



UNIVERSIDAD METROPOLITANA DE CIENCIAS DE LA EDUCACIÓN

FACULTAD DE HISTORIA, GEOGRAFÍA Y LETRAS

DEPARTAMENTO DE INGLÉS

THE BENEFITS OF STORYTELLING FOR VOCABULARY ACQUISITION
AND MOTIVATION AMONG 5TH GRADE EFL STUDENTS IN LA
FLORIDA, CHILE

TESIS PARA OPTAR AL GRADO DE MAGÍSTER EN LA ENSEÑANZA-APRENDIZAJE DEL INGLÉS
COMO LENGUA EXTRANJERA (TEFL)

Autor: Jorge F. Contreras

Profesor Guía: Edwin Abbet

SANTIAGO DE CHILE, JULIO DE 2020

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To my family: Jorge, my dad; Lily, my mom; and Leandro, my brother. I know you will open
this work and won't understand a single word.

To my friends (all of them). I know you'd understand many words from this work, but you
won't open it.

To my grandparents: Ida, Luis, and Teresa. I know they know. They always do, wherever they
are.

A mi familia: Jorge, mi papá; Lily, mi mamá; y Leandro, mi hermano, Sé que abrirán este
trabajo y no entenderán ninguna palabra.

A mis amigos (a todos). Sé que entenderían varias palabras de este trabajo, pero no lo abrirán

A mis abuelos: Ida, Luis y Teresa. Sé que ellos saben. Siempre saben, dondequiera que estén.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank various people for their contribution to this research. First of all, my family. Thanks to my mother, for her unconditional support during the development of this research; to my dad, for his knowledgeable advice and help during the analysis of data and results; and to my brother, for teaching and helping me enter data on Excel spreadsheets. Their contributions were vital for this investigation.

Also, I would like to thank Jaime Benavides Faúndez, former undergraduate classmate, for encouraging me to take this MA program and developing my storytelling interest into a relevant topic for my investigation. Likewise, I would like to thank Eduardo Barrientos Cisternas, former postgraduate classmate, for being a great support and companion during these academic years, and for his assistance with the final format of this document.

My special thanks are extended to the MA Professor's staff. I am particularly grateful for the assistance given by Professor Edwin Abbet during the elaboration of this thesis. I appreciate his support, help and commitment throughout this project; and also I would like to thank Professor Pablo Corvalán Reyes for believing in my capacities as a former UMCE student.

The support given by Colegio Nazaret de la Florida was essential for the execution of this work, hence, I want to thank Patricia Salinas Saavedra, academic coordinator, for her disposition and help to conduct my investigation; Diego Vila Becerra, teacher of English, for his willingness and enthusiasm during the storytelling interventions and his professional advice in the classroom; and Luis Serrano, for always receiving me with a smile and wishing me success in my interventions.

Last, but not least, I want to thank 5th grade students. Without their help and contribution during the storytelling interventions, this investigation would have been an unattainable goal to pursue.

Jorge F. Contreras

AGRADECIMIENTOS

Me gustaría agradecer a varias personas por su contribución a esta investigación. Primero que todo, a mi familia. Gracias a mi madre por su incondicional apoyo durante el desarrollo de este trabajo; a mi padre por sus sabios consejos y su ayuda durante el análisis de los datos y los resultados; y a mi hermano por enseñarme y ayudarme a ingresar los datos en planillas de Excel. Sus contribuciones fueron vitales para esta investigación.

También me gustaría agradecer a Jaime Benavides Faúndez, excompañero de pregrado, por animarme a tomar este Magíster y a transformar mi gusto por el cuentacuentos en un tema relevante para mi investigación. De la misma forma quisiera agradecer a Eduardo Barrientos Cisternas, excompañero de postgrado, por ser un gran apoyo y compañía durante estos años académicos y por su ayuda con el formato final de este documento.

Un reconocimiento muy especial al equipo de profesores de Magíster. Estoy muy agradecido por la asistencia entregada por el profesor Edwin Abbet durante la elaboración de esta tesis. Agradezco su apoyo, ayuda y compromiso a través de este proyecto; y también quisiera agradecer al profesor Pablo Corvalán Reyes por creer en mis capacidades como exestudiante de la UMCE.

El apoyo entregado por el Colegio Nazaret de la Florida fue esencial para la ejecución de este trabajo, por lo tanto, quisiera agradecer a Patricia Salinas Saavedra, coordinadora académica, por su disposición y ayuda para llevar a cabo la investigación; a Diego Vila Becerra, profesor de Inglés, por su disposición y entusiasmo durante las intervenciones de cuentacuentos y sus consejos profesionales dentro del aula; y al tío Luis Serrano, por siempre recibirme con una sonrisa y desearme éxito en mis intervenciones.

Por último, pero no menos importante, quiero agradecer a los estudiantes de 5to básico. Sin su ayuda y contribución durante las intervenciones de cuentacuentos, esta investigación hubiese sido un objetivo totalmente inalcanzable.

Jorge F. Contreras

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Abstract

This research project aims to establish the guidelines for an exploratory study in the EFL methodology field regarding storytelling as a teaching technique. As in Chile teaching English before 5th grade is not mandatory, there are certain differences in the language outcome between 5th graders that had some previous English courses with those who did not, and this affects their subsequent courses (Marzolo, 2015; Nikolov & Djigunovic, 2006). Hence, it is necessary to implement and adapt new techniques to teach vocabulary to students who have not been trained in the target language. The research evaluated 5th graders' vocabulary comprehension through the narrative-oriented storytelling technique and the Vocabulary Knowledge Rating sheet. Participants were two 5th grade groups from Colegio Nazaret de la Florida, whose levels of vocabulary knowledge were tested before and after the storytelling intervention. An interview with the teacher in charge of the English course was conducted to strengthen validity. Motivation in students was informed through a Likert-type scale model questionnaire after the implementation of the technique. Results demonstrated the effectiveness of the storytelling technique regarding vocabulary acquisition as well as motivation among students during the application of the technique.

Keywords: EFL methodology, storytelling technique, vocabulary, VKS.

Introduction

In a world that is continuously evolving through technological advances and different ways to think, it is difficult to find concepts that have not been digitalized. Regarding pedagogy, storytelling is one of a few concepts that maintains its artistic essence in terms of transmitting knowledge through the use of oral narration. Although the use of the storytelling technique has been present in the vast majority of classrooms worldwide (Sherman, 1979), some teachers neglect its implementation in ESL/EFL classrooms. The seeming complexity of the technique and the lack of professional training with short stories and oral narrative techniques affect teachers' and parents' motivation to use storytelling for educational purposes.

There have been a significant amount of studies that establish the benefits of the storytelling techniques, implemented by teachers and parents, with young children in their native language, such as the emphasis on creativity, imagination, and development of personal, social and cultural thinking (Bala, 2015; Nazir Atta-Alla, 2012; Spaulding, 2011; Harizaj & Hajrulla, 2017; Yang, 2009). Nevertheless, when implementing the storytelling technique in an EFL context, those benefits seem to be put aside, and interest shifts to the language aspects that are intended to be taught through the use of the technique. This is likely due to the curriculum emphasis on language skills and the comparative ease of measuring them, overshadowing the real benefits of storytelling. Thus, the English teacher's mission is to generate a suitable atmosphere for language knowledge without losing the focus on the benefits mentioned above, i.e., a balance between language acquisition and the advantages of storytelling.

Although most teachers are aware of this balance, they often rely on story reading rather than storytelling. They believe that to tell stories to children it is necessary to have a good voice, a good memory or acting skills, while the only required elements to succeed using this technique is "enthusiasm for the art of storytelling and love for the stories you tell" (Sherwin, 1979). When the teacher reads a story, he or she must pay attention to both the book and the students, and affording the proper level of attention to all of the children's reactions, interventions, and interruptions whilst simultaneously reading a successful story can be challenging. Also, when reading a story, the reader usually prompts the students with visual aids present in the book. In

this way, the emphasis on creativity and imagination is not entirely accomplished and, consequently, the motivational aspect may also be affected.

In Chile, formal teaching of English is not mandatory before 5th grade. To compensate for the lack of formal programs, the Ministry of Education offers some tentative proposals to guide teachers in the process of language teaching in those levels. There are a vast number of schools that include English courses before 5th grade, and even in preschool levels, especially in private and semi-private schools, whose students tend to be from upper and middle-class families. However, there is still a considerable amount of schools, particularly public, that decide against teaching English and start their formal English language teaching program from 5th grade. As a result, the differences between the students who start their English education in 5th grade and those who start earlier are worthy of analysis (Nikolov & Djigunovic, 2006). In that sense, it is necessary to adapt some techniques to teach English to students from late foreign language programs in a more effective way. As vocabulary is one of the fundamental pillars to learn a language (Hornby, 1995; Richards & Renandya, 2002, Asiya, 2017), storytelling could be considered a motivating technique to be adapted and used by teachers due to its effectiveness in the vocabulary instruction in an EFL classroom (Kirsh, 2016).

My personal aim as a teacher of English and a storyteller, beyond the objectives of this research, is to mix both areas in my future practice: to teach English through storytelling, which involves researching the storytelling technique, evaluating the students' prior vocabulary level, deciding on the criteria to select or create an appropriate story for students, and analysing the outcomes of the implementation of this technique. In this way, I expect to answer an essential personal question: Is it possible to teach English using storytelling? If so, how can I do that? By working on this research, I intend not only to answer my questions but also to contribute to the field of TEFL in Chile and establish a starting point of view for other researches based on the use of storytelling and its implementation in an EFL classroom in a Chilean context.

Literature Review

1. Total Physical Response

The diverse methodologies to teach English as a foreign or second language include the application of many techniques to support those approaches. The storytelling technique is highly related to Total Physical Response (TPR), a methodology popularized by James Asher (1977) as a counterproposal to the audiolingual practice present in the classroom those days (Cantoni, 1999). This methodology states that children would be able to understand spoken ideas and vocabulary if they perform the movements those words suggest. If children repeat those keywords and perform the action related to that word their retention capacity would also be increased (Pizarro, 2016).

The ‘scaffolding’ strategy (Vygotsky, 1986), which proposes the presentation of new vocabulary input by demonstrating the meaning through pictures or realia, is a pivotal point in TPR. Cantoni (1999) includes the example of the word ‘cat’: after teaching the word with the help of a toy or a picture, the word ‘cat’ becomes part of the general knowledge of students, and then that word is used as a scaffold for teaching modifiers such as ‘big’, ‘little’, ‘black’, or ‘white’. For this vocabulary to be acquired meaningfully, the teacher/storyteller must provide comprehensible input to students and, besides, this new vocabulary must be related to the previous knowledge of students (Krashen, 1985). To match this pre-existing knowledge with the storytelling technique, the teacher/storyteller uses his or her skills to present the new items by using sounds or the spatial representation of the word. In the case of the word ‘cat’, the teacher/storyteller meows and places his or her claw-shaped hands next to the face. Students would match the sound and the movements with the word and identify the word ‘cat’ with the real concept of the animal.

The concept of TPR-Storytelling or TPR-S was coined by Blaine Ray in 1997, when the storytelling technique became the central axis for teaching vocabulary by mixing the TPR theory with the SLA principles of Krashen and the benefits of the traditional narrative technique. Ray proposed that narrative stories were an ideal vehicle to meet the linguistic needs of students as well as their personal, and conceptual development (Bernal & García, 2010). Ray’s proposal

was a contribution to the study of the storytelling technique since it supported a great number of inquiries that agreed on the benefits of this narrative art.

2. Storytelling

Since stories are a fundamental part of the oral tradition of a society, the art of storytelling has been present during the continuous process of transformation of civilizations. Storytelling is regarded as one of the oldest ways of education and is utilized as an important pedagogical tool in formal education (Sherman, 1979).

The National Storytelling Network defines storytelling as “the interactive art of using words and actions to reveal the elements and images of a story while encouraging the listener’s imagination”. The general knowledge of the storytelling technique includes the use of words, vocalization, physical movements and/or gestures, and the most important characteristic: it presents a story, which is a description of people, plot, purpose, and places that the writer or speaker has invented in order to entertain people (Hornby, 1995).

Stories may adapt numerous formats and historical contexts, from Biblical parables used to teach religious themes, to myths and legends used to explain cultural features of a certain group of people and their culture. Fairy tales and folk stories, such as those popularized by the Brothers Grimm are a great example of how stories can be used as children’s tales and also as tools to teach discipline, using them as ‘warning tales’ in the case of *Little Red Riding Hood* and *Hansel and Gretel* (Dégh, 1979). In Chile, there is a rich variety of myths that are present in our collective consciousness, like Mapuche, Rapa Nui or Chilote mythology, and most of that awareness is due to the educational aspect of those stories and their inclusion in the Chilean curriculum. All in all, stories reveal universal truths about the world. Through stories we see how very different people share the same life experiences and how human nature transcends culture (Stoyle, n.d.).

Teachers rely on storytelling not only for the concrete knowledge it conveys but also for the social and motivational aspects that are present in the stories. Despite the overuse of digital devices and technology in current education, storytelling is still considered a great resource to enhance students’ imagination and creativity. This part of the literature review will focus on

eight topics: origins of storytelling, fundamentals of storytelling, motivation, personal development, linguistic development, conceptual development, storytelling in education and how to create stories for children.

2.1 Ancient Origins of Storytelling.

Storytelling has been present in the history of humanity since the first humans inhabited the planet. This ancient storytelling has served two primary functions: to entertain and to teach people how to become better human beings (Lawrence & Paige, 2016). The latter aspect bears the earliest knowledge of the ancient civilizations and their perceptions towards humankind and its relation between themselves and the world. Indigenous traditions of a great part of ancient cultures around the earth view the natural world as their home: no matter where they moved, people did not leave the earth behind and forget their origins. In that sense, and considering this powerful wisdom as one of the fundamental pillars of ancient cultures, stories conveyed this important insight about the circle of life and the view of the earth as an enormous home for all humankind (Lawrence & Paige, 2016). Campbell (1988) captures this notion of stories by saying

“...our life experiences on the purely physical plane will have resonances within our innermost being and reality, so that we actually feel the rapture of being alive” (p.3).

Together with the evolution of ancient cultures and later land invasions, some ideas built around the concept of ancient storytelling evolved as well, including the objective of its presence in time: preserving culture through oral history. Stories have been handed down over many generations through oral history and preserved as a survival tool for the people as a collective treasured experience. Thus, it is important to begin by treating stories with respect (Lawrence & Paige, 2016). Oral history is a way to keep old stories alive and make them prevail through time, especially since the arrival of the first invasions to native peoples. As a result of these multiple invasions in different periods of time, many of the old and beloved rituals that included stories, songs and dances were lost. Some of the preserved examples of ancient storytelling are keys to linking the past and present to a wiser future. And that is the purpose of storytelling: teaching people who they are and where they come from, so they can become all they were meant to be (Bruchac, 1996).

To exemplify the preservation of the ancient story it is necessary to mention The Epic of Gilgamesh, the great Sumerian/Babylonian poetic work which pre-dates Homer's writing by 1500 years and, therefore, stands as the oldest piece of epic world literature (Mark, 2018). Without the information provided by this piece of literature, a great amount of ancient history related to the Mesopotamian culture would still be unknown or misunderstood. Despite being considered the oldest existing piece of literature, it still has some modern interpretations that generate discussion among scholars and experts, like its relation with the aftermath of the destruction of World War II, the homo-erotic language used to describe the relation of Gilgamesh and Enkidu, and the transition from the original matriarchy of all humanity to modern patriarchy (Ziolkowski 2011). A similar situation occurs to *El Cantar del Mio Cid* or *Beowulf*, two epic stories that established the foundations for epic literature in their respective cultures, both influenced by the epic of Gilgamesh. At first, none of these stories was developed through writing, but they were the result of the oral narrative present at that time, which was later captured and expressed by written words. Taking that into account, it is interesting to know that the historical influence of these stories is because of the story itself, not for the person who compiled and wrote the original story. The process of storytelling allowed the story to transcend until it reached a point in which it links the past and the present, as it was mentioned before, to a wiser future, where other interpretations will be given according to the historical context.

Today, stories are told through multiple methods of illustrations, written word, and oral storytelling. The evolution of oral narration started in the early stages as ceremonial practices or rituals to become a method of discovering emotions, developing vocabulary, and strengthening knowledge. Storytelling nowadays is important in all cultures to not only hear, but also to tell (Van Pelt, 2018), and that insight establishes the future perception towards storytelling: it is never going to die because it is built into the human plan, humans come with it (Atwood, n.d)

2.2 Fundamentals of Storytelling.

Basically, the art of storytelling as an oral tradition is conceptualized as an activity in which the storyteller tells a story. On the one hand, the simplicity involved in the storytelling idea allows it to be widely used in conversations, presentations or even arguments with other

people. There are multiple examples of oral narration in everyday situations, like telling a person about something that happened to somebody else, explaining a situation that made a person arrive late to work, telling a joke, etc. On the other hand, the storytelling technique used as a formal educational or artistic tool involves certain characteristics that make this narrative art special and unique. Widdon (2016) lists a series of fundamentals of storytelling intended to separate the simple activity of telling a story from the oral narrative art, and also establishes an artistic perspective according to the nature of the oral tradition and its professional use. The most remarkable fundamentals are:

- Storytelling is not just oral. The audience is not just evaluating what the storyteller tells. They also analyse the appearance and movements of the storyteller even when he or she is in silence. Body language is essential to build a special atmosphere around the story, even subtle gestures can be very persuasive. Modest use of gestures can add meaning to the story, intensify the message, and create a stage upon which the story is played. The storyteller can use the hands to create props, to draw scenery, to increase the intensity of an emotion, to intentionally send an incongruent message, or just to have a bit of fun (Widdon, 2016).
- Facial expressions transcend borders and cultures. Widdon explains the nature of emotions and the physical and psychological impact on the human body. The communication of emotional content without using words becomes a pivotal element in the process of storytelling since just one facial expression can replace multiple sentences and speed up the story. Simmons (2009) relates this emotional phenomenon to the acting standpoint:

“Actors don’t study the anatomy of which muscles paint joy on their face. They study how to conjure up joy in their mind and body because they know that when they feel joy, it will show on their face.” (p.90)

Ekman’s findings (1970) provide evidence that there is a pancultural element in facial expressions for more than the six basic emotions: happiness, sadness, anger, fear, surprise and disgust, demonstrating that a wide diversity of emotions are expressed in similar ways in different cultures. Moreover, Izard (1994) established eight categories of emotions by adding ‘interest’ and ‘shyness’ to her study, which stated a relation between the innateness and universality of emotion expressions (IUH) and the semantic

attribution hypothesis (Russel, 1994). Nevertheless, Izard's conclusion explains the complex relation between an innate emotional reaction and the equivalence of emotion labels across cultures, therefore it is conceivable that a facial expression could be innate but not displayed in members of all cultures.

- Timing, pauses and silence. As well as facial expressions and body language, pauses and silence add variety to the story, often bringing more power than words. Sometimes pauses are needed to process the information of the story and think about possible outcomes, similar to what comedians do during their performances, giving the right amount of pauses to get the joke and laugh. This is the most outstanding difference between oral narration and audiobooks, in which the latter is not designed to give to the listener the appropriate time for thinking and processing what is being told, and the listener is forced to pause the recording every time that he or she needs. That is the same level of frustration the audience gets if the storyteller does not use pauses and silence wisely (Widdon, 2016)
- People, plot, purpose and place. Varga (2015) describes a storytelling method called MUSE, developed by Moreau (2015), in which stories speak to the heart in order to move the mind. These four concepts are the founding pillars upon which all good stories are based. Knowing the target audience beforehand is essential to establish an emotional connection among the listeners, the storyteller and the story; the plot is about creating a sequence of situations that creates in the audience the eagerness to see what happens at the end; the purpose is what moves the storyteller to tell a story, it might be inspirational, educational or a call to action; and the place reflects the general atmosphere in which the story is put into action. By taking these four factors into account during the storytelling process, it is expected to generate a meaningful outcome for the audience and also for the storyteller (Moreau, quoted in Varga, 2015).

This research, as well as the storytelling interventions at schools, are built around these fundamentals of storytelling, considering them key elements during the application of the technique and the subsequent analysis. Through this technique it is intended to cause a positive effect in the audience, being motivation one of the most important factors to consider.

2.3 Motivation.

According to Self-Determination Theory (Deci & Ryan, 1985), we can distinguish two basic types of motivation: (a) intrinsic motivation, which refers to performing an activity for personal rewards, and (b) extrinsic motivation, which refers to performing an activity in order to avoid a punishment or earn a reward. A great amount of modern storytelling papers are based on intrinsic motivation as one of the main objectives of the teaching-learning process in an ESL/EFL context (Wu, 2003; Nakata, 2009; Bekiari & Manoli, 2015). In a case study conducted in Hong Kong (Yang, 2009), the percentage of students strongly motivated to learn English was only about 16%. Taking this statistic into account, researchers implemented the storytelling technique to raise the students' interest in the subject. Surprisingly, after the use of short stories, 45% of the students in the research responded positively to the statement "*I like having English lessons*". To strengthen validity, researchers also quoted Wajnryb (2003): The story itself - its content, is interesting that can motivate students and make them involve in the class (p. 37).

Harizaj & Hajrulla (2017) mention the significant presence of motivation with the implementation of storytelling: "Through the use of storytelling learners are motivated, they develop communicative competence, critical thinking, listening and fluency" (p.25), though a more detailed perspective regarding motivation is required to support these statements. Bala (2015) indicates that storytelling is an effective tool to maintain language acquisition and highly motivate students. This statement is supported by Cooper (1993), who states that "Storytelling is an ideal method used by educators to draw children's attention to the story with enjoyment" (p. 21).

All this reviewed literature relates the concept of motivation to the attention students pay to this activity, which directly affects their personal development, i.e., their feelings, emotions, and imagination.

2.4 Personal Development.

An interesting discussion takes place in Bala (2015), in which the author mentions the importance of this method in the classroom since it directs learners to use their imaginations. As mentioned in the introduction of this research project, digitalization has been an important aspect of the storytelling evolution that has affected the creativity and imagination used by

students when experiencing stories with technological resources. In the book “*The Art of Storytelling*” Spaulding indicates that so much of modern life is mediated that many young people are becoming subconsciously dependent on outside stimulation and do not independently develop their imaginations in the way that previous generations did (2011, p. 95).

Stories enable children to develop their feelings and emotions by identifying with story characters and plots (Godwin & Perkins, quoted in Yang, 2009). This study concludes that as the learners activate their imagination during storytelling, stories offer them different patterns and thus they may be more productive in drilling. Likewise, Wright, quoted in Harizaj and Hajrulla (2017), establishes that learners relate stories to their own lives and imagination. Storytelling decreases the students’ affective filter and encourages their imagination and cooperation (Nazir Atta-Alla, 2012). All mentioned authors agree on the strength storytelling possesses regarding imagination and creativity over other pedagogical techniques. Short stories enhance the use of imagination in children as a way to connect ideas in their minds and transform them into logical thinking.

2.5 Linguistic Development.

As an ESL / EFL resource, storytelling is a great technique to teach some linguistic aspects according to the level of students. If the language used in a story is within the level of the students, it is a good source of comprehensible input for them. (Willis, 1996)

Stories can expose students to different language patterns, or parallelism (Yang, 2009), and new vocabulary can be learned in a natural context (Laine, 1997, quoted in Yang, 2009). Similarly, Huang (2006) claims that storytelling develops vocabulary learning, and that it is also an important element to present the grammatical and syntactic features in an interesting and meaningful context.

Nazir Atta-Alla (2012) presented a list of studies that demonstrated the different aspects fostered by storytelling. For example, Bishop & Kimball (2006) mention that the most important linguistic aspect presented through storytelling is vocabulary, while Neugebauer & Currie – Rubin (2009) placed listening comprehension as the most important skill to be mastered through

this technique. In a broad perspective, Harizaj & Hajrulla (2017) mentioned that storytelling is a technique that has the potential to help learners develop vocabulary and creative writing.

This tendency to consider vocabulary and grammatical patterns as the basis of the linguistic contribution of storytelling can also be observed in other older studies (Castro, 2010; Lwin, 2016; Abasi, 2014). Nevertheless, they all agree on the importance of choosing the appropriate story for the level of students. If the chosen stories contain complex vocabulary or abstract patterns, they will not accomplish linguistic development and it would also affect motivation in students. Language acquisition and motivation are two vital concepts that work together, considering that motivation is one of the main determinants of SLL/FLL achievement (Dörnyei, 1994).

2.6 Conceptual Development.

Godwin & Perkins (1998, quoted in Yang, 2009) explain that stories can convey new ideas and knowledge, which can facilitate children's conceptual development, and they are also introduced with cultural traditions and values of the society they live in. Besides, Nazir Atta-Alla (2012) mentions that

“...storytelling is effective in fostering diversity in the classroom of students from different cultural, religious and linguistic backgrounds. It enhances global networking by increasing awareness and understanding of cultural differences” (p. 4).

Regarding cultural background, Bala (2015) mentions that storytelling is an old teaching method that has conveyed cultural values to the new owner. The vast majority of storytelling studies point out the intrinsic nature of cultural traditions and social aspects present in storytelling. This is amply supported by Spaulding's *“The Art of Storytelling”* (2011):

Storytelling is a way of honouring the traditions that are being brought here by immigrants and teaching those already here about the values of these new cultures in a way that is respectful, not artificial, and enjoyable, not preachy. It is a joy (p.20).

In this respect, storytelling is regarded as a multi-subject technique, not only used to enhance linguistic aspects but also to raise and reinforce cultural awareness in students.

The analysed literature presents storytelling as a technique to motivate children and build on their interest and confidence in ESL / EFL classrooms. Despite the idea of linguistic development as the fundamental aspect for children learning a new language, these studies and researches discuss the relevance of creativity, imagination, motivation and personal development in children, if implemented properly. As a result, this traditional narrative performance is still used to preserve oral tradition and culture among children.

2.7 Storytelling in Education.

The elements of a great story in an educational context are imagination, believability in the veracity or fantasy of the story, and content. Regarding the content, it deals with the problem, resolution and moral of the story (Lawrence & Paige, 2016). Furthermore, a good story illustrates the importance of content knowledge, especially ancient cultures, myths and historical processes, and their transversal impact throughout history. By this means, storytelling functions as the vehicle to convey all that information and connect the past with the present and also the future, serving as an important instructive tool in formal education.

Tennant & Pogson (1995) pose Experimental Learning as one of the major theories in adult education, making linkages between new learning and prior experience. Telling, listening to or writing down stories help us make these connections, and by sharing stories, especially in an educational context, we create an ideal atmosphere for others to share their own stories and experiences (Tyler, 2009). In this way, storytelling is an effective teaching strategy for both adults and young learners, regarding adults for the important historical value, and regarding young learners for learning the general guidelines of a language that would be useful for sharing stories in the future.

Storytelling becomes an effective technique for teaching English to early foreign language classes. The storyteller provides the perfect atmosphere for young learners and provides listening experiences, while the audience perceives the message and creates personal mental images from the words and the gestures (Izzah & Mutiarani, 2015). Also, storytelling combined with TPR can motivate students and is beneficial to their learning of English vocabulary, sentence patterns, and understanding (Tugrul Mart, 2012). Comprehension, critical listening and

thinking skills are also developed by combining storytelling with questioning, imagery, inference and retelling (Miller & Pennycuff, 2008).

Several studies have stated the benefits of storytelling in young learners in an educational context (Isbell, 2002; Miller & Pennycuff, 2008; Izzah & Mutiarani, 2015), establishing its importance not only in the generation of language knowledge but also in the presentation of new concepts through oral narration, justifying the existence of this narrative art in the classroom, from the old expositive lessons used centuries ago to the modern methodologies currently used, like TPR-S. Lawrence and Paige (2016) conclude their study of the new directions for continuing education by connecting the oral narrative art as an educational tool to the essence of the human being:

“Storytelling preserves the best of adult education. We are all born with the innate ability to tell stories. Each of our lives is filled with a rich treasure of life experiences and life stories. We each carry like seeds a great many untold stories of who we are, where we came from, and what we are capable of enduring through our personal journeys. Through nurturing the art of storytelling, this seed of life can germinate and mature into an awakening of the heart, mind, and wiser emotional self. Storytelling is a gift that opens a path toward a greater good for all to share” (p.71).

2.8 Creating stories for Children.

The pivotal element to accomplish this investigation is the story. Although every element in the process of storytelling is important (the story, the storyteller, the audience and the atmosphere), it is completely necessary to focus especially on the creation of the story since all the language and cultural knowledge is to be delivered through words and sentences contained in the oral narration (Sherman, 1979). This section of the literature review expands on the different factors that should be considered while creating a story for children. Nevertheless, as this research is based on TEFL education, the perspective in relation to the language the stories are created must vary according to the objective of the research.

According to Wong (2019), to create a story for children requires a vivid imagination and the ability to empathize with the audience. The process of creation of a story considers brainstorming of appealing ideas to children, the inclusion of an interesting story arc and a moral. After the construction of the story, there should be a trial and error process. It is not an

immediate practice since the story can evolve and be adapted according to the reception of the audience and the storyteller's convictions.

Wong (2019) suggests some ideas to start with the creation of the story: the storyteller must identify the age group he or she is writing for. Sometimes, the storyteller uses memories from his or her childhood as inspiration for the story. After this, the storyteller must pick a theme or idea for the story, and make it fantastic and creative. The characters must be carefully selected and in synchrony with the story and the audience, and finally the storyteller plots the story out, in which he or she introduces the setting, the main character and the conflict. This plot to be effective must include an inciting incident, rising action, a dramatic climax, falling action and a resolution. Vonnegut (2004) explains the concept of the shape of the story based on two axes and the development of the course of the story according to those axes, and exemplifies the way in which most of the stories follow predetermined arcs. Having considered the concept of the design of the plot and the shape of the story, the storyteller is able to start creating a draft of the story.

In the drafting process, the storyteller should include literary devices, like rhymes, repetition, sensory language, alliteration, metaphor and simile, among others. It is a fun way to add rhythm to the writing and keep the story entertaining for children (Warner, 2018).

To polish the story it is necessary to read it aloud to notice if there is a complicated language for the level of the audience and to check if the story is easy to follow. One of the final steps is to receive feedback from the same age group the story is addressed to. It is necessary to tell the story to family members or other kids to perceive their reception and general opinions regarding not only the story, but the whole storytelling process (Wong, 2019).

After all the previous process, the storyteller is in conditions to tell the story and make it official. The final result should not be a rigid story meant to be told in the same context permanently. Stories are supposed to change, evolve and adapt, in line with different factors affecting the process, like the gender of students, time limitations or the storyteller's previously established objectives (Sherman, 1979).

3. Vocabulary Acquisition

Vocabulary is fundamental to the learning and teaching of a second language as it affords learners access to multiple forms of oral and written communication that includes literature, music, and content knowledge (Ketsman et. al, 2009). In the same way, grammar is taught and learned, practising language structures in the form of comprehensible input ensures the acquisition before language output, and for this input to be comprehensible and easy to access, it is necessary to internalize the vocabulary and store that information in long-term memory (Van Patten & Lee, 2003). There are multiple practices, based on modern theories and research, for teaching vocabulary that can be implemented to improve vocabulary retention and language proficiency. According to Ketsman et. al, (2009), the most remarkable practices are the following:

- Learning with multimedia. Duquette et. al., (1992) mention that when words are taught in different audiovisual contexts, such as animated pictures and images supported by text, students learn that vocabulary by retaining it more effectively. Words content is stored and accessible from long-term memory.
- Chunking language. The concept of “chunking” was first introduced by Miller in 1956, and it refers to a technique to break down large amounts of information into smaller chunks. This strategy improves the process of retention and compression of information in long-term memory. This compression of information activates the working memory and subsequently, the learner acquires and retains more information, especially vocabulary (Kalivoda, 1981).
- Promoting a deeper level of processing. When tasks require a higher level of cognitive processing and evaluation, the vocabulary involved in these tasks is generally better retained by learners (Keating, 2008). This hypothesis entails that the more attention and manipulations a word receives, the higher the chances of storing the vocabulary in long-term memory are (Craik & Lockhart, 1972).
- Authentic visuals and oral and written texts. As a definition, authentic materials can be perceived as
“...those written and oral communications produced by members of a language and culture group for members of the same language and culture group” (Galloway, 1998, p. 133).

Authentic materials are used to reflect the outside world into the classroom by replicating the culture in which the language is spoken. Storytelling, serving as a reflection of the real language used in a specific culture group, and therefore authentic material, contributes to the acquisition of new words. Stories can transport the audience beyond all boundaries of time, space, language, ethnicity, class and gender because narratives appeal to emotions and imagination (Wajnryb, 2003). The narratives used in stories (rhythm, repetition, rhymes, etc., captivate the learners, making them join in the process and repeat, chant, and participate in the telling of the story (Kent, 2004). Hereby, students learn language incidentally through unconscious processes. By combining the appealing nature of stories and the active contribution of the students, the process of memorization is facilitated together with academic success (Ellis, 1988).

4. Vocabulary/Knowledge Scale

One of the most recognized testing instruments in L2 research regarding receptive and productive vocabulary knowledge is Paribakht and Wesche's (1993) Vocabulary Knowledge Scale (VKS). The VKS has been extensively cited in a variety of research in different L2 contexts, including Spanish (Pulido, 2004) and German (Rott & Williams, 2003) giving the researchers a clear insight about the knowledge depth of each word.

Vocabulary acquisition and testing have been evolving since the first vocabulary evaluation tests were created, prioritizing the quantity of learned words or the frequency of words in a specified context rather than the quality of knowledge for each word. Anderson and Freebody (1981) define this dichotomy by establishing the relationship between breadth of knowledge, or the size of a learner's vocabulary, i.e., how many words are known; and depth of knowledge, or the quality of the learner's vocabulary, i.e., how well particular words are known (Read, 1993). In keeping with the aforementioned evolution, VKS focused especially in the depth of knowledge for each word, employing a 5-point scale item:

- I. I have never seen this word.
- II. I have seen this word before, but I don't know what it means.
- III. I have seen this word before, and I think it means _____. (synonym or translation)
- IV. I know this word. It means _____. (synonym or translation)

V. I can use this word in a sentence: _____.

(Paribakht & Wesche, 1993, p. 15)

This five-level description defines the different levels of acquisition of each independent word. These levels explain the progression of a previously established vocabulary teaching process, going from a total lack of awareness or recognition of the word to the ability to use the word in a sentence. (Paribakht & Wesche, 1993)

Seemingly, VKS applies to a restricted sample of students at almost any level of expertise and a limited number of target words. The objective is to assess initial vocabulary acquisition for each word from L2 reading or listening, and therefore evaluates the progress of words in memory, rather than the development of a participant's lexicon (Meara, quoted in Bruton, 2009).

Although VKS is one of the most widely used tests for vocabulary acquisition in modern studies, some researchers have criticized its validity, mentioning its limitation for word context and word breadth (Read, 1993; Burton, 2009; Batty et. al., 2012). Nevertheless, as this research is conducted in a context in which participants are experiencing their first approach to English language, the depth knowledge of words seems to be a fundamental element for students to start creating their own sentences; and the context for such words is going to be directly related to the story told during the storytelling intervention.

Research Problem and Questions

Despite the benefits of children being storytellers –love for language and encouragement to read, among other factors (Whaley, 2002) –, the art of storytelling is discussed placing the adult as the conveyor of the story. Some teachers do not feel confident telling stories to children, even though it has a strong connection with literacy, and as a result, the art of storytelling is not accomplished. Some teachers may offer regular picture-book readings but neglect storytelling. However, “when they listen to seasoned storytellers and practice their own stories, their ability to hold the attention of young audiences increases” (Machado, 1999). Storytellers do not need a good voice, dramatic training, an appealing look or good memory; the only requirements are enthusiasm for the art of storytelling and love for the stories to tell (Sherman, 1979). If these factors are accomplished, with a little practice, anyone should be able to become a storyteller and effectively perform this activity.

Taking these preferences into account, Chilean teachers tend to rely on other methodological techniques to teach vocabulary, like visual stimuli, contextualization, word clusters, chunking, etc. (Seinfert, n.d; Ketsman et. al., 2009). This Chilean context establishes mandatory English lessons in the curriculum from 5th grade, making the teaching of English in the previous levels optional. Nevertheless, a great number of schools still teach English from 5th grade regardless of the tentative proposals from the Ministry of Education to teach English at those levels. As a result, the foreign language knowledge of those untrained 5th-grade students is lower than the language knowledge of students who had formal teaching of English in previous years (Marzolo, 2015; Nikolov & Djigunovic, 2006).

Teachers should include diverse techniques to teach vocabulary more effectively (Ketsman et. al, 2009), and storytelling has proved to be an interesting and meaningful option to convey knowledge as well as fostering personal, cultural and conceptual development. According to the purpose of the present research project, the following research question was aimed to be answered:

- How does the technique of Storytelling benefit 5th graders English learning?

In a more specific aspect, as vocabulary is one of the fundamental features of learning a new language, the following subsidiary research question reflects the vocabulary acquisition process and its relation to the storytelling technique:

- Is vocabulary acquisition facilitated by the use of storytelling in the classroom?

Finally, as storytelling is my area of practice, it is indispensable to know the students' perception concerning the storytelling technique. According to that perception, this last subsidiary question is also aimed to evaluate students' motivation and thoughts towards the narrative intervention:

- Are 5th graders motivated to learn English through storytelling?

All these questions are meant to be answered by the end of this research. Moreover, further investigations and research questions are expected to be formulated taking this research as a possible reference in the field of ESL/EFL methodology.

Methodology

This investigation was projected to obtain data from a mixed-method design (qualitative and quantitative) according to the nature of the sample and the instruments to collect data that will be implemented during the research. Also, the present research entails an exploratory nature since it is the first approach to the problem. There have been different studies involving storytelling in ESL/EFL but in different contexts, in which the sample belongs to other cultures with different levels of proficiency in the target language and different aspects of the language to be acquired.

Also, this research project adopted a quasi-experimental design, in which there were two groups: experimental and control group, and there were pre and post-tests to measure the level of vocabulary knowledge in both groups.

1. Participants

The sample of this study belonged to Colegio Nazaret de la Florida, a semi-private school under the aegis of the Archdiocese of Santiago, a corporation that supports around 20 schools in Santiago de Chile. In this school, English is not taught before 5th grade due to a decision from the Archdiocese, and these students have their first approach to the English language when they are around 10 or 11 years old. For this reason, 5th A and 5th B were the subjects of study to analyse how storytelling might benefit their vocabulary learning processing. 5th A was composed of 45 students, 22 boys and 23 girls, whereas 5th B was composed of 45 students, 27 boys and 18 girls.

La Florida commune is a residential area (the third most populated commune in the country) and its inhabitants are mostly members of a new middle to upper-middle class. Nazaret de la Florida School is located in the southern side of the commune, next to Puente Alto, where the population density is high. Although La Florida is known for having a great number of schools, not all families are able to enrol their children to semi-private or private schools and they end up assisting to public school, which are related to a lower educational level. Nevertheless, the results of standardized tests issued at Nazaret de la Florida School are low if compared to other schools with the same socioeconomic level (Agencia de Calidad de la

Educación, 2018). Regardless of the results, families are willing to enrol their children in this school due to the educational project and its Catholic teachings.

For this study, students were selected as a whole group, regardless of their level of English or any other factor. To meet ethical requirements, students were asked if they wanted to be part of this process. Likewise, a note in Spanish was sent to their parents to inform about the nature of this process and to ask for their permission to allow their children to participate in the application of the storytelling technique and the instruments of evaluation. Their anonymity and confidentiality were protected during the whole process and also in other future inquiry instances.

2. Procedure

Firstly, both groups were given a pre-test to measure their initial level of English before the creation of stories and the application of the technique. During the first 10 minutes of the session (eight sessions in total), the students from the experimental group were part of the application of the storytelling technique. As it is based on oral narration, the storyteller narrated the story without any visual prompt or technological aid. It was a process in which the main components were (a) the storyteller, the conveyor of the story; (b) the children, the receivers of the story; (c) the story, a mixture of words, sounds and movements that deliver the knowledge and (d) the atmosphere, which was settled to embrace this process.

For this specific purpose, there were two stories. Each story was told in four sessions, with 8 sessions in total. The stories were created especially for this investigation by the researcher/storyteller according to the initial vocabulary knowledge (measured previously by the pre-test) and the 5th-grade curriculum from the Ministry of Education. These two stories presented the vocabulary contemplated in the 4th unit, called “What’s the weather like?” (retrieved from www.curriculimnacional.cl), which includes expressions like ‘happy new year, happy Christmas’, and the thematic vocabulary: clothes and weather. As these are short stories, the expected duration was no more than six minutes.

After the implementation of the storytelling technique to present the new vocabulary, the teacher of English in charge of the subject continued with his regular lessons, which included

the vocabulary presented through the storytelling technique and the rest of the contents of Unit 4. In both control and experimental groups, the teacher followed the same procedure to teach and evaluate. After the eight sessions, a post-test was given to the students to measure the vocabulary knowledge acquired by the students in the experimental group, who were benefitted by the implementation of the technique and the regular English class, and the control group, who just experienced the regular English lesson.

3. Instruments to Collect Data

3.1 Pre and post-tests.

To estimate the previous vocabulary knowledge of students as well as the knowledge they acquired after the execution of the technique, this research implemented the Vocabulary Knowledge Rating Sheet (VKS), created by Paribakht & Wesche (1993), and adapted by Kinsella & Feldman, (2004). VKS can be integrated into the lesson to pre-assess students' knowledge of key vocabulary from a specific unit and the acquired knowledge during an established process. To use VKS during explicit vocabulary instruction, the teacher presents a word or list of words. In this case, words were taken from the stories told by the storyteller. For each word, the students individually rated their prior knowledge of the word on a scale from 1 to 4:

- 1) I've never seen this word before.
- 2) I've seen this word before, but I don't know what it means.
- 3) I know what this word means, but I'm not sure how to use it.
- 4) I know what this word means and I can use it in a sentence.

After the students' self-assessment, they wrote their perception of the word on the vocabulary rating sheet. Throughout the lesson, the teacher used different techniques to teach the word and meaning by pronouncing, explaining through examples, and providing the context and common usage of the words, in this case, through storytelling and the regular lesson given by the teacher of English. At the end of the lesson, students re-evaluated their word knowledge using VKS and the 4-point scale. (Tappe, n.d). It is important to mention that these tests, as well

as the other instruments to collect data, were issued and modified in Spanish, excluding the list of words.

Words	1. I've never seen this word before	2. I've seen this word before, but I don't know what it means.	3. I know what this word means, but I'm not sure how to use it.	4. I know what this word means and I can use it in a sentence.
Word 1				
Word 2				
Word 3				

Fig. 1: Example of VKS

3.2 Interview.

At the end of the storytelling session, a semi-structured interview with the teacher of both groups was held. The questions revolved around issues of performance to get an insight of the teacher's viewpoint. It is worth to mention that the teacher was also in charge of teaching the vocabulary present in Unit 4, so the results were also influenced by his instruction. This qualitative data revealed the teacher's perception of the vocabulary presented in the narrative technique and the way students received and acquired that vocabulary and the differences during the lesson between the experimental and control group.

3.3 Questionnaire on Motivation

Storytelling has been found to motivate students (Cooper, 1993). Therefore, it was essential to measure the motivation students demonstrate towards this new technique because story enactment involves the child, an involved child is an interested child, and an interested child will learn, apart from fulfilling oral, listening and comprehension skills. (McMaster, quoted in Whaley, 2002)

Therefore, students were given a questionnaire with some questions regarding motivation. This questionnaire was based on a Likert-type scale model, which is the most widely used approach to scaling responses in survey research.

Some of the statements were:

- I prefer to start the class with the teacher telling a story rather than the normal class.
- I prefer the teacher telling a story rather than reading a story.
- I want to continue listening to stories during the English Lesson.

Students will indicate their preferences (1. I strongly agree, 2. I agree, 3. Neither agree nor disagree, 4. I disagree, 5. I strongly disagree). The statements and the preferences of the questionnaire will be delivered in Spanish.

Statement	1. I strongly agree.	2. I agree.	3. Neither agree nor disagree.	4. I disagree.	5. I strongly disagree.
I prefer to start the class with the teacher telling a story rather than the normal class.					
I prefer the teacher telling a story rather than reading a story.					
I want to continue listening to stories during the English Lesson.					

(Fig 2: Example of the questionnaire on Motivation)

Through this data, I was able to evaluate students' emotional perception towards the storytelling technique and also it demonstrated if they felt the same joy as the storyteller feels when telling a story.

The quantitative information obtained from the pre and post-tests, as well as the questionnaire on motivation, indicated the hard data of the research in the form of numbers and graphic amounts, whereas the qualitative information obtained from the interview with the

English teacher was used to support the quantitative results to understand the pedagogical nature of the expected variations from the pre to the post-test.

In that way, with all the collected data and the subsequent analysis, I expected to have enough information to properly answer the research questions aforementioned.

Implementation

1. Note to the parents

As mentioned in the Methodology section, for this research to meet ethical requirements, students' parents were asked if they allowed their pupils to be part of this process. To attain said objective, a note to the parents in Spanish was delivered in both the control group (5th A) and the experimental one (5th B) to ask for the required authorization to accomplish this inquiry. The note presented the main outline and objectives of the research, as well as the information of the researcher and the stages of the investigation.

Regarding the ethical aspect of the investigation, the note mentioned that all the information gathered through the use of the instruments to collect data will be strictly anonymous and private, and also this evidence will just be used for scientific purposes. Likewise, the results will present the group perspective of the research, that is, no information will be individualized. Finally, the note emphasized the responsibility of the researcher as the custodian of the information, who was in charge of the data processing, the protection of the information and its appropriate analysis.

At first, the note was written in two pages. For extension reasons, the note had to be reduced to a single page. The two-page note and the single-page note are included in the Appendix section, at the end of this research.

Before the application of the pre-test, all notes were brought back to the researcher with the corresponding authorization and signature. All ninety students' parents (45 students per class) agreed on the execution of the research.

2. Pre-test and post-test design

To have a clear perception of the list of words that were included in the VKS pre and post-tests, it is necessary to refer to the Chilean National Curriculum and the English language programme (Ministry of Education, 2012). In it, the general description of the units, the contents, general and specific objectives and some general teaching suggestions, among other aspects, are presented. The English language programme is composed of 4 units: *My world*, *The*

place where I live, What we eat, and What's the weather like?, ideally distributed two per semester. According to the point in the year this research was conducted (October and November), the corresponding unit is 4: *What's the weather like?*.

The purpose of this course, from a broad perspective, is that students learn the language and use it as a tool to get along in simple communicative situations of diverse nature. This 5th - grade programme focuses on the four language skills according to the communicative approach for students to include previous knowledge to express themselves in an everyday situation. Apart from the skills and content knowledge, this programme considers attitudes that contribute to the integral development of the student.

On the subject of vocabulary, the 4th unit addresses words related to weather and clothes, in addition to certain expressions, such as *happy birthday, happy New Year, Merry Christmas*. The outline of the suggested vocabulary in the unit is presented as follows:

- Weather: sunny, cloudy, rainy, windy, warm, cold.
- Clothing: boots, sandals, t-shirt, shorts, pants, blouse, shirt, coat, socks, sweater, skirt, dress, wear.
- Seasons of the year: summer, winter, fall, spring.
- Antonyms: hot-cold, day-night, sunny-cloudy.
- Everyday expressions: Happy birthday, Happy New Year; Merry Christmas, put on.

In line with the presented vocabulary, a set of 14 words were selected and included in the VKS test, for the pre and post-test instances. Those words are described in this manner:

1. Sunny: Adjective. (1) With a lot of bright light from the sun. (2) Cheerful and happy.
2. Rainy: Adjective. (1) Having or bringing a lot of rain.
3. Cold: Adjective. *Low temperature*. (1) Having a lower than usual temperature; having a temperature lower than the human body. *Food/drink*. (2) Not heated, cooled after being cooked.
4. Windy: Adjective. (1) *Of weather*. With a lot of wind. *Of a place*. Getting a lot of wind.

5. Boots: Noun. (1) A strong shoe that covers the foot and ankle and often the lower part of the leg.
6. Coat: Noun. (1) A piece of outdoor clothing that is worn over other clothes to keep warm or dry. Coats have sleeves and may be long or short. (2) A jacket that is worn as part of a suit.
7. Shirt: Noun. (1) A piece of clothing (usually for men), worn on the upper part of the body, made of light cloth, with sleeves and usually with a collar and buttons down the front.
8. Pants: Noun. (1) Trousers. A piece of clothing that covers the body from the waist down and is divided into two parts to cover each leg separately.
9. Shorts: Noun (1) Short trousers/pants that end above or at the knee.
10. Shoes: Noun. *From Shoe*. (1) One of a pair of outer coverings for the feet, usually made of leather or plastic.
11. Summer: Noun (1) The warmest season of the year, coming between spring and autumn/fall.
12. Winter: Noun. (1) The coldest season of the year, between autumn/fall and spring.
13. Christmas: Noun. (1) 25 December, the day when Christians celebrate the birth of Christ. (2) The period that includes Christmas Day and the days close to it.
14. Wear: Verb. *Clothing/decoration*. (1) To have something on your body as a piece of clothing, a decoration, etc.

(Hornby's Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary, 1995)

After finishing the design of the VKS test, it was given to both 5th A and B (45 students per group) as the pre-test to discover their initial vocabulary knowledge and also their eventual improvements at the end of the research.

3. Creation of the first story

Considering all the information discussed in the literature review, section "Creating stories for Children", the first step was to identify the age of the audience. In this case, 5th-grade students are around ten years old, and their level of English is elementary since that year was their first

approach to the English language, that is to say, the level of the language used in the story was elementary as well to accomplish a general understanding.

After the identification of the audience, a process of brainstorming took place, in which several ideas about the plot and the characters of the story were pointed out. The development of the creation of the story revolved around the list of words that were to be included, which were related to weather and clothes. Following this line, and with the help of the imagination and creativity from the researcher, a draft about weather and Christmas was created (see Appendix section).

The story took place in Christmas time and included Santa Claus as the main character, which was relatable to the children's own perception of the character, as this is one of the most recognizable subjects during Christmas. The main idea of the inclusion of Santa Claus in the story was the possibility for him to be portrayed using his unmistakable laughter and his deep voice, so this could create the mental picture of the character in the mind of the children in the audience. Similarly, the vocabulary from the list of words was meant to be introduced using the TPR methodology, so students were able to relate the presented vocabulary with a physical action or sound.

The structure of the story was built around the presentation of vocabulary, but it also included some literary devices, like repetition and sensory language. Apart from the special emphasis on the vocabulary, this story was created to contrast the weather in the North Pole and in Santiago de Chile, and the impact this variation of weather entails. Finally, a special moral about responsibility concerning important duties can be distinguished in Santa Claus actions, calling his friend to save Christmas.

After the official presentation of the story, it was previously told to some children (neither from control nor experimental groups) as a warm-up show to check their general reactions while listening to the story. After some minimal changes, the story was finished and ready to be presented at the beginning of the English lesson.

4. Implementation of the storytelling technique

After the creation of the story, it was presented to the experimental group. The introduction of the activity was given in Spanish and the story was told completely in English, using an appropriate pace and clear pronunciation for students to be able to understand most of the speech.

During the first sessions, the storyteller put special emphasis on the vocabulary using the TPR-S technique, so students could relate the movement, a facial expression or a sound to a specific word. For example, for the word “coat”, the storyteller performed the movement a person does when putting a coat on, giving the idea of wearing a large and warm piece of clothing. For the word “cold”, the storyteller performed the action of shiver, the human reaction when a person is freezing, also adding some changes to the voice to illustrate the physical process of being cold. The TPR-S methodology was used with all the words of the vocabulary that were present in the story, and also with other complementary words that were not included in the list of vocabulary, like “The North Pole”, “Santa Claus” or “windy”.

In the following sessions, the TPR-S methodology had some modifications: the storyteller acted on the word or the sound that represented that word, and students indicated the corresponding word to complete the idea. In that way, as stated in the literature review, students matched the sound and the movements with the word and associated those words to the real concept of the piece of clothing, verb or adjective. With the help of the storyteller, students were able to understand a major part of the story, in comparison with the first storytelling sessions.

5. Creation of the second story

During the first storytelling interventions, the second story was created according to the guidelines from the literature review and the previous procedures from the first story. As the audience was already identified, the process of brainstorming took place, in which several ideas and concepts were discussed, such as the characters and the plot of the story.

This second story is about a boy who wanted to go outside his house and play, but the weather is so intense that his desire to play was unsuccessful. To attain the synchrony with the audience, the gender of the main character is masculine since out of 45 students in the group,

27 of them are boys. The name of the character was chosen randomly, and his age reflected the same age of the audience (10 – 11 years old).

The draft of the story was improved with the inclusion of literary devices (repetition, sensory language and simile) and a moral that indicated that sometimes a person is unable to get everything she or he desired, and there is no use to get frustrated, after all, tomorrow is a new day (see the second story in the Appendix section). As well as in the first story, this one also emphasized the presentation of the vocabulary included in the list of words, especially the ones that were not present in the first story.

Before the official presentation during the English lesson, the draft was presented to an external group of children, whose reactions and responses were analysed to generate minimal changes to the story. After a few modifications, the second story was ready to be told to the experimental group.

6. Implementation of the storytelling technique (2nd story)

The execution of the first storytelling process established some guidelines and models that were replicated in the second storytelling intervention, regarding the emphasis on the words from the vocabulary and the TPR-S methodology used to introduce new words in the story.

As well as in the first storytelling process, the second one also employed the TPR-S methodology to present the new vocabulary to students. For example, the storyteller waved his hands from side to side making windy noises to illustrate the word “hurricane”, or portrayed a happy or angry face when he wanted to explain the main character’s mood. In the following sessions, the storyteller performed the movements or sounds of words and the audience named the words to complete the sentence. This process was more effective than the first one due to the previous experience from the first story: students were more eager to say the words out loud with no fear. At the end of the storytelling sessions, students acknowledged the assimilation of a major part of the speech, in comparison with the first storytelling sessions.

7. Application of the Post-test and motivation questionnaire

The VKS post-test was given to students after the storytelling technique implementation. It was the same VKS test that was used as a pre-test since the aim of the research is to evaluate vocabulary acquisition from a list of words, therefore, the same test must be given to students to evaluate their eventual vocabulary knowledge increase. As the students were already familiar with the test, there was no major problem during the application of the test.

Immediately after the VKS post-test, the questionnaire on motivation (in Spanish) was also given to students. This questionnaire was created according to the Likert-type scale model, which is the most widely used approach to scaling responses in survey research (See Appendix section). The statements used in this questionnaire reflected the main aspects of the storytelling technique and its impact on students:

- I. I prefer to start the lesson with a story told by the teacher.
- II. I prefer the teacher telling a story rather than reading a story.
- III. I would like to continue listening to stories during English lessons.
- IV. Listening to stories in English motivated me to continue learning the language.
- V. I would like to have the ability to tell stories, either in English or Spanish.
- VI. I would like to experience the storytelling technique in other subjects.

These indicators were created to cover the students' perception of the storytelling and the language acquisition process, including their interest in the ability to tell stories and the connection of the technique to other subjects.

The application of the questionnaire on motivation needed major guidance from the researcher since it was the first time the students faced a Likert model. Nevertheless, the questionnaire process suffered no difficulties and students were able to complete it successfully.

8. Interview

At the end of the storytelling process and the post-test and questionnaire application, a semi-structured interview with the teacher of both groups was held.

The teacher in charge of the English subject has 12 years of experience working with children at the same school, Nazaret de la Florida. At the beginning of his teaching career, he

was in charge of little children's courses, from 1st to 4th grade. In 2018, the school started working under the aegis of the Archdiocese of Santiago, which decided not to teach English before 5th grade. Since then, the English teacher started teaching from 5th to 8th grade, adapting his methodologies and techniques to the new curricular contents from the Ministry of Education. Since 5th grade is the first approach to face the English subject, students are not very familiar with the teacher. Nevertheless, the teacher's easy going and enjoyable personality draws the students' attention, making him one of the most admired and respected teachers at the school.

The questions revolved around issues of performance to get an insight into the teacher's viewpoint. This interview, which took place after the last English session, revealed the teacher's procedures during the English class in both groups. As it was a semi-structured interview, an open discussion on the general topic introduced by the questions was carried out. The questions were the following:

- I. What method or technique did you use to teach the thematic vocabulary from the unit? Do you think that method worked effectively?
- II. What was the general reaction from students when facing the methods or techniques you used to teach vocabulary during the lesson?

With these questions, the way in which the teacher presented and worked with the vocabulary was discussed. The teacher explained in detail all the techniques and methodologies used in his lesson to teach the thematic vocabulary, the exercises and the evaluation procedures used to assess vocabulary knowledge. In addition, we compared the results of the teaching and learning process between the two groups, considering the different schedules and their learning styles. With this qualitative information, plus all the quantitative results from the pre and post-test, and the results from the questionnaire on motivation, the process of analysis of data took place and consequently, the research questions obtained relevant answers.

Analysis of the Results and Discussion

The results of the VKS pre and post-tests signalled the previous knowledge of both control and experimental groups concerning the thematic vocabulary from Unit 4 and their improvements after the implementation of the storytelling technique. Students had to indicate their knowledge about a list of 14 words by choosing one of the following options:

- 1) I've never seen this word before.
- 2) I've seen this word before, but I don't know what it means.
- 3) I know what this word means, but I'm not sure how to use it.
- 4) I know what this word means and I can use it in a sentence.

All tests were analysed as a whole, and the number of answers from all tests was sorted among these four options. In that way, the percentage of the list of known, partially known or unknown words was exposed. As an example, let us consider a group of just five students whose answers are sorted in the following way:

1. I've never heard this word before	2. I've seen this word before, but I don't know what it means.	3. I know what this word means, but I'm not sure how to use it.	4. I know what this word means and I can use it in a sentence.	Total of answers (must be equal to the number of words)
4	4	3	3	14
5	5	3	1	14
8	5	0	1	14
6	5	1	2	14
9	2	3	0	14
Total: 32	Total: 21	Total: 10	Total: 7	Total: 70

(Fig 3: Example of the analysis of VKS test)

Considering the total amount of answers (70, that equals 100%) and the answers sorted among the different options, we can conclude that:

- The percentage of words from the list that this group have never seen before is 45%
- The percentage of words from the list that this group have seen before, but do not know what they mean is 30%

- The percentage of words from the list that this group knows what they mean, but they are not sure how to use it is 14%
- The percentage of words from the list that this group identifies and also knows how to use them in sentences is 10%

Out of this data, a possible discussion that would come about is on the deficiencies of this group when identifying the words from the vocabulary, and the potential desire to improve these results in the future post-test after the implementation of the technique.

It is worth to mention that the results of each group exhibit the average of all test taken in both control and experimental group. Therefore, we consider the result of each group as if it was an individual outcome made up by every single test.

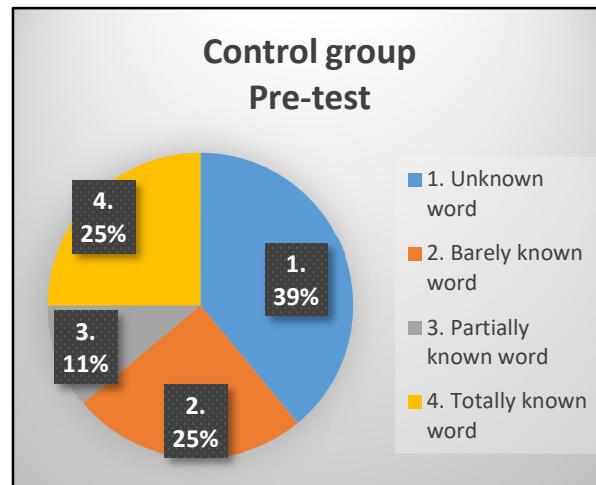
The analysis of the results from the VKS pre and post-test was executed according to the aforesaid methods, and the discussion of the results will occur immediately after the presentation of the analysis. Some results will be discussed in isolation and others will be discussed while comparing the two groups' outcomes.

The classification of the students' answers was labelled into the four aforementioned statements, which from now on will be referred as 1, 2, 3 and 4, according to the number of each statement:

1. Unknown word
2. Barely known word
3. Partially known words
4. Totally known word

Out of the total of tests given in each class, some tests were excluded from the analysis because more than one option was marked in just one word or some words were not given any option. Nevertheless, the excluded tests did not exceed 26%, which did not represent a substantial impact on the final results of the research. The individual sorting of every test can be found in the appendix section.

1. Pre-test



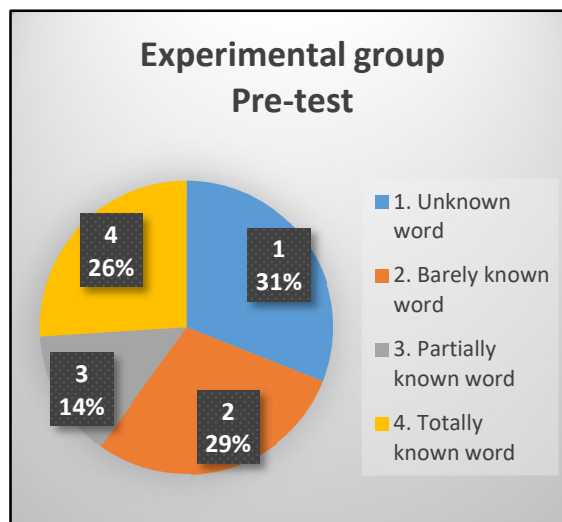
Analysed tests: 29

Excluded tests: 12

Total of tests: 41

(Fig. 4: Control group Pre-test chart)

The results of the pre-test issued to the control group demonstrate that this group is not familiar with 64% of the given words (option 1 and 2). On the other hand, the group has a general knowledge of 36% of the words (option 3 and 4). These were expected results considering that this is the first approach to the vocabulary for a major part of the group, but some words were still recognizable for certain students and some meanings could be extrapolated from other contexts.



Analysed tests: 38

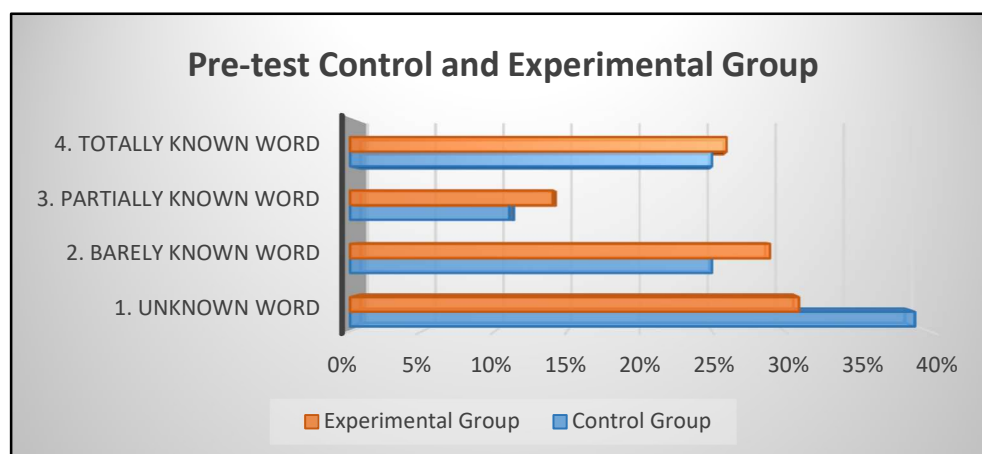
Excluded tests: 2

Total of tests: 40

(Fig. 5: Experimental group Pre-test chart)

The results of the pre-test given to the experimental group evidence that 60% of the meanings from the list of words were unknown (options 1 and 2). Likewise, 40% of the words

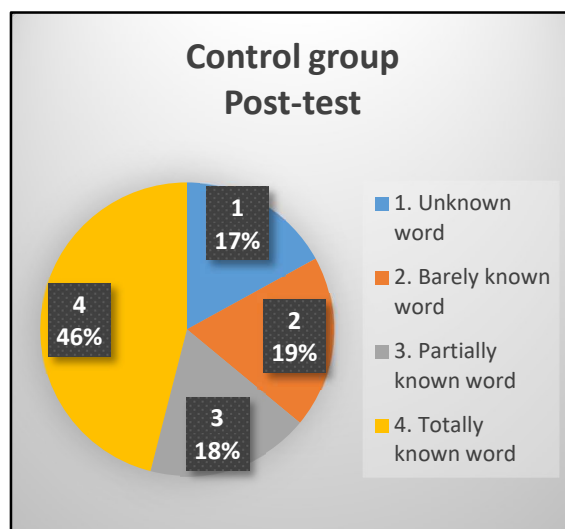
were known to some degree by students (options 3 and 4). As in the control group, some words were completely known (26%), revealing the different entry levels of students and their previous knowledge.



(Fig. 6: Pre-test Control and Experimental group graph)

In line with the information presented in the previous charts, we conclude that both experimental and control groups shared consistent resemblances in terms of the percentages of known and unknown words from the vocabulary. This means that both groups were suitable for an investigative comparison, according to the requirements of this research, due to the similarities in their initial vocabulary knowledge level.

2. Post-tests



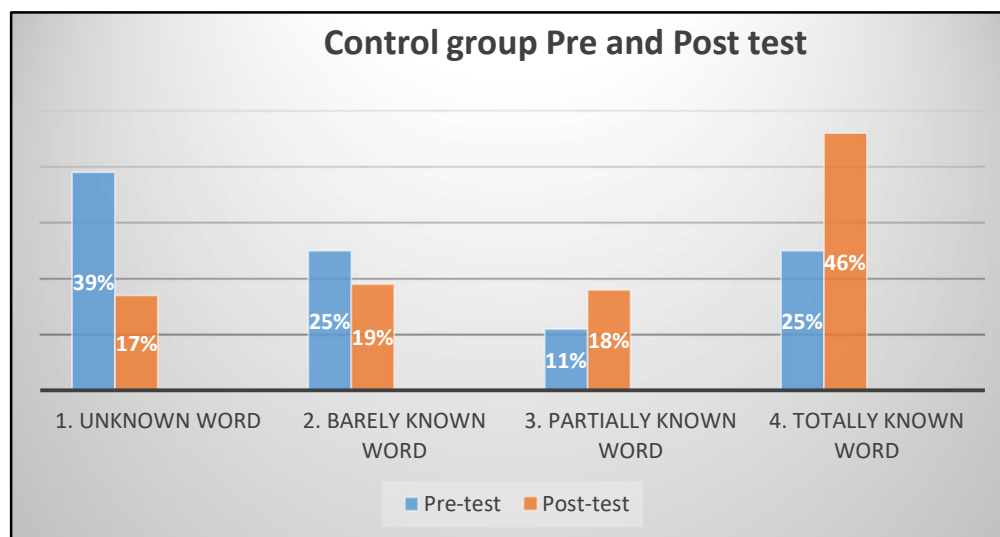
Analysed tests: 32

Excluded tests: 4

Total of tests: 36

(Fig. 7: Control group Post-test chart)

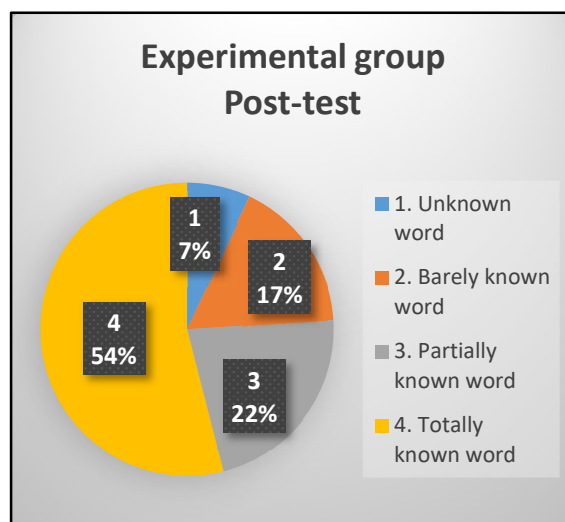
After the instruction of the teacher according to the program and planning of Unit 4, students were able to improve their vocabulary knowledge. The percentage of completely known words increased by 21% compared with the pre-test (option 1). Similarly, the percentage of completely unknown words (option 4) decreased significantly by 22%. The total percentage of relatively known words reached 64% (options 3 and 4), evidencing the appropriateness of the instruction facilitated by the teacher during the English lesson.



(Fig. 8: Control group Pre and post-test graph)

This graph shows the contrast between the pre and post-test in the control group, establishing a natural relationship between options 1-2 and 3-4. After the teaching instruction, options 1 and 2 are expected to decrease in comparison with the pre-test since both options indicate a lack of knowledge of the vocabulary list. Oppositely, since options 3 and 4 represent relative knowledge of the words, these options are expected to be higher than the results exposed in the pre-test. This graph demonstrates the expected tendencies and the actual differences between pre and post-test in the control group.

Consistent with the results of the post-test in the control group, it might be concluded that this group evidenced vocabulary learning on account of the English lessons given by the teacher of the group. His different methodologies and techniques promoted vocabulary comprehension and accomplished the pre-established objectives of the Unit 4 planning concerning the acquisition of vocabulary.



Analysed tests: 34

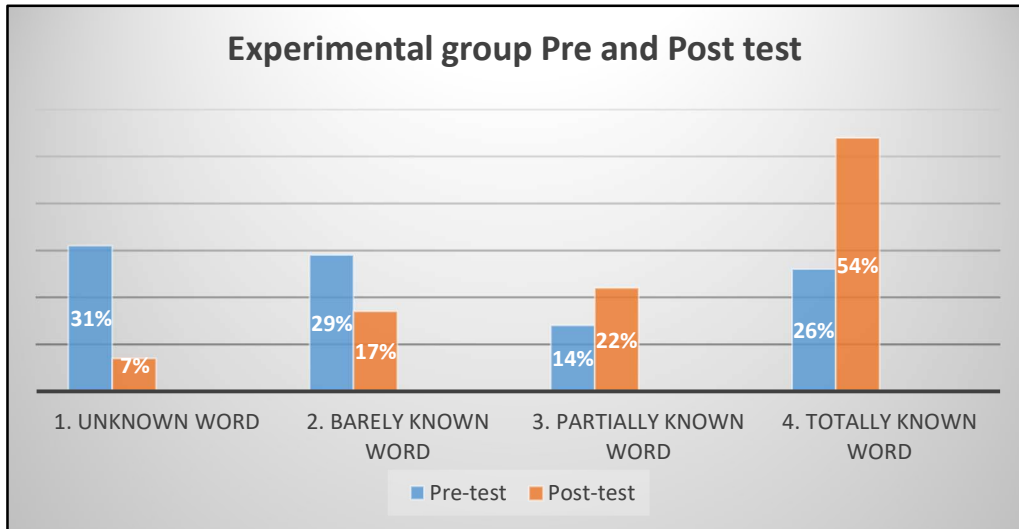
Excluded tests: 11

Total of tests: 45

(Fig. 9: Experimental group Post-test chart)

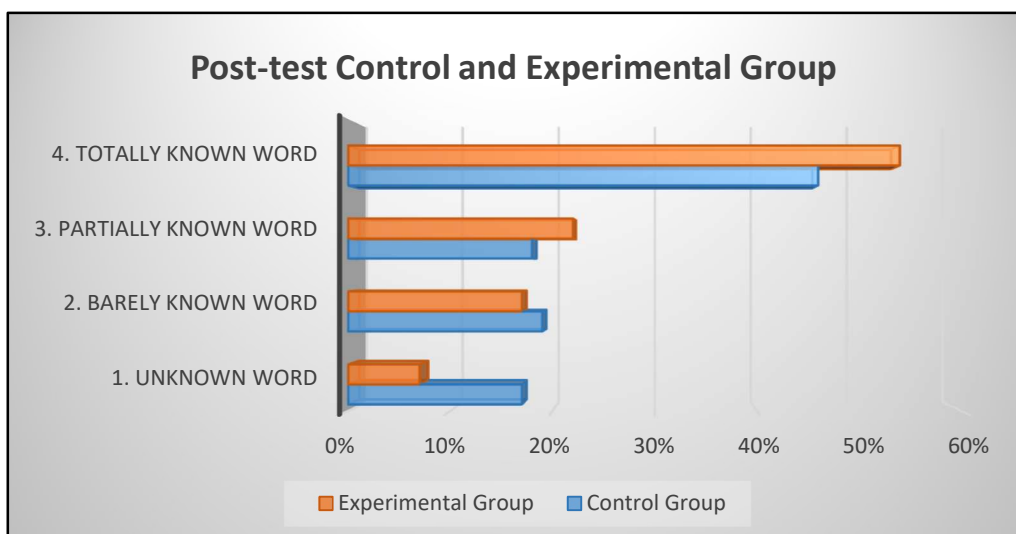
The results of the post-test issued to the experimental group indicate that students were familiar with the meaning and use of 54% of words from the list (option 4). The total percentage of relatively known words reached 76% (options 3 and 4), with an increase of 16% compared with the results from the pre-test. On the contrary, the percentage of relatively unknown words just reached 24%, showing an important drop of 36% in contrast to the results exhibited in the pre-test.

The improvement in the results is a direct consequence of two factors: the English instruction delivered by the teacher and the storytelling intervention. As well as in the control group, the teacher in charge of the English lessons used the same methodologies and techniques to encourage vocabulary learning. These procedures were completely appropriate for the level of students and their previous knowledge and will be discussed in the Interview item in this section. In addition, this experimental group experienced the storytelling technique at the beginning of the English class, which also contributed to the recurrent exposition to vocabulary and the use of those words in sentences. At this point, we may determine that both factors benefited vocabulary acquisition. Even though we are still not able to conclude the effectiveness of the storytelling technique, the improvement exhibited by the experimental group is noticeable, as shown in the following graph:



(Fig. 10: Experimental group Pre and Post-test graph)

As discussed early in this section, the diagram presents the expected results concerning the differences between pre and post-tests, in which the tendency in the latter is to raise the relative knowledge of words from the list (options 3 and 4) and lower the lack of knowledge of words (options 1 and 2) in contrast to the results obtained in the pre-test. Concerning the expected results, although options 2 and 3 evidenced variations (12% and 8% respectively), the most remarkable deviation occurred in options 1 and 4, showing a decrease of 24% in the former and an increase of 28% in the latter.



(Fig. 11: Post-test Control and Experimental group graph)

The comparison established between the control and experimental groups' post-tests illustrated in this diagram reveals the actual differences in both groups. In the option 1, which relates to the total lack of knowledge of the word, the difference between both groups is 10%, and the percentage of unknown words by the experimental group just reaches 7%. The results of option 2, which relates to the partial lack of knowledge of the word, is more even, with 2% in favour of the experimental group. Option 3, which relates to the partial knowledge of the word, exposes a slight difference of 4%, experimental group reaching 22% of partially known words. The greatest difference is revealed in option 4, which is related to the total knowledge of the word. In this category, the results of the experimental group reached 54%, compared to the 46% obtained by the control group. Considering options 3 and 4, the percentage of words relatively known by the experimental group reached 76%, compared to 64% achieved by the control group.

Hence, we could deduce that this said difference in the results of the experimental group's post-test is directly relatable to the storytelling intervention. The creation of the stories, the rhythm of the narrative, the TPR-oriented performance of the storyteller, and the special focus on the thematic vocabulary contributed actively in the students' vocabulary acquisition process. Although both groups increased their vocabulary knowledge because of the teacher's instruction, the results of the experimental group reflect the positive benefits of the storytelling technique during the English lesson. It is to expect that there be several language aspects fostered by the use of the storytelling technique, like listening skills or grammatical structures, facilitating the English language learning process. In this opportunity, vocabulary acquisition, as one of the pillars of any language, was indeed facilitated by the use of storytelling according to the results. Consequently, the recurrent exposition to real spoken language would increase those language aspects, apart from vocabulary, in students. That is to say, if students were exposed to the storytelling technique to learn different aspects of the English language for an extended period, the learning process would be significantly more effective and eventual results would reveal a higher comprehension compared to the regular lesson imparted by the English teacher.

This table exposes the results of pre and post-test issued to the control and experimental group:

Test	Option 1	Option 2	Option 3	Option 4
Pre-test Control Group	39%	25%	11%	25%
Pre-test Experimental Group	31%	29%	14%	26%
Post-test Control Group	17%	19%	18%	46%
Post-test Experimental Group	7%	17%	22%	54%

(Fig 12: Table of results Pre and post-test from control and experimental group)

3. Interview

During the storytelling implementation process, the teacher in charge of the English lesson had to teach Unit 4: *What's the weather like?*, according to the English program from the Ministry of Education. Along with the storytelling benefits, the teacher used his own techniques and methods for teaching the contents of the unit, including the thematic vocabulary. To know the procedures the teacher employed to teach the contents from the unit and his point of view towards the teaching/learning process, a semi-controlled interview with the teacher was held after the last storytelling session. The interview revolved around two main questions:

- I. What method or technique did you use to teach the thematic vocabulary from the unit? Do you think that method worked effectively?
- II. What was the general reaction from students when facing the methods or techniques you used to teach vocabulary during the lesson?

To the first question, the English teacher indicated that he employed several techniques to teach vocabulary during the lesson: flashcards, picture projections and audio recordings. These procedures are suitable ways to teach vocabulary since the use of technology enhances vocabulary learning. When words are taught in different audiovisual contexts, such as animated pictures and images supported by text, students learn that vocabulary by retaining it more effectively. Words content is stored and accessible from long-term memory. (Duquette et. al., 1992). In addition, thematic vocabulary not only was taught in isolation, but it also was employed when teaching other language aspects, like grammatical structures or phonology, or

practising different language skills. The teacher's perception of the class suggested that students attained the learning objective, therefore, according to his perception and the results revealed by the pre and post-tests, the techniques used during the lesson were effective.

Also, the teacher promoted the use of the vocabulary through the use of different activities, like crosswords, puzzles and word search, and also describing, orally and in written) the weather and clothes following given pictures. These activities took place right after the presentation of each set of vocabulary to prevent students from not acquiring the words and their meanings in a meaningful way.

In regard to the second question, the teacher mentioned that the general reaction of the students towards his techniques to teach vocabulary were within the expected outcome: students accepted the structure of the lesson and properly performed the activities. There was no special reaction of students when facing the English lesson and the techniques and activities used to teach and assess vocabulary acquisition. In conformity with his previous experiences as a teacher of the same group, the teacher states that students are no longer surprised by his techniques to teach vocabulary. At first, when the teacher employed the mentioned techniques, students felt amazed because of the inclusion of multimedia tools and various digital resources into the classroom, but now it became a usual aspect of the English class. The students accomplished the learning objective, but their reaction towards the lesson was rather neutral.

It is in this point in which the teacher added some extra information about the storytelling intervention process in the experimental group: he, as a witness of the eight interventions, was able to observe the reactions and behaviour in general of the group and compare them with their feedback during the regular English lesson. He pointed out that the general answer of the students during the storytelling intervention was positive in terms of their reactions when facing the playful feature of the storytelling technique. The fact that they were asked to understand and assimilate the thematic vocabulary motivated them to pay attention to the whole story, considering that it was their first experience with short stories completely in English told by a storyteller. The gestures, sounds, physical movements, use of the voice and portrayal of characters help them understand the story in a more didactic way, and also they familiarized with vocabulary more specially. Summing up, this was a fun experience and students seemed thankful after the intervention.

Finally, the teacher mentioned that this experience was also useful for himself since he would adapt some aspects of the storytelling technique into his future lessons. He stated that creating a story based on the contents and vocabulary from the unit, learning the story and tell it to the students was a big challenge, but at the moment in which he perceived the attention students paid to the storyteller and their positive responses, he acknowledged that it was totally worth to try this technique at least once per unit to present new vocabulary.

In this interview, I also mentioned the great disposition of the teacher and the academic coordinator and their will for this activity to succeed. It is meaningful to conduct a research in a great environment with no impediments or difficulties to implement a technique or a methodology, and that meaningfulness could be reflected in the results and the positive feedback from the students.

4. Questionnaire on Motivation

For a teacher, it is fundamental to attain educational objectives using different techniques and methods. For a storyteller, on the other hand, it is fundamental that students, apart from learning a certain educational content or understanding specific ideas, enjoy the storytelling moment and basically have fun while learning. In so doing, the student would be prone to learn English using this or other strategies and eventually feel fascinated by this narrative art in English or Spanish.

In this research, a Likert-type scale model was tailored for students in the experimental group to indicate their opinion about different statements that revolved around the motivational aspects of the storytelling interventions. The statements used in this questionnaire reflected the main aspects of the storytelling technique and its impact on students:

- I. I prefer to start the lesson with a story told by the teacher.
- II. I prefer the teacher telling a story rather than reading a story.
- III. I would like to continue listening to stories during English lessons.
- IV. Listening to stories in English motivated me to continue learning the language.
- V. I would like to have the ability to tell stories, either in English or Spanish.
- VI. I would like to experience the storytelling technique in other subjects.

These indicators were created to cover the students' perception of the storytelling and the language acquisition process, including their interest in the ability to tell stories and the connection of the technique to other subjects.

This questionnaire was issued to forty students, and the results can be illustrated in the following figure, in which the first number is the actual number of answers and the second number is the percentage of the whole group:

Statement	1. I strongly agree.	2. I agree.	3. Neither agree nor disagree.	4. I disagree.	5. I strongly disagree.	Total
I prefer to start the lesson with a story told by the teacher.	26 (65%)	8 (20%)	4 (10%)	1 (2.5%)	1 (2.5%)	40 (100%)
I prefer the teacher telling a story rather than reading a story.	21 (52.5%)	11 (27.5%)	3 (7.5%)	1 (2.5%)	4 (10%)	40 (100%)
I would like to continue listening to stories during English lessons.	25 (62.5%)	4 (10%)	7 (17.5%)	0 (0%)	4 (10%)	40 (100%)
Listening to stories in English motivated me to continue learning the language.	15 (37.5%)	12 (30%)	9 (22.5%)	2 (5%)	2 (5%)	40 (100%)
I would like to have the ability to tell stories, either in English or Spanish.	19 (47.5%)	12 (30%)	3 (7.5%)	3 (7.5%)	3 (7.5%)	40 (100%)
I would like to experience the storytelling technique in other subjects.	24 (60%)	2 (5%)	8 (20%)	0 (0%)	6 (15%)	40 (100%)

(Fig. 13: Questionnaire results)

To exemplify it in a visual-friendly version, this heat table can be adapted out of the results from the previous figure:

Statement	1. I strongly agree.	2. I agree.	3. Neither agree nor disagree.	4. I disagree.	5. I strongly disagree.
I prefer to start the lesson with a story told by the teacher.	26	8	4	1	1
I prefer the teacher telling a story rather than reading a story.	21	11	3	1	4
I would like to continue listening to stories during the English lessons.	25	4	7	0	4
Listening to stories in English motivated me to continue learning the language.	15	12	9	2	2
I would like to have the ability to tell stories, either in English or Spanish.	19	12	3	3	3
I would like to experience the storytelling technique in other subjects.	24	2	8	0	6



(Fig. 14: Questionnaire heat map)

This heat map shows the preference choice students indicated in the motivation questionnaire using different colours. The tendency of higher numbers and darker blue color in the left side of the table can be appreciated, where the options “I strongly agree” and “I agree” dominate. If we consider that all statements involve a positive reflection about the motivational aspect towards the storytelling technique and the language learning, the results are revealing.

In the first statement, 85% of students (option 1 and 2) prefer to start the class with a short story in English, demonstrating that students enjoyed the implementation of the storytelling technique, considering it to be interesting and innovative. An important aspect to factor in is the formative aspect of this intervention: since they were not evaluated summatively, they felt free to enjoy the story without the pressure imposed by the educational context that demands a total

understanding of the idea and the vocabulary. This aspect is vital for enhancing the motivational aspect of students: as long as this is an intervention with formative assessment, students will be eager to participate in it, enjoy it and learn from it.

80% of students prefer the concept of “storytelling” than “story reading”, exposed in the second statement. The fact that a story can be told as well as read generates a great dichotomy from the story viewpoint, and students are aware of this difference. As they have already experienced story reading in English and other subjects, students preferred the storytelling technique since it offers a variety of elements like movements, sounds related to those movements, TPR instances, etc., accepting the restricted nature of a story when it is read.

The third question aims at the continuity of the storytelling technique through time. 72.5% of students indicated that they would like to continue listening to stories in English, which is relatable to the learning they attained during the eight sessions, or to the innovative side of the technique. Whichever the reason is, it entails a real challenge for the English teacher of the group, but according to his perception of the storytelling intervention, he is liable to include storytelling into his lesson plan, not only for 5th grade but also for all the groups he is in charge of.

The result of the next question, although it is not as telling as the previous ones, is inclined to demonstrate the students’ interest in the future acquisition of the English language and the positive impact the storytelling technique generated in these students. 67.5% of students agreed on the willingness to continue learning English thanks to the storytelling intervention, and just 10% of the students mentioned that they were not inspired by the intervention to learn English in the future.

As mentioned at the beginning of this section, it is very important for a storyteller that the audience feels touched by the stories and their meanings. Moreover, if the audience feel especially attracted by this traditional art and the desire to develop the narrative characteristic of this activity, the whole process is successful to the eyes of the storyteller. This fifth statement was related to the ability to tell stories rather than the language aspect of the interventions. In line with the experience they witnessed, 77.5% of students would like to develop narrative techniques to tell short stories, either in English or Spanish. In some instances, the art of storytelling could be considered as difficult to master, nevertheless, having this first narrative

experience is a great first exposure for some students to be immersed in this wonderful discipline.

The last question exposes the interdisciplinary nature of the storytelling technique. Generally, this narrative art is specially designed for being implemented in artistic or language lessons due to its inventive background. Nonetheless, if implemented properly, the storytelling technique can be adapted to be useful in any subject, according to the level and the contents to be studied (Hadzigeorgiou, 2018). In this statement, 65% of students indicated that they would like to listen to short stories in other subjects. This goes along with the special curiosity in students generated by the storytelling technique, its usefulness in practice and the motivation it produced in students.

As a summary, the implementation of the storytelling technique generated great interest in the students, not only in the way they learned vocabulary but also in the way they received the storytelling intervention. Students in the experimental group discovered a new technique in which knowledge is delivered in a fun and enjoyable way. The atmosphere, story, movements, sounds, and the abstract concept of “magic” that this narrative art conveys is vital to understand the special attention students paid to this intervention and, consequently, the positive answers disclosed in the questionnaire on motivation.

5. Discussion of the Research Questions

After collecting and analyzing the results from the different instruments to gather data, the research questions stated previously in the Methodology section are able to be answered. According to the purpose of the present research, the following research question was aimed to be answered:

- How does the technique of Storytelling benefit 5th graders English learning?

In line with the quantitative results of the VKS test and the questionnaire on motivation, plus the qualitative results from the semi-structured interview with the teacher, we can conclude that the technique of storytelling benefited 5th graders English learning positively. In addition to the VKS results that exhibited a major comprehension of the vocabulary exposed during the technique, it is fair to mention the general reception from students and the eagerness they

demonstrated during the intervention. Also, the interview with the teacher was key to understand the positive behaviour of students during the storytelling time and throughout the English lessons. All these factors affect the general impact of the storytelling technique in 5th graders' English language acquisition. Nevertheless, to understand that general impact, it is essential to analyse the following subsidiary questions to support this main research question. The first subsidiary question goes as follow:

- Is vocabulary acquisition facilitated by the use of storytelling in the classroom?

In keeping with the quantitative VKR results previously discussed, we can confirm that vocabulary acquisition is indeed facilitated by the use of the storytelling technique. Students from the experimental group demonstrated to acquire a higher percentage of words than the control group during the eight sessions of exposure. It is worth to mention that the presentation of the vocabulary and its reinforcement was led by the English teacher, and the storytelling technique solely addressed the acquisition of vocabulary from a narrative perspective supported by the traditional art and the TPR-S method. Out of this discussion, we can establish that vocabulary acquisition in 5th graders is likely to be facilitated if the storytelling technique is included in the lesson plan and adapted to the requirements of the contents from the specific unit and the students' needs.

Along with the students' perception concerning the storytelling technique, this last subsidiary question was also aimed to evaluate students' motivation and thoughts towards the narrative intervention:

- Are 5th graders motivated to learn English through storytelling?

The quantitative results of the questionnaire on motivation issued to the experimental group showed that a major part of 5th graders was motivated to learn English through storytelling. Apart from that specific motivational aspect, they revealed their awareness in the continuity of the technique through time and interest in the narrative art itself, regardless of the language objectives and the assessment nature. These results, together with the qualitative results from the semi-structured interview, support the inclusion of the storytelling technique as a motivational tool for 5th graders not only to acquire vocabulary but also to develop imagination, creativity and narrative aspects.

6. Limitations

Although the results exposed by this research were conclusive, the process of conduction of the research faced some setbacks related to the access to data and the lack of time for the application of the instruments to collect data for external reasons:

- Access to data and size of the sample

As I, the researcher, was not formally working as a teacher, therefore, I was not part of any school during the year in which this research was executed. It took some effort to get in contact with some schools to carry this investigation out: I had to send several e-mails to inform those schools that I was interested in performing the research, and I only got one answer. Nazaret de la Florida School was concerned about my situation and the Academic Coordinator offered me the opportunity to conduct the thesis there, but I had to talk to the teacher in charge to agree on the schedule to apply the instruments and the storytelling technique. The only groups that I had the chance to intervene were 5th grade A and B. Maybe the results would have been more significant if the sample had been larger or maybe had included higher grades.

- Lack of time

This research was carried out during October and November 2018. During that time, Chilean society witnessed civil protests in response to the increased cost of living, privatization and inequality in the country. As a consequence of the multiple protests and demonstrations, some groups of people started vandalizing the city's structures, which lead to a state of emergency and a curfew in the area of Santiago. Local authorities announced the closure of schools in several communes of the Metropolitan Region, including La Florida. Due to that situation, some sessions had to be postponed and the whole process had to be delayed. I was able to extend the calendar just a couple of weeks from the original agreement to have more sessions with the groups since there were other curricular activities during November, and that helped me meet the 8 sessions to have meaningful results. Possibly, the total number of sessions would have modified the methodology, the number of short stories or the instruments to collect data, but the results responded to a well-organized structure and the compromise of the researcher, the teacher and the students to participate in this process, hence, the differences would have been minimal.

Conclusions

This research project investigates the storytelling technique as a valuable tool to teach English as a foreign language, especially vocabulary, in a context in which 5th-grade students are experiencing their first formal approach to the English language at school. There are a great number of parents and teachers who do not feel confident enough to tell stories to their students or children because of the assumed difficulties this technique entails. In agreement with this context, this research aims to confirm the benefits this oral narration technique offers in terms of both vocabulary acquisition and personal and conceptual development in children.

The analysed literature presented storytelling as a technique to motivate children and build on their interest and confidence in ESL / EFL classrooms. Despite the idea of linguistic development as the fundamental aspect for children learning a new language, these studies and researches discuss the relevance of creativity, imagination, motivation and personal development in children, if implemented properly. As educational methodologies keep evolving, a series of digitalized storytelling techniques have been proposed by teachers and scholars. However, a traditional narrative performance is still used to preserve oral tradition and culture among children. The literature mentions the ancient origins of storytelling, its fundamentals, storytelling in education and the process to create stories for children. Alongside the general discussion on storytelling, the TPR method is exposed to support the storytelling technique within the educational context, and some theories concerning vocabulary acquisition are also discussed.

The main research question relates to how children learn English as a second/foreign language through storytelling. The first subsidiary question involves the possibility for a student to benefit from the storytelling technique to learn key vocabulary. Several studies state the foundational nature of vocabulary to acquire a new language, and also some studies establish the value of the storytelling technique in terms of vocabulary acquisition. The second subsidiary question is related to the motivational aspect in students after the application of the storytelling technique and its objective is to reveal if students enjoy the oral narration while acquiring vocabulary at the same time.

The methodology of this research implies the application of a pre-test to evaluate prior vocabulary knowledge in both 5th grades (control and experimental groups). After eight sessions of storytelling at the beginning of the lesson, a post-test was given to students to evaluate possible variations in the results when compared to the results from the pre-test. Another essential instrument to validate the quantitative results was an interview with the English teacher in charge of the 5th grade English instruction. Also, a questionnaire on motivation was issued to students, in which they showed their preferences regarding their experience with oral narrative in the classroom.

With all the data collected, the research question and the subsidiary questions were answered successfully. The results established the positive benefits of the storytelling technique among 5th graders concerning vocabulary acquisition and motivational aspects. Nevertheless, since this is not a global investigation, further research in the field of EFL regarding storytelling as a teaching technique is needed. This investigation is intended to serve not only as a contribution to the TEFL field in Chile but also as a possible reference in future inquiries regarding the benefits of this narrative art as a teaching technique and its performance as a motivational tool. For example, it would be interesting to see some research on the motivational aspects of high school students regarding the use of the storytelling technique, the impact of storytelling in adult education, or the process of storytelling adapted for students to become storytellers, create stories and tell them in front of their classmates. In a more ambitious future, I would develop this study into a doctoral thesis considering a consistent extension of the sample, a new analysis of the instruments to collect data, some modifications to the methodology and the results in a more extended period of time. In this way, the results would even be more conclusive and would inspire teachers, parents and students to perceive children's stories from a different point of view.

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Appendixes

A. Note to the parents

A. 1. Two-page version

Consentimiento Informado de Participación en Proyecto de Investigación

Dirigido a apoderados de 5to Básico

Mediante la presente, se le solicita su autorización para que sus pupilos de 5to básico sean parte del estudio enmarcado en el proyecto de investigación “Beneficios del uso de Cuentacuentos para la Adquisición de Vocabulario y Motivación en Estudiantes de Inglés de 5to Básico en La Florida, Chile”, proyecto que conduce al grado de Magister en la Enseñanza/Aprendizaje del Inglés como Idioma Extranjero y conducido por el profesor Jorge Contreras Daza, perteneciente a la Universidad Metropolitana de Ciencias de la Educación.

Dicho proyecto tiene como objetivos principales evaluar la forma en que la técnica de cuentacuentos beneficia a los estudiantes de 5to básico, investigar la facilitación de la adquisición de vocabulario en inglés, y apreciar la motivación de los estudiantes con el uso de esta técnica. En función de lo anterior es pertinente la participación de sus pupilos de 5to básico en el estudio, por lo que mediante la presente, se le solicita su consentimiento informado.

Al colaborar con esta investigación, los estudiantes de 5to año A serán parte de la aplicación de la técnica de cuentacuentos en inglés que se llevará a cabo durante ocho sesiones al principio de cada clase de inglés. En cada sesión, el investigador contará un cuento en inglés con un vocabulario temático de la unidad correspondiente al programa del Ministerio de Educación. Dichas intervenciones no tomarán más de diez minutos del principio de la clase de inglés, después de lo cual, el profesor seguirá con su clases regulares.

Tanto al inicio como al final del proceso, los estudiantes de ambos cursos, 5tos A y B, deben rendir una pequeña prueba de diagnóstico llamada VKS, en la cual deben dar su apreciación con respecto a una lista de palabras, es decir, decidir si conocen el significado de la palabra, si han visto la palabra alguna vez, o si no conocen la palabra. De esta forma, se evaluará el conocimiento previo de los estudiantes, se valorará el aprendizaje esperado a través de la técnica de cuentacuentos en inglés y se analizarán las diferencias entre los resultados del grupo experimental (5to A) y el grupo de control (5to B).

Los alcances y resultados esperados de esta investigación se relacionan con la adquisición de vocabulario a través de la técnica de cuentacuentos, por lo que los beneficios reales o potenciales que los estudiantes podrán obtener de su participación en la investigación son la adquisición de léxico en un contexto lingüístico creado especialmente para el nivel de enseñanza. Además, cabe destacar que la participación de los estudiantes en este estudio no implica ningún riesgo de daño físico ni psicológico.

Todos los datos que se recojan serán estrictamente **anónimos y de carácter privados**. Además, los datos entregados serán absolutamente **confidenciales** y sólo se usarán para los fines científicos de la investigación. Asimismo, los resultados darán a conocer el aspecto grupal de la investigación, es decir, no se individualizará ningún tipo de información. El responsable de esto, en calidad de **custodio de los datos**, será el Investigador Responsable del proyecto, quien tomará todas las medidas necesarias para cautelar el adecuado tratamiento de los datos, el resguardo de la información registrada y el correcto análisis de estos

Esta investigación ha sido autorizada por la Comisión Evaluadora del Departamento de Inglés de la Universidad Metropolitana de Ciencias de la Educación. Cualquier duda con respecto a la naturaleza o ejecución del estudio, no dude en escribir al Investigador a cargo, profesor Jorge Contreras Daza (jcontreras22@gmail.com).

Desde ya agradecemos su colaboración.

Jorge Contreras Daza

Profesor de Inglés

Candidato a Magíster en TEFL

Universidad Metropolitana de Ciencias de la Educación

Investigador Responsable

.....

Yo, _____, apoderado de _____, del 5to año ____, he leído el consentimiento informado y autorizo a mi pupilo/a a ser parte del estudio enmarcado en el proyecto de investigación “Beneficios del uso de Cuentacuentos para la Adquisición de Vocabulario y Motivación en Estudiantes de Inglés de 5to Básico en La Florida, Chile”, conducido por el profesor Jorge Contreras Daza en el colegio Nazaret de La Florida.

Santiago, _____ de _____ de 2019.

A. 2. One-page version

Consentimiento Informado de Participación en Proyecto de Investigación

Dirigido a apoderados de 5to Básico

Mediante la presente, se le solicita su autorización para que sus pupilos de 5to básico sean parte del estudio enmarcado en el proyecto de investigación “Beneficios del uso de Cuentacuentos en Inglés para la Adquisición de Vocabulario”, conducido por el profesor Jorge Contreras Daza, de la Universidad Metropolitana de Ciencias de la Educación.

Este proyecto se llevará a cabo durante ocho sesiones al principio de cada clase de inglés. Dichas intervenciones no tomarán más de diez minutos del principio de la clase de inglés, después de lo cual, el profesor seguirá con su clases regulares.

Tanto al inicio como al final del proceso, los estudiantes de ambos cursos, 5tos A y B, deben rendir una pequeña prueba de diagnóstico llamada VKS, en la cual deben dar su apreciación con respecto a una lista de palabras. De esta forma, se evaluará el conocimiento previo de los estudiantes y se analizarán las diferencias entre los resultados del grupo experimental (5to A) y el grupo de control (5to B).

Todos los datos que se recojan serán estrictamente **anónimos y de carácter privados**. Además, los datos entregados serán absolutamente **confidenciales** y sólo se usarán para los fines científicos de la investigación. Asimismo, los resultados darán a conocer el aspecto grupal de la investigación, es decir, no se individualizará ningún tipo de información. Esta investigación ha sido autorizada por la Comisión Evaluadora del Departamento de Inglés de la Universidad Metropolitana de Ciencias de la Educación. Cualquier duda con respecto a la naturaleza o ejecución del estudio, no dude en escribir al Investigador a cargo, profesor Jorge Contreras Daza (jcontreras22@gmail.com).

Desde ya agradecemos su colaboración.

Prof. Jorge Contreras Daza

Investigador Responsable

.....

Yo, _____, apoderado de _____, del 5to año _____, he leído el consentimiento informado y autorizo a mi pupilo/a a ser parte del estudio enmarcado en el proyecto de investigación “Beneficios del uso de Cuentacuentos en Inglés para la Adquisición de Vocabulario”, conducido por el profesor Jorge Contreras Daza en el colegio Nazaret de La Florida.

Santiago, _____ de _____ de 2019.

B. VKS Pre-Post test

Vocabulary Knowledge Rating Sheet

Instrucciones: Lea cada palabra que aparece en la lista y marque con una X el recuadro de la opción que mejor represente su opinión con respecto a dicha palabra.

Lista de Palabras	1. Nunca he visto esta palabra antes.	2. He visto esta palabra antes, pero no sé qué significa.	3. Sé qué significa esta palabra, pero no estoy seguro/a de cómo usarla.	4. Sé qué significa esta palabra y puedo usarla en una oración.
Sunny				
Rainy				
Cold				
Windy				
Boots				
Coat				
Shirt				
Pants				
Shorts				
Shoes				
Summer				
Winter				
Christmas				
Wear				

C. Short stories

C.1. Story 1:

Once upon a time, there was a person. This person was called Claus... Santa Claus. Do you know Santa Claus? Ho ho ho ho! That person is Santa Claus. He lives in the North Pole, on top of the world. In the North Pole, it is always Winter. it is very cold, windy and rainy. Santa Claus wears a red coat and black boots to protect from the cold.

One Christmas day Santa Claus was sick because it was very cold. He couldn't give the Christmas presents to all the children in the world, so he called his friend.

-Hello!

-Hello!

-I am sick. It is Winter, it is very cold and windy. Can you help me give all the presents to the children?

-Yes, okay. I will help you.

And that person took all the gifts and gave them to all the children in the world.

The next year, Santa Claus decided to move to Santiago. In Christmas, Santiago is very sunny, because it is summer. Now Santa Claus wears shorts and a shirt. Santa Claus was never sick again.

C.2. Story 2:

This is the story of Gary. Gary wants to go outside the house and play. It is very hot outside, so he decides to wear a T-shirt, shorts and sandals. He goes outside.

But now the weather is not hot, it is snowy! Gary decides to go inside the house and change clothes. Now it is snowy, so he decides to wear a coat, pants and boots. He goes outside again.

But now the weather is not snowy, it is raining! Gary decides to go inside the house and change clothes again. Now it is raining, so he decides to wear a shirt, shoes and an umbrella. He goes outside again.

But now, it is not raining rain... It is raining cats and dogs! It is very windy, like a hurricane!

Finally, Gary decides to go home and stay in his bedroom. He opens his closet and puts the coat, pants and boots in the Winter section. He puts the T-shirt, shorts and sandals in the Summer section. He takes his pyjamas and goes to sleep.

D. Individual Results from VKS test

D.1. Control group Pre-test

Opt. 1	Opt. 2	Opt. 3	Opt. 4	Total
9	4	1	0	14
7	1	0	6	14
7	4	2	1	14
5	4	5	0	14
8	5	0	1	14
7	4	3	0	14
9	2	1	2	14
2	3	0	9	14
1	3	4	6	14
6	4	1	3	14
0	1	4	9	14
4	4	2	4	14
8	3	0	3	14
5	8	0	1	14
8	5	0	1	14
8	1	0	5	14
3	0	0	11	14
6	5	0	3	14
1	4	4	5	14
2	2	3	7	14
6	3	2	3	14
7	4	0	3	14
5	6	1	2	14
8	3	0	3	14
5	4	1	4	14
6	5	1	2	14
3	6	4	1	14
9	2	3	0	14
5	2	1	6	14
160	102	43	101	406
39%	25%	11%	25%	100%

D. 2. Experimental group Pre-test

Opt. 1	Opt. 2	Opt. 3	Opt. 4	Total
3	5	1	5	14
5	0	3	6	14
4	7	2	1	14
5	8	0	1	14
9	3	1	1	14
0	5	0	9	14
5	5	4	0	14
3	4	4	3	14
6	0	2	6	14
1	5	4	4	14
6	5	3	0	14
4	6	4	0	14
0	2	4	8	14
0	2	3	9	14
6	3	2	3	14
5	3	0	6	14
6	5	2	1	14
5	3	2	4	14
0	2	4	8	14
0	3	2	9	14
8	4	0	2	14
5	8	0	1	14
3	7	1	3	14
8	5	0	1	14
5	4	0	5	14
6	2	1	5	14
7	5	2	0	14
8	4	1	1	14
6	6	2	0	14
7	4	2	1	14
10	2	1	1	14
0	0	2	12	14
1	4	3	6	14
11	3	0	0	14
2	6	5	1	14
4	5	3	2	14
1	5	4	4	14
2	2	3	7	14
167	152	77	136	532
31%	29%	14%	26%	100%

D. 3. Control group Post-test

Opt. 1	Opt. 2	Opt. 3	Opt. 4	Total
0	0	0	14	14
9	5	0	0	14
6	0	0	8	14
3	2	3	6	14
0	2	3	9	14
0	0	13	1	14
3	2	4	5	14
1	4	9	0	14
7	5	0	2	14
0	0	1	13	14
3	1	10	0	14
6	1	0	7	14
9	1	2	2	14
0	0	1	13	14
0	7	1	6	14
1	6	3	4	14
0	0	2	12	14
0	2	0	12	14
0	1	0	13	14
0	1	0	13	14
6	6	0	2	14
0	13	0	1	14
2	0	0	12	14
0	1	0	13	14
5	2	3	4	14
0	3	0	11	14
2	4	2	6	14
2	1	9	2	14
2	3	8	1	14
3	1	2	8	14
5	4	2	3	14
5	5	3	1	14
80	83	81	204	448
17%	19%	18%	46%	100%

D. 4. Experimental group Post-test

Opt. 1	Opt. 2	Opt. 3	Opt. 4	Total
0	0	14	0	14
0	0	1	13	14
0	0	1	13	14
0	4	10	0	14
6	0	0	8	14
0	4	0	10	14
0	1	0	13	14
0	0	5	9	14
0	0	4	10	14
2	3	5	4	14
0	2	6	6	14
0	2	2	10	14
0	1	0	13	14
0	8	6	0	14
0	5	7	2	14
0	1	0	13	14
0	0	6	8	14
5	4	3	2	14
0	13	1	0	14
0	0	1	13	14
5	1	1	7	14
0	0	1	13	14
2	3	2	7	14
0	2	0	12	14
0	3	0	11	14
0	1	4	9	14
0	0	2	12	14
6	3	5	0	14
0	1	6	7	14
0	2	0	12	14
5	1	6	2	14
2	6	3	3	14
2	8	0	4	14
0	0	5	9	14
35	79	107	255	476
7%	17%	22%	54%	100%