



TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY OF COTOPAXI

PEDAGOGY OF NATIONAL AND FOREIGN LANGUAGES

UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAM

RESEARCH REPORT

THEME:

“USE OF THE REALIA TO PRACTICE ACTIVE VOCABULARY IN YOUNG LEARNERS”

Research report before obtaining the bachelor's degree in National and Foreign Language Pedagogy, English Major

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DECLARATION OF AUTHORSHIP


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Furthermore, I certify that the ideas, concepts, procedures and results expressed in this research work are my sole responsibility.

Pujilí, February 25, 2025



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ENDORSEMENT OF THE TUTOR OF THE RESEARCH PROJECT

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"USE OF THE REALIA TO PRACTICE ACTIVE VOCABULARY IN YOUNG LEARNERS" by Collaguazo Amores Lisette Anahi, Tipantuña Guamán Jaime Misael of the Pedagogy of National and Foreign Languages career, I consider that this Research Report is worthy of the endorsement of approval as it complies with the technical standards, translation and formats foreseen, as well as it has incorporated the observations and recommendations proposed in the pre-defense.

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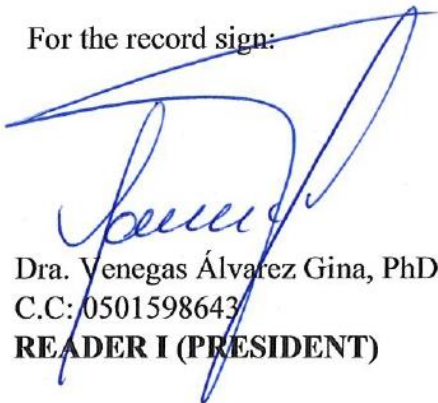
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As the Readers' Tribunal, approve this Research Report according to the regulations issued by the Technical University of Cotopaxi, and by the Pujili Extension; because, the applicants Collaguazo Amores Lisette Anahi, Tipantuña Guamán Jaime Misael, with the title of the Research Project "**USE OF THE REALIA TO PRACTICE ACTIVE VOCABULARY IN YOUNG LEARNERS**", has considered the recommendations issued in a timely manner and meets the sufficient merits to be submitted to the act of sustaining the degree work.

Therefore, it is authorized to save the corresponding files in a CD, according to the institutional regulations.

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GRATEFULNESS

*I would like to express my sincere gratitude to all the professors at the Technical University of Cotopaxi, Faculty of Human Sciences and Education, Career of Pedagogy of National and Foreign Languages (English), for the invaluable knowledge I have gained throughout my studies. A special thanks to **MSc. Fabiola Soledad Cando Guanoluisa** for her exceptional guidance and support in directing this research project to its successful completion.*

Anahi and Jaime

DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to my mother, Anita, who with her unconditional love, sacrifice, and constant support has been my greatest source of strength. To my siblings, who have always been by my side, providing me with encouragement, love, and companionship, pushing me forward even in the most difficult moments. And to my best friends, Jessica and Kasandra, for their loyalty, and understanding and for being my refuge every step of the way. Your unwavering support and affection have been essential to get me this far. This achievement is as much theirs as it is mine because, without their love and support, none of this would have been possible.

Anahi

DEDICATION

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Jaime

TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY OF COTOPAXI
PEDAGOGY OF NATIONAL AND FOREIGN LANGUAGES
UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAM

THEME: Use of The Realia to Practice Active Vocabulary in Young Learners

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ABSTRACT

The problem addressed in this research is the difficulty that students have in using vocabulary actively and in real contexts. The main objective of this qualitative study was to enhance vocabulary learning in 4th-grade students through the use of realia with Total Physical Response (TPR) and the Natural Approach in the Educational Unit “El Sembrador”. The study followed an action research approach, which included problem identification, planning, implementation, and reflection. Data were collected through different instruments. A diagnostic test and a progress test showed significant improvement in vocabulary retention, as students' mean scores increased from 5.23 on the diagnostic test to 8.72 on the progress test, highlighting the usefulness of realia in vocabulary retention. The reflection on the recorded activity to see students using vocabulary suggests that realia does not effectively promote active vocabulary use. Although they help in vocabulary recognition, they do not promote consistent or frequent application by learners, as their vocabulary use remains limited or occasional. This indicates that, while real objects can promote active vocabulary to some extent, additional strategies may be necessary to ensure sustained and frequent use of vocabulary. Finally, the reflection process on positive and negative points shows that the use of realia in the classroom enhances learning by engaging students' senses and connecting abstract concepts with real-world experiences, promoting active participation and deeper understanding. However, challenges arise, such as students' difficulty relating objects to the lesson, distractions from play, and reluctance to participate due to fear of being wrong or lack of confidence. Variety levels of knowledge can create insecurity, limiting participation, while classroom and time management issues can hinder the flow of the lesson and delay progress. Effective management is essential to maximize the benefits of realia while addressing these challenges.

Keywords: Active Vocabulary, Physical Response, Realia, Total Natural Approach, Young Learners.

UNIVERSIDAD TÉCNICA DE COTOPAXI

CARRERA DE PEDAGOGÍA DE LOS IDIOMAS NACIONALES Y EXTRANJEROS

TÍTULO: Uso de la Realia para practicar vocabulario activo en los jóvenes estudiantes

Autores:

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RESUMEN

El problema que se aborda en esta investigación radica en la dificultad que presentan los estudiantes para usar vocabulario de manera activa y en contextos reales. El objetivo principal de este estudio cualitativo fue fortalecer el aprendizaje de vocabulario en estudiantes de 4to grado a través del uso de objetos reales (realia) con la Respuesta Física Total (TPR) y el Enfoque Natural en la Unidad Educativa “El Sembrador”. El estudio siguió un enfoque de investigación-acción, que incluyó la identificación del problema, planificación, implementación y reflexión. Los datos fueron recolectados a través de diferentes instrumentos. Una prueba diagnóstica y una prueba de progreso mostraron una mejora significativa en la retención del vocabulario, ya que las puntuaciones medias de los estudiantes aumentaron de 5.23 en la prueba diagnóstica a 8.72 en la prueba de progreso, lo que resalta la utilidad de los objetos reales en la retención del vocabulario. La reflexión sobre la actividad grabada al ver a los estudiantes usar vocabulario sugiere que los objetos reales no promueven efectivamente el uso activo del vocabulario. Aunque ayudan en el reconocimiento del vocabulario, no fomentan una aplicación constante ni frecuente por parte de los estudiantes, ya que su uso del vocabulario sigue siendo limitado u ocasional. Esto indica que, aunque los objetos reales pueden promover el vocabulario activo hasta cierto punto, pueden ser necesarias estrategias adicionales para asegurar el uso sostenido y frecuente del vocabulario. Finalmente, el proceso de reflexión sobre los puntos positivos y negativos muestra que el uso de objetos reales en el aula mejora el aprendizaje al involucrar los sentidos de los estudiantes y conectar conceptos abstractos con experiencias del mundo real, promoviendo la participación activa y una comprensión más profunda. Sin embargo, surgen desafíos, como la dificultad de los estudiantes para relacionar los objetos con la lección, distracciones por el juego y la renuencia a participar debido al miedo a equivocarse o la falta de confianza. Los niveles de conocimiento variados pueden generar inseguridad, limitando la participación, mientras que los problemas de gestión del aula y el tiempo pueden obstaculizar el flujo de la lección y retrasar el progreso. Una gestión efectiva es esencial para maximizar los beneficios de los objetos reales mientras se abordan estos desafíos.

Palabras claves: Enfoque Natural, Jóvenes Estudiantes, Realia, Respuesta Física Total, Vocabulario Activo

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UNDERGRADUATE DEGREE WORK STRUCTURE

1. GENERAL INFORMATION

Theme: Use of The Realia to Practice Active Vocabulary in Young Learners

Starting Date: October 2024

Ending Date: March 2025

Place of Research: Pastocalle, Cotopaxi, Educational Unit El Sembrador

Sponsoring Faculty: Pujilí Campus

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Linked Research Project: Education, communication and design for human and social development.

Macro project of the career: Training processes in the teaching and learning of English as a Foreign Language in Educational Institutions in the Province of Cotopaxi.

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Research line: Pedagogical and didactic practices in the areas of knowledge.

Research line of the career: Innovation in Education

2. PROBLEM STATEMENT

Khalilova (2023) explains that, during the process of learning English, students must acquire new vocabulary, both general and academic. However, many use ineffective methods to memorize academic words, such as writing them along with their translation in a notebook without practicing their use in speaking or writing. This causes active vocabulary to become passive, making it difficult to apply in communication. On the other hand, Moku (2022) points out that the use of real material (realia) in the classroom is beneficial for improving the vocabulary of young learners, as it makes the experience more memorable for students. It also encourages more active participation, facilitates recognition of objects and memorization of their names, and increases interest in the lesson, reducing boredom during learning.

The purpose of this study was to strengthen vocabulary learning through the use of realia, in combination with the Total Physical Response (TPR) and Natural Approach methods, to improve active vocabulary retention in fourth grade students at the “El Sembrador” Educational Unit. Traditional approaches to vocabulary teaching are often unappealing and do not guarantee lasting retention, highlighting the need for more dynamic and effective strategies. Given that vocabulary acquisition is fundamental to language development, this research explored how integrating realia with TPR and the Natural Approach can promote more interactive and sustainable learning experiences. It also analyzed the positive and negative aspects of applying these methods in the classroom, providing valuable information for teachers and providing impetus for future research on innovative strategies for teaching vocabulary. The study was guided by three main questions:

- **Research Question 1:** Is there any improvement in vocabulary retention by using realia?
- **Research Question 2:** Does realia promote the use of active vocabulary?
- **Research Question 3:** What are the positive and negative aspects of teaching vocabulary using realia?

3. OBJECTIVES

3.1. General objective:

- To enhance vocabulary learning in 4th-grade students by using realia with Total Physical Response and Natural Approach methods at the Educational Unit "EL Sembrador".

3.2. Specific objectives:

- To explore a comprehensive range of realia types and methods that are useful for teaching vocabulary to young learners.
- To analyze students' vocabulary retention and use before and after using realia with Total Physical Response and Natural Approach Methods.
- To describe the positive and negative experiences of the application of realia with the Total Physical Response and Natural Approach methods.

4. ACTIVITIES AND TASK SYSTEM IN RELATION TO THE OBJECTIVES

PROPOSED.

Specific objective	Activities	Verification Means
To explore a comprehensive range of realia types and methods that are useful for teaching vocabulary to young learners.	Conduct a thorough review of educational research, journal articles, and case studies focusing on the use of realia in language learning.	Scientific and technical foundation. Background Theoretical Framework
To analyze students' vocabulary retention and use before and after using realia with Total Physical Response and Natural Approach Methods.	Diagnostic test Lesson plans with Total Physical Response method and Natural Approach. Progress test Evaluation of active vocabulary use	Scores Planning of the TPR method, NA. Analysis of the last part activity of each session
To describe on positive and negative experiences in implementing realia with Total Physical Response and Natural Approach Methods	Student's reflection Analysis of results	Analysis and discussion of the Results Extracts from the reflections

5. JUSTIFICATION

Today, English is crucial in areas such as education, business, and technology. Learning it effectively not only develops language skills but also improves essential interpersonal skills such as writing, speaking, listening, and reading, which are fundamental in the professional environment. This highlights its relevance in today's world. (Putra, 2020). Language learning is essential in education, as it provides key communicative skills for students' academic and personal development. A fundamental aspect of this process is the acquisition of vocabulary, which directly influences the understanding and expression of ideas. Moreover, Yudha and Mandasari (2021) emphasize that vocabulary is a critical element in learning English as a foreign language. They point out that, in classrooms where students are not comfortable with the second language, teachers should make the learning process more interactive and interesting by incorporating appropriate vocabulary exercises.

Surmanov and Azimova (2020) identified several difficulties that students face in learning vocabulary. Prominent among them are word pronunciation, grammatical variations and choosing the appropriate meaning according to the context. In addition, students are often confused about the correct use of words and face difficulties in interpreting idiomatic expressions. Therefore, the aim of the present study is to explore innovative strategies to improve active vocabulary retention in young learners. Since children learn best through hands-on experiences, the combination of realia, TPR, and the Natural Approach can create a motivating environment that encourages their participation. The study aims to provide information on how these methods can improve vocabulary retention in 4th-grade students at the “El Sembrador” Educational Unit and offer guidelines for more effective teaching practices.

The main beneficiaries of this study are 4th-grade students, who will be part of this more effective and motivating vocabulary learning process. Also, teachers will gain practical knowledge on how to apply realia-based teaching with TPR and the Natural Approach to improve active vocabulary retention. Indirectly, the educational institution and future researchers will benefit from the results, which will serve as a basis for further research on innovative vocabulary teaching methods.

6. SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNICAL FOUNDATION

6.1. BACKGROUND

Research emphasizes the effectiveness of Realia use in improving vocabulary acquisition among students. Several studies have demonstrated how incorporating real-world objects into the learning process enhances students' ability to connect new vocabulary with tangible experiences, fostering better comprehension and retention.

Ahmed et al. (2021) aimed to examine the effectiveness of using realia to improve students' ability to learn English vocabulary. Conducted in a private school classroom, the study followed the Kempis and McTaggart research model. Data were collected through classroom observations and analyzed mathematically. The findings showed that using realia motivated the students, who were highly attentive to the teacher's explanations and demonstrated strong interest in learning new vocabulary. Consequently, the students' vocabulary abilities improved notably. As a result, the students' vocabulary skills improved significantly. The study concluded that realia are an effective teaching aid for improving students' vocabulary learning.

Tigrero (2025) This study evaluates the effectiveness of using realia in vocabulary learning for elementary students, focusing on its impact on motivation, participation, and word acquisition. A qualitative approach was adopted, involving interviews with five teachers—two from Escuela de Educación Básica José Mejía Lequerica and three from other institutions. The results indicated that incorporating real objects in the classroom not only improves vocabulary comprehension but also promotes more meaningful, contextualized learning. It enhances children's connection to the material, increases interest, and encourages active participation. The study concludes that using realia is an effective technique for improving vocabulary learning and fostering multisensory engagement in the classroom.

Deviga and Ardhani (2024) This study aims to explore the improvement of vocabulary mastery and the effect of using realia in teaching English to students in the fourth semester of the midwifery program at STIKES Bhakti Husada Mulia Madiun. Conducted as a classroom action research from March to May, the study involved 31 students. The research followed four stages: planning, implementing, observing, and reflecting. Data were collected through qualitative observations and quantitative vocabulary tests. The results showed significant improvement in

students' vocabulary scores. In the preliminary study, 0% of students achieved the target score of 75. After two cycles, the percentage of students achieving scores between 75 and 100 increased to 58.1% in the first cycle and 87.09% in the second cycle, meeting the success criteria. The findings also indicated a positive effect on the teaching and learning process, with improved student participation.

Muliyah et al. (2023) investigated the effectiveness of the three-period lesson for teaching English vocabulary to younger learners. This method, commonly used in early childhood education, was combined with realia and flashcards to enhance language learning and retention. The study focused on three phases: introduction, association, and recall/reinforcement. Data were gathered through interviews with two teachers and pre- and post-tests administered to the learners. Results showed significant improvement, with a pre-test mean score of 51.92, a formative test score of 72.76, and a post-test score of 74.57, demonstrating notable progress in vocabulary acquisition. These findings offer valuable insights for educators looking for effective methods to introduce vocabulary to young learners and help establish a strong foundation in English.

Jumbo, López, and Bonilla (2024) studied the effectiveness of the Natural Approach in enhancing the vocabulary of fourth-grade students with an A1 level at the César Dávila Andrade Educational Institution in Cuenca, Ecuador. The research highlighted the importance of childhood as the ideal stage for language learning and emphasized the need for active participation in authentic learning contexts. Students' motivation, concentration, and problem-solving skills were essential for achieving proficiency in English. Using a mixed qualitative and quantitative methodology, the study collected data through diagnostic tests, pre-tests, post-tests, observation checklists, and surveys. The results confirmed that the Natural Approach significantly improved vocabulary learning in English.

Jungal and Guaman (2024) investigated the impact of the Total Physical Response (TPR) method and realia on vocabulary acquisition in an eighth-grade EFL class at Ejército Ecuatoriano Educational Unit. TPR, developed by Dr. James Asher, suggests that language acquisition is more effective when students physically engage with the content. Realia, which uses real-life objects, further aids language understanding. By integrating these methods, students learn in a dynamic and participative environment, reducing fear and boosting confidence and motivation. The research used both a diagnostic test and a perception survey,

employing mixed methods. The results showed that this approach enhanced vocabulary acquisition, promoting natural communication and long-term retention.

6.2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Teaching English to young learners

Deni and Fahriany (2020) say: “Teaching and learning English at a young age become more and more common in many countries around the world” (p. 48). Similarly, Mutiah et al. (2020) explain that teaching English to young learners involves not only introducing the language, but also considering various factors that influence the teaching and learning process. Among these factors are teacher preparation, which affects students' confidence in their pronunciation, and the availability of resources, which influences motivation and learning effectiveness. Additionally, Wulandari et al. (2020) emphasize that teaching English to young learners is a complex task that requires the use of appropriate strategies to maintain student engagement and motivation. Their study identified eight strategies employed by teachers, including “listen and repeat,” “listen and do,” “question and answer,” “pair work,” “cooperative learning,” and “games,” which contribute to a more effective teaching process.

Teaching English to young learners should be an interesting activity. The teacher should know the characteristics and needs of the students before choosing the appropriate teaching method, model, or technique. The classes should be attractive, fun, and suitable for children, using resources such as images, songs, and games. In addition, the teacher should be creative, cheerful and always motivating, since he/she works with children. Teaching strategies can be creatively enhanced to suit the needs of the students (Fajarina, 2017). Finally, Coello (2023) indicates that the use of realia in English classes favors vocabulary acquisition, since exposure to words through games, real objects and activities allows students to learn lexis in a natural way.

Characteristics of children

According to Piaget (1952), cognitive development is divided into three stages. In the preoperational stage (2 to 7 years), children think egocentrically, and develop their memory and imagination, but do not think logically. In the concrete operations stage (7 to 11 years), children think in a more organized and logical way when dealing with concrete objects, and can think

backward. During the formal operations stage (ages 11 and up), children are able to use symbols to grasp abstract concepts, develop hypotheses, and apply logical reasoning. Similarly, Bruner (1961) argued that learning is an active process where students construct new ideas based on their prior knowledge. These stages show how children's ability to think becomes more complex and flexible as they grow older, allowing them to better adapt to their environment and solve problems in a more advanced form. In addition, Sumarni, Vianty and Andika (2021) argue that children's readiness to learn English depends on internal factors, such as their cognitive abilities and motivation, and external factors, such as the family environment and stimulation through play.

Methods to teach English to young learners

Suggestopedia

According to Altun (2023) "Suggestopedia is a language learning method which is based on an idea that new information can be easily absorbed in a relaxed and positive learning environment" (p. 278). In addition, Bakhromov and Ergashev (2022) state "Suggestopedia is an effective comprehensible input-based method with a combination of "desuggestion" and "suggestion" to achieve "super learning" (p. 371). On the other hand, Hidayanah et al. (2023) argues "The suggestopedia method is a relaxation method that relies on a person's subconscious mind to receive material" (p. 66).

Characteristics

Richards and Rodgers (1986) identified four main features of Suggestopedia: classroom decoration, furniture, classroom layout, and the use of music. Classroom decoration involves the teacher's creativity in including elements such as pictures or posters related to the teaching materials to capture the students' attention. The furniture seeks to provide comfort through the arrangement of tables, chairs, lamps, and other attractive elements. The classroom layout allows for seating arrangements that avoid boredom and promote a more dynamic environment. Finally, the use of music, especially baroque music, helps students relax and generates a positive emotional response, optimizing their mental state to facilitate memorization and the acquisition of knowledge in a natural way.

Steps

Lozanov (2005) noted that the Suggestopedia method develops in four main stages. During the introductory phase, the aim is to help students relax and foster a positive mindset to learning, making it easy and enjoyable. To achieve this, the teacher creates a comfortable environment and incorporates group games to combat tedium, lack of motivation and learning fear. The concert sessions are divided into two parts: in the active concert, the teacher reads the material in synchrony with emotional classical music, while the students follow the text without trying to memorize it; in the passive concert, the students relax listening to baroque music, with the text being read quietly in the background, which facilitates the acquisition of the content in a natural way.

In the elaboration phase, students' creativity and liberty are encouraged through dialogues, songs, jokes, and games, integrating all the elements of the method to reinforce learning dynamically and spontaneously. Finally, in the practice phase, knowledge is consolidated the following day through games and relaxed activities, avoiding stressed tasks. Students are recommended to read the material briefly before going to sleep and after waking up.

Advantages and disadvantages

Köçeri and Aslan (2024) state that the Suggestopedia method has both advantages and disadvantages in teaching English. Among its limitations, it may restrict the practical application of the language, may not suit all learning styles, and may be affected by the lack of materials, which reduces student motivation. However, it can also improve language skills such as speaking, writing, listening and comprehension, as well as increase confidence and stimulate students' imagination.

The Silent Way Method

Sasi, Haga and Chen (2020) explain that the Silent Way method is based on the idea that the teacher should speak as little as possible in the classroom, while students are encouraged to actively participate in language production. In addition, they view learning as a problem-solving process, using materials such as color charts, pronunciation charts, and Cuisenaire sticks, which reflect an educational approach influenced by mathematics and pedagogy.

Characteristics

Richards and Rodgers (1986) summarized the Silent Way method in three key aspects: first, students learn best when they discover or create on their own, working as a team with the teacher to achieve objectives. Second, it uses visual and manipulative materials, such as colorful charts and sticks, to teach vocabulary (such as colors and numbers) and grammar (such as verb tenses and plurals). Finally, learning is reinforced when students solve problems related to what they are learning.

Steps

Siva (2024) explains that the Silent Way method prioritizes learning over teaching, emphasizing learner autonomy in the learning process while the teacher presents essential structures to guide awareness. This method unfolds in three stages: the awareness stage, in which learners recognize something new to explore; the exploration stage, in which they practice and build understanding; and the transition stage, in which they acquire and transfer the new skills to real-life situations. In addition, the method is based on three fundamental principles: learning through discovery rather than memorization, using physical objects to facilitate understanding, and engaging in problem-solving activities.

Advantages and disadvantages

Liu (2023) highlights both advantages and disadvantages of the Silent Way teaching method. On the one hand, it fosters active learning by empowering students to discover concepts, self-correct, and take ownership of their learning journey. It also fosters teamwork and provides opportunities to practice, sparking creative expression in a low-pressure environment. On the other hand, the Silent Way's reliance on independent discovery can lead to confusion. In addition, it can neglect systematic practice of essential elements such as grammar and vocabulary. Its lack of focus on real-world contexts can hinder practical application, and its personalized nature makes it less effective for complex subjects or large groups. Essentially, the Silent Way may be most beneficial in the early stages of language acquisition, as it lacks the structured instruction necessary for more advanced learning.

The Natural Approach

Krashen and Terrell (1995) advocated a language acquisition method designed to mimic the natural process of first language learning. Their approach prioritizes comprehension and meaningful communication over the direct teaching of grammatical rules. This framework is flexible, adapts to diverse learning styles and individual needs, and ultimately aims to equip learners with the ability to communicate effectively with native speakers. This is concordant with Krashen (1982) input hypothesis, which posits that language acquisition occurs when learners encounter comprehensible input, i.e., material that is slightly above their current level, but still accessible, providing a manageable learning challenge. This theoretical basis provides a versatile structure that can be adapted to various learning preferences and needs, with the central goal of facilitating effective communication between learners and native speakers of the target language.

Steps

Krashen and Terrell (1983) describe the process of English acquisition in several stages. In the Preproduction phase, students do not yet speak, respond nonverbally, and rely heavily on teacher input. In Early Production, they begin to use short responses and memorized phrases, favoring small group learning. During Speech Emergence, they can form more complex sentences and understand more difficult questions, although with grammatical errors. Finally, in Intermediate Fluency, they develop advanced academic skills in English, but still need support to consolidate their learning and face assessments fairly.

Advantages and Disadvantages of the Natural Approach

According to Quin (2022) language learners achieve better learning outcomes when they feel relaxed and actively engaged in the process. The Natural Approach focuses on fostering a stress-free environment by minimizing error correction during communication, which increases participation and reduces anxiety. However, this method also presents notable challenges. Shi and Ariza (2018) emphasize the significant time and patience needed on the part of both teachers and learners to facilitate language learning through input and output. Because the natural period of language acquisition in children can extend from six months to several years,

this approach is often difficult to implement in large classrooms and may be more suitable for smaller learning groups or one-on-one instruction.

Total Physical Response

Asher (1969) explains that the "Total Physical Response is based on the premise that the human brain processes language more effectively when it is used in combination with physical actions" (p. 5). In addition, Liu and Chen (2021) mention "TPR is a teaching method which can mobilize the enthusiasm and the initiative of learners" (p. 1249). Furthermore, Canora, Setiyadi and Riyantika (2024) state "TPR is an effective method for teaching learning activities it helps to reduce the affective filter because it is less stressful than traditional language activities" (p. 2).

Steps

Jiang, Tananuraksakul and Noparat (2022) explains a staged approach to teaching Total Physical Response (TPR), in which the roles of the teacher and learner evolve. Initially, during the "Preteaching Key Words" phase, the instructor introduces the basic vocabulary, demonstrating the associated actions for the learner to imitate. In the "Listen, Watch and Do" phase, the phrases are gradually introduced at a pace suitable for the learners, who listen, watch and perform the actions. Next, in the "Listen and Do" stage, the teacher gives commands and the students respond physically, with variations in the order of the commands to consolidate understanding. Finally, the "Listen and Do (unordered order)" stage presents the action stories in a random sequence, creating a more dynamic learning experience as learners apply their accumulated language knowledge.

Characteristics of Total Physical Response Method

Nuraeni (2019) highlights that the Total Physical Response (TPR) method integrates physical activity and play in language teaching, which benefits both language and motor development. Instructors use commands within activities such as songs, storytelling, or role-playing, prompting students to respond physically. This active participation improves listening comprehension, reduces learning anxiety, and increases overall efficiency. Repetition of actions and responses helps learners relate physical movements to language acquisition, creating an enjoyable and stimulating learning atmosphere.

The advantages of using Total Physical Response

According to Mullo (2024) This method has the advantage of engaging students in a fun and interactive way by incorporating physical movement, which makes learning more entertaining and, at the same time, helps students retain information better. Students who enjoy the learning process tend to be more engaged and motivated, resulting in a more enriching language learning experience. In addition, this method can be beneficial for the development of both oral and written comprehension skills of learners. This approach is versatile and easily adapts to different learning styles and preferences, and can be combined with other methods, such as audiovisual resources or communicative activities, to provide a complete language learning experience. In addition, TPR accommodates individual styles, such as visual, auditory or kinesthetic, allowing teachers to ensure that all students remain engaged and motivated to learn.

The disadvantages of TPR

As well as Mullo (2024) One of the main drawbacks of TPR is that it may not be suitable for all students. Some students may feel uncomfortable or embarrassed performing physical movements in front of their peers. This is especially true for students who are shy or have low self-esteem. As a result, they may not participate fully in these activities, which could negatively affect their language learning outcomes. Another disadvantage is that it is not always effective for all types of vocabulary. While it is very useful for teaching concrete and action-related vocabulary, it may not be as effective for abstract and complex terms. For example, teaching concepts such as “democracy” or “freedom” is difficult, as they cannot be easily represented by physical movements. In addition, not all language learners benefit from this technique; some may find it too simple or monotonous, especially if they already have a basic grasp of vocabulary and grammar. It may also not be suitable for those who prefer a more structured and formal approach to their learning.

Resources to teach English to young learners

According to Ezeh, Anyanwu and Onunkwo (2022) “Effective teaching and learning in a second language situation demand innovative strategies to complement the traditional mode of chalking and telling, using the teacher’s manuals, texts, audio-visual and pictorial aids in the classroom” (p. 108). As Valencia (2019) mentions, teachers must use didactic materials in class because it has a good impact on the students’ learning the moment that they are learning a new

vocabulary of a language. It facilitated their learning process. Also, he said that the use of these types of tools is required to engage students with the topic because if there is, they can better understand the information that teachers give in class. In addition, Garton and Tekin (2022) explains young learner pedagogy can cover a very wide range of classroom approaches and activities, but one constant is the call for holistic approaches with frequent advocacy for the use of songs, stories, games, and drama.

Learning Material

As (Yusmei et al., 2022) “Learning materials suitable for their student’s difficulty needs and objective(s) of the teaching the teachers have designed” (p. 142). Similarly (Sorohiti and Aini, 2021), “Teaching materials play an important role in English grammar mastery for students; however, there are possibilities that teaching materials might be perceived differently by either students or teachers” (p. 1).

Visual and Interactive Materials

Visual and interactive resources are highly effective for young learners, as they are particularly responsive to materials that feature vibrant illustrations, images, and engaging visuals. Such resources capture their interest and enhance the enjoyment of the learning process (Islahuddin, 2023, p. 501) In addition Islam y Salam (2023) mentions that “visual learning materials are used in non-formal classroom teaching-learning activities to increase the teacher-learner interaction as well as peer and group interaction” (p. 48).

Songs and Chants

According to Cedeño and Santos (2021) “Songs and chants in EFL education are both artistic and pedagogical acts belonging to the same family of musical expressions, whose practical use in the classroom is not unfamiliar among teachers” (p. 153). In addition, Calle (2023) mentions “Chants have melodic and rhythmic elements that captivate the mind of young learners and persuade them to participate actively in their learning process” (p. 8).

Storybooks

As Curenton et al., (2022) mention “Shared reading practices using racially affirming storybooks and conversation may promote children's ability” (p. 5). In a similar view Onuorah (2021) and Islahuddin (2023) state that storybooks are essential for fostering young learners' language development, as they introduce new vocabulary, concepts, and ideas that expand their worldview and stimulate their imagination. Through meaningful and engaging presentations, storybooks and picture books offer young learners valuable exposure to the English language (p. 187).

Storytelling

As noted by Rahiem (2021) states that “Storytelling has grown and developed over time, adopting a dynamic, contemporary presence through settings and functions” (p. 3). Storytelling is an effective method for teaching a foreign language or imparting life lessons to students, particularly young ones. Similarly, Huda et al., (2022) argue that the use of the storytelling method in the learning process not only improved language skills but also affected the child's character because presenting true stories from human life provides a good and ideal example for children to instill good character in themselves.

Realia

As Magar (2022) also emphasizes "The use of realia in the lesson is a great icebreaker and serves as a useful tool to promote conversation" (p. 18). Also, Sunengko and Afifi (2021) mention “Using realia can help to learn English to be memorable by creating connections between objects and the words or phrases they represent” (p. 225). Similarly, Hadi (2018) describes “Realia as real objects, specimens, or artificial objects, not copies, models, or representations from a particular culture. Authentic materials such as newspapers, magazines, catalogs, timetables, films, etc., are designed for use in real-life situations, not for use as instructional tools” (p. 45). According to Hariati (2020) "real objects or realia can increase students' joy and interest in learning English" (p. 741). Lee et al. (2021) adds that "the use of realia in language classrooms enhances students' real-life experiences and enriches learning at all levels" (p. 1). Finally, Lee et al. (2021) states “The use of realia not only stimulates students’ thinking, it also improves their creativity” (p. 20).

Kinds of Realia

Richards and Rodgers (1986) consider Real resources are tools used by the teacher to generate appropriate classroom contexts. These include: 1. visual media (such as images, maps, slides, cards, classroom objects, among others), 2. auditory media (such as songs, riddles, rhymes, etc.), and 3. audiovisual media (such as videos, audios, movies, etc.), which the teacher uses to promote meaningful learning in students.

Virtual Realia

Smith (1997) explains that “digitized objects and items from the target culture are brought into the classroom as examples or aids to stimulate spoken or written language production”. In addition, Carrillo (2022) mentions that “virtual realia contain a wide range of materials that could be available for application in a lesson because of the management of resources that could be found navigating the web” (p. 17).

Puppets

According to Kroger and Nupponen (2019) highlight that pet puppets should not be limited to shows but should also be integrated into education. They recommend including them in teacher training to enrich learning and make it more appealing to both teachers and students. Råde (2021) mentions that “The puppets in sociodramatic play was highlighted, as was the fact that puppets could positively influence a child’s intellectual, creative and social development” (p. 24). Similarly, Del Pezo and Rodriguez (2025) argue that research indicates that the use of puppets in the classroom can encourage student participation and enhance their ability to express their ideas clearly.

Advantages

Muliyah et al., (2023) affirm that “incorporating realia into activities, such as giving students directions using real objects, can make students active participants in the lesson” (p. 208). Humaira et al., (2023) emphasize that “The advantages include, because realia are real objects, children are given the opportunity to be able to touch, see and build new experiences with objects they are introduced to” (p. 21). Finally, Manangkari, Ningsih and Hente (2022) state “Realia is utilized to give students opportunities to employ all of their senses while learning and to provide experiences on which to base future learning” (p. 34).

Disadvantages

Carrillo (2022) explains “Real objects are uncomfortable to carry in classrooms, some of the main topics could be clothes and food for that reason it is pertinent to consider before planning a lesson applying realia” (p. 17). Similarly, Lopez (2022) mentions that one of the disadvantages is “likewise, when the practice of realia is used, time must be very controlled as it is tempting for learners to get easily distracted by touching and feeling the object” (p. 8). Moreover, Humaira et al., (2023) “A weakness that cannot be denied is that the original object that will become media realia cannot always be there” (p. 21).

Benefits of using Realia in the classroom

Hadi (2018) states that the implementation of real objects, in a foreign language, can “enliven a classroom, by using the senses to involve the audience in what is being presented. The learning is natural and not forced” (p. 67). In addition, Hoggan (2024) mentions that having a pet in the classroom can generate anxiety and guilt in children due to concerns about its care and ethical treatment, so it is important for teachers to recognize this potential source of stress in students.

As Khatimah (2021) explains, a positive classroom environment helps students learn better. This can be achieved when social interactions are smooth, allowing everyone to build strong relationships without disruptions. Similarly, Li (2023) mentions that in the modern classroom, group work is commonly used to stimulate students' participation in the classroom because it can provide students with collaborative learning opportunities and effectively help teachers engage students.

Tips and Common Obstacles to Learning

According to Olivo (2021), time management is central to ensuring effectiveness in teaching, as classroom teachers must apply appropriate strategies to manage their time efficiently, helping them to meet the expectations of their work while ensuring good performance for both themselves and their students. In addition, Daar (2020) mention the problems come from the students themselves. Lack of interest and motivation is on account of the lack of adequate resources, attractive materials, as well as a negative perception of learning English. A shortage of basic knowledge and vocabulary makes it difficult to understand the content, while low self-esteem prevents students from daring to practice with others.

Active Vocabulary

Kartini and Kareviati (2021) mentions that “Active vocabulary refers to the use of items appropriately in speaking and writing and it also called productive vocabulary” (p. 376). According to Silaban, Situmeang and Nababan (2024) “Active vocabulary includes all the words that need to be used and no doubt used to communicate with other people every day” (p. 7). Moreover, Maity (2021) mentions the active vocabulary is what we know very well and use actively in our daily communication. It is the words that the learner knows intimately and can use correctly and effectively in speech and writing. So they are also known as productive or working vocabulary (p. 108). Finally, Dakhi and Fitria (2019) state that “The active vocabulary is the words by which listeners and writer usually use as they are completely understood” (p. 19). Additionally Silaban, Situmeang and Nababan (2024) say that “The range of a person's active vocabulary is a unique reflection of their sociocultural position and the various discursive practices they engage in” (p. 7).

Passive Vocabulary

Dakhi and Fitria (2019) state that “Passive vocabulary is meant as the words that are not completely understood so that they are infrequently used when writing and speaking” (p. 19). In addition, Maity (2021) explains words which are likely to be encountered a great deal, in speech or writing or reading, and therefore, the student should be able to recognize, though s/he may never use them in his/her own use, speech or writing or reading. It is also known as recognition or receptive vocabulary. Finally, Silaban Situmeang and Nababan (2024) state that “Passive vocabulary is all the words and expressions that you can see (read) and hear from other people” (p. 7). As well as Kartini and Kareviati (2021) point out “The passive vocabulary refers to a language item that can be recognized and understood in the context of reading and listening, this vocabulary also called receptive vocabulary” (p. 376).

7. METHODOLOGY

7.1. Research Approach

This project was conducted using a qualitative approach, as its purpose was to improve vocabulary learning by using realia with the Total Physical Response and Natural Approach methods. According to Ugwu and Eze (2023) qualitative research explores feelings, ideas, and experiences to discover insights for testable hypotheses. It collects non-numerical data in a semi-structured or unstructured way, which helps educators identify patterns and new insights. Similarly, Oranga and Matere (2023) argue that qualitative research aims to provide an in-depth understanding of phenomena using non-numeric data. It is especially useful for describing and explaining relationships, individual experiences, and social norms within groups.

7.2. Research Method

The action research approach was adopted, as the pre-service teachers identified a problem in an educational context and designed an intervention plan to confront it. This made it possible to apply a set of strategies and analyze their effects, evaluating both their positive and negative aspects. In this regard, Mertler (2024) states that action research bridges the gap between theory and practice by generating a two-way flow of information. For one thing, educators can use research findings to improve their practices and better understand what is happening in their classrooms. On the other hand, data collected and analyzed by teachers themselves in their classrooms can contribute to the development of theories and studies on best practices.

a. Problem identification stage

A problem related to vocabulary retention and use has been identified, in which students have difficulty with long-term memory of vocabulary taught in class. A study by Isnaini and Aminatun (2021) found that “many EFL students are still having difficulties in learning vocabulary. It is because most of English vocabulary is different in terms of written and spoken” (p. 62). This problem was observed in 4th-grade El Sembrador Educational Unit students, located in Pastocalle. The sample comprises 32 students, 16 boys and 16 girls, aged between 8 and 9 years old. For this reason, a diagnostic test was applied (see Annex 1), based on the work of Quinata (2017). The results obtained evidence that most students fail to retain vocabulary effectively, which negatively impacts their learning and academic performance. (See Table 1).

b. Planning Stage

To address this problem, realia was identified as a potential resource for improving students' vocabulary retention. A total of 11 lesson plans were designed, 6 using the Natural Approach method and 5 with the Total Physical Response method (See Annex 2). The use of realia was incorporated into all plans, which were each 25 minutes in duration. In addition, the topics covered in the lessons were linked to the content of the diagnostic test, ensuring a greater connection between what was assessed and what was learned.

c. Implementation stage

At this stage, an official letter was issued to the teacher to conduct the classes (see Annex 3). In addition, a meeting was organized with the parents, in which the objective of the intervention and what was going to be done was explained. Allowing them to sign an informed consent form and to coordinate the schedule for the classes (see Annex 4). A total of 11 classes were given over 9 days, each lasting 25 minutes, applying the lesson plans in the classroom and recording the last part of each session. At the end of the classes, a new vocabulary assessment was applied to see if the students were able to retain new vocabulary, using the Quinata (2017) test (see Annex 6). The last activity of each class was recorded to analyze if students were able to use the vocabulary taught.

d. Reflection Stage

Reflections were written (see Annex 5), focusing on the positive and negative aspects of each class. De la Cruz and De Jesus (2018) state the following cycle of reflection: Description, Interpretation, Generalization and Plan Action. They analyzed the development of the activities, student participation, and the effectiveness of the strategies used, such as the realia. The most relevant extracts of these reflections are presented below in the results section, providing a detailed evaluation of the teaching-learning process. The reflection of the vocabulary use was also developed (see Annex 7) to analyze whether or not students used vocabulary of each lesson plan.

7.3. Research context and participants

This research was conducted to enhance students' retention and use of active vocabulary, since it was identified that students were not able to remember and effectively use the vocabulary learned. To address this problem, the research approach focused on implementing the use of realia together with TPR (Total Physical Response) and Natural Approach (NA) methodologies, in order to foster better assimilation and application of vocabulary by students. The research was carried out at the “El Sembrador” Educational Unit, a private educational institution located in the Pastocalle located in the province of Cotopaxi. The participants were 32 fourth grade students, aged between 8 and 9 years old. There were 16 males and 16 females out of the total number of students.

7.4. Data Analysis

To analyze the data collected in the research, a structured approach was followed. First, a diagnostic test was applied to assess the students' initial level of vocabulary retention and use. Subsequently, a progress test was conducted to measure progress in vocabulary retention and application after the application of the methodologies and an average of the two tests was obtained.

Next, a table was prepared in which the frequency of active vocabulary use was analyzed, identifying how many students used the vocabulary learned at the end of the study. This analysis made it possible to compare the effectiveness of the methods applied.

Finally, a table was drawn up to describe the class and the last part of the recorded video, which were analyzed to identify positive and negative points in their use and to be able to extract excerpts. From this analysis, categories and subcategories were defined to help interpret the results.

8. ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

Research question 1: Is there any improvement in vocabulary learning by using realia?

Table 1

Diagnostic and progress test

N°	Students	Scores		
		Diagnostic – Test	Progress- Tess	Average
1	Student A	6,1	9	2,9
2	Student B	3,5	9	5,5
3	Student C	6	9,5	3,5
4	Student D	4	9,25	5,25
5	Student E	5,45	8,5	3,05
6	Student F	4,3	9,25	4,95
7	Student G	6,15	8,75	2,6
8	Student H	5,05	8,75	3,7
9	Student I	5,85	7,5	1,65
10	Student J	5,85	9,75	3,9
11	Student K	6,1	9	2,9
12	Student L	6	8,5	2,5
13	Student M	5,85	7,9	2,05
14	Student N	5,45	7,5	2,05
15	Student O	5,05	8	2,95
16	Student P	3	8,5	5,5
17	Student Q	3,5	9,3	5,8
18	Student R	4,7	8,2	3,5
19	Student S	5,2	8,5	3,3
20	Student T	5,2	8	2,8
21	Student U	4,3	8,2	3,9
22	Student V	6,5	9	2,5
23	Student X	3,5	8,2	4,7
24	Student Y	5,85	7,5	1,65
25	Student Z	5,2	8,75	3,55
26	Student AA	5	9	4

27	Student AB	4	9,25	5,25
28	Student AC	5,2	8,5	3,3
29	Student AD	5,45	7,5	2,05
30	Student AE	6,15	8,75	2,6
31	Student AF	4,5	8,2	3,7
32	Student AG	6,5	8,5	2
	Average	5,1390625	8,5625	3,423438

Note: This table shows each student's Diagnostic and Progress Test scores, along with their average score, reflecting their improvement after applying Realia for incremental vocabulary.

Comparative results of the diagnostic test and progress tests subsequently show a significant improvement in students' vocabulary scores after using realia in English classes. The average score for the diagnostic test was 5.23, with scores ranging between 3.5 and 6.5, while that for the progress test was 8.72, with scores ranging between 7.8 and 9.75. This reflects an increase of 3.49 points between the two tests. This shows an improvement of 3.49 points between the two tests. Similarity Deviga and Ardhani (2024) The results showed significant improvement in students' vocabulary scores. In the preliminary study, 0% of students achieved the target score of 75. After two cycles, the percentage of students achieving scores between 75 and 100 increased to 58.1% in the first cycle and 87.09% in the second cycle, meeting the success criteria. Muliyah et al. (2023) who observed a notable rise in students' vocabulary proficiency, with the average diagnostic test score of 51.92 increasing to 72.76 on the formative test and 74.57 on the progress test. The study emphasized the practical benefits of using realia and flashcards in helping young learners build a strong foundation in English language skills.

Research question 2: Does Realia promote the use of active vocabulary?

Table 2
Students using the vocabulary

	Frequency	Percentage
1. Never	0	0%
2. Few students	5	45.45%
3. A few of the students	6	54.55%

4. Some of the students	0	0%
5. Most the students	0	0%
Total	11	100%

Note: The results in the table show that the use of realia to promote active vocabulary is not frequent among students, with most indicating that few or some use it.

Table 3
Frequency of using vocabulary

	Frequency	Percentage
1. Never	0	0%
2. Almost never	4	36.36%
3. Occasionally/Sometimes	7	63.64%
4. Almost every time	0	0%
5. Every time	0	0%
Total	11	100%

Note: The results in the table indicate that most students use vocabulary actively occasionally or sometimes, suggesting that vocabulary use is not constant, but does take place at specific times.

Table 4
Effectiveness of the use of Natural Approach and Total Physical Response

Topic	Method	Effective %
Daily Fruits	N/A	76
This Is My Family	N/A	67
Fashion in Class	TPR	84
Shapes Around Me	N/A	63
My Body	TPR	79
Animals in Action	TPR	85
This Is My House	N/A	72
My Boat Is Big	N/A	77
Five Senses	TPR	88
Keep Your Body Clean	TPR	86
My Lovely Pet	N/A	76

Note: The table shows the methods and percentages of effectiveness of the use of TPR and NA.

Average de NA: $(76 + 67 + 63 + 72 + 77 + 76) / 6 = 71.83$

Average de TPR: $(84 + 79 + 85 + 88 + 86) / 5 = 84.4$

In Table 2 shows that 45.45% of the students used new vocabulary in a limited way (“few students”) and 54.55% use it occasionally (“a few of the students”). Neither regular nor constant use of the vocabulary is observed. Furthermore, Table 3 shows that 36.36% of the students use the vocabulary rarely, while 63.64% use it occasionally and almost never.

The table shows that activities using the TPR (Total Physical Response) method have a significantly greater average effectiveness (84.4%) compared to the Natural Approach method, which has an average of 71.83%. The activities with TPR range from 79% to 88% effectiveness, while those using the Natural Approach show effectiveness ranging from 63% to 77%. This suggests that the TPR approach, based on physical action, active participation and the use of realia (physical objects representing real-world concepts), is more effective for learning by facilitating a more direct connection to the concepts.

The fact that some learners use vocabulary on occasion suggests that realia could have a positive, albeit small, influence on language production. Magar (2022) emphasizes that incorporating real objects significantly improves oral expression in students, surpassing traditional methods. Integrating tangible materials facilitates the connection between vocabulary and its application in real contexts, promoting fluency and comprehension. In addition, Mauliza (2018) highlights that realia has a significant positive impact on students' performance, particularly in pronunciation, fluency, vocabulary, and grammar. Additionally, the study emphasizes that incorporating realia effectively strengthens various aspects of oral expression.

Research question 3: What are the positive and negative aspects of teaching vocabulary using realia?

Table 5
Positive and Negative Categories

Categories	Subcategories
Positives	Active Participation with Objects (Realia)
	Real experiences with Realia’s use
	Realia to Stimulate Multi-Sensory Learning
	Realia for effective learning
	Classroom Disruptions from Realia

	Comprehension problems
Negatives	Inequality in Participation by Student Levels
	Difficulties in Classroom Management

Note: The table categorizes the positive and negative aspects of using Realia in the classroom.

The following are extracts from the last part of each class where both positive and negative aspects of the use of realia in the classroom to improve vocabulary acquisition are analyzed. The categories and subcategories below reflect the different approaches that have been explored in relation to the implementation of realia in the teaching-learning process.

1.1 Category 1: Positive aspects

Subcategory 1.1: Active Participation with Objects (Realia)

- *Al interactuar con objetos reales se emocionaron y estimularon los cinco sentidos.* [When interacting with real objects, they became excited and stimulated the five senses.]
- *Observaron, escucharon y jugaron con marionetas de animales, creando un ambiente alegre y divertido.* [They observed, listened, and played with animal puppets, creating a cheerful and fun environment.]
- *Los estudiantes participan de manera activa al interactuar con títeres que representan a los miembros de su familia.* [The students actively participate by interacting with puppets that represent members of their family.]

The pre-service teacher states that by interacting with real objects in the classroom, students not only get excited but also activate their five senses, which enriches their learning experience. Active participation with real objects (realia) allows students to engage directly with the content, creating a deeper connection to what they are learning. In this case, interaction with animal and family member puppets fosters a happy and fun environment, where students can observe, listen, and play, facilitating more dynamic and memorable learning. In fact, Cando et al. (2024) state the following: “Activities involving these objects were perceived as more fun and engaging, which increased her active class participation” (p.102). In addition, Aziza (2024) mentions that “When students are

actively involved in exploring real objects, they become more invested in the subject matter” (p. 17).

Subcategory 1.2: Real experiences with Realia’s use

- *El uso de objetos reales de prendas de vestir ayudó a los estudiantes a vincular las representaciones gráficas con su significado en contextos cotidianos. [Using real clothing items helped students connect visual representations with their meaning in everyday contexts.]*
- *Al trabajar en grupo compartieron sus vivencias con medios de transportes reales, los alumnos pudieron entender y recordar mejor el vocabulario y ayudó a su aprendizaje. [While working in groups, they shared their experiences with real means of transport, the students were able to understand and remember the vocabulary better, and it helped their learning.]*
- *El uso de objetos reales como cepillo, jabón, etc, ayudó a los estudiantes a aplicar lo aprendido, lo que aumentó su interés y participación en la clase, promoviendo un aprendizaje más efectivo. [Using real objects like a brush, soap, etc., helped students apply what they had learned, which increased their interest and participation in the class, promoting more effective learning.]*

The teacher mentions that using tangible objects, such as clothing, transportation toys, and cleaning supplies, was a good way to help the children learn better. When the children see how these things are used in everyday life, they more easily understand the ideas they are taught in class. Working in groups and playing with these objects also made the children have more fun and want to participate more in the activities. Kulmamatova (2024) emphasizes the incorporation of realia into the classroom presents a multitude of benefits, including enhanced engagement, retention, and cultural awareness. By grounding learning in tangible experiences, educators can foster a richer educational environment that promotes active participation and deep understanding.

Subcategory 1.3: Realia for effective learning

- *Las marionetas de animales motivan a los estudiantes y facilitan el aprendizaje de manera creativa y significativa.* [Animal puppets motivate students and facilitate learning in a creative and meaningful way.]
- *Las demostraciones con el cuerpo fomentan la participación y facilitan el aprendizaje al vincular la teoría y la experiencia.* [Demonstrations with the body encourage participation and facilitate learning by linking theory and experience.]
- *Los participantes estuvieron más activos en clase al interactuar con las marionetas de mascotas, lo que ayudó a su aprendizaje.* [The participants were more active in class when interacting with the pet puppets, which helped their learning.]

Innovative teaching methods, such as puppets, motivate students and facilitate learning in a creative and meaningful way. By interacting with them, students actively participate, reinforcing their understanding and expression. These ludic tools connect theory and practice in an accessible and engaging way, creating a dynamic environment that stimulates the imagination and reinforces knowledge in an effective and fun way. Mogollón (2024) states “Puppets” have long been used as an educational tool to foster creativity, stimulate active speaking, and improve language fluency. Despite the rise of digital resources, apps, and virtual classrooms that have transformed education, research continues to highlight the enduring value of puppets in creating an engaging and interactive learning environment.

Subcategory 1.4.: Realia to Stimulate Multi-Sensory Learning

- *Los estudiantes tuvieron la oportunidad de interactuar con frutas reales, pudiendo verlas, tocarlas y olerlas directamente en el aula.* [The students had the opportunity to interact with real fruits, being able to see them, touch them, and smell them directly in the classroom.]
- *Identificaron las figuras geométricas de su alrededor, lo que les permitió conectar las formas con la realidad que los rodea.* [They identified the geometric shapes of their surroundings, which allowed them to connect the shapes with the reality that surrounds them.]

- *Se visualizaron objetos que representaban distintas habitaciones, lo que permitió conectar el aprendizaje con el mundo real. [Objects that represented different rooms were visualized, which allowed connecting the learning with the real world]*

Researchers state that using realia in teaching is an effective strategy that connects abstract concepts with the tangible world, improving students' understanding by engaging multiple senses. These examples such as interacting with real fruits, identifying geometric figures in the environment, or visualizing objects that represent rooms allow students to use what they have learned in real-life situations with this we can make lessons more engaging, relevant, and easy to understand while reinforcing memory and contextual learning. Using realia in the classroom is an effective strategy for fostering a creative and active learning environment that engages all students. According to Sunengko and Afifi (2021) “Realia helps the students memorize English subjects because it connects directly to the words or phrases they represent” (p.227). Mokalulu (2022) also affirms that “Realia is a technique used by foreign language teachers to help pupils make connections between words for ordinary objects and the objects themselves” (p. 48), showing how real objects can bridge the gap between abstract vocabulary and practical application.

Category 2: Negative aspects

Subcategory 1.1.: Classroom Disruptions from Realia

- *Algunos estudiantes tuvieron dificultades para conectar los objetos con las acciones, retrasando su participación y afectando potencialmente su aprendizaje. [Some students had difficulty connecting the objects with the actions, delaying their participation and potentially affecting their learning.]*
- *La presentación de objetos tangibles causó dificultades de comprensión y retrasó la participación de los estudiantes. [The presentation of tangible objects caused comprehension difficulties and delayed student participation.]*
- *Se produjo distracción al jugar con los medios de transporte, lo que interrumpió la clase. [Distraction occurred when playing with the modes of transportation, which interrupted the class.]*
- *El interés de los alumnos por las habitaciones hizo que quisieran seguir más tiempo, causando distracciones y afectando la concentración. [The students' interest in the rooms made them want to continue for more time, causing distractions and affecting concentration.]*

interest in the rooms made them want to stay longer, causing distractions and affecting concentration.]

The teacher mentions again that when using real objects, some problems may arise. Some students may have difficulty understanding how the objects relate to what they are learning, which can cause them to not learn well. Sometimes showing real objects can confuse children rather than help them understand; if children play with the objects, such as transportation toys, they may become distracted and not pay attention to the lesson. Finally, if children like an object or a place, such as a particular room, they may want to stay longer than they should, which can affect their concentration on the activity. Following, Torenliyazova and Otegenova (2022) “realia activities and authentic materials in teaching vocabulary in the way of development of the vocabulary skills to enrich the word-stock of learners and making EFL classroom more effective teaching environment and its background usage in teaching” (p. 1085).

Subcategory 1.2.: Comprehension problems

- *El maestro hizo preguntas sobre la lección, pero algunos estudiantes no participaron.* [The teacher asked questions about the lesson, but some students did not participate.]
- *El miedo a cometer errores limitó la participación de algunos estudiantes, afectando su interacción con sus compañeros y el maestro.* [Fear of making mistakes limited the participation of some students, affecting their interaction with their classmates and the teacher.]
- *Los alumnos confundían formas similares, como el rectángulo con el cuadrado o la esfera con el círculo esto hizo que su participación se vea afectada.* [The students confused similar shapes, such as rectangles with squares or spheres with circles, which affected their participation.]

In class, some students are reluctant to participate. This could be due to a fear of making mistakes and being ridiculed, or because they lack confidence in knowing the correct answer. It can also happen that children get confused about similar things, such as shapes, and this makes it difficult for them to participate. Teachers need to help children feel more confident and not be afraid of making mistakes so that everyone can learn and participate

in class. According to Alava (2022) “Realia will reinforce language skills and its focus is on visual and kinesthetic learning for all ages” (p. 82). Many students hesitate to speak due to fear of mistakes, limited vocabulary, poor pronunciation, or grammar issues. To encourage active participation, teachers need effective techniques, such as using real objects. Integrating realia into lessons improves communication skills, helping students use the language more effectively both in and outside the classroom.

Subcategory 1.3.: Inequality in Participation by Student Levels

- *Algunos estudiantes participaron más porque estaban familiarizados con el tema, lo que dificultó que otros se involucraran y causó inseguridad en aquellos con menos conocimiento.* [Some students participated more because they were familiar with the topic, which made it difficult for others to get involved and caused insecurity in those with less knowledge]
- *El conocimiento previo de la mayoría de los estudiantes causó distracción y desinterés, afectando su participación en clase.* [The prior knowledge of most students caused distraction and disinterest, affecting their participation in class.]
- *No obstante, algunos comenzaron a distraerse y a perder el enfoque durante la clase, ya que ya conocían los nombres de las frutas.* [However, some began to get distracted and lose focus during the class, as they already knew the names of the fruits.]

The presence of students with different levels of knowledge in a class can significantly affect the dynamics of participation, since those with more experience in the subject tend to participate more, which can create insecurity in students with less knowledge, limiting their involvement. In addition, prior knowledge can lead to distraction and disinterest, especially if the topic is already familiar to some, causing them to lose concentration. To cope with this diversity of levels, the teacher must adapt strategies that provide additional challenges to more advanced learners while offering support and reinforcement to those with less knowledge, creating an inclusive environment that encourages equal participation and fosters learning for all. According to Olagbaju (2021) “Learners’ prior knowledge in L 1 is capable of creating anxiety that hinders the learning or acquisition of L 2 in most ESL classrooms” (p. 2). In addition, Farid (2021) that when students of one language have developed the necessary skills before beginning to learn another, various

factors linked to the student, such as language anxiety and prior knowledge, can affect both the learning process and the results in EFL classes.

Subcategory 1.4.: Difficulties in Classroom Management

- *El maestro perdió el control del aula, lo que dificultó el flujo de la lección y afectó la dinámica del grupo.* [The teacher lost control of the classroom, which made it difficult for the lesson to flow and affected the group dynamic.]
- *Fue necesario retirarles los juguetes y restablecer el control, lo que causó un retraso en el progreso de la lección.* [It was necessary to take away the toys and restore control, which caused a delay in the progress of the lesson.]
- *El exceso de duración de la actividad con los títeres, que se extendió más allá del tiempo planeado, provocó el incumplimiento del objetivo.* [The excessive duration of the puppet activity, which extended beyond the planned time, led to the failure to meet the objective.]

The researchers mention that the situation highlights the challenges of classroom and time management, loss of control hindered the flow of the lesson and affected group dynamics, causing a delay in progress. Furthermore, the activity with the titles, which expanded more than planned, prevented the established objective from being met. This underlines the importance of maintaining order in class, being flexible when unforeseen events arise, and managing time efficiently to ensure that all lesson content and objectives are covered. However, Sinha (2022) states “Real objects are always better than learning through images. Realia attracts the attention of learners and thus makes the learning process more efficient” (p. 4).

9. RESEARCH IMPACTS (TECHNICAL, SOCIAL, ENVIRONMENTAL, EDUCATION, OR ECONOMIC):

This research on the use of realia to practice active vocabulary in young learners is valuable to the educational field, especially in English language teaching, by integrating realia into lessons, teachers can develop more engaging and interactive learning experiences learning environments that stimulate the senses and enhance vocabulary production. This resource allows students to relate abstract terms to real-world

experiences, fostering the development of practical language skills. It also promotes active participation and builds confidence in the use of new vocabulary, which not only improves language proficiency but also facilitates a deeper understanding of the language in context, making it an effective tool for early English language acquisition.

10. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

10.1. Conclusions

The application of realia in English classes significantly enhanced students' vocabulary retention. When using real or representational objects, students were better able to relate words to tangible contexts, which facilitated their comprehension and retention. In general, the results show that the use of real objects favors vocabulary acquisition, which proves its effectiveness as a method of learning vocabulary retention, which proves its effectiveness as a classroom tool to help learners retain vocabulary.

The results show that real objects seem to have a limited but positive influence on active vocabulary use. Although most learners used new vocabulary only occasionally or the results suggest that the incorporation of real objects may facilitate the retention and application of vocabulary in participatory contexts. The absence of regular or systematic vocabulary use, however, indicates that, while real objects do encourage some active vocabulary to some measure, additional strategies may be necessary to ensure sustained use, sustained, active vocabulary use.

There are advantages and disadvantages to using real objects to teach vocabulary. On the positive hand, real objects engage learners, encourage their senses, and create a fun learning environment that connect theory to real-life experiences. It increases engagement and vocabulary production. Nevertheless, problems such as difficulty relating objects, distractions, and comprehension problems can impede learning. In addition, varying levels of prior knowledge and classroom management issues can affect engagement. For the greatest benefits, teachers must carefully integrate real objects, assuring that they match students' interests and levels, while maintaining control of the class and providing classroom management support.

10.2. Recommendations

It is important to regularly introduce the use of real material in the classroom, adapting the materials to the level of the students to ensure that they are both accessible and relevant. In order to reinforce learning, it is also important to encourage interaction through hands-on activities such as role playing or speaking exercises. Lastly, periodic assessments are suggested to measure the impact of this methodology and adjust strategies according to the results obtained.

Because of the limited but positive impact of real objects on active vocabulary use, it is recommended that real objects be accompanied by additional strategies that encourage consistent use of vocabulary. The teachers can integrate interactive activities such as role-playing and in-context conversations to reinforce new vocabulary in a more significant way. Likewise, the inclusion of methods based on active learner participation can help facilitate consistent vocabulary use. Additional research could examine the long-range effects of combining real objects with other methods to enhance active vocabulary development.

To benefit most from real objects in vocabulary acquisition, teachers are encouraged to choose objects that match learners' interests and knowledge levels to encourage their active participation; clear instructions and consistent support are essential for linking objects to their meanings. In already existing learning environments, it is important that teachers choose objects that match learners' interests and levels of knowledge to promote their active participation; clear instructions and continuous guidance are essential to match objects with their intended meaning.

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