word that has just come up needs to be clarified. The teacher must improvise on the spot. In such situation the author recommends to use three C's method: The teacher conveys the meaning, via mimics, synonyms, or anecdote; the teacher checks that the meaning is understood, and the teacher consolidates the information by trying to get students to relate the word to another context or personal experience.

On the other hand, planned vocabulary is adjusted to teaching. The teacher follows textbooks and syllabi. Most teachers tend to follow strictly the text's sequence, methodology, pacing, and vocabulary, but teachers should also make some needed adjustment and to know well how vocabulary was selected and in what context it is introduced and reinforced in language teaching materials.

With the growing use of computers in language instruction Hatch and Brown (1995) state that the selection of vocabulary to be learned has been placed increasingly in the hands of the learner. Programs as Hypercard or Toolbook allow teachers to prepare 'hypertexts', which are texts linked to other texts, such as dictionaries, thesauruses, or pictures, with the computer. The students using some programs decide when and where



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they need help with vocabulary. When a student clicks on a word, a pop-up dictionary gives the meaning, grammar, pronunciation, cultural information, collocation information, or cultural information related to the word. With computer access to the dictionary, a thesaurus, or large database, the student can search for meanings with ease.

Learning vocabulary is also a matter of learning grammar for the learners need to learn to use words and their forms. They need some guidance on how to use vocabulary more accurate. Sometimes they know the meaning of the verbs lie and lay, but they do not know how to use them in Past Simple, Simple Present, or Present Perfect. Some other times, learners think the word news is plural or that the noun advice takes plural form. The grammar of the vocabulary is so outstanding that there is a danger of the grammar point becoming the overriding focus, and vocabulary being introduced simply to exemplify this point.

Gairns and Redman (1986) have made a checklist that contains the types of questions that are useful for teachers to ask themselves when preparing a vocabulary lesson in order to anticipate potential errors. These authors have also given importance to word building in vocabulary learning. Affixation refers to the process of adding prefixes and suffixes to the base item: unmanliness. Compounding refers to the formation of words from two or more separate words that can stand independently in other circumstances: fish story. In addition, conversion, also known as zero affixation, which is the process by means an item, may be used in different parts of speech: She kisses me several times a day. / She gives me many kisses a day.

The authors also claim for the link between pronunciation and learning vocabulary. Learners' lexical knowledge of a word may be useless by their inability to make themselves intelligible when they speak. This fact is not confined to production either, for



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it is equally true that unfamiliarity with correct pronunciation can result in the learner failing to understand words in connected speech which he understands clearly in written English. Careful attention is therefore an essential part of vocabulary teaching. As a teaching implication, the degree of attention paid to the pronunciation of a lexical item will depend on the importance of the item in spoken English and to the extent to which it poses problems for the students in question.

Several factors influence the teacher's selection and organization of lexical items for the classroom and the role the learners can play in making those decisions. Vocabulary may reach the classroom from different sources: course books, supplementary materials, through the students, through specific vocabulary activities, without discarding incidental learning through listening and reading. In the very early stages of learning, most students recognize the value of a common core of lexis that will be essential, and clearly in all their interests to learn. Vocabulary is context-specific; items that are essential to an understanding of one field may be quite irrelevant for students who are not interested in that particular subject.

That is why a common core of lexis plays a major role in learning the language. One solution to this problem, following Gairns and Redman (1986) is to accept that the students have different needs, and to further accept that they must assume some of the responsibility for defining those needs and the vocabulary that will be relevant to those needs. In other words, it allows the students to have more autonomy in lexical decision-making.

Some common criteria for selection of vocabulary is frequency of use, but frequency does not guarantee usefulness; however, there is a significant correlation between the two; so it is worthy to consider these criteria. One of the most widely-counts is the



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General List of English Words, compiled and edited by Michael West (1953) compiles the 2.000 most commonly used words in English. The Kucera and Francis List (1967) compiled an initial list of 2,000, later expanded to 5,000 words, and the Threshold Level (1975) prepared for the Council of Europe by J. van Ek. It includes approximately 1,500 items. The threshold Level attempted to define a minimum level of general ability and the authors suggest that two third of the lexicon would be required for productive use.

Another available word-count is Cambridge English Lexicon compile by Roland Hindmarsh (1980), who set out to define a comprehension lexicon (receptive vocabulary) that would be sufficient for students to pass the Cambridge First Certificate Examination. The result is a list of 4.500 words with over 8.000 semantic values (Hatch and Brown, 1995).

Other criteria for vocabulary selection are cultural factors, need, level, and expediency. This last criterion refers to certain vocabulary needed in the classroom, without which the students may fail to understand their teacher, fellow students, or the activity they are engaged in.

How to organize the teaching of vocabulary is also a main concern for teachers. Since vocabulary is a series of interrelating systems and is not just a random collection of items, there seems to be clear case for presenting items to a student in a systematized manner, which will enable them to internalize the items in a coherent way. Semantic fields, or, as they are often called in pedagogical terms, lexical sets, are made up of sets of semantically similar items. These fields may range from very broad categories, such as "life", "love", and "humanity" to smaller areas such as "love to the family", "love to the partner", "life in the woods", and "the ancient man". One of the most common and useful



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groupings found in course books is types of fruit, articles of clothing, and the parts of the house.

Besides grouping in semantic fields, words can also be grouped in phonological and grammatical sets. Other types for vocabulary organization are items grouped as an activity or process (also topic-related), items which are similar in meaning, and items which form "pairs", and items within word families, items which connect discourse, and items grouped by grammatical similarities, among others, which can be found in Gairns and Redman (1986). These authors also refer to some external factors to be considered when selecting and organizing vocabulary teaching, among them: How similar in form is the target item to an equivalent in the learner's own language? How easy is to illustrate the meaning? What is the student's learning environment? What language attitudes do the learners have? What else does the syllabus dictate apart from the teacher? There are factors under the teacher control, for example, how much exposure will you give to the item? What else do you intend to cover within the timetable?

Finally, the researcher considers that when learning English as a foreign language, what is primary in language teaching is communication in itself, the vocabulary system being one of its dimensions, known as the linguistic or grammatical competence. The researcher also considers that interactional competence is also a key objective in language teaching. Teachers have experienced through their own learning of foreign languages as well as the learning of their students that vocabulary is better learned in the same process of listening, reading, speaking and writing, considering that learning a language is not a matter of learning a rule, but of using it, above all. However, vocabulary teaching needs a new approach as to what words to teach and how.



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What matters most is attitude, the learners' beliefs of what English is and the functions it plays and, then, learning methods. The psychology of success in the students' mind is a need as well as emotions when learning. Teachers need to make English learning easier, faster and better, through the use of a wider and richer view of vocabulary teaching and learning. Teachers need to become teacher-researchers able to go deeper into how to teach vocabulary interactively, so that they would offer plenty of opportunities to their students to reflect on the language system and to interact with it. Teachers need to learn how to find solution to their students' problems in learning vocabulary, through a kind of action research; consequently, they should reflect on what is going on in the classrooms and outside concerning the students' learning process.

### **2.4 Review of Literature**

In order to develop this investigation, the most important precedents related to the subject matter of this investigation were considered. These focused on determining the effects of the TPRS Method on the students' English vocabulary Acquisition at the Catholic University of Cuenca, Cañar Extension as a favorable strategy to teach the English language. In addition, its reading and writing skills establishing the use of the TPRS Method in vocabulary Acquisition as an alternative to teach and learn foreign languages at the university level.

Several studies about TPRS and its influence on vocabulary acquisition have been developed; for instance, Heiser (2001) showed that TPRS improves pronunciation and vocabulary retention. He claims for the integration of grammar using it. Moreover, Watson (2009) compared TPRS to traditional teaching proving that the first is better in vocabulary learning. Additionally, Varguez (2009) studied the relation between TPRS and learners' socioeconomic conditions. Braunstein (2006) informed that even adult ESL





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students who expected more traditional instruction responded positively to TPRS.

Furthermore, Merinnage De Costa (2015) compared TPRS against traditional methods at a Public University in the Midwestern United States in an introductory college level. He reported that the experimental group which used TPRS showed superior developments on measures of listening, vocabulary, culture, grammar and writing skills. Besides, Dukes (2012) explored the feelings and perceptions students have when being taught with TPRS as a stand-alone methodology at a high school foreign language classroom, in the state of Utah. The study revealed that students enjoyed learning a foreign language through TPRS, and they experienced a more significant English understanding.

It is necessary to highlight the importance that these investigations have for this research, as, they propose the educational use of TPRS as a natural learning method that uses innovation, creativity, and dynamism to teach a language.

The above precedents constitute an important indicator when it is time to determine the impact of the TPRS method in the acquisition of English vocabulary in second level students at the Catholic University of Cuenca, as they leave evidence of the implementation of a different English-teaching method and its implications in the classrooms and in this way be able to propose the implementation of the TPRS method in the universities of Ecuador as an educational tool for the teaching of English.



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## **Chapter III**

### **3.1 Methodology**

This chapter presents the methodology that was used to collect data during the study as well as the way the data were analyzed. This chapter also presents the study paradigm and design. It also provides information about the participants, the research site, variables, and the intervention applied.

This investigation consisted in using the TPRS method to teach English vocabulary to students in the second level course at the Catholic University of Cuenca, Cañar Extension.



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The researcher worked with all 56 students who belonged to the second English level at this university. There were two groups: one of 30 students who were part of the class in which the TPRS method was implemented, that is, the experimental group, and another group that acted as the control, in which a traditional textbook methodology was used. The control group was formed by 26 students. In order to avoid ethical issues, the TPRS methodology was also given to the students in the control group immediately afterwards the intervention in the experimental group was completed. The intervention process was carried out from October 2016 to February 2017. It lasted 32 instruction hours during eight consecutive weeks. Students met twice a week for two hours each section in different schedules. That is, the control group attended on Mondays and Wednesdays while the experimental one had classes on Tuesdays and Thursdays; both groups met in the morning from 8:00 to 10:00 am. Additionally, a Likert Scale questionnaire was applied to the experimental group in order to gather information about students' perceptions towards TPRS.

### **3.2 Research Paradigm and Design**

In order to carry out a research study, Creswell (2014) suggests that it is paramount that the researcher decides about the suitable investigation paradigm. Therefore, to develop the present study, the post-positivist paradigm was selected since it holds the notion that causes (probably) determined effects or outcomes. Accordingly, this study used the pre/post-test quantitative design, so that the students' English vocabulary acquisition can be measured in pre-test and post-test stages in order to establish the effects that the TPRS may have on it. Additionally, students' perceptions and interpretations could be worthy at the time of discussion on the effects of the TPRS method on the teaching and learning of English vocabulary. The post-positivism



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quantitative paradigm was necessary to look and process data so that dialectical relations between the object (TPRS method) and the subjects (students' English vocabulary acquisition) can be well established.

### **3.3 Setting**

This investigation was carried out at the Language Department that belongs to the Catholic University of Cuenca, Cañar extension, which is a private university located in the Cañar Canton, Province of Cañar, Ecuador. It is worth mentioning that this is the only university in the Cañar Canton. It has five academic units. Its students come from both rural and urban areas. The university's Language Department currently offers English instruction to all of its students. There are five English levels (A1, Low Intermediate 1, Low-Intermediate 2, Intermediate 1, and Intermediate 2). Students must successfully complete all English levels in order to comply with their language study program. This research was carried out with the students in the Low-Intermediate 2 course (second level).

### **3.4 Participants**

The participants in this quasi-experimental study were 56 learners who attended the second English level at the aforementioned university. They comprise the total number of students in this level at the university's language department. They come from different academic backgrounds and their ages vary from 19 to 22. The researcher worked with two intact classes that were randomly assigned as experimental and control groups. Thirty students were part of the experimental group and twenty-six students were part of the control group. The students were both male and female. There were 19 females and 7



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males in the control group. The experimental group had 21 females and 9 males. All of the participants had successfully completed English level one in the previous cycle.

All of the participants were informed about the study prior to its beginning (Creswell, 2014). First, the consent form (Appendix I) was presented which contained the purpose of the study, the role of the students, and the advantages and risks. Furthermore, confidentiality was guaranteed to the participants, who were also assured they had the freedom to withdraw at any time. All students voluntarily decided to participate in the study by signing the consent form. Finally, the consent form was written in Spanish in order to avoid participants miscomprehending its content (Mackey & Gass, 2005).

### **3.5 Hypothesis**

Mackey and Gass (2005) say that to predict whether there is a relationship between two variables, it is essential to test the hypothesis. They consider two types of hypothesis: the null and the alternative one. Thus, the null hypothesis ( $H_0$ ) for the present study states that scores from the vocabulary test will not increase after the implementation of the TPRS method. Meanwhile, the alternative hypothesis ( $H_1$ ) predicts that scores from the vocabulary test will improve after the TPRS method instruction. The purpose of the statistical analysis is to reject the null hypothesis and accept the alternative hypothesis.

### **3.6 Variables**

A variable is something that may vary or differ. Variables differ both over time and among individuals, as in the case of language proficiency and vocabulary acquisition (Dean, 1995). Mackey and Gass (2005) consider two main kinds of variables: independent and dependent. The authors see the independent variable as the one that the researcher thinks may provoke some kind of effect on the outcomes. Thus, the



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independent variable declared for this study is the TPRS method, the one selected by the researcher to be manipulated in order to determine its effect on or relationship with the dependent variable. Meanwhile, the dependent variable is stated as English vocabulary acquisition. This variable is the one measured to observe the effects, if any, that the TPRS method has on it.

### **3.7 Data Collection**

#### **3.7.1 Vocabulary Test.**

In order to gather data about the students' English vocabulary academic performance an English vocabulary test was used. The vocabulary test was retrieved from the course book titled Touchstone 2B by MacCarthy, MacCarten and Sandiford (2014). This textbook is the one used by the Language Department at the university. The test has already been validated by Cambridge. Authorization to use it was requested and accepted (Appendix II). This test is based on the English vocabulary from the six units included in the book. The test encompasses 48 multiple choice vocabulary questions. Students had to read the vocabulary question and choose the correct answer among three possible items. They received one mark for each correct answer. The test score was out of 48 marks. The same vocabulary test was applied to both experimental and control groups in pre-/post-test stages. The researcher administered the test in paper format. The test was piloted with a similar group of 23 students in order to verify its validity and reliability and no problems were reported.

#### **3.7.2 Survey**

At the end of the implementation of the TPRS method, a survey was administered to the participants in the experimental group in order to collect data about their perceptions about the use of the TPRS method to learn English vocabulary. The questionnaire



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(Appendix IV) was adapted from Dukes (2012), who conducted a study to find out students' feelings and perceptions about TPRS as a stand-alone methodology. Her study concluded that students felt TPRS was a valuable tool when learning a foreign language (Dukes, 2012, p. 46). The author reported that the original Likert Scale instrument was adapted from a study initiated at the Humber College of Applied Arts and Technology in Ontario, Canada. She also indicated that the original survey was intended to determine teacher effectiveness; therefore, the questionnaire provided questions that allowed learners to offer responses indicating their opinions and feelings about learning a foreign language through the use of the TPRS method.

The instrument contains eight questions. Students were asked to rank them from a scale of 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). For the purpose of the present study, the questionnaire had to be translated into Spanish to avoid any misunderstandings by the participants whose native language was Spanish (Mackey & Gass, 2005). The researcher made the first translation. Then, the translated version of the questionnaire (Appendix V) was presented to two professionals from another university in order to ensure the clarity and veracity of the translation. They reviewed and accepted the translated version. The translated version of the questionnaire was piloted with a similar group of 23 learners who were asked to mark unclear statements, phrases, or words. Participants did not report any misunderstandings; therefore, no changes were made to it. Additionally, the researcher was able to time students answering the questionnaire. Indeed, fifteen minutes were necessary to complete it.

### **3. 8 Intervention**

In order to apply the intervention that would allow determining the effectiveness of the TPRS method, it was necessary to create a lesson plan that would be used not just for one



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session but for a number of sessions with the students. The level that received the intervention usually studies six units of the textbook Touchstone by McCarthy, McCarten, and Sandiford (2014). For this study herein, the lesson plan was applied throughout four units in the mentioned textbook. The lesson plan was made with strict adjustment to the three steps the TPRS method involves, which are: establishing meaning, asking the story, and reading. The lesson plan is included herein and it clearly displays the activities each step involves.

It is important to clarify that the lesson plan was a basic model, but it required modification to adjust to the content of each different unit in the textbook. This lesson plan herein inserted was used for the intervention with the experimental group.

To be able to compare results, there was a different lesson plan used with the control group. Such lesson plan is simply the one included in the textbook, which does not include the steps of the TPRS method. This way, it was possible to make a comparison of the results when one lesson plan was applied with the experimental group as opposed to the textbook lesson plan with the control group.

The TPRS lesson plan is below.

### TPRS LESSON PLAN

Time: 2-hour period (120 minutes)

#### TPRS Steps:

1. Establishing meaning
2. Asking the story
3. Reading activities

Unit 7: Going away





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- Unit's aims:
- talk about getting ready for a trip using infinitives to give reasons
  - To give opinions using It's + adjective + to
  - To talk about things to take on a trip
  - To give advice and suggestions with should, could, need to, etc.
  - To respond to suggestions
  - To use I guess when you are not sure
  - To read the co-created stories
  - TO write your own scrip of the story

### 1. Establishing Meaning (10 min.)

#### 1.1 Choose three high frequency words or phrases:

It's nice, need to, to see my relatives

Teacher: writes the words on the board with their translations

Teacher: reads students the words on the board

Teacher: Asks students to suggest gestures for the mentioned phrases using gestures with their bodies

Teacher and students agree on the gestures that will be used for the phrases (structures)

Teacher makes sure all the students have got the gestures according to the vocabulary

#### 1.2 Personal questions and answers PQA (15 min)

Teacher: shares with the class something about himself/herself making sure when he says the structures he gestures them.

Class: "I need to go to the park to see my relatives. It's nice to see my relatives"



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Teacher asks students to react to what was just said

Teacher begins to ask students PQAs

Class: Do I need to go to the park?

Do I need to see my relatives?

Is it nice to see my relatives?

Do you need to go to the park?

Do you need to see your relatives?

Is it nice to see your relatives?

Do you know my relatives?

Write on the board the new words: (10 min)

should, could , with their translations, tell students that these are used to give advice and suggestions.

### 1.3 Extended PQA Questions (20 min)

Where do I need to go?

Why do I need to go to the park?

When do I need to go to the park to see my relatives?

Who needs to go to the Park?

Why should I go to the park?

Should I go to the park now?

Should I see my relatives now?

Could I go to the park now?

Could I see my relatives now?

### 1.4 Taking students' suggestions

Who wants to go to the park? (Class suggests a name)



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Why does \_\_\_\_\_ want to go to the park? (take students' suggestions)

Is it nice to go to the park, suggested name?

Are you going to see your relatives, too?

Why should you go to the park?

Should you go to the park now?

Could you go to the park now?

### 1.5 Slow

Teacher must ask student the questions slowly

### 2. Asking the story (25 min)

Teacher tells students that we are going to co-create a story; therefore, they must suggest:

1. A location
2. A problem.
3. A solution to the problem

#### 2.1 Teacher tells the students

Class: Guess what?

We are going on a trip and you must suggest some places (locations)

- Teacher takes students' suggestions
- Teacher and students agree on a location
- Teacher asks students to suggest a problem
- Teacher takes students' suggestions
- Teacher and students agree on a problem
- Teacher asks students to suggest a solution to the problem
- Teacher takes students' suggestions
- Teacher and students agree on a solution to the problem

Teacher and students co-create a story that has a location, a problem, and a solution

### 3. Reading Activities (30 min)



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Teacher writes on the board the co-created story.

Teacher reads to students the written story from the board

Teacher asks students to work in pairs and to read one another the story

Teacher asks students to role play the story

Teacher assigns students to create their own scrip of the story

## **Chapter IV**

### **4.1 Study Outcomes**

The chapter presented here is supported by the analysis of the collected data and their interpretation, which was done through the presentation of tables, analysis, and statistical charts. It is worth mentioning that to determine the impact of the TPRS method on the English vocabulary acquisition of second level students at the Catholic University of Cuenca, Cañar Extension, the application of a vocabulary test from the textbook called



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Touchstone English Level II was used as a methodological strategy to determine the impact of the TPRS method in the acquisition of English vocabulary of second level students.

### 4.2 Vocabulary Test Outcomes

In order to establish the influence of the TPRS method on the students' English vocabulary acquisition, a pre-test and a post-test to both experimental and control groups were applied. The pre-test was intended to measure the students' previous English vocabulary knowledge at the beginning of the study. Moreover, its results were used to confirm that the two groups had nearly the same level of English vocabulary knowledge, as seen on table 1 by comparing their means (control group 11.0, experimental group 13.5) since it tells the average score students got in the pre-test stage.

Table1. Mean and Standard deviation in pre-test stage.

Score	Group	N	Mean	Standard Deviation
	Control	26	11.0	3.5
	Experimental	30	13.5	4.5

Source: SPSS



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Table 2. Pre-post- test results – control group

Control Group	N	Mean	Standard Deviation
Pretest	26	11.0385	3.51546
Posttest	26	18.6154	1.83471

Source: SPSS

Table 3. Pre-post- test results – Experimental group

Experimental	N	Mean	Standard Deviation
Pretest	30	13.5667	4.51575
Posttest	30	25.7667	6.52678

Source: SPSS

On one hand, table 2 shows the pre-post-test results from the control group. As it is shown, students in the control group increased their mean vocabulary score from 11.03 to 18.62; there is an average increment of 6.99 points. On the other hand, table three shows the pre-post-test results from the experimental group. The group's mean in the pre-test is 13.57 and 25.77 in the post-test. There is an increment of 12.2 points in this group which means that comparing the post-test results from the two groups there is difference in increment of 5.22 by the experimental group. Therefore, there is a significant improvement in the post-test results of the experimental group in comparison to the control one since the experimental group almost doubles the increment of the control one.

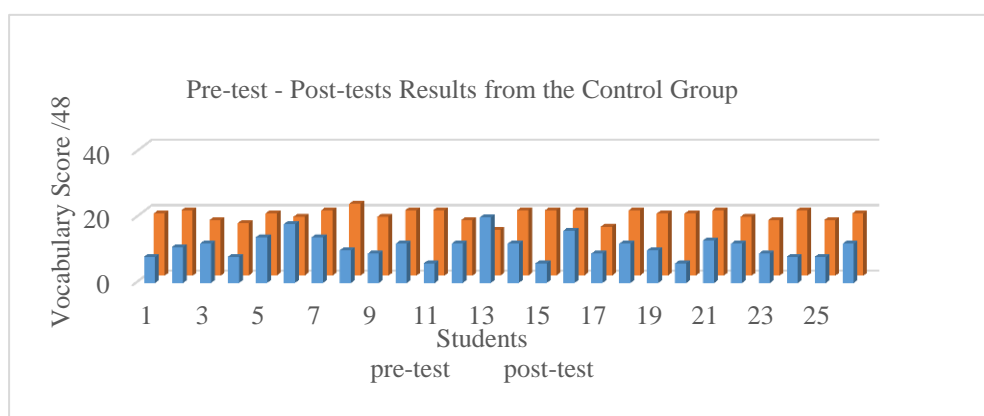


Figure 1, Pre-test – Post-tests Results from the Control Group

Figure 1 shows the contrast between the pre-test and the post-test in the control group

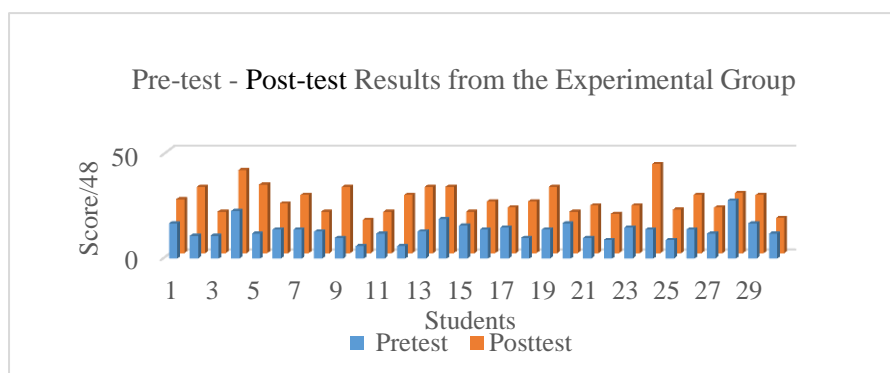


Figure 2. Contrast between pretest and post-test results in the experimental group

Figure 2 shows the contrast between the pre-test and the post-test in the experimental group.

### 4.3 T-Test Results

Larson-Hall (2012) explains that a t-test procedure is conducted in order to compare the means of two different groups (control and experimental). For results to be reliable, assumptions of independence, normality, and homogeneity must be met. To test for normality, the Shapiro-Wilk's test ( $p > 0.5$ ) was used (Shapiro & Wilk, 1965).

Table 4. Normality Test

		Kolmogorov-Smirnov <sup>a</sup>			Shapiro-Wilk		
	Group	Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
Score	Control	.198	26	.010	.898	26	.014
	Experimental	.131	30	.200*	.928	30	.043

Source: SPSS



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Additionally, an observation of their box plots was made. They graphically showed that the data in both control and experimental groups were normally distributed around their respective means as figure 3 below shows it.

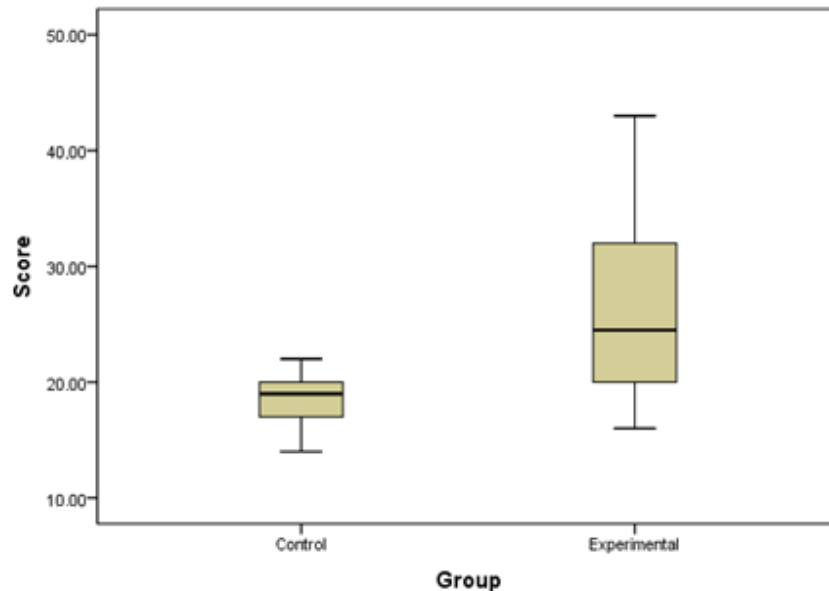


Figure 3. *Box-and-whisker plots for control and experimental groups*

Moreover, results showed a skewness of -0.810 (SE= .456) and a kurtosis of 0.496 (SE = 0.887) for the control group while, a skewness of 0.856 (SE= .427) and a kurtosis of 0.485 (SE = 0.833) for the experimental group. These outcomes also suggest that the data are roughly normally distributed for both experimental and control groups (Doane & Seward, 2011). Additionally, table 5 below shows a comparison between the two groups in terms of scores, that is the minimum score out of 48 in the control group is 14, while the maximum score is 22. However, the minimum score in the experimental group is 16 while the maximum is 43. These data show that the scores in the experimental group almost doubled the scores in the control group as it can be noticed on the respective table below.





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Table 5. Statistics of group post-test

Group			Statistic	Standard Error
Score	Control	Mean	18.6154	.35982
		95% Confidence Interval		
		Lower Bound	17.8743	
		Upper Bound	19.3564	
		5% Trimmed Mean	18.6966	
		Median	19.0000	
		Variance	3.366	
		Std. Deviation	1.83471	
		Minimum	14.00	
		Maximum	22.00	
		Range	8.00	
		Interquartile Range	3.00	
		Skewness	-.810	.456
		Kurtosis	.496	.887
Score	Experimental	Mean	25.7667	1.19162
		95% Confidence Interval		
		Lower Bound	23.3295	
		Upper Bound	28.2038	
		5% Trimmed Mean	25.3889	
		Median	24.5000	
		Variance	42.599	
		Std. Deviation	6.52678	
		Minimum	16.00	
		Maximum	43.00	
		Range	27.00	
		Interquartile Range	12.00	
		Skewness	.856	.427
		Kurtosis	.485	.833

Source: SPSS

Table 6. Mean and Standard Deviation Post-test

	Group	N	Mean	Standard	Standard Error Mean
				Deviation	
Scores	Control	26	18.6154	1.83471	.35982
	Experimental	26	25.3077	5.93814	1.16457

Source: SPSS

The post-test was intended to measure the students' English vocabulary knowledge after the implementation of the TPRS method. Therefore, its results were used to compare the English vocabulary scores between the experimental and the control groups as table 6 shows their scores greatly differ as shown by their respective means.



Table 7. Levene's Test

		Levene's Test for		t-Test for Equality of means						
		Equality of variances								
						Sig.		Standard	95% Confidence	
						(2-	Mean	Error	Interval of the	
						tailed)	Difference	Difference	Lower	Upper
Scores	Equal variances assumed	F	Sig.	T	df					
		29.781	.000	-5.491	50	.000	-6.69231	1.21888	-9.14051	-4.24411
	Equal variances not assumed			-5.491	29	.000	-6.69231	1.21888	-9.18255	-4.20206

Source: SPSS

The control group ( $N = 26$ ) was connected to a vocabulary score  $M = 18.61$  ( $SD = 1.83$ ). By contrast, the experimental group ( $N = 30$ ) was connected to a numerically greater vocabulary score  $M = 25.31$  ( $SD = 5.94$ ). An independent sample t-test was conducted to determine if a difference existed between the mean vocabulary scores of the experimental and control groups. Results found that there was a significant difference for vocabulary scores in the experimental group ( $M = 25.31$ ,  $SD = 5.94$ ) and vocabulary scores in the control group ( $M = 18.6$ ,  $SD = 1.8$ ) where;  $t(50) = 5.4$ ,  $p = .001$ . These results indicate that the TPRS method actually does have an effect on English vocabulary acquisition. Unambiguously, it can be assumed that when the TPRS method is used to teach English vocabulary, acquisition increases. Cohen's  $d$  effect size was estimated at 1.52, which is a large effect based on Cohen's (1992) guidelines. These results suggest that the students in the experimental group scored 1.52 standard deviation higher on the vocabulary test than students in the control group.



#### 4.4 Survey Outcomes

At the end of the application of the TPRS method, students who took part in the experimental group were asked to complete a survey in order to explore how they felt about the proposed method of learning English vocabulary. The outcomes from the survey questionnaire are analyzed next.

##### **Question 1: I think the teaching method used in class creates a comfortable atmosphere for learning the English language**

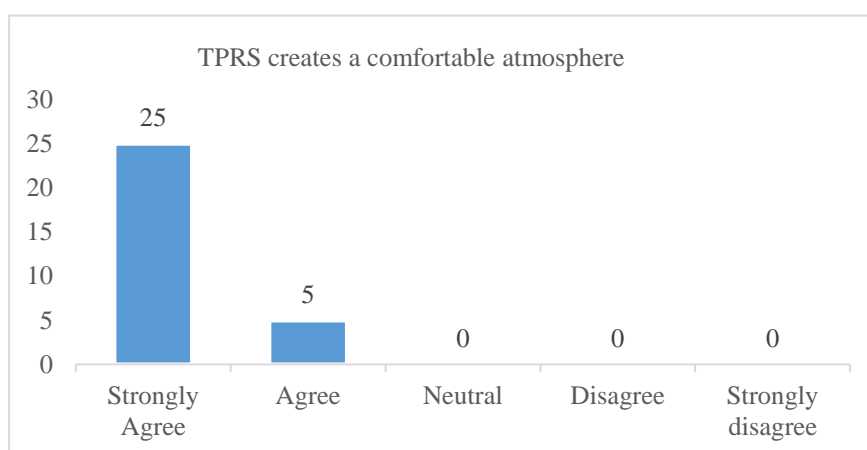


Figure 4. *Students who think TPRS creates a comfortable atmosphere.*

Figure 4 shows the number of students who chose numbers 5 and 4 when they were asked whether TPRS created a favorable environment for learning, that is, most of the students 25 out of 30 answered that they strongly agreed and 5 of them answered they agreed. That means that all of the students felt that TPRS creates a comfortable atmosphere to learn the English vocabulary. Considering the learning environment as all that surrounds the student in the learning process these results determine the importance of offering a warm, secure, innovative, and dynamic learning environment so English learning process can be developed with more confidence.



**Question 2: I feel comfortable performing the body movements according to the vocabulary.**

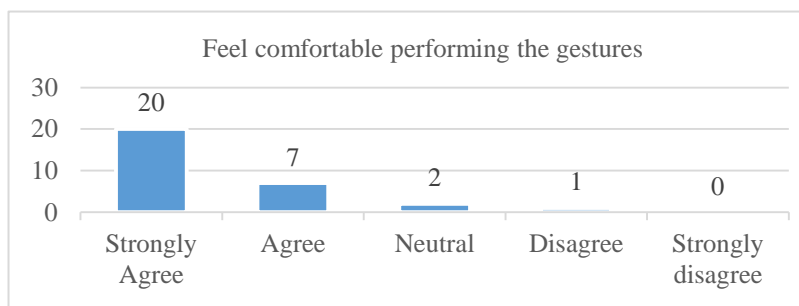


Figure 5. *Students who feel comfortable performing the gestures*

Figure 5 shows the results when students were asked if they felt comfortable performing the gestures according to the vocabulary. Twenty of them strongly agreed, seven of them said they agreed, two of them expressed that they felt a neutral position, and one of them said he/she disagreed. Therefore this shows that the majority of students felt really comfortable performing the gestures according to the vocabulary.

**Question 3: I feel comfortable contributing with the story creation.**

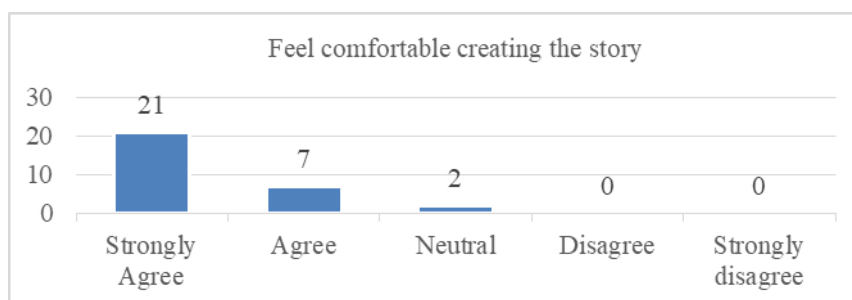


Figure 6. *Students who feel comfortable contributing to the story creation*

Figure 6 displays the number of students who felt comfortable facilitating their ideas to create the stories. Twenty-one of them expressed that they felt very comfortable with the contribution while 7 of them agreed they felt comfortable. However, just two out of the total number of students in the group expressed a neutral position. Consequently, this means that the majority of students felt really comfortable at the time of creating stories



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**Question 4: I think storytelling helps me learn the English language.**

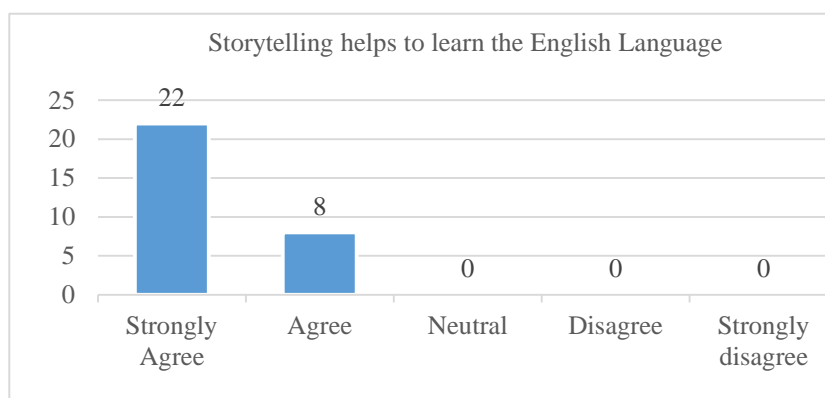


Figure 7, Students who feel storytelling helps them learn

Figure 7 shows the number of learners who felt storytelling helps them learn the English language. Twenty-two of them strongly agreed, while 8 of them said they agreed. This means that all of the students in the group felt that storytelling helped them acquire the English vocabulary.

**Question 5: I think that listening and trying to understand what is said in the English language helps me learn its vocabulary.**

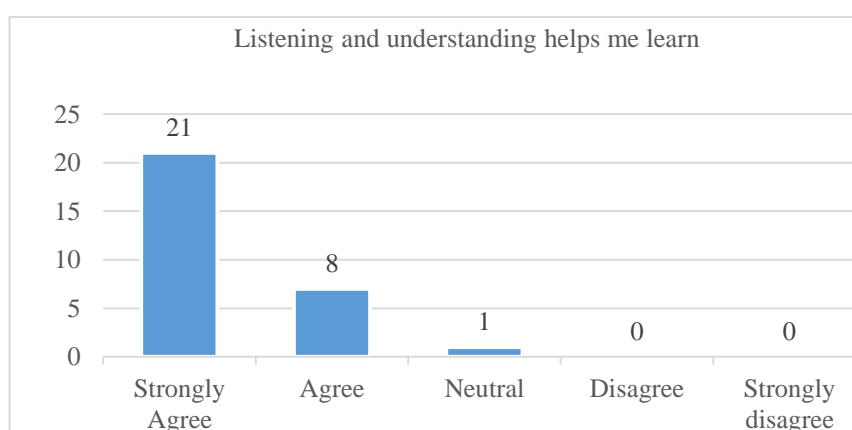


Figure 8, Students who feel listening and understanding helps them



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Figure 8 displays the number of students who think that listening and trying to understand what the teacher says in the classroom supports their vocabulary learning. Twenty-one of them stated that they strongly agreed while eight of them expressed they agreed. However, only one student kept a neutral position. Therefore, it means that almost all of the students felt that listening and trying to understand what is said by the teacher during the lessons helped them to acquire the English vocabulary.

### **Question 6: I feel that I understand most of the English words said in the classroom.**

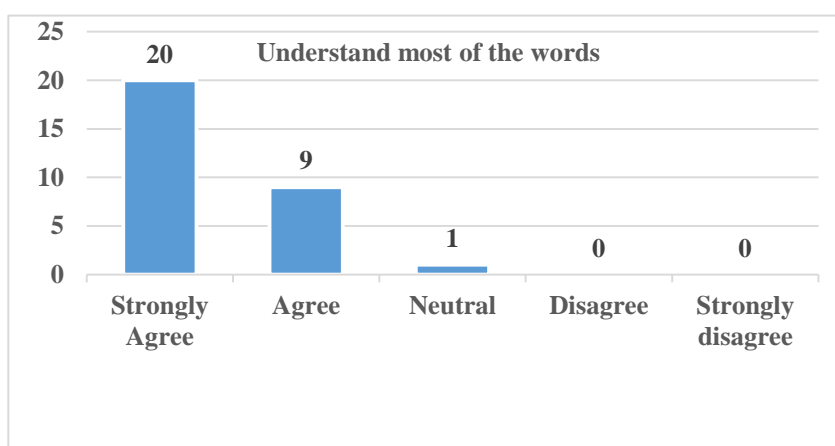


Figure 9, *Students who feel they understand most of the words*

Figure 9 shows the number of students who thought they were able to understand most of the words used in the English classroom. Twenty of them said that they strongly agreed while nine of them said that they agreed, and one of them chose a neutral position. These results show that the majority of students agreed that they were able to understand most of the English words used during the development of the lessons applying the TPRS method.



**Question 7: I feel that reading the stories created in class helps me learn the English vocabulary.**

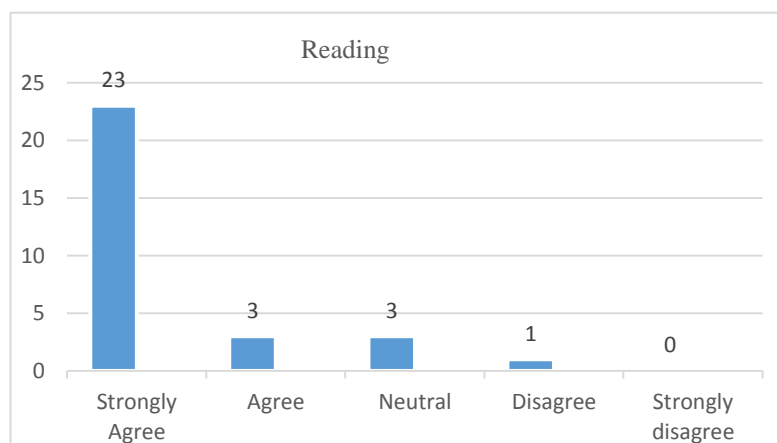


Figure 10, *Students who feel reading the stories helps to learn*

Figure 10 shows the number of students who felt that reading the stories created in the English class helped them learn the English vocabulary. Twenty-three of them said that they strongly agreed while three of them said that they agreed. However, three of the students in the group expressed a neutral position and one of the students said that he/she disagreed. Therefore, this shows that the majority of the students in the group felt that reading the stories created during the TPRS lessons helped them learn the English vocabulary.



**Question 8: I think that the TPRS method helps me learn the English vocabulary**

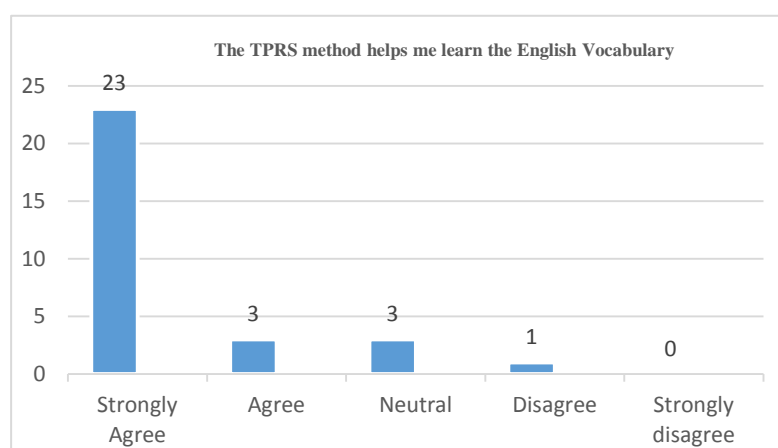


Figure 11, *Students who feel TPRS helps to learn*

Figure 11 shows the number of students who believed that the TPRS method helped them to learn the English vocabulary. Twenty-three of them claimed they strongly agreed, while 3 of them chose that they agreed. Though, three of them said they were neutral and one student stated that he/he disagreed. Therefore, these results indicate that the majority of students in the experimental group strongly felt that the TPRS method helped them learn the English vocabulary. These results determine a positive impact of the TPRS method in the acquisition of English vocabulary of the second level students at the Catholic University of Cuenca, Cañar Extension since most of the students strongly agreed that the TPRS method help them to learn the English vocabulary.





### Summary of the Percentages of Student survey results

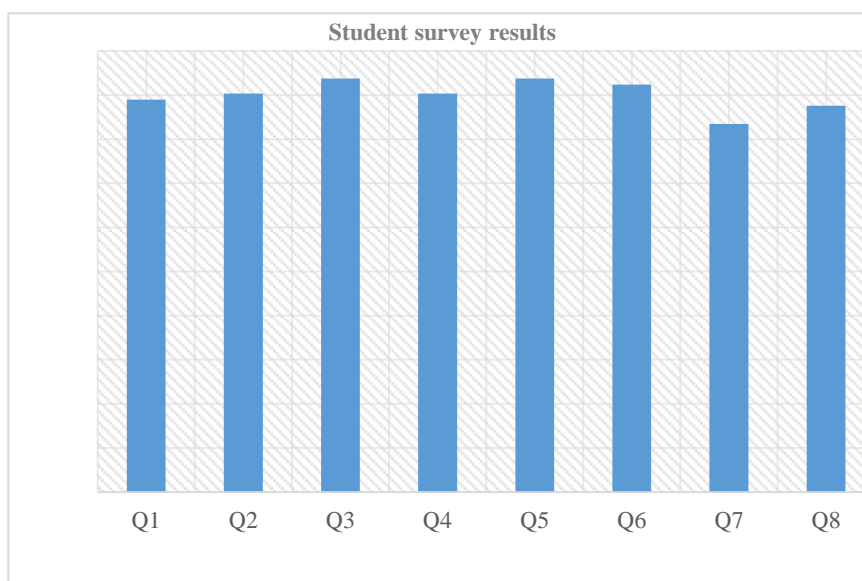


Figure 12, *Student survey results*

Figure 12 shows that the lowest result in all questions is 4 points, which means that the students strongly agreed with the proposed method.

Overall results show that the majority of second level students at the Catholic University of Cuenca, Cañar Extension strongly agreed that the TPRS method helped them improve their English language learning.



## Chapter V

### 5.1 Discussion

The current research began as an effort to investigate whether the use of the TPRS method supports the increase of the English vocabulary acquisition of second level students at the Catholic University of Cuenca, Cañar Extension. As well as to explore what perceptions these students have about TPRS due to the necessity of Ecuadorian universities to improve the teaching and learning of English as a foreign language.

As an English teacher, the researcher has been challenged with the requirement to assist students in acquiring a significant amount of English vocabulary in accordance to their level since vocabulary is the basis for foreign language learning. Additionally, the new regulation of the Academic Regimen (2015) states that university students must demonstrate foreign language B1 level according to the Common European Framework of Reference before they reach sixty percent of their total credits have motivated the researcher to find an instructional methodology that increases the students' English vocabulary acquisition.

Several studies have been carried out around the world about the TPRS method as an educational resource and its influence on vocabulary acquisition. Nevertheless, the shortage of research in Ecuador has encouraged the researcher to undertake the study. For this reason, the TPRS methodology was applied in order to assist the students in regards



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to their need to increase English vocabulary. The TPRS methodology consists basically of using three steps as follows.

The first step involves establishing meaning. In order to establish the meaning of new words or phrases, the instructor presents the vocabulary to the students and gives them evident clues so that they can deduce the meaning of each word or phrase. Within this step, the instructor can use translation if needed or can make use of mimic as in the Total Physical Response method in order to make evident to students the meaning of new words or phrases.

The second step includes creating a story along with the students so that they use the vocabulary within a context that allows them to use the vocabulary in a practical way.

The third step is reading the actual story the class created. This final step allows students to see the vocabulary in context through a written piece.

The application of these steps means putting into practice several of the TPRS skills suggested by Slavic (2008, 2010, 2015) in order to infer their effect on the second level students' English vocabulary acquisition at the Catholic University of Cuenca, Cañar Extension.

In this section the two research questions will be answered:

Do English vocabulary scores for students taught with the TPRS method differ from English vocabulary scores of students taught without it?

What perceptions do second level students have when being taught English vocabulary using the Teaching Proficiency through Reading and Storytelling instruction?

Taking into consideration the outcomes from the statistical examination, these indicate that second level students in the experimental group English vocabulary acquisition has



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been enriched with the use of the TPRS method since their vocabulary scores in the post-test greatly differ from the vocabulary scores of students in the control group. Thus, the independent variable, the TPRS method, significantly exerted control over the dependent variable that is English vocabulary acquisition. These findings concur with other studies that show that TPRS improves pronunciation and vocabulary retention as Heiser (2001) concluded it. Likewise, Merinnage De Costa (2015) demonstrated that TPRS college students showed superior progress on measures of listening, vocabulary, culture, grammar, and writing skills. In the same way Watson (2009) compared TPRS method to traditional teaching. She demonstrated that the use of TPRS improves vocabulary learning.

In relation to the second research question students' perceptions towards the TPRS method were considered. To determine what students think about the TPRS method, a questionnaire was given to the students. The questionnaire included aspects such as how students perceive the classroom environment that TPRS creates. In addition, the questionnaire included the aspect of the level of comfort students feel while making mimics or performing other movements which are part of the TPR. Another aspect of the questionnaire was the level of comfort students feel when creating the story. In addition, there is also the aspect of whether students feel or not that the TPRS method increased their ability to understand new vocabulary and, finally, if the overall use of the method, aided the students to actually learn the English language.

The results of the questionnaire were positive for all the questions students were asked. These responses in the questionnaire mean that students have a positive perception of the TRPS method by itself. Most importantly, the students expressed that they really



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achieved an increase in their knowledge of vocabulary which, in turn, leads to the improvement of their English language skills.

To sum up, results from the student survey showed that participants strongly agreed that the TPRS skills aided them in acquiring the English vocabulary. Additionally, Slavic (2015) and other current literature suggest that the TPRS method helps to improve not only vocabulary acquisition in EFL classes, but also all other language skills. That is why the present research aimed to determine the impact of the TPRS method in the acquisition of English vocabulary for the second level students at the Catholic University of Cuenca, Cañar Extension. This impact was seen through the results obtained from the students which suggested being positive, as students stated they felt comfortable with the provided environment, as well as, with the TPRS strategies that were used, and better yet, with the knowledge obtained by applying the method in order to help them improve their English vocabulary acquisition.

It is important to point out that among the benefits of applying the TPRS method these include the development of capacities and skills of listening and speaking in the English language, the development of the different learning channels, like sight, hearing, and kinesthesia, in the same way that it encourages the learning of reading (particularly reading comprehension), writing, encouraging creativity, criticality and imagination in the second-level students, highlighting the improvement of the management of the English vocabulary for their academic education.

For its part, the TPRS method seems to develop the teaching of the English language in a complete way. It does not just reduce itself to the programmatic contents of the language, but also develops capacities and cognitive skills in the students of the second level; therefore, they learn English in a more effective way.



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It is necessary to highlight that the academic performance of the second level students in the experimental group has been higher after the application of the TPRS method as they acquired a vocabulary in accordance to their academic level, with an emphasis on grammatical structures and the development of imagination and creativity. The actual instruments that demonstrate that the academic English level of the students effectively reached a higher level, are the pre-test and the post-test students took. When students took the pre-test, the scores were significantly low for students who are in the second level. Students lacked appropriate vocabulary to express a wide range of ideas. When the students took the post-test, the scores were significantly higher in comparison to the students in the control group. Students had increased their vocabulary and, thus, they were able to express a wider range of ideas.

As stated before, second level students at the Catholic University of Cuenca, Cañar Extension expressed their satisfaction at having participated in the application of the method. In the same way, they expressed through their answers that TPRS is one of the most effective and efficient methods in the teaching of English, claiming that it is a dynamic, creative, and innovative method that can be developed at any academic level. Evidently, the instrument that allows the students to express their opinion can lead to biased criteria because the students do not necessarily have an objective appreciation of what the TPRS method involves. Instead, the students simply express their views based on the knowledge they acquire. The researcher is limited in this aspect because it is not possible to influence the views students express.

### 5.2 Conclusions

The Teaching Proficiency through Reading and Storytelling (TPRS) method seems to activate the natural ability the brain has to produce language while students use their



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kinesthetic ability. In other words, the TPRS is a method that makes use of different resources to teach languages providing comprehensible input, personalization, and input under social and imaginary situations coming from the students' social context and cognitive and affective needs.

Another benefit of the TPRS method is that students are able to personalize the story they produce. The reason for this is that the instructor simply guides the students on what task to perform. Then, the students have the creativity to perform the task in any way they wish as long as it is within the guidance the instructor provides. In other words, creativity is the key to the performance of students when they use the TPRS method.

For its part, Teaching Proficiency through Reading and Storytelling method falls within the Communicative Language Teaching approach and this has many benefits as discussed below.

First, the TPRS method offers opportunities for interaction between the learners and instructors. This is a benefit because it is not only the instructor the one who speaks or uses the language; also, the students get to use the language and interact with the instructor and with peers.

Second, there is the benefit of collaborative creation of meaning because students work together and not in isolation in order to perform the task the instructor assigns.

Third, the TPRS method facilitates acquisition of meaning and learning through feedback. In other words, the students are strongly encouraged to let the instructor know their doubts, level of comprehension, and input so that the instructor clarifies any doubts they may have.



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Finally, the TPRS method gives enough comprehensible input and personalized learning to the student because the instructor takes the necessary time to explain to students in detail so that the students really acquire the knowledge the instructor wants them to have.

To put together all these advantages, according to the results obtained from the second level students at the Catholic University of Cuenca, Cañar Extension the benefits of the TPRS method revolve around developing capacities and skills of listening and speaking in English in accordance with the student's academic level. In the same way, the method develops different learning channels such as sight, hearing, and kinesthesia as part of the student's complete learning. It also benefits the skills of reading and writing, encourages creativity, critical thinking, and imagination in students, and improves English vocabulary for their academic education.

Moreover, the TPRS method seems to promote teaching the English language in a complete manner, addressing all skill areas as well as grammar and vocabulary. At the same time, it develops cognitive skills in the second level students for their management of the language.

In this same way, this method seems to develop a high academic performance in accordance with the academic level the surveyed students are in. This includes vocabulary and grammatical structures and the development of imagination and creativity.

In the same way, the students in the study reported that they were satisfied to have participated in the application of the method. In addition, they felt that the TPRS method is efficient and effective, dynamic, creative, and innovative, and can be developed at any level. Finally, they believe it can lead students to master the language.





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For all these reasons, it is important to highlight that the diagnostic test showed that before TPRS was used, the students' English vocabulary was weak due to the lack of the culture of learning words and phrases and the lack of knowledge the teachers and the students had about Teaching English through Reading and Storytelling. Individual learning outcomes in terms of words and phrases were low due to lack of good procedures and motivation for learning.

For its part, the teaching procedure followed by the researcher to teach English vocabulary using TPRS has proved to be effective in terms of learning words and phrases. It leads to success by treating words and phrases in a dynamic, active, and whole learning process are created through body movements, actions, thinking, imagination, feeling, and other resources. This uses the power of the human psyche, art, technology, and social progress. The teaching procedure followed herein shows the achieving outcomes from the pedagogical practice for the school.

The importance of this study resides in the fact that the teaching procedure has been enriched by using TPRS for teaching and learning English vocabulary.

### **5.3 Recommendations**

Using the outcomes obtained from the second level students at the Catholic University of Cuenca, Cañar Extension it is recommended to broaden the use of the TPRS method in all the educational levels of the country. This would encourage early learning of English, and would include this method in the curricular content in the university. In addition, the objective should be to develop listening and speaking skills for foreign language acquisition and implement the method to develop the learning of reading and writing skills in English. In doing so, this will also encourage creativity, criticality, and



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imagination in students so that they are able to master the English vocabulary in their academic education.

Also, training of teachers in the TPRS method will encourage the development of teaching the English language in a complete manner, addressing the four skills, grammar, vocabulary, and cognitive skills in the second level students for a dominion of the language.

This method seems to develop a high academic performance in accordance with students' academic levels by improving vocabulary and emphasizing grammatical structures and the development of imagination and creativity.

Besides, through the reflection of the participants in the study, it can be recommended that university teachers should be trained in the usage of the TPRS method as it is an effective and efficient method to teach the English language.

The TPRS method might be used to teach English vocabulary in universities in Ecuador, adjusting this to specific learning conditions. For example, different universities with different resources can adjust the application of the method to the context of each university. The key of the method is to establish meaning of new words, create stories, and use it in reading. As long as these three steps are in place, universities can adjust the method to their needs.

Future opportunities are needed to make a better selection of the stock of words and phrases to be taught with the TPRS approach in order to approximate real English use with tasks related to students' communication needs. In this aspect, however, there is the practical limitation that English instructors often are obliged to work with a specific content. For instance, there is a syllabus, a textbook, and other instruments the instructors must use. This is a limitation because the instructors do not have the academic freedom to change or alter the syllabus unless the institution allows.



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English teachers need to be prepared to put into action the TPRS approach to teach vocabulary. This kind of training requires time, effort, and energy to improve the performance of teachers. A modular English language teacher training that involves planning, understanding, managing the learners, and reviewing the outcomes is needed. A limitation here would be the limited resources universities may have. The limitation is important to highlight because training requires resources and not all universities have them.

A whole language school approach using TPRS could improve vocabulary learning for it will bring a change of attitude towards English in terms of resources, mentoring, reflection, and research.

### **5.4 Further Research**

For future research, studies about the effects of the TPRS method applied to speaking, listening, reading, and writing skills could be carried out. The advantage would be that researchers may find new benefits of the TPRS method.

Additionally, the researcher suggests that there is a gap in the literature using delayed post-tests in order to empower the relationship between the TPRS method and English vocabulary acquisition.

Finally, the review of literature showed that there was no research work carried out about teachers' perceptions towards the TPRS method. It would be a useful contribution to explore teachers' reactions to TPRS use. However, it is important to highlight that, recently, a new study regarding teacher's perceptions was published by Baker (2017). However, this is a new study and replication in the future will be necessary to confirm the results of this study. The results of this study confirm the effectiveness of the TPRS method.



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To conclude, it is encouraging to know that new research can confirm the effectiveness of the TPRS method. If new research continues to confirm such effectiveness and Ecuador academic institutions apply it in the teaching of English, it is likely that our country will be able to succeed in preparing students who are in need of learning English for their future success.

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## Appendix I: Consent Form

### CONSENTIMIENTO DEL PARTICIPANTE

Fecha: \_\_\_\_\_

Título:

### **THE EFFECTS OF THE TPRS METHOD ON THE STUDENTS' ENGLISH VOCABULARY ACQUISITION AT THE CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY OF CUENCA**

Antes de formar parte en esta investigación lea cuidadosamente cada una de las pautas que conforman la misma.

Objetivos de la investigación:

Esta investigación tiene como objetivo identificar los efectos del uso del método TPRS (Enseñanza de la competencia a través de la lectura y la narración) por sus siglas en inglés en la adquisición de vocabulario, para de mejor manera facilitar a que los estudiantes de inglés adquieran nuevas palabras de vocabulario y puedan hacer uso del mismo en las diferentes destrezas del idioma inglés.

Papel del participante:

Su participación en la investigación se detalla a continuación: tomar un examen inicial, asistir a las clases de inglés con regularidad, participar activamente de las clases impartidas por su profesor en las cuales se utilizará movimientos corporales para las palabras de vocabulario, ser partícipe de la creación de historias, leer detenidamente las historias creadas, realizar el examen final. Además se le solicitará llenar una encuesta sobre el aprendizaje de vocabulario. Tanto la encuesta como las sesiones de clase se llevarán a cabo en su aula de clase. Debe conocer que ninguna de las notas que usted obtenga tanto en el pre test como en el post test afectará de ninguna manera su rendimiento en la asignatura de inglés.

Seguridad:

No existen peligros físicos como tampoco psicológicos ligados a esta investigación. Su participación es voluntaria, el participante es libre de retirarse del proyecto en el momento que crea necesario sin ser penalizado o cuestionado con cualquier tipo de interrogantes acerca de su decisión.

Ventajas:

Las ventajas de la investigación conllevan su contribución para mejorar el nivel de adquisición de vocabulario de inglés de los estudiantes, para que estos puedan usar el vocabulario adquirido en las diferentes habilidades del idioma inglés. El hecho que forme parte del estudio no le proporcionará notas adicionales, puntos extras o remuneración



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alguna. Los resultados de la investigación brindarán información para ayudar a los profesores de inglés a mejorar su desempeño profesional.

### Confidencialidad:

En esta investigación no se mencionará ningún nombre propio. La indagación se formará mediante símbolos o distintivos. Los datos recolectados en la investigación se mantendrán bajo absoluta privacidad durante el tiempo que se realice el estudio y aún después de haberlo finalizado. Solamente el investigador tendrá acceso a dichos datos.

### Inquietudes:

Cualquier pregunta que pueda tener sobre la investigación antes o luego que se realice la misma, no dude en contactarme: Mónica Pinos, [mapinoso@ucacue.edu.ec](mailto:mapinoso@ucacue.edu.ec). De la misma manera, Si necesita mayor información, puede contactarse con Mst. María Isabel Espinoza, directora de esta investigación, a: [isabel.espinoza @ucuenca.edu.ec](mailto:isabel.espinoza@ucuenca.edu.ec)

Yo, \_\_\_\_\_ (nombre completo) después de haber revisado y comprendido la información explicada a través de este instrumento, libremente decido ser partícipe de este estudio.

---

Firma del estudiante participante

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Firma del investigador



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## Appendix II: Authorization Letter



**CAMBRIDGE**  
UNIVERSITY PRESS

Quito, Julio 01 de 2016.

A quien corresponda:

Por medio de la presente autorizamos a **Monica Alexandra Pinos Ortiz** a utilizar VOCABULARY TEST del nivel 2 de la serie TOUCHSTONE para el trabajo de su tesis de grado.

La interesada puede hacer uso de este documento en la manera que estime conveniente.

Atentamente,

Juan Carlos Hidalgo  
Digital & ELT Specialist  
Cambridge University Press



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### Appendix III: Vocabulary Test

#### VOCABULARY TEST (Touchtone Level 2. Cambridge, 2016. Original Version).

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Class \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Choose the correct answer.

I have a small \_\_\_\_\_ in front of the sofa on top of the big carpet.

- a. cushion
- b. nightstand
- c. rug

I've got spots \_\_\_\_\_ on my nose.

- a. braces
- b. freckles
- c. braids

Margaret has \_\_\_\_\_ ears. She wears two earrings in each one.

- a. tall
- b. pierced
- c. skinny

He doesn't have any hair. He's \_\_\_\_\_.

- a. short
- b. bald
- c. muscular



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We're going to buy some new \_\_\_\_\_ for our sofa.

- a. speakers
- b. cushions
- c. lamps

When you have a cold, you usually sneeze a lot, and your \_\_\_\_\_ gets red.

head

nose

back

I use e-mail to \_\_\_\_\_ with my friends. We write one another often.

- a. keep in touch
- b. chat online
- c. do research

A: Hello, Is Sandra there?

B: No. There is nobody named Sandra here. I think you have \_\_\_\_\_.

- a. a bad connection
- b. a voice mail
- c. the wrong number

Some teens send \_\_\_\_\_ a lot. They're always writing to their friends.

- a, text messages



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b. video conferences

c. webcams

My brother wears \_\_\_\_\_. He needs them to read.

a. glasses

b. braids

c. braces

I'm cooking dinner on the \_\_\_\_\_?

a. lamp

b. sink

c. stove

I \_\_\_\_\_ hot coffee on my hand. And I burned myself.

a. spilled

b. dropped

c. carried

I \_\_\_\_\_ an old friend yesterday, but I didn't remember his name.

a. paid attention to

b. picked up

c. ran into





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I like to see the people I'm talking to online. That's why I like my\_\_\_\_\_.

- a. webcam
- b. phone
- c. TV

Your \_\_\_\_\_ are between your hips and your feet.

- a. knees
- b. fingers
- c. toes

Put the clean dishes back in the \_\_\_\_\_ over the sink.

- a. cabinets
- b. microwave
- c. dishwasher

She wears her hair in\_\_\_\_\_ tiny braids.

- a. a beard
- b. a ponytail
- c. cornrows

We need some new \_\_\_\_\_ for the window in the living room.

- a. curtains



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b. cushions

c. lamps

I hurt my \_\_\_\_\_ when I hit my foot on the dresser.

a. fingers

b. toes

c. chest

A: Did you break your elbow?

B: No, I just \_\_\_\_\_ it.

a. touched

b. sprained

c. deleted

I found my old friend's address and sent her an e-mail. I didn't \_\_\_\_\_ yet.

a. get a response

b. call back

c. leave a message

He's got \_\_\_\_\_ hair. It really stands up tall.

a. spiked

b. shaved

c. muscular



That man \_\_\_\_\_Brad Pitt. I thought he was Brad!

- a. looks totally different from
- b. looks like
- c. takes after

I'm sorry \_\_\_\_\_. Ms. Sato is out of the office. Do you want to \_\_\_\_\_?

- a. get a wrong number
- b. leave a message
- c. make a phone call

My company uses \_\_\_\_\_ a lot because it's good to both see and hear people.

- a. instant messaging
- b. video conferencing
- c. TV

A: Is your sister thin?

B: Yes, she is. She's \_\_\_\_\_!

- a. long
- b. skinny
- c. tall

A baseball hit me in the face, and I\_\_\_\_\_.



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- a. broke my hand
- b. got a black eye
- c. sprained my ankle

Eric and Sam are identical twins. They look \_\_\_\_\_.

- a. alike
- b. trendy
- c. totally different

Do you keep your shoes in your \_\_\_\_\_ or under your bed?

- a. nightstand
- b. closet
- c. dresser

I have a shower in my bathroom, but I don't have a \_\_\_\_\_?

- a. Sofa
- b. Bathtub
- c. Microwave

Your elbow is between your hand and your \_\_\_\_\_.

- a. Shoulder
- b. Chest
- c. Fingers



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When I was riding my sister's bike, I hit a tree and \_\_\_\_\_ her bike.

- a. forgot
- b. damaged
- c. lost

I was talking to John when I got \_\_\_\_\_. I have to call back.

- a. cut off
- b. switched off
- c. lost

A: Where's my wallet?

B: I think it's on the \_\_\_\_\_ in the bedroom.

- a. sofa
- b. nightstand
- c. mirror

A: Should I cook the potatoes in the oven?

B: Why don't you use the \_\_\_\_\_? It's faster.

- a. carpet
- b. mirror
- c. microwave



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When I fly, I never get \_\_\_\_\_. I can always sleep on the plane.

- a. a nap
- b. a headache
- c. jet lag

My classmate can't write today, she hurt her \_\_\_\_\_.

- a. wrist
- b. ankle
- c. neck

The \_\_\_\_\_ in the living room is very comfortable -everyone wants to sit in it

- a. cushions
- b. armchair
- c. bed

I was drinking coffee when I spilled it all over my shirt. How \_\_\_\_\_!

- a. nervous
- b. embarrassing
- c. cool

Alma \_\_\_\_\_ her mother. They're both short and pretty.

- a. looks totally different from
- b. is identical to
- c. takes after



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My hair isn't dark. It's \_\_\_\_\_.

- a. blond
- b. heavy
- c. curly

The fruit is on top of the \_\_\_\_\_ in the kitchen.

- a. faucet
- b. end table
- c. refrigerator

My grandmother prefers to use \_\_\_\_\_. She doesn't have a computer.

- a. e-mail
- b. regular mail
- c. spam

I can't hear you. We have a \_\_\_\_\_.

- a. wrong number
- b. bad mistake
- c. bad connection

Your \_\_\_\_\_ is between your head and shoulders

- a. nose
- b. neck
- c. chest

My teacher has long \_\_\_\_\_. They're always pink.



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- a. dreadlocks
- b. hair
- c. fingernails

I have to use the bathroom sink to get water. The \_\_\_\_\_ in the kitchen isn't working.

- a. stove
- b. refrigerator
- c. faucet

I don't get much \_\_\_\_\_. The program on my computer blocks some e-mail.

- a. text messaging
- b. spam
- c. regular mail





## Appendix IV: Student Survey

### Students' perceptions towards the TPRS method

Dear students I would like to ask you to help me by answering the questions below concerning your perspectives about the TPRS method. This is not a test; therefore, there are not right or wrong answers. Additionally, you do not have to write your name on it. I am interested in your personal opinion. Please give your answer sincerely as only this will ensure the success of the study.

1. I think the teaching method used in class creates a comfortable atmosphere for learning the English language.	5	4	3	2	1
--	---	---	---	---	---

Date \_\_\_\_\_ Age: \_\_\_\_\_

Gender: Male \_\_\_\_\_ Female \_\_\_\_\_

5 = strongly agree 4 = agree 3 = neutral 2 = disagree 1 = strongly disagree

Please circle one (and only one) number for each item, and please do not leave out any of them.



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2. I feel comfortable performing the body movements according to the vocabulary.	5	4	3	2	1
3. I feel comfortable contributing to the story creation.	5	4	3	2	1
4. I think storytelling helps me learn the English language.	5	4	3	2	1
5. I think that listening and trying to understand what is said in the English language helps me learn its vocabulary.	5	4	3	2	1
6. I feel that I understand most of the English words said in the classroom.	5	4	3	2	1
7. I feel that reading the stories created in class helps me learn the English vocabulary.	5	4	3	2	1
8. I think that the TPRS method helps me learn the English Vocabulary.	5	4	3	2	1

Adapted from Dukes (2012)

THANK YOU VERY MUCH - I REALLY APRECIATE YOUR COOPERATION!

## Appendix V: Student Survey (Spanish version)

### Encuesta Estudiantil

#### Percepciones de los estudiantes hacia el método La Enseñanza Eficiente a través de la lectura y la narración de historias (TPRS por sus siglas en inglés)

Estimado estudiante me gustaría que me ayude contestando las siguientes preguntas con respecto a sus percepciones sobre el método TPRS. Esto no es un examen, por lo que no hay respuestas correctas ni erróneas. Adicionalmente, no tiene que escribir su nombre en el cuestionario. Yo estoy interesada en su opinión personal. Por favor de su respuesta sinceramente ya que solamente esto asegurará el éxito de este estudio.

Fecha \_\_\_\_\_

Edad: \_\_\_\_\_

Género: Masculino \_\_\_\_\_ Femenino \_\_\_\_\_

5 = Completamente de acuerdo 4 = De acuerdo 3 = neutral 2 = En desacuerdo 1 = Completamente en desacuerdo

Por favor encierra un (y solamente un número) para cada ítem y por favor no dejes ninguno sin contestar.

1. Pienso que el método utilizado en clase crea un ambiente agradable para aprender inglés.	5	4	3	2	1
2. Me siento cómodo realizando los movimientos	5	4	3	2	1



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corporales en relación al vocabulario en inglés.					
3. Me siento cómodo contribuyendo a la creación de historias.	5	4	3	2	1
4. Pienso que la narración de historias me ayuda a aprender el idioma inglés.	5	4	3	2	1
5. Pienso que escuchar y tratar de entender lo que es dicho en inglés me ayuda a aprender el vocabulario.	5	4	3	2	1
6. Siento que entiendo la mayoría de palabras en inglés.	5	4	3	2	1
7. Siento que el leer las historias creadas en clase me ayuda a aprender el idioma.	5	4	3	2	1
8. Pienso que el método TPRS me ayuda a aprender el vocabulario en inglés.	5	4	3	2	1

Adaptado de Dukes (2012)

MUCHAS GRACIAS. ¡REALMENTE APRECIO SU COOPERACION!