

**UNIVERSIDAD HISPANOAMERICANA**

**Thesis Submitted to Obtain the Licentiate**

**Degree in English Teaching**

**INTEGRATING THE USE OF TABLETS AS A  
PEDAGOGICAL TOOL IN READING  
COMPREHENSION CLASSES FOR SEVENTH  
GRADERS IN THE FIRST PERIOD OF  
2018 AT NEW HOPE HIGHSCHOOL IN SAN JUAN  
DE SANTA BARBARA DE HEREDIA**

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**July, 2018**

## **Dedication**

I want to dedicate this work to the one and only who has given me the strength and ability to accomplish my objectives. I want to devote this thesis to God who has allowed me become who I am now. In addition, I want to dedicate this work to the person that has been my support through this time. The person who I love the most and the one I consider to be a role model. My mom who has taught me that I am capable to achieve all my goals and never stop dreaming is one of the reasons I keep trying to become a better person.

## **Acknowledgements**

I would like to thank God, who gave me the strength and ability to finish this work. I also would like to thank my best friends who have been always there to support me through this long process.

## Declaración Jurada

### Declaración Jurada

Yo Liz Mejías Rodríguez, mayor de edad, portador de la cédula de identidad número 402130727, egresado de la carrera de licenciatura en enseñanza del inglés de la universidad hispanoamericana, hago constar por medio de éste documento que entendido de las penas y consecuencias con las que se castiga en el código penal el delito de perjurio, ante quienes se constituyen en el tribunal examinador de mi trabajo de tesis para optar por el título de, juro solemnemente que mi trabajo de investigación titulado: **Integrating the Use of Tablets as a Pedagogical Tool in Reading Comprehension Classes for Seventh Graders in the First Period of 2018 at New Hope Highschool in San Juan de Santa Bárbara de Heredia** es una obra original que ha respetado todo lo preceptuado por las Leyes Penales, así como la Ley de Derecho de Autor y Derecho Conexos número 6683 del 14 de octubre de 1982 y sus reformas, publicada en la Gaceta número 226 del 25 de noviembre de 1982; incluyendo el numeral 70 de dicha ley que advierte; artículo 70. Es permitido citar a un autor, transcribiendo los pasajes pertinentes siempre que éstos no sean tantos y seguidos, que puedan considerarse como una producción simulada y sustancial, que redunde en perjuicio del autor de la obra original. Asimismo, quedo advertido que la Universidad se reserva el derecho de protocolizar este documento ante Notario Público. en fe de lo anterior, firmo en la ciudad de San José, a los veinticuatro días del mes de abril del año dos mil dieciocho.

  
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# Carta del Tutor

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Estimado señor:

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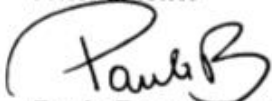
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En virtud de la calificación obtenida, se avala el traslado al proceso de lectura.

Atentamente



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### CARTA DE LECTOR

San José, 9 de Junio del 2018

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Señor Director M.Sc. Diego Torres  
Estimado señor:

La estudiante Liz Mejias Rodriguez, cédula de identidad 402130727, me ha presentado para efectos de revisión y aprobación, el trabajo de investigación denominado "Integrating the Use of Tablets as a Pedagogical Tool in Reading Comprehension Classes for Seventh Graders in the First Period of 2018 at New Hope High School in San Juan de Santa Barbara de Heredia", el cual ha elaborado para obtener su grado de Licenciatura.

He revisado y he hecho las observaciones relativas al contenido analizado, particularmente lo relativo a la coherencia entre el marco teórico y análisis de datos, la consistencia de los datos recopilados y la coherencia entre estos y las conclusiones; asimismo, la aplicabilidad y originalidad de las recomendaciones, en términos de aporte de la investigación. He verificado que se han hecho las modificaciones correspondientes a las observaciones indicadas.

Por consiguiente, este trabajo cuenta con mi aval para ser presentado en la defensa pública.

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Estimados señores:

Por este medio hago constar que he revisado de manera filológica la tesis denominada **“Integrating the Use of Tablets as a Pedagogical Tool in Reading Comprehension Classes for Seventh Graders in the First Period of 2018 at New Hope Highschool in San Juan de Santa Barbara de Heredia”**, propiedad de la estudiante Liz Mejías Rodríguez, cédula número 402130727. Todas las sugerencias han sido debidamente acogidas, por lo que se recomendó seguir con la defensa de dicho Proyecto de Graduación.

Atentamente,



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**CHAPTER I**  
**INTRODUCTION**

## **1.1 Problem statement**

### **1.1.1 Background**

Globalization has been an important process of interaction and integration between countries. It has brought trading, investment, and cultural opportunities to many nations around the world, but one of the most important benefits it has brought to the under developed countries has been the incorporation of English language.

Because of the financial and employment influence that English has had in Costa Rica, this language has become a significant component for the development of the country. It was at the end of the XIX century when English became a significant instrument for the financial expansion of the country and its upcoming business. In Costa Rica, English turned out to get an important role mostly in the exportation field, since Englishman controlled around the 50% of the coffee harvests in Costa Rica. (Quesada, 1993 quoted in Marín 2012) Because of the new job opportunities and influence English and its cultural effects provided to the country, years later, English education became official in Costa Rica.

After these events, the country has been working on the progress of the instruction of the language to take advantage of it as a tool for empowerment and employment. As a result, important areas such as technology, communication, and education have been changing and improving continually over the last years.

It can be said, that the evolution of English instruction has been mainly managed by the existing economic interests of the Costa Rican state, but the role of this language was not always as valuable as it is now.

Some decades ago, English was considered more as a new option to learn than a useful tool for job opportunities and telecommunications. Later, because of the development of the country, people's necessity for learning English increased noticeably. The desire of introducing other languages in Costa Rica was evident after the introduction of Latin. Years later, Latin was replaced by the teaching of other languages, especially French and English. Because of the geographical, political, social, and cultural reasons, English has had a considerable influence in the country. (Patricia Córdoba et al, 2005)

Having the opportunity to expand Costa Rican business to other nations and changed the perspective of the world that Costa Rican society used to have, enhanced aspects such as language, cultural knowledge, and ethnicity that at the same time enriched the traditions of the country. As English became a source of new opportunities for Costa Rica, it was essential to help citizens acquire the language as soon as possible, so they could have the opportunity to take advantage of it as a job-opening source and at the same time, contribute to the development of the country.

After English education became part of the educational programs, around 1901 the necessity of looking for English teachers increased. As a result, the educational authorities in charge decided to look for the best options who were English native

teachers who had experience with the language and its culture. Unfortunately, as there were not many foreign teachers, the state decided to give Costa Rican, who has studied the language before or knew how to produce the language, the opportunity to teach at school. (Edwin Marín Arroyo, 2012)

This opportunity of having tutors and socializing with English speaker individuals helped people of those ages learn at least the basic English they needed to communicate and get not only better job opportunities, but also self-satisfaction. Even though people of those ages had the opportunity to learn English, the number of teachers and tutors was really limited to teach different areas in the country. In order to accomplish the objectives of offering English classes for the majority of citizens, some private and public institutions started opening English courses to all citizens interested in learning the language. After some years, of a constant hard work, Costa Rica's opportunities of trades and business with other English-speaker countries, especially the United States, noticeably increased what benefited the development of the country in many important areas. The fact that Costa Rica had the opportunity to sign different Trade Agreements with important countries including United States at the end of the 30's, increased the development of English as an important language in the economic improvement. As a result, many institutions around the country were interested in teaching English and offered students English education in their programs. Some of these institutions were the Minerva School of Commerce, the Manuel Obregón School and the Castro Carazo Schools. These private institutions guarantee students the

development of the language in order to help them get prepared for the labor demand necessities and job occupations. (Marin, 2016)

Having the opportunity to open more public institutions in the country helped past generations develop a better understanding of the language. It is evident that Costa Rican English proficiency improved through the years and new carriers and changes in the education programs were also part of the achievements of these decades. It was in the 50's when English became an important element in the English education programs. As a result, some of the most prestigious public universities including the University of Costa Rica, opened English courses in order to reinforce areas such as language, literature, methodology and teaching practice. (Córdoba, et al, 2005)

Getting the opportunity to study English by a formal method instructed by one of the most meaningful universities of the country gave the opportunity to students, who decided to be part of the project, to add a valuable source to their professional resume. Moreover, including different areas to the carrier such as the ones already mentioned, guarantee students that they would be able to develop specific skills needed to really acquire the language and get a base of English knowledge strong and pure that would allow students to fill the requirements that society demanded.

In addition, after opening the English course at UCR University, years later, other courses were added to the programs and different carriers which required English as the main source were opened. Decades later, the impact of English in Costa Rican society

increased noticeably becoming one of the main sources of development of the country and a vital element in the educational programs for public and private institutions. Since the English language became an essential part of the daily education inside the classrooms, methodologies and strategies used to teach the language have been also enriched and better learning opportunities have been given to students.

Through the years, the objectives and teaching methodologies of English have changed according to the economic necessities of the country. It is evident that even though the coffee exportation keeps generating high incomes to Costa Rica, during the last decades, the country has focused its production on tourism and the incorporation of and multinational companies which have benefited not only the country, but also people by the numerous job opportunities (Chaves, Solano and Villalobos, 2009). As a result, the education has also been changing in order to better prepare students for the current necessities in the country.

The growth of the number of American companies such as call centers and others have also impacted the way English is been taught in public and private institutions. For instance, in some institutions, the educational programs have added oral classes with specific topics that allow students develop communication skills necessary to apply for jobs at multinational companies or specific occupations in which English is an essential tool. Additionally, technical high schools offer courses such as conversational English courses or tourism in which students can develop as much as possible the language and become professionals.

Furthermore, it is imperative to mention that because of the necessity for learning English, new techniques have been added recently in order to adapt the programs to the students' current necessities. One of the most important achievements in education has been the incorporation of technology in order to better assist students with their learning process. The constant technological innovations and the open access to technology have increased the opportunities teachers have to offer students a richer education. Because of the influence that technology has had in the way people live, communicate, and interact in society around the world; governments, educational institutions, and teachers have considered technology to be an essential tool in students' instruction. The incorporation of technology in education seeks to help the younger generations to become highly skilled in the use of different devices, so they can take advantage of the benefits it might bring in their professional preparation.

### **1.1.2 The Impact of ICT's in Education**

Over the years, technological devices for information and communication have been created in order to facilitate almost all areas of human beings lives. Nowadays, the majority of daily activities require the use of technology for different purposes such as traveling, treating illnesses, enjoying free time, and even education. From old desktop computers to laptops, cellphones, and tablets, the way young generations access to information is continuously improving and has become in a relatively short period of time

an essential element. As young age groups have access to different devices not only at school, but also at home, they have developed a close relationship with technology.

During the last years, there has been an increase in the use of technology in kids at ages less than 10 years old. It has become more evident to see kids whose ages can range the 8 or 10 using phones, however, there is a higher number of students who use phones most of the time composed by teenagers who range 15 years old (The National Institute of Statistics, 2016). It is evident that technology has become a significant daily-used tool which since very early years, kids and teenagers are getting accustomed to, whether it is for educational purposes, communication or just for entertainment. As new generations are becoming dominants of technology, educational institutions might take advantage of this in order to adapt new technologies in the learning process, so students use them as a pedagogical tool that might help teachers and students move away from traditional teaching methodologies.

In the book *Teaching and Learning in Digital Worlds*, which has as the main purpose to offer different cases studies of new teaching methods that might fully exploit emerging technologies, in its chapter *Digital learners in higher education: implications for teaching, learning & technology*, Mark Bullen and Tannis Morgan (2015) make reference to the way technology has influenced different generations stating that:

Central to the “digital natives” discourse is the notion that the generation born between 1980 and 2000 has been profoundly influenced by its immersion in the world of networked, digital

technology and, because of this, we need to make radical changes to our educational systems. (p.11)

Moreover, it is necessary for educational institutions to incorporate new collaborative and constructivist pedagogies in which students might take advantage of their previous technology-based knowledge and the extensive technological devices available in the market to learn, because new generations request it.

Since the use of technology was incorporated in education, institutions around the world have been investing in the improvement of their study programs to adapt them to the innovations of technology and the students' necessities. In the investigation ICT in Schools which takes place in Ireland and has as the main purpose to present findings and recommendations to teachers and curriculum developers, it is mentioned in the chapter ICT in primary and post-primary education that ICTs have become an essential component for society in different areas of life as it has been in education. Since the Irish Government decided to incorporate the use of ICTs in the educational policies in 1997, Ireland and other countries as well have invested in technology to take advantage of this great source that might enhance students' learning experience. (Stack, 2005)

Even though some schools have invested more than others in the use of technological devices, it is evident that for present and future generations the incorporation of the use of technology is considered not only a necessity, but also

a requirement in the curricula. It is important to mention that technology is changing and improving continuously. In few years, ICT abilities have become essential for all ages to be able to perform successfully in society. Even though applications and devices vary depending on age, they are present in daily routines. These different devices have had so much influence over human beings' way of living that they have changed the way they read, write, and communicate.

Additionally, in education, the use of information and communications technology better known as "ICT's" is changing the way students learn the different subjects. These devices and applications have provided a rich instrument of new teaching opportunities to teachers and students. Including these types of devices in the learning process has brought many advantages to students.

Through the use of these technologies, teachers can use the most appropriate ones to encourage students to learn by the use of applications always taking in to account specific exploratory and pedagogical purposes. For instance, when including different technological devices in school, teachers might have the chance to focus more on students' needs rather than their own preferences. As a result, the learning process becomes richer and more individualized, always having the teacher as a guide they can go to when necessary. Moreover, when students learn by the use of technology, they have the chance to develop more flexible thinking abilities, become more independent, and enjoy the broad list of options of interesting and dynamic multimedia sources that

might help them become more interested in the subject. In addition, it is important to mention that when using ICTs to learn, education might take place not only at New Hope School, but anywhere, anytime. As a result, pupils can keep practicing what they have learned along the day and have the chance to learn new information.

In the case study *Use of Information and Communication Technologies in Primary Education* which took place in the Czech Republic, Pavla Hlasna, Blanka Klimova and Petra Poulouva investigated about the use of information and communication technologies inside the classes of primary schools. Different instruments and questionnaires were applied to teachers from different schools and also to some part-time students (future teachers at the University of Hradec Kralove) in order to gather the necessary information about the use of technological devices in the class. Conclusions showed that the majority of the teachers who participated incorporate ICT on daily basis, especially to teach subjects related to mathematics and languages. In addition, these teachers argued that using technological sources based on internet, tutorials, and interactive boards enriches the way students learn the traditional lessons. Consequently, classes become more interactive and motivating (Hlasna, Klimova and Poulouva, 2017)

Technology can offer students rich learning opportunities, as it usually generates a variety of immersive and dynamic environments in which students can put into practice what they learn through the activities set in class and their own experiences. In addition, when incorporating the use of technology in the class, students' learning process

becomes entertaining and helps students put into practice multiple disciplines that can even help teachers avoid misconduct in the classes.

Many researchers declare that technology-based education brings advantages to teachers and students that facilitate the learning process for both of them. Mercè Gisbert Cervera and José María Cela-Ranilla state that “learning environments based on advanced technologies are prompting new ways of delivering learning actions, new ways of mediating as teachers in instructional processes, new tools for monitoring the learning processes and richer ways of assessing the resulting products.” (p.77)

The creation of ICTs definitely provides teachers with many helpful educational tools that can be applied to the traditional methodologies. However, it is important to mention that teachers have the responsibility to contribute to education creating new teaching methodologies in which students might be able to develop as much as possible their technical and critical thinking abilities.

However, it is imperative for teachers to keep investigating the different strategies and elements technology offers in order to enhance the effectiveness of their practices inside the classroom. Bullen and Morgan (2015) state:

Educators need to understand the rapidly changing technological landscape and determine how, or if, their teaching should change to accommodate emerging technologies. And while we can now say with certainty that generation is not relevant, the question of how post-secondary education should respond to the growth in digital, networked technology use remains to be explored (p.14).

Teachers should take into account that using technology in the class demands them to keep investigating and making changes in the methodologies. It is a fact that there are numerous sources and devices that might be helpful for students; however, not all of them might be the most adequate ones. For example, in languages classes, it is necessary to take into account that while some ICTs are helpful to work on specific areas such as pronunciation, grammar analysis and other areas, some of them might not have the same results. As ICTs are used to manage teaching and learning procedures, teachers have the responsibility to look for the sources that better work for students and extra material in order to help students to reinforce the abilities they might be working on. This is enough reason to inspire and motivate teachers' competences.

The newspaper *Altablero* published the article *Costa Rica: Tecnologías Digitales con Visión Educativa* which makes reference to the incorporation of technology into the classroom, states that:

Since the 80's Costa Rica has been working on the improvement of the education. Along this process it has been necessary not only look for new opportunities for the students, but also help teachers get prepared and informed to better assist students inside the class. Consequently, along the years teachers had had the opportunity to get trained on the use of technology in order to take advantage of the equipment that has been used since those years (Anfossi and Quesada, 2005).

Having the opportunity to start incorporating basic technology skills in the curricula gave past generations the opportunity to get familiar with the most common technological sources used in those decades. In addition, it motivated past governments to continue

looking for new technology-based methodologies in order to improve the education in Costa Rica.

As technology changes, students' necessities vary as well. For this reason, different programs have been added in order to fulfill students' necessities. The Ministry of Public Education (MEP) designed a National Program of Mobile Technologies for Education called Tecno@aprender. This program has as the main purpose to bring new learning opportunities to students by the incorporation of digital technologies in the class. In order to get the best results, not only technological tools needed to be offered to public institutions, also there was a need to train teachers and make some changes in the infrastructure and equipment of the schools. By doing this, teachers could have the opportunity to help students develop a close relationship between students and technology that would lead them to develop critical thinking, communicative, and searching abilities (Katherine Diaz, 2015).

Having the opportunity to get new devices such as video beans, tablets, laptops, and others, helped public institutions of Costa Rica offer some richer curricula that allowed students to develop different ICTs'-based skills. It is important to mention that there still many public institutions around the country that have many infrastructural and technological needs. For this reason, it is imperative to look for solutions, so students from rural regions of the country can have the opportunity to get prepared for the use of technologies.

In the article *Tecnología y educación: la fórmula del éxito en las aulas*, Joselyne Ugarte (2016) makes reference to the importance of the use of TICs in education, by taking as a reference the speech *Formación docente inicial y permanente en el uso de las TICs*, in which Marta Castellanos, an expert in the field, mentions that teachers must be trained in order to take advantage of the use of TICs in the class. In addition, she mentions that it is necessary to look for innovated applications, software, and programs that might change students' perceptions towards the learning process. The idea is to create a richer and satisfactory learning experience through the use of tablets.

As it was mentioned before, nowadays there are numerous devices that might be helpful tools for teachers and students. However, teachers need to choose specific ICTs to use along with the appropriate applications, so students might really take advantage of technology as a pedagogical tool. For example, one of the most common devices used in English classes has been computers and tablets.

In an article published by Purdue University, titled *The Evolution of Technology in the class*, it is stated that "When IBM introduced its first personal computer in 1981, the educational world knew that it was on the verge of greatness" (n.p). Getting the opportunity to access technology inside the class, gave education a broad set of new opportunities and an expansion of the curricula used in class. Additionally, one of the most important achievements in education has been the creation of tablets or multi-touch devices which have benefited the languages learning the process.

In addition, the easy access to information by the internet has changed the way teachers transmit information. Nowadays, teachers can use different applications and programs to catch students' attention while learning. Purdue University also states that "With the evolution of technology, educational capabilities are growing and changing every day. The Internet is a vast electronic library of information, and both research and instruction can be achieved through a click of the mouse" (n.p). Teachers who work with technology in the class keep students motivated while they are at school, but also, they facilitate students more interesting projects or homework that require the use of applications or programs at home. As a result, students might feel more motivated and confident as they might be using the technological devices they are used to, in order to work on their assignments and not just working on the paper as it used to be years ago.

Although, there are many types of TICs in the market, for this investigation, the tablet might be the one taken as a reference to analyze the influence it has over students' learning process when learning a second language in reading comprehension classes.

## **1.2 Problem Statement**

Since there have been significant technological advances in the last decades, the professional preparation and educational necessities have increased through the years. With the constant incorporation of technologies in education, the teaching methodologies and strategies have been improving constantly. Therefore, the use of

technological devices, such as digital tablets, has become more evident in schools and in some of them the use of these devices is mandatory.

The use of tablets in education has provided teachers and students with revolutionized opportunities. These devices offer benefits to students such as improving their technological skills, accessing digital textbooks, a wide variety of interactive applications and so on, these devices might be useful in English reading classes. To analyze the influence that the use of tablets has on students' learning process in reading comprehension classes and the possible elements that affect students' development, a specific application was chosen.

When learning a second language, there are many factors that might influence the way students learn, but one of the most important ones is the different teaching approaches used in the class. Teaching approaches are basically the way teachers transfer knowledge to the students; they might depend on students' needs and teachers' flexibility and originality to accomplish the diverse education goals. All teaching approaches are based on specific conditions that include students and teachers' roles in the process, learning materials used in class, and the different activities that should be used inside the classroom. When using technology in the reading classes, students need specific approaches which allow them to develop the language as much as possible in order to better understand the different texts. Some of the most recently used methodologies and approaches for second language learners might be the Content-Based Methodology, the Action-Oriented Approach, and the Task-Based Approach.

As these three methodologies require students not only to analyze the language, but to use their critical thinking abilities taking advantage of real-life situations, they help students acquire the language and read more effectively. Therefore, it is important for the investigation to study **How do the currently used methodologies and approaches used for teaching English might influence students' learning process?**

Reading comprehension is an elaborated process that helps students build their own understanding through the different information they get from texts, which is later compared to the knowledge students' have acquired already. Having the opportunity to develop English proficiency and reading ability might benefit students who are learning a second language not only to get a clearer idea of the information they are processing, but also develop specific strategies that help them become fluent and critical thinking English speakers. Moreover, students who are learning a second language might face difficulties when reading English texts because of the complexity of the readings or the vocabulary they can find. For this reason, teachers should consider offering students more problem-solving strategies in reading classes, so students can develop skills that allow them to monitor their job, summarize ideas, make predictions of the texts they are analyzing. As a result, it is important to study **What reading strategies can be implemented in class to help students develop the necessary reading comprehension skills for a better understanding of the texts?**

It is important to mention that when taking English reading classes, the level of comprehension students might develop depends on readers' lexical knowledge. When students read different texts, they assimilate the meaning of different words by the contexts of the sentences. The different vocabulary students find when reading might not be part of their lexical data, on the contrary, they would have to apply different strategies to get the meaning of the word depending on the different contexts to understand the idea that the author wants to transmit in the text. It is important to mention that developing vocabulary awareness requires students to develop an interest and perseverance when reading, so students can have a positive attitude towards the vocabulary and reading skills that might be reflected in their reading performance. As a result, it is imperative to analyze **How can reading comprehension help students enrich their vocabulary awareness when learning a second language?**

In addition, technological devices such as digital tablets offer students attractive and interactive sources that might be helpful when learning a second language. Educational sources such as games, digital books, and interactive applications might create a more comfortable and attractive environment in the class. For some students, common reading classes based on reading from books and simple activities can be tedious, but if they can read texts taking advantage of the tablets as the pedagogical and interactive tool, students can get easily engaged in the learning process. For this reason, it is important to analyze **How can the use of tablets influence students' perception towards reading classes when learning English?**

### **1.2.1 Justification**

During the learning process of a second language, the development of cultural, intellectual and academic elements are improved by the influence of reading comprehension. Through the years, different investigations have been conducted in order to improve the current teaching techniques and expand the English teaching methods and strategies. Numerous investigations have found that the use of technology in class can offer educators and students many advantages that make the learning process more attractive and interactive. As a result, many institutions have decided to expand their learning programs by the inclusion of smartphones, computers, and tablets on daily basis. Therefore, nowadays students are becoming digital natives; they are accustomed to manipulate different high operational technological devices into the everyday educational experience, making these devices an essential tool for their English learning process.

Technology has changed the way individuals live nowadays. In Costa Rica, the use of technology has also influence education. Since technology started to be an important element in education, many strategies and methodologies have become part of the programs in order to help students and teachers to take advantage of its benefits. Some examples can be the use of computers inside the classrooms years ago and now the inclusion of more recent devices such as the tablets that appeared in the educational field in 2012. (Muñoz Alvarado, Nicaragua Nicaragua, 2014). Including different technologies inside the class has helped students from private and public institutions

around the country improve their learning strategies and open their minds to a broad world of opportunities that technology can provide to their learning process.

In addition, it is important for teachers and institutions to have a clear understanding of the objectives to be developed in class. In the article *Tecnología en las aulas del MEP sin uso y provecho claros*, published by *La Nación*, it is stated that in order to promote the use of technology inside the classroom, different programs and projects such as TecnoApoyo, TecnoEscuela y TecnoSecundaria have been some of the achievements currently used in 27 regional offices of MEP (Daniela Cerdas, 2017). It is evident that even though many schools still have the necessity to implement technology in their programs, the country keeps working on the development of the education in order to offer students a better education service.

Moreover, implementing the use of technology in the classes helps to bring students and teachers considerable benefits. In the previously mentioned article, Cerdas makes reference to the opinion of the Vice-minister of the MEP Alicia Vargas, who declares that because of technology offers students digital contents and applications that reinforce and improve their learning process, it is considered an important source for these generations. (Cerdas,2016)

It is important to mention that the integration of technology and technological tools in the educational field can help students improve the technological knowledge some of them already have to prudently apply it to the everyday educational scenarios and take advantage of it to succeed professionally. However, the challenge for teachers is to take advantage of the great potential that these devices provide to their classes, without

disrespecting the pedagogical limits and guarantying that students might develop the necessary skills to succeed when learning a second language. For this reason, teachers might work on the elaboration of programs following guidelines based on the use of technology as a pedagogical tool and not only based on the development of technical skills. Traditional education would be considered a failure if ICT devices are used to reproduce the same old contents in a digital format. (Canovas 2014, quoted in Fernandez, 2016). For this reason, the necessity of incrementing and transforming the educational quality to digitalize it, is one of the most important topics in the educational field.

Moreover, this investigation seeks to analyze the influence that the use of tablets has on students' learning process in reading classes to contribute to the current methodologies used in English reading comprehension. In addition, this research pretends to help teachers by providing recommendations to fulfil the necessities that new generations might face when learning a second language in classes in which technology becomes a requirement to learn English. Moreover, it aims to break down the possible inflexibility some teachers might have already established in reading classes, so new strategies and modifications can be applied to offer students a more interactive and attractive environment. Therefore, it is necessary a proposal that provides teachers of English with a clearer idea about the type of technological resources they should use in class, so they might be prepared to overcome any challenge related to the use of tablets inside the class.

Additionally, this investigation tries to reconsider the different approaches and applications presently used in New Hope School. As every professor has the chance to determine if he or she uses or not extra material through the use of tablets, there might not be a balance in the development of reading skills among the different groups in the institution. For this reason, by establishing a specific method and tool that teachers can use in reading classes, teachers might avoid a possible variability in students' performance in reading classes.

Furthermore, it is necessary to encourage teachers of the Nueva Esperanza to raise consciousness about the importance of reading ability, so students might appreciate these classes as a helpful class they can take advantage of in order to enrich their knowledge in life. This research also pretends to alert the higher authorities of the institution about the necessity teachers have to get trained in the use of tablets inside the class. While some teachers might have read about the use of tablets or getting trained, other teachers might have never used tablets in their teaching carrier what may lead to an unbalance in the educational quality of the institution. For this reason, it is imperative to make conscience about the necessities also teachers might have to offer excellence to future generations.

Even though the institution has created a set of regulations for the use of tablets inside the class, it is imperative to analyze if the reality that teachers and students face inside the class is the one projected in this manual. Finally, this research seeks to study the influence of these devices in order to identify the possible positive and negative

aspects that might be not only reflected in this regulation, but also applied in class successfully.

### **1.3 Problem**

The use of digital devices such as tablets in reading classes has given students more opportunities to acquire the language and experience a more interactive learning process. The opportunity of having access to various sources of information such as, language translators, digital books, applications, videos and others has given students the opportunity to be in contact with the language. As these devices are used in everyday situations, new generations have become accustomed to their use. However, when it comes to the use of tablets in education, their implementation might be focused on pedagogical and didactic strategies and not only on the development of technical abilities. While some teachers might think that the use of these devices benefit students learning process, others might argue that there is an evident need to continue working on the strategies teachers implement in class to help students develop a richer reading comprehension skill.

As a result of the necessity for innovating the strategies used in reading classes, this research proposes as the main problem the following:

How does the use of tablets as a pedagogical tool influence the way students learn English in reading comprehension classes?

## **1.4 Objectives of the Research**

### **1.4.1 General Objectives**

- Analyze the influence of the use of tablets as a pedagogical tool in the learning process of the seventh grader students in reading comprehension classes of the New Hope school in cycle 2018.
- Propose a reading class structure that teachers can use as a reference to promote reading comprehension using tablets as the main source in cycle 2018.

### **1.4.2 Specific Objectives**

- Describe the different methodologies for teaching English as a second language that might be helpful in reading comprehension classes.
- Identify the possible reading strategies that support students to develop a richer reading comprehension ability.
- Analyze how reading comprehension enriches students' vocabulary awareness when learning a second language.
- Recognize how the use of tablets influences students' motivation towards learning English in reading classes.

## **1.5 Achievements and limitations**

This investigation seeks to create awareness about the influence of the use of tablets inside the classrooms. In addition, the main aspects that comprises this research are related to the study of the effectiveness and quality of the technology-based teaching methodologies offered in the school.

For this reason, it is imperative to analyze the current methods to determine if they are really helping students develop technical and critical thinking abilities in reading comprehension classes using tablets as a pedagogical tool or if some changes might be needed.

### **1.5.1 Limitations**

Among the limitations that restrict the present investigation are the following:

#### **1.5.1.1 Limited Access to information**

Due to the constant renovation of the teaching personnel in the institution, there is a degree of difficulty when it comes to the collection of data associated to the possible teachers' perspectives about the use of tablets inside the reading classes. In addition, there might be a limitation in the details related to the effectiveness of methodologies

and students' performance in previous years when tablets were not considered a requirement inside the class.

#### **1.5.1.2 Limited investigations on the topic studied**

Because of the significant influence technology has had on people's lives over the last decades, there have been conducted many pieces of research about the use of technology in education. As a result, many methodological changes have been done and new technological devices are coming up every year. This constant innovation has inspired researchers to study the use of devices such as computers, smartboards, cellphones, tablets, and many other devices inside the classroom to help teachers and students take advantage of them. When it comes to the use of tablets inside the classroom, there have been researchers who have study aspects such as the possible advantages and disadvantages when using them as a pedagogical tool, unfortunately, specific information about the use of tablets in English reading classes seems to be really limited.

#### **1.5.1.3 Information that might be compromised:**

Because some professors have really little time working at the institution, they might feel compromise when being asked about certain information. They might be afraid of any negative consequence that could affect their image in or out of the institution. In addition, data related to the effectiveness of the teaching materials used in

class, possible challenges students might face when using their tablets in school or probable variations they might consider changing when teaching reading classes could be limited.

#### **1.5.1.4 Experience and Training**

It is evident that while some teachers have years of experience using tablets inside the classroom, others might be working for the first time in their carriers with these technological devices. As a result, some teachers might not have problems when mentioning elements that benefit or affect students' reading comprehension when using tablets in reading classes. Moreover, it is important to mention that the institution does not keep training teachers to improve their performance and be able to add new methodologies and strategies to the ones already used in the school.

#### **1.5.1.5 A very recent method**

It is important to mention that the incorporation of tablets in New Hope school is a very new strategy that was implemented a year ago. When teaching English every new strategy or method needs to be applied for a considerable period to prove its effectiveness. As this strategy has been implemented just for a year, there might be few pieces of information about the effectiveness of the strategy and the areas that need to be modified and improved in order to better assist students.



**CHAPTER II**  
**THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

## 2 ICTs in Latin American Education

During the last decades, education has suffered important changes. Years ago, kids and teenagers were taught to listen to their teachers, who had as their main source of information just their notebooks, and libraries. Unfortunately, these books were not always updated and regularly required students to memorize information that was not adapted or focused on their reality and necessities. As a result, teachers have been working on a desire of the creation of a new educational world based on students' necessities, competences, and abilities in order to prepare them to be able to survive in the society they live in. Fortunately, nowadays teachers and students have in their hands a really powerful tool known as information and communications technologies (ICTs) which allows them to create, manage, communicate, and store information in a different way.

The use of Information and Communications Technologies has influenced the way people live during the last decades. As its impact has changed aspects such as communication, education, socialization, and lifestyle, ICTs have been considered to be an important influence of the present society (UNESCO, 2013). This incorporation of the use of ICTs in all life areas has become not only a benefit for all the countries of Latin America, but also a challenge for the different governments which have been looking for options to invest in education and equipment in order to offer students access to the latest technological innovations.

In addition, many countries around the world have been trying to look for new opportunities to invest in the incorporation of technology in education. In the case of

Latin America, there have been some important projects that have helped developing countries make some changes to offer students a better quality of education based on the use of ICTs. Moreover, it is important to mention that in order to make these changes possible, it has been imperative for institutions and teachers to make considerable changes in their educational objectives and programs in order to eradicate some aspects of the old methodologies that might not be helpful anymore and adopt the current plans to the different types of technological resources available now.

In the article *El Impacto de la Tecnología en la Educación de América Latina y el Caribe*, published by the IESALC (Instituto Internacional para la educación Superior de América Latina y el Caribe) and the ONU (Organización de las Naciones Unidas para la Educación y la Ciencia y Cultura) (n.d) it is specified that because of the necessity of changing the way education has been developed, teachers have been working on the innovation of methodologies used in class to offer students the best programs. For example, in different countries of Latin America, as it is Colombia, different projects have been created to help students develop the use of technology in the class. One important project has been “Computadoras para educar” which purpose is to supply institutions with equipment and offer teachers different pieces of training to make conscience about the use of technology inside the class. This program has helped millions of students and institutions with low budget to get very useful and low-priced equipment to be used inside the class. One of its achievements has been the possibility to purchase thousands of tablets allowing important savings that have benefited low-income institutions.

Moreover, in other countries, there have been created projects that look for the implementation of ICTs in distant areas to help students get informed and trained in the use of technology. One of these cases has been the project Para Tod@s developed in Ecuador. This project has been employed to help students and individuals from rural areas of the country to get trained in the use of technology. Through the operation of mobile vehicles that are technologically-qualified, this project has been helping individuals from one area to another, to understand the use of technology (UNESCO, n.d). In a world that depends on the use of technology, it is imperative to develop the necessary skills to be prepared to face any situation. It is believed that technology has had such an important influence in the last decades that nowadays, not only people who do not know how to read are considered illiterate, but also people who do not manage the basic technological knowledge. For this reason, it is important to continue promoting and looking for programs based on the development of technology in all areas of Latin American countries to the preparation of current and future generations.

Through education, individuals develop abilities that are helpful for the rest of their lives such as logical thinking, prewriting, reading, languages, and others that are vital elements to succeed professionally. As the use of technology has become an essential part of individuals' preparation, it is imperative to promote and incorporate it in the objectives of the educational programs with a deeper analysis, so education and technology can be two important elements to be developed along the learning process.

UNESCO (2013) states that "Technologies enable students and teachers to have an accurate and differentiated register of each student's learning process generating an

individual itinerary appropriate for teachers' fresh roles and information. Meanwhile, students may develop additional search and self-learning strategies". (p.36) Using technologies in the learning process help students become more independent and develop important strategies that are not developed just through the use of books and old-fashioned methodologies.

In order to start getting positive results in the development of technology in education, it is important to make some changes. There are two important areas that need to be considered if good results are expected, the first one is the incorporation of new educational practices at schools, and the second one, the evaluation of learning styles (UNESCO, 2013). In addition, if teachers expect students to be able to develop abilities that allow them to succeed academically and, in the market, it is essential that teachers offer students the necessary tools to make it possible.

Additionally, the incorporation of new technologies has given teachers and institutions new perspectives and ideas to work on always using technology as a pedagogical source. In the article Strategic Approaches on the Use of ICTs in Education in Latin American and the Caribbean, published by the Regional Bureau of Education for Latin America and the Caribbean, OREALC/UNESCO (2013) it is stated that:

"Increasing access to technology by educative systems opens wide perspectives to learning and quality assessment. Many of these opportunities are already on track and being tested. Examples are the Uruguayan learning evaluation system, the aforementioned ATC21 endeavor (also led in Latin America by the government of Costa Rica), and the preparatory work of OECD to apply forthcoming versions of the PISA test, and numberless still little efforts that have already shown their potential" (p.46).

Having the opportunity to develop projects as the ATC21 has helped teachers understand new systems that allow them to evaluate competencies. In addition, these programs help students get trained in the use of helpful technological tools that they might use in the future jobs.

The assessment & teaching of 21<sup>st</sup> century skills has been a useful project promoted by Intel, Microsoft and Cisco which has been developed in countries such as Australia, the United States, Philadelphia, Singapore, Costa Rica and Holland. This project has as the main objective to offer new teaching and evaluation strategies of technological skills necessary in 21<sup>st</sup> century. Its importance eradicates in the necessity of helping students adapt to the new technologies to the subjects studied and their real-life situations. (MEP, nd).

Moreover, there have been other important institutions that have helped different countries with the incorporation and access to ICTs. The World Bank has been working on the establishment of different strategies to different countries in Latin America. These strategies focus on offering teachers pieces of trainings, digital literacy, supplying schools with technological equipment to improve education quality (Claro, 2011).

Another important institution that has helped Latin American countries' schools has been the Banco Interamericano del Desarrollo (BID) that looks to help not only students since they are in their first years of their learning process, to the preparation they need at high school before getting any job, but also to help teachers keep improving their instructive quality. Some of its purposes are based on the promotion of politics to improve the use of ICTs in the class and the facilitation of their access. In

addition, the BID has developed projects as the impact of the ICTs as a knowledge web in Latin America which evaluates the effectiveness of the use of ICTs in education through indicators to monitor their influence in different institutions. Also, the experimental evaluation of one laptop for each kid that has taken place in Peru and Honduras which offers students different learning strategies through the use of technology (Claro, 2011). These types of programs have helped students get professionally prepared.

Schools have always been categorized as the organizations in charge of the teaching process of elements such as values and costumes, the development of abilities and knowledge that individuals need to develop as their essential basic knowledge. Unfortunately, in many institutions, the strategies and methodologies are not based on new generations' necessities who are familiarized with the interaction of technology. It is important to mention that new generations are accustomed to get and manage information not only from paper, but from digital devices. For this reason, teachers need to change the way they have been teaching decades ago, to make the difference in the way students learn (UNESCO, 2013).

## **2.1 Some Historical Events related to the Incorporation of Technology in New Hope School**

As technology has become an essential tool in education, the New Hope School has been working on its development since many years ago in order to help students develop skills and competences useful for their present and future.

The educational history of this institution has always been characterized for offering students the latest and the best technological devices and learning strategies that along with a great development of English become an excellent option for students. Jeanette Cortés (2018), the principal of the institution, states that it was in 2016 when the institution started using technology as one of its main pedagogical tools. The use of cyber stations and smartboards let this institution became the first one in

Costa Rica that had the opportunity to incorporate these devices in the class.

This incorporation of the smartboards, as Cortés (2018) explained, required the institution to train teachers and administrative workers in order to better assist students and offer them a more innovated and interactive way to see education. The process of the incorporation of the smartboards took around two years in order to set up the 60 smartboards needed in the different levels of the institution from preschool to high school. Including these types of devices has helped teachers to motivate students. In addition, it is evident that by the incorporation of the smartboards, students' perspective to the learning process improved. Now, students get more involved in the learning process and are more motivated to participate in class as they have in their classes different applications, videos and interesting topics that make them get engaged in the learning process.

In addition, the incorporation of tablets two years ago has brought positive results in the development of the language and technological skills. The use of these devices has helped teachers in reading and language classes to promote the language through

the use of indicative and digital books which catch their interest in learning. (Cortés, 2018)

Finally, this school is working on new projects such as the creation of a laboratory with digital desktops in order to promote investigation. In addition, the creation of a digital library is another project that is going to take place next year.

### **2.1.1 The incorporation of Technological Devices inside the Classrooms**

When it comes to the importance of including technology inside the class, according to Cortés (2018), the purpose of including technology in the class is to motivate students to see the world of motivation in a more interactive way. In addition, the incorporation of technology in the class helps students and teachers get trained in the use of technology to develop skills that are necessary to succeed in the current society.

In addition, it is essential to mention that the incorporation of these technological devices has benefited students who have suffered from an illness while they are studying. For instance, if a student needs to leave the school for a while, he has the opportunity to study at home through the use of technological devices such as the computer or tablets, he can keep studying without the necessity of attending to class.

### **2.1.2 The importance of Promoting Bilingualism in New Hope**

This institution has been characterized for having a high level of English development. Since years ago, the development of English as a Second Language, and also other languages such as Chinese, has become an essential element in the educational program of the school. Its purpose, as Cortés (2018) mentions, is to prepare students to succeed professionally. As English has become an essential element in society and education, the promotion of languages gives students more job opportunities. Nowadays, companies are looking for individuals who have a great English level that helps them interact with people around the world. As Cortés mentions, nowadays companies are looking for individuals who are not only capable to speak the language and write it, but who really have acquired the language and are certificated with a B2 or C1 level in the European language certifications. As a result, this institution has as one of its main objectives, the instruction of English along with the use of technology in order to prepare students capable enough to succeed professionally.

## **2.2 Approaches and Methods to be used in Reading Comprehension Classes**

Since many decades ago, the way teachers transmit the information has been changing. The implementation of different ideas has leaded teachers and specialists in education to come up with different methodologies and approaches that have changed the way students learn and see the world.

Evdokia Karavas states that “All methods are a pre-packaged set of specifications of how the teacher should teach and how the learner should learn derived from a particular theory of language and a theory of language learning” (p.4)

Even though approaches are connected to the teaching methods, they can be defined differently. In the case of approaches, it can be specified that they follow an explicit theory or a way of thinking about how a student acquires the information in their learning process. Karavas also states that underlying each method is a theory on the nature of language and a theory on the nature of language learning both of which comprise the approach. These theories are derived from the areas of linguistics, sociolinguistics, psycholinguistics and are the source of principles and practices of language teaching (p.7). Consequently, it can be said that within an approach many different methods might be found and these methods are put into practice by the different techniques that each professor chooses to help students acquire the necessary information.

Decades ago, the approaches used in class were based on inflexible and teacher-oriented methodologies in which the students were expected to listen and repeat in order to learn. These types of methods required teachers to follow scripted and unbending lesson plans that did not allow students to take control of their learning process or build their own learning strategies, on the contrary, they used passive learning styles that limited students' creativity. As years have passed, the idea of this rigid way of thinking started to be changed and new methodologies started to appear

being more flexible and student-centered mostly in order to take advantage of the students' abilities and competences. For this reason, it is imperative that teachers look for the best teaching methodologies in order to facilitate the learning process.

### **2.2.1 Task-Based Instruction Method**

The Task-Based Instruction method is considered as one of the most recent and helpful ones currently used in second language instruction. One of its purposes is to motivate students to communicate using the target language. Many teachers have started using this method in order to make the language inside the class truly communicative always connected to real-life situations that allow students to develop the four language skills. Contrary to old teaching methodologies, when using the task-based approach, the development of communicative skills plays an important role and the structure of grammar is introduced indirectly, when it is needed to sustain the different skills. In addition, this method recommends the use of tasks as fundamental elements that are the base of the daily and long-term lesson strategies to develop in class (Córdoba, 2016).

The purpose of a task in the learning process is to increase students' interest and motivation towards the language studied. Additionally, this method follows clear objectives that tests students by assigning them specific duties based on their necessities that will help them improve important language skills while developing the task. (Córdoba, 2016). The task-based approach requires students to be exposed to the

language, share information, discuss, negotiate in order to comprehend the input not only using the target language in educational scenarios, but taking advantage of it in any real-life situation. This gives the language a meaning in students' lives turning the language into a useful tool they can take advantage of to face any communicative situation and not only a class they have to take as part of the educational program.

It is important to mention that this method is based on three tasks. The pre-task, Task and Review (Erlam, 2015). In this task, the teacher gives students instructions for what they are going to do. Also, in this task, the teacher usually introduces key words or clarifies vocabulary. This task is introduced by the teacher in charge and material such as videos, audios or others might be used. Therefore, there is the task, during this period the students perform their tasks individually or in groups depending on the type of activity. It is important to say that the teachers' role is very limited, because the students are the ones in charge of developing the activity and teachers are usually there to provide feedback. Finally, there is one last task which is called "review", in this period the students present and explain their works and conclusions. Contrary to other approaches, the task-based approach allows students to review each other's' work and provide feedback, leading them to learn from others and enrich their knowledge.

Different institutions around the world have incorporated this method in their language classes and have gotten really good results. In the case study *Implementing Task-Based Language Teaching to Integrate Language Skills in an EFL Program*, that was conducted with six students of an English class of a university in Colombia and which main goal was to implement Task-Based Method inside the English classes as a

way to integrate the four skills of the language, it was found that the implementation of the task-based method helped students develop a sense of consciousness about the importance of the use of language in their lives. Additionally, after incorporating this methodology, the environment of the class improved, students took control of their learning process and were more involved in the developments of the class. In addition, through the developments of different tasks based on students' necessities, students had the chance to improve their language working on the four skills at the same time, making not only the teacher, but the students eradicate the different misunderstandings about how to work on each of the skills (Córdoba, 2016). Having the opportunity to develop a task-based method in the class, allowed students to change their perspective towards the language and improve their language skills.

In addition, it is important that teachers evaluate not only students' performance, but also their opinions while incorporating a new methodology. In the previous case study, students were asked about their opinions towards the task-based approach. The results showed that for some students, this method supported the use of interesting and authentic activities such as practicing the language through skimming and scanning texts, negotiation and written assignments that were focused on real-life situations (Córdoba, 2016). It is important that teachers take time to ask their students what they think about the methodology that's currently being used inside the class, so the teacher has a clearer idea of what is working for the students and what needs to be changed in the plan in order to help students improve and motivate them to keep learning the language.

In the study titled 'New tricks': Teachers talk about task-based language teaching which was conducted with a group of primary and secondary teachers who had been part of a program in New Zealand in which they introduced the Task-Based Approach in second language classes. Results about students' perception towards the method showed that the implementation of this method changed the procedure of the class taking a more student-centered direction than teacher-driven one. In addition, they stated as the class became more flexible and gave them the opportunity to choose between the topics they consider were important, they became more engaged in the learning process (Erlam, 2015).

Moreover, it is necessary to inform teachers about the benefits this method can give to students. The Task-based methodology is a good source to take advantage to enhance reading comprehension ability. For this reason, it is imperative that teachers get capacitated or more informed about the benefits this method implies in order to start using it in class (Mesbah, 2016). Innovating methodologies is one of the main responsibilities that all teachers have. It is necessary for teachers from different parts of the world, including Costa Rica, get informed about the methodologies they can start using in English classes to achieve the main goals stated in the programs successfully.

### **2.2.2 The Content-Based Method**

Content- Based Instruction Methodology is considered to be an important method in second language acquisition. This method focuses on content rather than language; however, its goal is language instruction. During the lesson, students are focused on learning about a specific topic, using the target language in order to develop a linguistic ability. Mahawattha (2013) states that “CBI supports contextualized learning too. Learners are taught useful language that is embedded within relevant discourse contexts rather than as isolated language fragments” (p.17). Analyzing content in specific contexts helps students make connections between the new vocabulary and information acquired with the purpose of their use helping students get a better understanding of the input.

In second language acquisition, when students learn through this method, they learn the language by using it within a specific context instead of learning it out of context. In the investigation Strengths and Weaknesses of Content-Based Instruction in EFL setting at Beginning at Language Development Stages, Henry Bolaños (2013) makes reference to the content-based method and states that:

It is designed to provide second language learners instruction in content and language. This way this approach changed the misconception of learning languages through lack of context moving to more realistic English in which learners face everyday challenges and tasks so they could really apply everything they learn in order to succeed (p.21).

Incorporating content-based instruction in second language classes helps students learn the topics in their context, making students get more familiar with the vocabulary and its meaning.

In the study *Integrating the Content-based Instruction into the American Civilization Class*, a paper that took place in a course taught in the department of English at Guelma University, in which students from the first year of a foreign language class were learning the language through the content-based instruction in order to reinforce the language skills, Elaggoune (2015) states that “In a CBI course, students gain knowledge and understanding of the curricular subject while at the same time learn and use the target language”. (p.63) Incorporating this method in second language classes gives students the opportunity to learn through the content studied of the second language, consequently, students use content as a reference to start developing the language unconsciously while they explore the content and work on the different activities. “In other words, students can successfully get both language and subject matter knowledge by obtaining content input through activities in the target language” (Elaggoune, 2015, p.63) This might help students develop the relationship between content, life situations, and the language itself while they acquire the language through interactive activities.

Moreover, this method is characterized by encouraging peer correction. It is important to mention that contrary to other methodologies in which the professor is the one that transmits input and gives feedback to each student, this methodology allows students to provide and get input from their classmates Mahawattha, (2013). Having the

opportunity to learn from others' perspectives and not only from the teacher's, helps students expand their knowledge and the way they see the world. In addition, as students have the opportunity to have an active participation and contribution to their learning process, they might feel more motivated and helpful to others.

In the previously mentioned research, that was developed in the American civilization class, it is explained that before using the CBI approach, students used to complain about the lack of opportunities for participation in course. However, after the teachers decided to change the method, students improved their language skills. In order to prove the efficacy of the Content-based approach, teachers worked with two groups of students each of them with a different approach. (Elaggoune, 2015) While one of the groups, continued using the old methodology in which students' main function was to listen to the teacher passively, in the other group, students had the opportunity to use the new CBI method in which the development of critical thinking abilities was higher and the role of a teacher was guiding the students. Some exercises in which students had to define key items, answer short and essay form questions were applied to the students.

Results revealed that students who learned though the CBI method had the opportunity to develop a better understanding of the topic. In addition, it was evident that students in the CBI group had the opportunity to improve their critical thinking and study skills in a considerable way. (Elaggoune, 2015). Getting the opportunity to change from a very inflexible methodology that did not allow students express their ideas, to a more flexible methodology in which they had the chance not only to get in contact with the

content, but produce it in different interactive ways, helped students expand their language acquisition opportunities.

Additionally, after interviewing the participants, the majority of students agreed that having the opportunity to learn in a class in which the content-based approach was the main methodology made them feel more comfortable and interested in the subject. Moreover, they stated that through this methodology, the relation student-professor and student-student improved increasing collaboration and active learning (Elaggoune, 2015). As one of the most important elements in second language acquisition is the motivation and the perception students have towards the language, it is important to mention that when using the Content-Based Methodology students' perceptions towards the subject matter might be considerably influenced.

Based on the previous analysis, it is evident that for many teachers and specialists in education, the content-based methodology is one of the most helpful ones not only for teachers, but also for students who can be helped by the different advantages that this method offers to them.

### **2.3 The Action- Oriented Methodology**

Through the years, the educational necessities have been changing. In a society in which individuals are required to develop communicative, social, technical, and critical capacities in order to be able to survive. These competencies have become one of the most important elements teachers and specialists consider individuals need to work on through their learning process. In order to develop these specific abilities, it has been

necessary to teach students in a different way, offering them a richer and productive education based on reality in order to help them get prepared to succeed in the market.

As a result, teachers have started using suitable methodologies that facilitate the learning process and language communication. One of these methodologies is known as the Action-Oriented Method which has become popular during the last years.

The Action-Oriented Method is considered to be a methodology that increases the chances of developing social and methodological competencies that work as the base of a good education. As this method seeks to expose students to real-life situations, it is important to mention that it involves students in a constantly appropriate development of cultural and social language knowledge that helps them go beyond the stated goals. (Chaves and Granados, 2017). Through the application of the action-oriented method, students are able to prove what they know about English and what they can do through the use of language. As mentioned before, with this methodology, students have the chance to apply their knowledge in realistic situations and become able to overcome any difficult situation in which the language might be needed.

One of the most important characteristics of this methodology is that it focuses on the learning quality rather than the time it takes students to learn the subject. Through this methodology, students have the opportunity to demonstrate the competences they have developed along a course having the opportunity to hold learning efficacy in order to guarantee students the acquisition of the language through the extensive professional development of skills.

This methodology is based on the submission of three main steps: planning, application, and control (Chaves and Granados, 2018). When learning through the Action-Oriented Method students are required to, first of all, get informed about the main goal of the activity that is going to be developed. After the student realizes what the main purpose of the task is, he or she plans the way and direction in which the activity is going to be developed in order to finally do the work. After these steps, the students are able to evaluate their performance along with the teacher if all the steps were well executed to guarantee the learning performance and efficacy.

In the article Teachers Guide for the New English Curriculum Seventh Grade 2017, which facilitates teachers the process of including and evaluating through the action Oriented methodology, Chaves and Granados and other authorities make reference to the principals of the Action-Oriented Approach setting up the following list that includes some of its main characteristics.

#### Principals of the Action-Oriented Approach

1. The students are social agents that use the target language to perform specific actions in real life contexts meaningfully.
2. Language performances, in oral or written form, respond to language functions and are carried out in specific scenarios.
3. Enabling and communicative activities are task-based and real-life.
4. Learners use authentic materials as comprehensible input, as much as possible.
5. The ICT become an important tool to create meaningful learning experiences.
6. A great degree of autonomy is placed on the learner; therefore, the teacher works in the development of learners' meta-cognitive, meta-affective, and meta-social strategies.

7. Intercultural awareness plays an important role in getting meaning across and facilitating communication among cultures.

8. Vocabulary, syntax, cohesive forms, and phonology are taught with the purpose of facilitating communication (p.15).

It is evident that the mentioned characteristics help students who are learning a second language develop a better understanding of the language and the learning process. It is a fact that when students are learning a language, they need to use it in all possible contexts in order to understand not only its meaning, but also its functions. In addition, it is important to mention that as this method seeks to prepare students to be able to deal with the influence of globalization and the expansion of communication, it implements helpful activities and materials that help students understand the language and its cultural background.

Additionally, it can be said that this methodology focuses on the preparation of independent students able to think critically and look for effective solutions. In order to promote independence, this method allows students the interaction with others and the development of cognitive and metacognitive abilities necessary for the acquisition of the second language. As a result, it can be inferred that the role of the teacher is not directly present, on the contrary, the teacher becomes a guide that helps students get through the path of the language acquisition process giving them the necessary tools to succeed.

## 2.4 Second Language Acquisition Theories in Foreign Languages

For many years, researchers have been studying the development of a second language process which has been characterized for being complex and time consuming. They have been investigating about if once an individual has developed his first language, which is known as L1, the L2 language acquisition process follows the same pattern or if it differs.

In the research *Applied Linguistics to Foreign Language Teaching and Learning*, Dendrinos (2014) states that:

Second Language Acquisition investigates the processes by which children and adults acquire or learn a language other than their mother tongue and ultimately develop proficiency in this language, with the expectation that findings may be useful in teaching a language other than L1 (p.3).

The second language acquisition process requires individuals to develop certain conscious and subconscious elements that help them acquire the necessary lexical, grammatical, semantic, and pragmatic elements to be able to acquire the L2 (Second Language). While some specialists might say that the L2 learning process follows almost the same pattern of L1, others might argue that both processes are completely different but at some point, they are associated with each other. However, many investigators agree that there is a difference between learning a second language and acquire it. "Acquisition is a subconscious process identical in all important ways to the process children utilize in acquiring their first language, while learning is a conscious process that results in knowing about language" (Krashen 1985, quoted in Ludmilla

Mamelina, 2013). When learning a second language, the acquisition or learning process depends on the individuals' environment. For instance, if the process takes place at school, the language process is developed directly which means that the student is conscious about learning the components of the language such as the different tenses, verbs, grammar rules and other elements. On the contrary, if the process is developed unconsciously, the student is completely immersed in the language and culture, and there is no need to learn the structures or rules, he might be acquiring the language. However, even when students might have the best learning strategies and take many lessons weakly, it can happen that the learning process does not lead to the acquisition of the target language.

It happens that for some people learning a second language might be easy, but there might be others that struggle along this learning process. It can be said that this difficulty can happen because of the type of strategies being used when learning the language or because of the influence of specific elements. Factors such as the age at the students start learning a second language, the type of methodologies used in class, the motivation of the individual towards the language or even his or her personality can be factors that influence the way students acquire or not a language (Mamelina, 2013). Having a good balance of these elements helps students acquire the language easily. It is important to mention that even though these elements are different, they work all together and the development of each of them influences the students' performance.

Moreover, a second language is known as any language an individual learns or acquires after having learned his native language. This process implies elements that

are related to the educational and sociocultural environment, biologic factors and cognitive and psycholinguistic elements of the individual (Arango et al, 2013). All these factors make the acquisition of a second language possible. If students are in the most adequate environment and are immersed in the culture of the language, they have more possibilities of acquiring the language, however, his cognitive and psycholinguistic abilities are the ones that make the acquisition process keep improving.

As the cognitive and psycholinguistic elements that influence the acquisition of a second language, researchers have stated different hypotheses that explain the acquisition process.

#### **2.4.1 Behaviorism**

It is believed that all human actions are learned behaviors that with the necessary stimulus can become habits. When it comes to the L2 learning process, the behavior being conditioned is almost always a verbal one and the stimulus is what is taught or presented by the instructor. In the article, *Second Language Acquisition: Reconciling Theories*, Vera Menezes (2013) makes reference to the behaviorism theory stating that:

Behaviorism gave birth to a stimulus-response (S-R) theory which understands language as a set of structures and acquisition as a matter of habit formation. Ignoring any internal mechanisms, it takes into account the linguistic environment and the stimuli it produces Learning is an observable behavior which is automatically acquired by means of stimulus and response in the form of mechanical repetition. Thus, to acquire a language is to acquire automatic linguistic habits (n.p).

In other words, this theory states that individuals acquire a language by the imitation and practice. For example, if a kid listens to his mom saying

“bye” every time she needs to leave, he will unconsciously learn that this word is used in goodbyes and he will start imitating and producing the word. Basically, this theory analyzes the acquisition of a language through the stimulus-response communication and interaction with other individuals. Additionally, since a set of responses and structures of a first language already exist, when it comes to the acquisition of a second language, this process of learning by imitation gets more difficult because students might deal with the influence of the L1 over the target language (Mamelina, 2013). In addition, it is important to remember that each individual learns in a different way and each individual does not learn equally in the same environment and experiences conditions.

#### **2.4.2 Universal Grammar Theory**

Another important theory related to the acquisition of a second language is the Universal Grammar Theory. This theory states that every individual is born with an innate capacity to learn a language. Universal Grammar is described as those linguistic patterns or structures that are found in all languages. This belief is supposed to be present in the first language and second language acquisition and influences the initial state of the learning process. (Chomsky, 1981 quoted in Jmila, 2015). The existence of this linguistic patterns helps individuals who are learning a second language to start developing the language structure unconsciously. It is believed that all languages are composed by specific patterns or syntactic rules that once an individual acquires his first language become even more familiar. Moreover, if an individual is learning a second

language, he unconsciously expects this new language to follow the general structure of tenses and sentences. For instance, an individual whose first language is Spanish but he is learning English as a second language, would relate the structures of the target language to his first one, so in a sentence like “la casa es blanca” and “The house is white” he follows a subconscious pattern or principal that tells him that the sentences in the target language are also composed of subjects, verbs and objects.

However, it is important to mention that even though languages might follow universal patterns that are evident in all languages, the way they are used change and for each language they follow specific rules. Researchers have been investigating the fact that learners start learning a second language from zero or if the fact of having an L1 already developed helps them learn the language easier. It is thought that the development of the second language acquisition process is somehow associated with the first language. The existence of mistakes or errors while learning can be considered as evidence of the influence of the first language experiences over the second language, in other words these errors might be evidence of the grammatical structures already acquired (Broselow 1988, quoted in Jmila, 2015). It is a fact that the influence of the L1 on the target language is present along the learning process at any point. As a result, it is believed that the Universal Grammar theory is evident not only in the L1 learning process, but L2 as well.

### **2.4.3 The Natural Order Hypothesis**

Stephen Krashen who is one of the most famous linguists that has influenced the second language acquisition field has proposed different theories to understand the

process of the learning acquisition. One of these theories is the Natural Order Hypothesis which states that the acquisition of the language, especially the grammar structures follow a predicted progression to finally acquire all structures. When students are learning their L1 they acquire specific elements in a predetermined natural process until developing their mother tongue. Krashen's theory has been also being applied to the development of a second language. Individuals who are learning a second language might experience that they develop more easily some structures than others that require more analysis and practice. This theory is applied in languages programs in which there is an order of the structures students learn. Commonly, students start learning aspects such as the third-person singular, but this structure is acquired last, instead, students developed other structures such as the ing form first (Ibrahim Abukhattala, 2013) It is important that students keep practicing the language until the most difficult structures are completely acquired.

#### **2.4.4 The Theory of Comprehensive Input**

Another hypothesis developed by Krashen is the theory of comprehensive input. When learning a Second Language one of the most important elements that work as a key for success is a comprehensive input. Either written or oral messages need to be understandable for students. In addition, it is important to mention that teachers need to find out different strategies to make the input comprehensible for students, but not all input gets acquired all the time. This theory states that individuals acquire language when the input they receive goes beyond their current knowledge and capacity, this is represented as  $i+1$  which basically means that students get extra information

(Abukhattala, 2015). If students are accustomed to getting input that is below their current language knowledge, they do not learn anything new resulting in a boring learning process they can get stuck in. This theory also states that when learning a second language there is a period known as “the silent period” in which students do not produce, instead they are silent assimilating the language they are getting. Teachers should take into account that this period of time is really important for students because they need to internalize the information in order to finally produce it

#### **2.4.5 The Role of Output in the Second Language Acquisition**

In the study of second language acquisition, there has been other specialist that have argued against the input hypothesis. One of these researchers has been Swain who states that along the learning process not only a comprehensive input is required, but also there must be a comprehensive and effective output. Having students practicing the target language helps them become conscious about their production and perseverance. In addition, the production of the language plays a really important role in the acquisition of a second language because it helps students move from unclear knowledge to a more precise development and management of the language that leads to the acquisition of the language (Menezes, 2013). Having the opportunity to produce output, leads students to produce more input. If students develop the ability to elaborate comprehensive output, they have the opportunity to acquire more input, start using even more complex structures, and become more interested in learning. Furthermore, Swain also argues that when learning and producing a language there are different skills that influence its acquisition. For instance, an individual cannot produce a language orally

just because he or she understands the written or oral input being transmitted. In order to produce the language there is a need to work on the different skills necessary to produce and understand the language in oral, written, reading and listening contexts. (Swain 1985, quoted in Menezes, 2013).

## **2.5 The process of Reading in Second Language**

Developing reading ability is a complex and interesting process that requires compromise and practice. This process starts from very specific details as the sound of the letters to more general scenarios in which students have the opportunity to understand paragraphs and ideas in written forms. The ability of reading can be explained as “a complex ability to extract, or build, meaning from a text” (Grabe, nd). This ability follows a complex process that usually starts by acquiring short sounds of letters, that later become syllables and finally words that give meaning to a whole sentence. Moreover, it can be said that the recognition of words, which is related to the decoding and visual elements of words, and the association of them with the meaning of the words are very important aspects in reading acquisition process (Troeva, 2016). As students start reading through the acquisition of the names and phonemes of letters in the alphabet, the decoding of the visual elements which are known as letters plays a really important role in the acquisition of the reading skill, because it is the base of the reading process. When individuals have understood that words are formed by different series of sounds, it is time for them to learn the relationship between those sounds and graphics symbols known as the alphabetic system. This awareness of the relationship of

sounds and letters is the main principle of start reading the alphabetic language (Konza, 2010). As when learning the L1 in which students are required to relate the symbols and the sound of each of them to start creating words. When learning a second language, students also need to develop this relationship in order to start producing the reading skill, however, if individuals are not able to make this relationship, they are not going to be able to learn how to read.

According to the Professor and specialist Stanislas Dehaene (2013), in his talk about how the brain works when learners learn to read, he explains that the reading process starts at the visual stimulation in the occipital part of the brain. Then it moves into an area which he calls “the brain letter box” in which all the words individuals learn are stored. He also explains that the information moves from one area which accesses the meaning of words and another that concerns the pronunciation of words. As a result, he explains that the learning process starts from the recognition of the letters and how they are combined into written words, to the connection of each of them to the system of coding speech sounds.

Dehaene also declares that each individual, since their early years of life, has a very sophisticated spoken system inside their heads. However, what students need to develop is the ability to connect it to the visual interface (the appearance of letters), so they can connect both appropriately and become able to produce reading ability. Developing the ability to connect the letters with the spoken system individuals are supposed to have usually taken place at school. For this reason, teachers should investigate and get informed about how the brain works when students are learning to

read, especially a target language that might be more difficult for some students. It is teachers' responsibility to motivate students and help them develop the basic elements of reading, so they can start developing strategies to finally become able to produce reading fluently.

When it comes to the way students should be learned to read, there are two different points of view corresponding to the difference between acquiring and learning vocabulary which is known as psycholinguistic view and word recognition view. When students learn through the word recognition view, they are expected to identify words while reading. While learning the language students should develop specific reading skills that allow them to start making a connection with the words they see written and the words they produce orally. For example, when learning a second language, students start learning how to recognize words by the imitation of different isolated sounds that become later blended sounds that in conjunction become words. When students learn to decode these different sounds. They become able to pronounce and identify them in written forms. On the contrary, the Psycholinguistic view focuses on the construction of the meaning of words by the influence of their background knowledge. In this view, students focus more on meaning than recognition of words. To point it out, it can be said that students who learn by the Psycholinguistic view read to acquire vocabulary by encountering words in different contexts. By doing this, students will have the opportunity to construct meaning and understand the different uses of a word in context which can be really helpful.

In the article, Key Issues in L2 Reading Development which outlines the elements that influence students reading development and the nature of the L2 reading process in particular academic contexts, William Grabe (n.d) makes reference to the elements that influence the reading comprehension process arguing that:

Reading comprehension involves abilities to recognize words rapidly and efficiently, develop and use a very large recognition vocabulary, process sentences in order to build comprehension, engage a range of strategic processes and underlying cognitive skills (e.g., setting goals, changing goals flexibly, monitoring comprehension), interpret meaning in relation to background knowledge, interpret and evaluate texts in line with reader goals and purposes, and process texts fluently over an extended period of time (p.8).

As the reading process requires students to develop plenty of skills, individuals need to have in mind that this process might be difficult, but if they develop the necessary phonological awareness, they acquire reading easily. It is important to mention that the effects of the reading development depend on the phonological awareness students develop. In addition, one fact that influences the development of students' performance while reading is the influence of how individuals appreciate the world of the L1 over L2. For example, when individuals are reading, they use their background to understand the messages they see in the text. However, these messages might vary between the mother tongue and the target language. Factors related to cultural traditions or social thoughts can influence the meaning of the message transmitted.

Finally, whatever are the reading strategies used when learning to read, individuals need to go through a complex and long process that goes from the recognition of letters to the analysis of extensive paragraphs. Different factors influence students'

development of reading skill when learning a second language such as the age students start reading, the cultural factors, and the influence of the L1 over the L 2. Though, it is important to say that having developed the ability to read in the L1 might help students who are studying a second language to move easily as they already have a basic knowledge of the alphabet system and how it works already internalized.

### **2.5.1 Types of reading comprehension**

The reading comprehension is a process related to the construction and extraction of meaning through the immersion and interaction that the reader develops with the written text and the language. The reading performance may have different purposes depending on the place it is developed and the readers' interests.

#### **2.5.1.1 The Silent Reading**

The silent reading is performed by making no sound and it is developed individually. This type of reading has as the main goal to help students focus on getting the meaning from the printed text without the necessity of producing the language orally. (Botsas, 2017). This type of reading helps students read faster as they do not stop to think about the pronunciation of words that are not necessary to understand the text. Moreover, this type of reading improves understanding and allows students to move quickly to the useful information as students are focused on analyzing the text. This type of reading can be subcategorized into intensive reading and extensive.

### **2.5.1.2 Intensive Reading**

This type of reading usually takes place in an educational environment and it is based on the achievement of aspects of the language such as the grammatical forms, literal meaning, and semantic elements in order to understand the meaning of the text. (Botsas, 2017). In other words, it requires a deep analysis to discover a specific piece of information with specific tasks and purposes that helps students identify vocabulary and get more familiar with the new words.

### **2.5.1.3 Extensive Reading**

Contrary to intensive reading, extensive reading can be considered as a more flexible and general type of reading. As students are not asked to remember details, there is no pressure to keep memorizing or taking notes about very specific information (Freaht, 2015). This reading is flexible and might take place not only inside in an educational environment, but also out of it. In addition, this type of reading is characterized for having as the main goal the accomplishment of a general understanding of the reading what makes students feel more confident and enjoy the reading when reading individually and quietly.

### **2.5.1.4 Oral Reading**

Oral reading is a very valuable practice that usually takes place inside the classroom. This type of reading is associated with fluency, accuracy and pronunciation, elements that help teachers evaluate students' reading ability.

Moreover, teachers take advantage of this type of reading to evaluate different aspects of the language that are also related to pronunciation and fluency of the language and give them the corresponding feedback.

This type of reading can be applied to different activities such as the following:

- Students can take advantage of oral reading to practice with a partner or in small groups and receive feedback from others.
- Reading scripts. Students can use oral reading in theater-based activities in which they can practice aspects such as fluency, pronunciation, tone of voice and others that benefit them when learning a second language.
- Another type of activity that students can develop through oral reading is audio-repetition. Students can play and listen to a fluent reader reading text about a specific topic, then, they practice reading the text aloud alone the necessary times. Finally, they try to read along with the audio until there is an improvement in his or her fluency (Freaahat, 2015).

### **2.5.2 Reading Purposes**

There are different reasons why an individual reads. Some of them might be for necessity or subsistence, pleasure, informative, and academic purposes.

### **2.5.2.1 Necessity or Subsistence Purpose**

It is a fact that all individuals might need to develop their reading skill at one point in their lives. When individuals are in their early years of life, this skill might not be as important as others such as listening or speaking skills, however, the necessity of reading takes place when individuals start to be conscious about the influence that reading has over their lives (Troeva, B, 2016). From reading the date in the class to asking for food in a restaurant, reading can be considered a vital skill that human beings must develop to succeed.

### **2.5.2.2 Pleasure Purpose**

Reading for pleasure purposes can be an amazing experience which benefits the individuals who practice it. Readers can get benefits from this practice such as improve fluency and accuracy while reading, increase self-awareness about different topics, become more conscious about the consideration of their own identity and preferences, increase vocabulary or just get relaxed (Troeva, B, 2016).

### **2.5.2.3 Academic Purpose**

Reading experience takes place since students are in their early years of life. It is in preschool when individuals start being conscious about the influence reading has over their daily activities inside the class and the value it has for the rest of their professional

preparation in life. When reading takes place inside the classroom, its main purpose includes deriving meaning or analyzing specific texts to accomplish a specific a task that is going to be later on evaluated (Emin and Çubukçu, 2017).

#### **2.5.2.4 Informative Purpose**

Another reading purpose might be related to the necessity of getting informed. The main objective of the informative purpose is to look for information about a completely new topic or to add more information to the data that the individual knows already (Frehat, 2015).

#### **2.5.3 Reading Strategies**

When learning a second language, the reading process, requires a higher individual's effort. As the new language includes aspects related to syntax, morphology, and phonics that might contrast to the ones the students already own and manage from their native language, reading can be a difficult process. For this reason, it is imperative for teachers to provide adequate emphasis on the different comprehension skills and the numerous reading techniques since students are in the early years of their learning process to guarantee that all students have the possibility to become proficient readers.

It is believed that there are four important factors involved in the process of reading comprehension: the text, the reader, the different types of strategies the reader

develops through reading, and the stated goal. (Dr. Emin and Prof. Dr. Çubukçu, 2017) Developing the necessary reading strategies is what can make a difference in the performance of a student. Understanding the input leads students to become efficient in the learning process of a second language. For this reason, it is important to offer students helpful materials and strategies to acquire the language.

When developing reading classes, teachers can offer students a variety of strategies to develop reading comprehension. Some of these strategies can be:

### **2.5.3.1 Using Graphic Organizers**

Graphic organizers work as a guide that helps students have a clearer understanding of the structure of the text as they build upon a visual diagram. There are different ways of developing graphic organizers, some of them can be maps, time lines, charts, clusters, webs and so on. (Emin and Çubukçu, 2017). They can be really effective strategies in reading classes to enhance comprehension of ideas as they help pupils to make relationships between the events inside the text, help them identify the main and secondary ideas or identify introduction, rising action, climax and the conclusions.

### **2.5.3.2 Metacognition**

This strategy requires students to think about the reading and have control over it before, during, and after reading in order to better analyze the text. Using metacognitive

strategy helps students because they can follow an order of the process of reading. For instance, before reading, they can clarify their purpose for the text. In addition, while pupils are reading they can monitor their understanding and regulate their reading speed towards the difficulty of the reading and avoid comprehension problems. Through the use of metacognitive strategies, readers develop the ability to overcome any difficulty while reading. By doing this, students are able to avoid elements such as ambiguity or even irregularity that can influence their reading comprehension efficiency (Botsas, 2017). Finally, when students finish reading, they can check their understanding. When using this strategy, students can use different ways of monitoring states:

- Students can identify their difficulties while reading. For example, a student might identify that their difficulties are especially on a specific paragraph, so they need to look for strategies to get the idea of the text.
- Moreover, students might go back through the text in order to remember details that can help him or her understand the situation presented inside the text. For instance, if a student is reading about a character's life but he does not understand why he behaves differently, he might go back to a previous chapter in which information about the character was given.
- In addition, the pupil can also look forward in order to understand. By doing this he can understand the results or consequences of the situation he is having trouble with (Botsas, 2017).

Following this structure of analysis of the reading helps students dominate the content of the text and understand the causes and results of specific situations inside of it.

### **2.5.3.3 Generating their own Questions**

Through the generation of questions, students become aware of their reading comprehension (Emin and Çubukçu, 2017). Students can use the different information sections of the text to generate different questions. For instance, if a student reads the introduction of an article, he can ask himself about what the text is going to be about or he can also predict which elements are going to be included in the next pages. Moreover, as this type of strategy is flexible, it helps students improve their critical and creative thinking abilities.

### **2.5.3.4 Answering questions**

This strategy helps students work on their critical thinking ability. As some of the questions they might find inside of the text require them to look not only for explicit, but also implicit information, they have to be critical to answering some of these questions. Consequently, students need to be more focused on the reading to find out the details needed to answer the questions (Freaht, 2015). Finally, it can be said that this technique allows students to make a connection between what they learn with what they already knew before reading the text, helping them increase their knowledge.

### **2.5.3.5 Skimming**

Another reading strategy is known as a skimming. This strategy focuses on finding the main ideas in a text without reading it deeply. Students usually take advantage of this strategy to find out words, phrases, or the general ideas in a paragraph. As this strategy does not require students to deeply analyze the texts, it is usually performed when the time of reading is short (Emin and Çubukçu, 2017). For example, a student might understand the general idea of a text just by reading the headings and subtitles he might find inside the text. As a result, he is able to answer a very general idea of the text.

### **2.5.3.6 Scanning**

Contrary to skimming, scanning is a deeper analysis of the text. When students practice scanning, they have the opportunity to read and analyze important details of the text (Freaht, 2015). In other words, scanning is the strategy students use when they have to look for specific information. To point it out, if students are reading a text about the Second War and they are asked to find out a specific year an event took place in history, they would be using scanning in order to find out what the year is.

The previous analysis showed some of the different strategies teachers can offer to students in reading comprehension classes in order to improve their understanding, fluency and language acquisition. Through the use of technology, teachers have the opportunity to change the way reading comprehension classes have been developed through the years. Consequently, students might develop a positive perspective towards

the action of reading as a rich source of knowledge and feel encouraged to enjoy the activity of reading.

## **2.6 Reading as a Source of Lexical Enhancement**

When students are learning a second language, reading becomes one of the most important skills to develop vocabulary. As this process requires the individuals to know the meaning of words, develop fluency, and get to understand semantic connections to improve reading comprehension, the development of this process is usually slow and unpredictable. In the study Exploring learner factors in second language, (L2) incidental vocabulary acquisition through reading, examined the possible factors that could influence 129 Chinese-speaking L2 English students' vocabulary acquisition. In order to get the data, the students were given some reading materials that after reading them the best they could, they had to answer some comprehension questions. After analyzing the data collected, it was concluded that the L2 acquisition of vocabulary of these students was influenced by cognitive and linguistic aspects. These factors went from the target language proficiency students had developed, the type of strategies they used when reading the texts, and emotional perspectives such as anxiety towards the language that could directly or indirectly influence students' vocabulary acquisition. (Aiping et al, 2016). Helping students develop the necessary proficiency and strategies help them enrich their lexical knowledge and manage the cognitive and linguistic elements that can influence their performance as much as possible.

It is believed while reading, students can acquire lexicon incidentally or intentionally. When it comes to the intentional acquisition of vocabulary, it can be said that it takes place when students are doing an exercise in class or academic purposes are expected. For instance, if students are asked to read a text in order to complete a questionnaire or a matching activity, they look for the meaning of words in order to complete the assessment. In other words, it can be argued that the intentional acquisition is some process in which students are completely aware of. On the contrary, incidentally, reading happens when individuals develop linguistic activities for personal purposes such as getting informed, reading for pleasure, listening to a conversation and so on.

In addition, it is important to have in mind that individuals have the chance to learn vocabulary through incidental reading without the necessity of having an instructor guiding the reading the process. Moreover, it is important to understand that aspects such as the strategies used to read, the methodologies used by the teacher, the type of vocabulary being studied, and the personal factors of each individual might influence the amount of words individuals can acquire incidentally. (Ellis, 1994, quoted in Nation 2015). Teachers have to make sure students' perception towards reading is positive, so students can put into practice frequent reading. For this reason, teachers have to offer students reading strategies that better work for each of them, so they can make sure that students are not only enjoying reading, but they are understanding what they read and enrich their lexical knowledge through reading.

Besides these factors, it is important to take into account that one essential element in the acquisition of incidental vocabulary is the amount of time students are exposed to the language and vocabulary. It is a fact, that the more a student is exposed to a word, the possibilities to learn it are higher. This frequency of contact with the word depends on the learner because he is the one that gives incidental or a deeper focus to the new word. Furthermore, it is significant to mention that incidental attention occurs when the learners focus on other aspects of the text and not basically on the new word. On the contrary, if students focus on a word intentionally, they take time to analyze it, however, it does not always lead to the analysis of a word in different contexts, but the meaning itself (Nation, 2015). When students use either of these techniques, they need to keep looking for the different uses and meanings that the word might have. For instance, if a student encounters the word “tear” in a sentence he can get the meaning of it by the context, however, it might happen that he can encounter the same word in a different context in which the meaning would be different, maybe the word is working as a verb or as a noun. For this reason, it is important to clarify that even if students use intentional or incidental acquisition while reading, the acquisition of the word depends on the ability of the student to understand when and how it can be used, on the contrary, the word would be learned and not acquired.

As individuals have the opportunity to find a word more than once in a text or even in different texts with different linguistic settings, this might affect students’ ability to guess from contexts. However, this affection can be diminished if individuals receive sufficient input, because the more input they receive, the more opportunities for meeting the word they get (Nation, 2015). It is imperative for individuals who are learning a

second language to keep practicing reading, because through reading they have higher chances to enrich their vocabulary to be able to use it and recognize it in different situations, not only in written form, but in listening and oral as well.

When students keep exposed to reading scenarios, they can become proficient readers. It is believed that proficient students have the chance to develop effective interpreting skills and strategies and a higher incidental capacity of vocabulary acquisition. However, teachers should focus not only on the linguistic skills, but also on helping students master strategies and manage their anxiety skills. (Aiping et al, 2016).

Being exposed to the target language helps individuals acquire more vocabulary and get good results in the acquisition of the L2. Teachers need to make sure they provide students with different strategies while reading in order to help students acquire the language and get familiar with the different words they learn every day. These activities can be brainstorming, questionnaires, explanations, interactive games and others that make the reading class more interactive and help them practice the other skills (grammar, listening, speaking, writing) that are directly influenced by the development of language.

Through reading comprehension students have the possibility to acquire vocabulary. It does not matter if students reading practice is incidental or intentional, the fact of having a text full of different structures and new words help students improve their vocabulary. As a result, students' development of the language skills gets benefited as well. For instance, when students manage a broad lexical understanding they have more chances to understand what they listen in different conversations. Consequently,

they have the chance to use different structures and words while speaking with others. This helps them avoid using the same structures over and over, what could make them get stocked in the production of the language. In addition, students have the chance to enrich their writing skills. When students own a rich lexical knowledge, they face less difficulties when using synonyms or antonyms, writing different types of paragraphs as long as they also practice writing skills.

### **2.6.1 Some Advice to Improve Vocabulary**

When students are learning a second language, it is imperative that they keep working on their reading skills, so they can not only enrich their vocabulary and grammar structure but also become more fluent in the language. In order to improve vocabulary acquisition, students should take into account activities such as the followings:

- Students can consider learning a word every day. If students learn a word and its uses every day, at the end of the month, they have learned an important amount of vocabulary that benefits their language skills. By doing this, students start using different words correctly and use it in different contexts. However, students need to keep using the vocabulary they learn in order to acquire it, on the contrary, if they do not use it might be possible that they forget its meaning.
- Keep practicing language orally. When students engage in conversations, they have chances to expand their vocabulary. One technique that students can use to improve vocabulary and reading can become part of a reading group. If students are reading a book and additionally, they have the opportunity to share what they

understood and listen to other participant's perspectives, they have the opportunity to learn more vocabulary.

- Getting a dictionary. When students are learning a second language, there may be situations in which they do not understand a word even when reading its context many times. If students really need to look for the meaning of the word, it is really helpful for them to have a dictionary in their hands. Nowadays, that students have access to many sources of information, looking for the meaning of words becomes easier. Nation (2015) states that "Electronic look-up is now so speedy that it takes very little time away from reading" (p.138) In addition, students can take advantage of the extended list of sources they can find on the internet such as games and interactive applications that help learners improve their vocabulary acquisition.
- Finally, another important strategy students can put into practice is to keep learning suffixes and prefixes (Nation, 2015). By doing this, students have a clearer idea of what the meaning of a word can be. For example, if students have in mind that the meaning of the prefix "anti" means against, they have fewer difficulties understanding words like antifreeze, antisocial or antibacterial.

## **2.7 The Influence of ICTs over Students' motivation in Second Language classes**

Increasing students interest in learning a second language has always been the main focus of teachers at school. However, it is important to take into account that this interest for learning a second language depends on the motivation and perspective

students have towards the language. Motivation is one of the most important keys of success when learning a second language, because if individuals are not motivated to learn a new language, they do not have a good performance at school and they see the subject as a negative aspect they have to deal with every day at school. The element of motivation can be defined as a process that starts with the necessity of accomplishing a specific goal (Al-Ghamdi, 2014). In other words, motivation is seen as the intention or initiative a student has towards realizing an action until it is accomplished.

Researchers have been studying for many years, the influence that motivation has on the acquisition of a second language. As a result, different theories have been exposed, but one of the most popular ones is the theory of the affective filter. This theory states that there is a device that can be called the Affective filter device where information students learn needs to go to in order to be acquired. This theory also refers to the negative emotional factors that infer with this process of acquisition of the language and do not let that the input that students learn finally gets to this device. In addition, these negative factors can be related to the anxiety students experience when learning new information, the way they feel when learning or the perspective they have towards the language, the environment they are surrounded by and self-confidence while being exposed to the language.

Moreover, it is important to recognize the key elements of the affective filter hypothesis and how they influence language acquisition. These factors are:

- Motivation: When students are motivated, they have higher chances to acquire the language.

- Self-confidence: If students feel confident when producing the language, they have more opportunities to succeed when learning a second language.
- Anxiety: If students develop less anxiety when learning a second language, they have more chances to develop all areas of the language successfully (Krashen, 1982 quoted in Abdoulaye Diallo, 2014).

Having developed a great balance between all these factors helps students avoid the negative elements that can possibly interfere in the acquisition of a second language.

## **2.8 The Role of Motivation when Learning a Second Language**

As mentioned before, motivation relies on the desire and the disposition an individual has to do something. This desire is influenced by the purpose of the individual to accomplish a goal. It is believed that there are two types of motivation, intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. No matter which of these types of motivation pushes students to perform an activity, both are important and are present in the development of a second language.

In the case of intrinsic motivation, it is the motivation that relates to the personal desire of learning. On the contrary, extrinsic motivation is related to the necessity of getting a goal or an accomplishment (Zaman, 2015). In other words, it can be said that

the difference between these two types of motivation is the origin they come from. For example, extrinsic motivation comes from outside elements that influence students' perspective towards learning. When students develop an extrinsic motivation, their view is focused on earning a reward. When it comes to the acquisition of a second language, it can be said that students might develop extrinsic motivation in situations such as studying English to pass an exam and get a good grade or doing a great oral presentation in order to get a reward. In addition, when students develop this type of motivation, it happens not because they enjoy studying or because they like languages, but because their motivation moves along with the reward they can get if they develop a specific action. On the other hand, the intrinsic motivation involves the engaging of individuals in a specific behavior or activity because of their personal purposes or desires. For instance, when learning a second language students' motivation might be because situations like want to understand what the lyrics of a song are or because they prove to themselves that they are able to learn a second language. Developing extrinsic motivation while learning means that the individual's behavior will be influenced by his internal desire of developing or participating in an action for his/her own interest.

Moreover, it can be said that the difference between these two types of motivation when learning a language or performing an activity is focused on internal or external factors that influence the student's performance. It is significant to mention that, when learning a language, it is important to identify which is the type of motivation students have, so teachers can help them with their learning process. Having extrinsic motivation might not be as bad as some individuals might think, this type of motivation can be really

helpful for students that need to complete an activity that they find unpleasant. By giving students rewards, their interest and participation in class can increase and they can also be used to help students acquire different skills. For example, if a student is dealing with a reading book, the instructor can use a specific external reward to motivate the student finish reading the text and start implementing the ability to write his own stories.

However, these external factors need to be well managed or their motivational effect can decrease at any point. For this reason, it is important that teachers keep monitoring students, so they can find out what their purposes and interests are to use them as a benefit source to improve their language acquisition process.

Finally, it is a fact that intrinsic and extrinsic motivation influence students' performance when learning a second language. Even though these two variations follow a different purpose, they are connected. (Zaman, 2015). It is important for teachers to understand what really motivates students to learn a second language, if it is the necessity of getting a job or if it is just the desire to communicate with other people for fun, so teachers can guide students and offer them the best tools and strategies needed to fulfill their necessities.

### **2.8.1 Technology as a source of Motivation to learn a language**

When learning a second language, the use of technology plays a really important role in students' motivation towards the language and the learning process. It is believed that the use of ICTs in the classroom can empower teachers and students to transform teaching methodologies from a teacher-dominated strategy to a more student-centered

one. These devices go from desktop computers, laptops, cellphones, tables or any technological device that allows students access to software and internet connection for pedagogical purposes. Researchers have found that the incorporation of ICTs in the educational field benefits students and offers them a more interesting and interactive way of learning. The incorporation of technology in education offers students a broad list of benefits along with their learning process. Some of these benefits are related to the growth of aspects such as motivation towards the subject studied, independence and confidence in the learning process, a promotion of team work, creativity, and interest towards the input analyzed. (Amar, 2006, quoted in Huertas and Pantoja, 2016). The integration of technology into the class definitely transforms the way students are used to learning. In addition, its incorporation may result in an increase of the learning gains, helping students work on reasoning skills, problem-solving abilities, and thinking skills.

As technology has had such an important impact on individuals' lives, many teachers around the world have started using it as a pedagogical tool in their daily activities. By doing this, teachers can catch students attention easily and their interest towards the learning process increases as they feel comfortable using a technological device which they are accustomed to using at home or anywhere. Teachers have become aware of the importance of the use of technology in class to encourage students to learn. In the case study *Efectos de un Programa Educativo Basado en el Uso de las TIC sobre el Rendimiento Académico y la Motivación del alumnado en la Asignatura de Tecnología de Educación Secundaria* that took place at the provinces Jaén and Málaga. This

investigation had as the main purpose the analysis of the effects of ICTs over students' academic performance and motivation, so in order to gather the information a pretest and post-test were applied. Results showed that the incorporation of ICT's in education facilitates the acquisition of information and helps them improve their performance along with their educational experience. In addition, the participants stated that with the incorporation of technology in the class time goes faster and they feel more comfortable and confident when working with ICTs than when working in the traditional way (Huertas and Pantoja, 2016). As technology offers students a broad list of interactive and interesting sources, it is a fact that for students learning through the use of a technological device can be more interesting and motivating than learning from a book or a whiteboard.

In addition, it is believed that one of the benefits of incorporating the use of technologies in second language classes is the contact of the target language with the culture through the use of technological devices. In the investigation *Students' Perceptions of their ICT-based College English Course in China: A Case Study* which analyzed the foreign language students' perceptions about their ICT-based College English Course in China, students gave their opinions about the incorporation of ICTs in their classes. In order to gather the information, questionnaires were applied to 200 participants to have a clearer idea about what their perspectives towards the use of ICTs in education, students' attitudes towards teaching materials, motivation to learn, cooperation among the students and others. Results showed that through the use of technology students had the chance to access to plenty of sources of information in

which they were exposed to foreign cultures in which English is spoken. Having students exposed to these different contexts and cultural factors helped them get a clearer perspective of the language. (Zinan, 2017). It is a fact that when learning a second language, students need to immerse in the language and its culture in order to understand how the language works. However, as some students do not have the chance to travel or practice the language every day, technology becomes a great tool which allows them access to videos, audios, and applications that give them a great perspective of the cultural aspects that influence the language.

Moreover, one of the benefits that the incorporation of technology offers to students is the access to information anywhere at any time. Using technology as a pedagogical tool helps students be in contact with the target language even after they go to school. Through the use of CDs, applications or online materials, students are able to look for information to reinforce what they learn at school or information they are interested in (Zinan, 2017). Having access to the target language through audible and visual elements helps students keep practicing the language and improving their weaknesses. When students keep having access to information they have the chance to improve their listening, writing, speaking and reading skills what helps them succeed at school. This interactive and innovated way of learning motivates students to keep practicing the language through the use of the devices they are familiarized with.

Furthermore, there is a belief that when students learn through the use of technological devices, their learning process becomes richer than in the traditional class. Some individuals might argue that through the use of technology their learning process

becomes more exciting because they get more interested in the subject studied and when there is too much content to study, the fact that they have the chance to work with their classmates and learn all together makes the learning process easier as a result, students' motivation increases when they have access to technology inside their classes (Huertas and Pantoja, 2016). With the traditional methodologies, when teachers have plenty of topics work on in a short period of time, they usually prepare their classes in a really simple and monotonous way, however having technology in the class helps them change the way the class is developed. For instance, teachers can use technology at school to ask students to read an article. As an extra work, the teacher can ask them to look for videos or audios about the same topic, so they can discuss it next class. Having students construct their own perspective through the analysis of videos and interactive material helps them get more prepared to the discussion of the topic at school helping them feel also motivated and comfortable while working on the assignment.

In addition, in the article Teachers' Beliefs and the Integration of Technology in the EFL Class, there is an analysis of teachers' perspectives towards the use of technology in education. This survey took place in the Language Institute Private University in Barranquilla Colombia. In order to get a clearer idea of which these perspectives were, class observations and surveys were developed. Results exposed that the majority of the teachers who participated believed that through the use of technology in the class, instructors have the opportunity to use language with real native speakers, what normally is not frequent in traditional classes. As a result, students are more exposed to the language and have the chance to improve their language abilities. Teachers state

that this type of benefits makes classes more attractive and engaging to students what makes them become more motivated (García and Rey, 2013). Through the use of applications such as Skype or video calls, students have the possibility to practice the language with native speakers or even get feedback from them making the learning experience comfortable and stimulating.

Additionally, in the study previously mentioned, results showed that teachers believe that technology-based activities encourage students to achieve the goals of the course easily. Having this facility to acquire the information through the use of interactive options, motivates students to keep practicing and participating (García and Rey, 2013) Teachers should take into account that students need to become part of technology-based activities as one of their necessities nowadays is the development of technological skills.

Finally, it is important to mention that the integration of ICTs in the development of a second language is still a situation that teachers need to work on to help students improve their language skills. However, it is important to have in mind that its use is not just a trendy topic in education, it goes beyond. Technology is a tool that students can take advantage of to succeed academically and professionally.

## **2.9 Benefits of using Tablets in Education**

One technological device that has become popular during the last years has been the tablet. Because of their characteristics and size, tablets have become more common in education. The incorporation of these devices has brought to students and teachers

different benefits. In the article *Tablets en Educación Oportunidades y Desafíos en Políticas uno a uno*, which emphasizes the role of tablets in education exposes some of the advantages that using these devices gives to students. Some of those benefits are:

- As these devices are really innovated and attractive the use of tablets in the learning process increases students' motivation towards learning.
- The technical features of these devices have to make them really useful to distribute the different topics studied. In addition, their system allows students to access to applications, games, videos, texts in an efficient and fast way.
- These devices have also the benefit that they can be used as readers for digital books. Contrary to computers, tablets have a small size that allows students to take them anywhere as if they were books or kindles. In addition, they can access different websites to download digital books that can be sometimes free.
- Moreover, it is important to mention that sometimes students have to carry lots of books to school. This can be tedious and even be tiring for students. With the incorporation of tablets into the class, students can replace some of the books that can be read online or through the school platform in order to prevent future physical illnesses (Marés, 2012).
- Additionally, as these devices are really easy to use and can be taken anywhere, students independency while learning increases. When students have access to tablets, they do not need to have the professor telling them what to do, instead, through the use of applications and educational tools given by the teacher, students can become more independent and build their own knowledge.

- Using tablets increases collaboration in learning. Through the use of tablets, students have the opportunity to discuss the different topics studied and access to important facts easily. In addition, students can have the opportunity to share the information one to another immediately what increases collaboration where all students have access to technology (Kearney, Schuck et al. 2012, quoted in Dr. Clarke and Svanaes, 2014).
- Finally, due to their functionality, some educators might prefer tablets instead of kindles, computers or even phones. Because of their appearance, a capacity of recording videos and audios, memory capacity and other aspects tablets have become popular and necessary in many schools.

Incorporating the use of tablets in education, helps teachers make a change in the way regular classes are developed. As a result, more interesting, interactive, innovated, and creative classes take place. In addition, the use of digital devices engages students in the learning process and motivates them to be more independent capable to build their own learning process. Finally, it is imperative to say that these devices offer students the opportunity to develop the necessary technological skills at any time and anywhere, so they can use them wisely in their learning experience to succeed.

**CHAPTER III**  
**METHODOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK**

## **3.1 METHODOLOGY**

This chapter contains important information about this research. Aspects such as the type of study, the techniques and procedures for collecting the data are going to be developed in this chapter.

### **3.1.1 Purpose of Investigation**

This study has as the main purpose the study of the reading process in Second Language Acquisition and all the factors that can influence its development through the use of technology. In order to better understand how the reading process is developed and how the use of technology can help students improve their reading techniques, the analysis of previous investigations such as books, articles and others needs to be taken into account in order to come up with new conclusions and strategies to contribute to the investigation of the field. A basic investigation is oriented to search for new information to help improve a specific field of science. (Barrantes, 2014) In other words, the basic research takes advantage of the existent investigations and information available in order to contribute with the improvement of the field being studied.

As, this research seeks to find out how the use of tablets in New Hope school can be improved and how can teachers take advantage of these technological devices in order to help students improve their Reading comprehension skills, this research is considered a basic one.

### **3.1.2 Dimension**

This study pretends to study the results that using tablets in reading classes can have on seventh-grade students' learning development in New Hope school during their learning process in their first period of 2018. Cross-sectional investigation studies investigate the development, behavior and important aspects of a group of subjects in a specific moment. (Barrantes, 2012). This type of study seeks to analyze a specific topic as deep as possible, in other words this study cares more about investigating a considerable amount of information in a short period of time than analyzing the behavior of the subject over time. As this research seeks to analyze the implementation of the use of tablets at a specific point of time that will not take a year to expose final conclusions, this research is a cross -sectional investigation.

### **3.1.3 Framework of the Investigation**

This study is going to be developed at the institution Complejo Bilingue Nueva Esperanza which is located in San Juan de Santa Bárbara de Heredia. Even though this institution offers a very varied educational program with different subjects based on a second language as the main source, based on the aim of this research it takes as the macro element the English department of the school. Additionally, it is important to mention that as the main objective of this study is to analyze the results that the use of tablets has over students' learning process in reading English classes, the micro element of this research is the English reading class of a specific group of seventh graders of the school.

### **3.1.4 Nature of the Study**

This research seeks to study the use of tablets with the purpose of getting information about the elements that can influence students' performance in a positive or negative way. In order to better understand the influence of these technological devices on reading comprehension classes, important elements need to be described as much as possible.

The qualitative investigation is characterized for developing an intensive and frequent relation with the environment and subjects studied because of the necessity of gathering detailed information about the subject studied. This information is gathered through the use of different strategies such as: interviews, observations, videos, biographies, recordings and others that allow the researchers to get detailed information (Barrantes, 2012).

As this research seeks to develop a close relation with the subjects and their environment to study the purpose of the use their tablets, how the class is developed, how students' behaviors and perspectives when using tablets and how the tablets facilitate their learning process in the reading class, it is considered to be a qualitative investigation.

This study has as the main purpose the research of the use of tablets and the elements that might influence students' behavior and performance in reading classes. In order to better understand the influence of tablets in reading comprehension, there is a

need to observe the subjects being studied in their natural environment to come up with conclusions. All individuals have different perspectives and understandings of the world which are based on their experiences. This influences their performance in different situations, so it is through investigations that researchers get to understand different performances in different contexts (Hernández, et al, 2014). Qualitative investigations are based on the collection of information through observations of the subjects in their daily routines, questionnaires, discussions and others that help investigators get to a conclusion or even state new conclusion of a specific topic. As this investigation needs to observe the performance of the students during their reading classes while using tablets as a pedagogical tool and get to know students' perspectives towards the use of tablets and the different methodologies used in class and discover the elements that influence the way students improve reading through the use of technology rather than verify theories, this is a qualitative investigation.

### **3.1.5 Character of the Investigation**

As this study seeks to analyze the elements that might influence students' reading comprehension development through the use of tablets, elements such as the environment, methodologies and strategies used in class, students and teachers' perceptions and others need to be described to better understand how these devices help students along their learning process. As a result, the character of this study is descriptive, because it seeks to study and describe in detail what happens inside the reading comprehension class in order to come up with conclusions.

## **3.2 Subjects and Sources of Information**

This fragment of the research describes the subjects of the study which are basically a group of students and important documents that make this study possible.

### **3.2.1 Subjects of Information**

One of the vital parts of this study are the subjects that work as a reference for the credibility of the research. In order to have a clear understanding of the different findings and innovations about the use of technology in education of a Second Language, the following group of sources is going to be used as a reference: articles, videos, educational magazines, and books. It is important to mention that the majority of sources are taken from the data-base of the Universidad Hispanoamerica and have been recognized as reliable and important investigations.

Moreover, the second group of sources of information comes out from the application of observations, interviews, and questionnaires that are going to be later analyzed. The population considered for this study is a group of 25 seventh grade students of New Hope School.

However, it is important to mention that in the application of the instruments only 21 students participated.

### 3.2.2 Primary Sources

To conduct this research, it is necessary to analyze important documents that work as a reference for the development of the research and its conclusions. Some of the primary sources of information are based on national and international documents. The following are some of the primary sources used in this research:

The information gathered by the Principal of the school, who plays an important role in the development of this research and the Regulation of the use of tablets in New Hope school, include the main objectives that justify the use of tablets in the school. In addition, the information gathered from the group of students being analyzed work as a primary source of information. In addition, it is important to mention that the teacher of the group also plays an important role in the study, Maria Fernanda Castro, who has a licentiate educational degree and is currently working in New Hope School contributes to the development of important elements of the research that are taken into account for the observations and conclusions.

- Actualidades Investigativas en Educación la Enseñanza del Inglés en Costa Rica y la Destreza Auditiva en el Aula desde una Perspectiva Histórica published on 2005 which refers to the history of the incorporation of English in the Costa Rican education.

- Cronología de la enseñanza del inglés en Costa Rica durante el Siglo XX, magazine Comunicación, published in 2012 which describes important facts about the incorporation of the language in the country and education.
- Strategic Approaches in the use of ICTs in Education in Latin American and Caribbean published by the Regional Bureau of Education for Latin America and the Caribbean (OREALC and UNESCO) in 2013 that describes elements about the importance of the use of ICTs in education.
- El papel de las tecnologías de la información y las comunicaciones en la educación inclusiva, published by UNESCO on 2013.
- Applied Linguistics to Foreign Language Teaching and Learning published by the University of Athens on 2014 which explains the different approaches used in SLA and their characteristics.

### **3.2.3 Secondary Sources**

Information from this research is reinforced by other resources such as books, magazines, articles taken from the Universidad Hispanoamericana data base and other important sources, newspapers, and videos. They contribute to reinforce the information of this research and they are also included in the bibliography and their contents are related to the use of ICTs in education, the process of learning a second language, strategies for reading comprehension, and others.

### **3.3 Population**

This study is based on a group of seventh grade students from New Hope School. The group 7-1 composed of 11 girls and 12 boys are in the group of subjects to be studied. This students' ages range from 13 to 14 years old and come from several surrounding communities of Heredia and Alajuela. It is important to mention that all the students have been enrolled in this institution since they started primary school what makes this group a good source of information because of their experience and familiarity with the institution and its educational program. As a result, it can be stated that because of its experience as New Hope students, they have developed a good English level that has been improved along with their learning experience. Finally, it is imperative to mention that this group of students has experience with the use of ICTs in the class, especially tablets which started being used since they were in their last years of primary school.

In addition, it is important to say that the Teacher Maria Fernanda Castro who is the reading teacher in charge is part of the subjects, as her experience and relation with the group is useful for the study.

### **3.4 Instruments of Investigation**

The methodology of this study, includes observations made directly to the group of subjects in their reading comprehension classes. The application of observations allows researchers to get information in detailed and works as a reference when interviews or questionnaires are not sufficient to get conclusions. Additionally, observations need to

be applied more than once in order to be able to interpret the findings (Barrantes, 2012). In this study, through the application of observations, details about the methodology and strategies, teaching materials, and other aspects are going to be observed in detail. Moreover, it is important to say that these observations are going to be developed during the regular reading classes in order to detect the normal development of the lesson. The researcher is going to consider elements such as discipline, teaching techniques, methodologies, students attitude towards the subject and the materials being used, the development of the class in order to come up with conclusions.

In addition, questionnaires with open and closed questions are going to be applied in order to obtain students' views about aspects concerning the English reading comprehension classes and its relation with the use of technology in the class. The use of questionnaires can be a useful instrument for qualitative investigations. It is considered to be a procedure to explore ideas and believes of a real-life situation (Barrantes, 2012). In this study, the use of questionnaires can be an important tool to gather information related to the influence of the use of tablets in reading comprehension.

The use of questionnaires plays an important role in the qualitative investigations because as this type of research seeks to study the social and human behaviors in different contexts, this technique allows researchers to get detailed information about the subjects studied (Barrantes, 2012). Interviews help the investigator to get information not only about students' experience but also the teacher's when incorporating the use of tablets in the regular classes.

**CHAPTER IV**  
**DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS**

#### **4.1 Methodologies used in the English Reading Class of the 7-2 Group of New Hope School**

Based on the observations related to the methodologies developed in the 7-2 group in the reading class of the New Hope School, some important aspects can be mentioned. It can be said that the methodologies used in the reading classes are based on Content-Based Instruction and Task-Based Approach which are implemented depending on the activities the teacher develops in the class. However, because of the type of subject, the one which is regularly used is the Task-Based Approach that allows the teacher to introduce the new vocabulary before reading a text. It is usually done by the application students use which is called “Kahoot” or Literature Circle, that provides students the new vocabulary explanation and examples of it used in context. In addition, this approach allows the students to develop their reading process quietly individually or in groups, while the teacher is providing feedback when necessary, but the students are the ones in charge of producing. At the end, the students are in charge of presenting their conclusions and review each other’s work.

In addition, the Content-Based approach is also used in the reading class. Through this approach, the students are exposed to a considerable amount of English through stimulating content through the different texts. This helps students learn the language indirectly, so they have the opportunity to explore the texts and learn vocabulary and structures naturally in context. This method also offers the teacher and the students flexibility in their daily classes and can be adapted to students’ interests.

Some of the activities realized in the class such as taking short tests after reading a story, answering and asking questions orally based on the texts, making round-tables, changing the end of the stories, working in groups to analyze pieces of the texts to explain points of view to the rest of the class, and others help students work on their reading comprehension skills through flexible and interactive ways of learning. In addition, it is important to mention that all these activities have as the main goal the development and improvement of the reading skills and proficiency of the language. For this reason, the activities are based on real-life situations and the texts studied are adapted to the students' daily situations, so they can develop a better understanding of the language.

Having these types of methodologies that allow the teacher develop interactive and attractive activities to help students become engaged in the reading class. During the English reading class, the students usually work in silence, if they have questions, they ask the teacher for clarification and feedback. When it is time to check reading comprehension, the majority of the students participate actively, they share their ideas and even come out with new theories. However, it is evident that not all the students have an active participation. Some of the students remain quite listening to others and raise their hands to ask questions to the teacher, so she can clarify aspects of the reading.

Applying these types of methodologies benefit students in different aspects. First of all, the students have the possibility to be more critical as they have to analyze the different texts and come up with conclusions. In addition, this method allows students to

use the target language as much as possible, so this allows them to improve their English skills every day. Moreover, these methods make reading comprehension classes more flexible and seek to help students develop the necessary skills to apply what they learn in the class to their daily routines. As a result, students learn reading through a more interactive and attractive way of learning, instead of just reading from a book that sometimes might be a boring activity for some students.

#### **4.2 Technology Used in the English Reading Class of the 7-2 Group of New Hope School**

It is evident that in the group observed, technology plays a really important role in the reading class. This group takes English reading classes four times a week. From these four classes, students use their tablets twice a week for their reading comprehension class, while the other two days, they work on their grammar class with extra material. However, it is important to say that students need to carry their tablets all days in case they need it. The use of tablets is so important for the development of their classes that if students do not take them to class, they can be penalized and their grades can be also affected. Each student has their tablet, so they can read comfortably and do their practices and duties by themselves.

Based on the observations, it is evident that the use of tablets in reading class is necessary for a great development of the topics studied. Since the class starts, students access to their accounts, so they can get into the platform where they find all their digital books and applications. Students usually have a period of time to read individually and when they finish reading, they have to complete the activity prepared for the day. The

activity can be answering a short questionnaire based on the reading provided by the application they are using or it can be a short questionnaire prepared by the professor. Once students finish their jobs, they send their answers to the teachers' email, so she gets the results immediately and by using google docs, the practice is checked, so the teacher gets the practice checked. However, depending on the type of questions, the teacher needs to double check the answers to make sure the students developed the correct answers. Other type of activity is the implementation of educational games. When students finish their work, they have the opportunity to access to the educational games that the teacher allows. By doing this, the students can learn unconsciously while they are playing. This helps the teacher keep the class quiet and all the students focused on practicing the language, while the rest of the students finishes reading.

Additionally, depending on the activity students work together reading different pieces of the text to analyze them all-together. In this case, the use of the tablet helps students take notes while they are analyzing the text all together. Some people might think that this activity can be done with regular books, however, the use of tablets helps students look for information, vocabulary, and pronunciation of words by using digital translators. By doing this, students enrich their knowledge, become independent and develop technical skills through the use of their tablets.

It is important to mention that the use of the tablets in the reading classes has as the main purpose to motivate students to see the literature education world in a more interactive way by the use of attractive applications and educational material. In addition, including technology in the reading classes makes research and learning easier as

tablets provide students with more opportunities to access to information, check their spelling, pronunciation and knowledge just by “a click” faster than going to the library to find the information they need. As technology has become part of students’ daily routine, the inclusion of it in their reading classes might help them feel comfortable as they are using a familiar device not only outside of their classes but also inside of it, leading students get trained in the use of technology to develop skills that are necessary to succeed in the current society.

Having access to the use of technological devices in the class can really motivate students to learn. In the 7-2 group, it is evident that the majority of students enjoy doing their assignments through their tablets. However, while the students are working some of them get distracted and access to different websites that are not educational. In order to keep students focused on what they are supposed to be doing, the teacher usually checks students work, so she makes sure that they are working. In addition, some students complain because sometimes their internet connection is not good or the platform does not work as they expect what interrupts their reading.

In general, it can be said that the use of the tablets in the reading classes helps students in an easier and more interactive way that with the necessary supervision can be a really good educational tool to be used.

### **4.3 Teacher's Perspective Towards the use of Tablets**

Based on the teachers' perspectives towards the use of tablets, important elements can be mentioned. According to the literature teacher Maria Fernanda Castro (2018) tablets are really useful because they make teachers and students work easier. She mentions that through the use of tablets students develop their assignments faster and they do not have to worry about carrying many books to their class. In addition, she mentions that some of the advantages students get from these devices are: colorful and neat images, interesting applications and games that can motivate them to read, and their learning process gets easier as they use simple, but well-designed sites that helps students learn.

However, she also states that there can be disadvantages. According to Castro (2018) some disadvantages she has experienced when using tablets in class can be a bad internet connection that does not allow students to work as expected. As almost all the class is based on the use of technology, she always needs to have a "Plan B" to continue with the class and avoid skipping the topics to study. In addition, she says that as sometimes students bring their tablets uncharged, they have to wait until it is ready to be used, so they work with another student, but their reading comprehension can be affected. Castro (2018) also says that working with tablets makes reading classes more attractive than traditional reading classes. She mentions that even though they have both types of classes, the grammar which is developed as the traditional class with a regular book and the reading comprehension class, which is developed through the use of tablets, she has noticed that students prefer the class that includes technological

devices. In addition, she mentions that the use of tablets benefits also teachers because they give them the facility to check and send different assignments.

According to Castro (2018), the use of tablets has helped students achieve positive academic results. She says that if students read carefully, the results can be amazing and if they make mistakes, the teacher can easily check their jobs and give the credit, making the learning process easier and enjoyable. Moreover, she mentions that students have improved their vocabulary, reading comprehension, and pronunciation through the use of apps they use in class such as Kahoot and Literature circle which promote the analysis of texts and acquisition of vocabulary and good pronunciation. Additionally, teachers have the chance to send videos, links to websites, power-point presentations that can be really helpful strategies to provide feedback to the students.

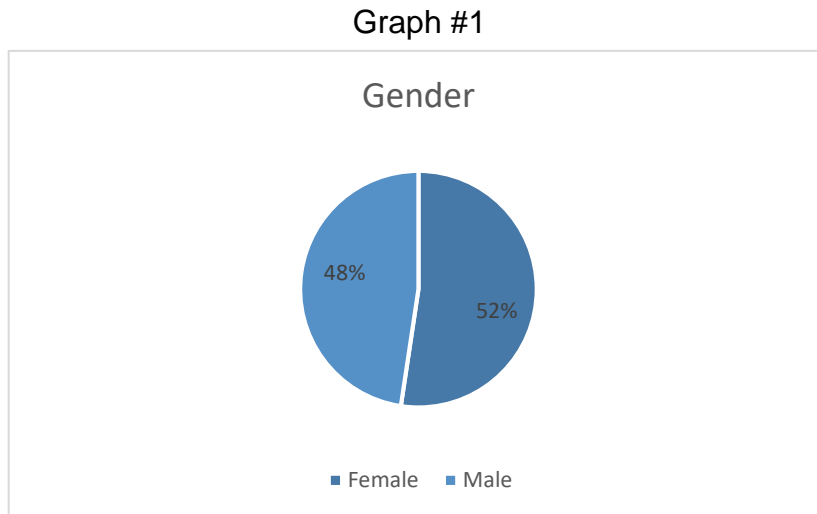
Finally, Castro (2018) states that in order to monitor the use of tablets in classes, teachers have to take into account that they need to keep walking along the aisles to check that students are really working and not accessing to other websites. Having tablets in the class can become a useful tool to motivate students to keep reading and use technology, so they can improve their English skills as much as possible.

#### **4.4 Data Analysis and Results**

This chapter contains the information gathered from the observations, application of instruments to the twenty-one students, and the questionnaire completed by the English Reading professor from group 7-2 from the New Hope School in San Juan de Santa Barbara de Heredia.

## 4.4.1 Analysis of the Subjects Studied

### 4.4.1.1 Population

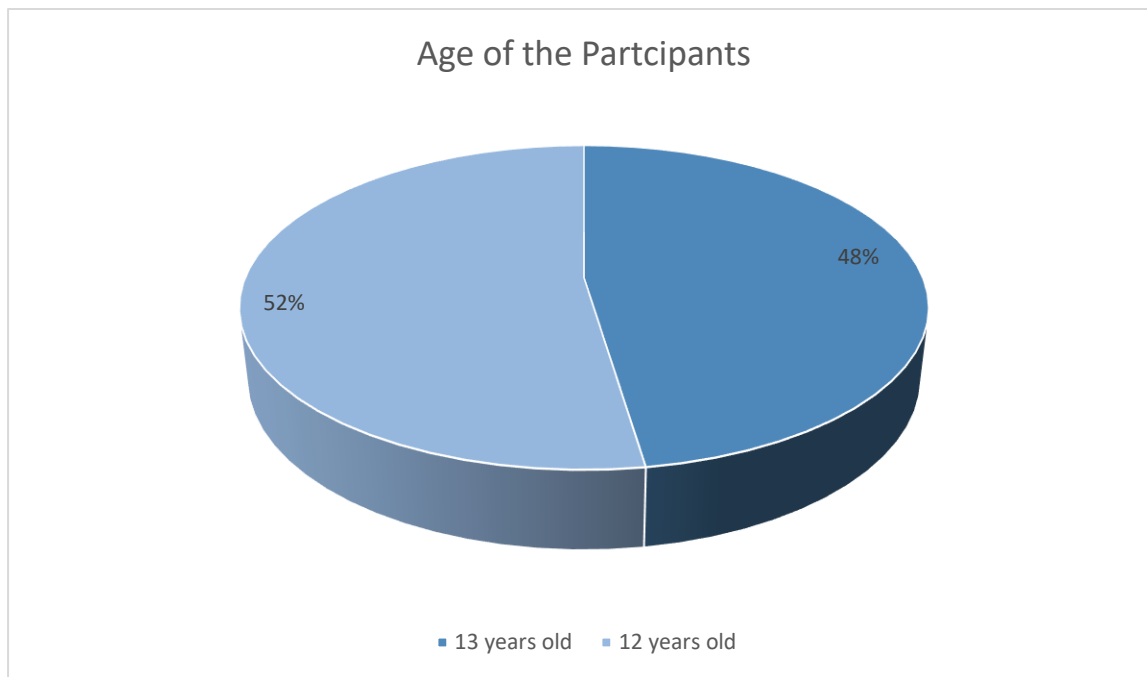


Source: Liz Mejías. Item Identification Data: Gender of the Participants.

### 4.4.1.2 Gender

From the twenty-one students who participated answering the questionnaire, 52% (11) of them were female and 48% (10) of them were male.

Results show that the distribution of the population is balanced in what benefits the investigation as there is a well-adjusted opinion about the use of tablets from female and male.

**Graph # 2**

Source: Liz Mejías. Item Identification Data: Age of the Participants.

#### **4.4.1.3 Age**

Students' ages ranged from 12 to 13 years old.

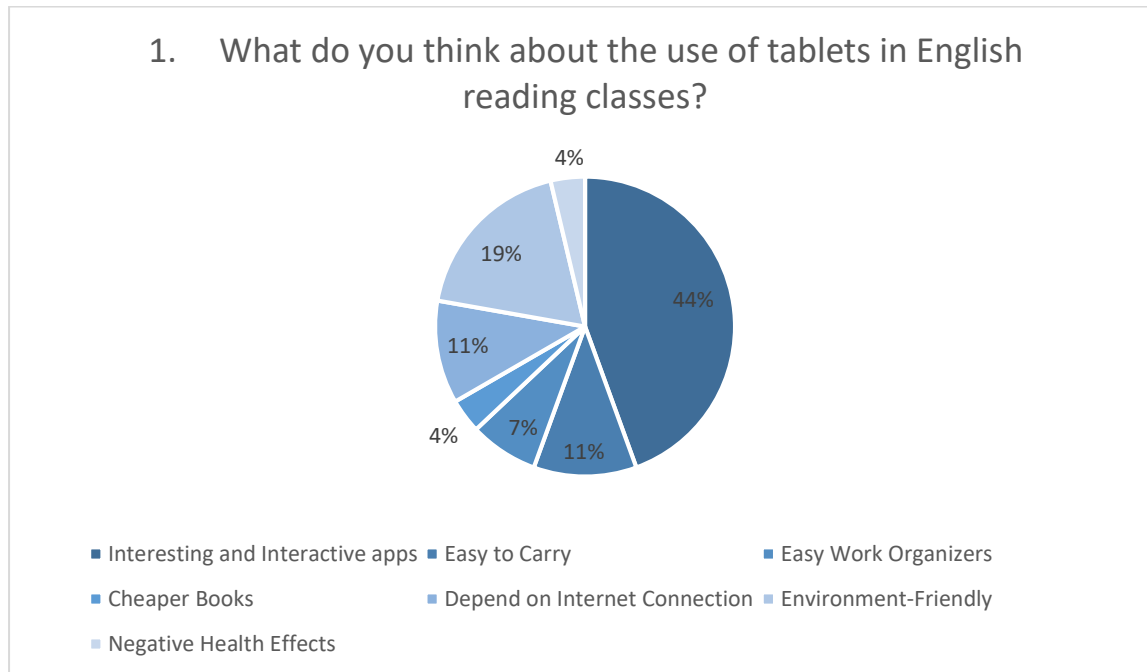
From twenty-one students who participated in the research, 52% (11) of them were 12 years old and 48% (10) of the students were 13 years old.

Hence, there are different ages among the students; it may sometimes interfere in the learning process due to the supposedly acquired student's maturity and their probable desire to read.

## 4.4.2 Analysis of the Questionnaires for Students

### 4.4.2.1 Students' perspectives towards the use of tablets

**Graph #3**



Source: Liz Mejías. Students' perceptions about the use of tablets in English reading classes

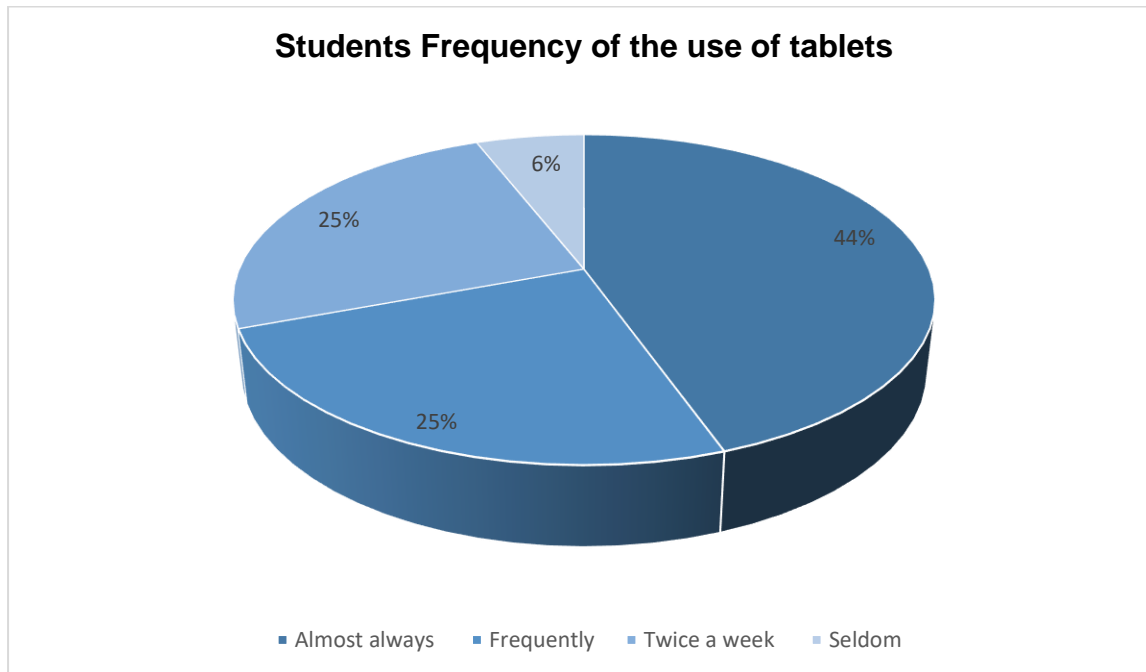
In the first question of the instrument for students about their perceptions towards the use of tablets in the class, 44% (12) of the population stated that they believe that the use of tablets offers them interesting and interactive applications they can use in their reading classes to improve the language. Some students argue that the use of applications such as digital books, games, translators, audio books, and others make the use of tablets in the reading class as a helpful tool. Additionally, students state that the fact of having these types of applications helps them move from the regular books to

a more innovated way of learning that definitely benefits their learning process. Moreover, 19% (5) of the students stated that they believe that the use of tablets benefits the environment as they do not need to copy materials to use them in class. Also, 11% (3) of the students believe that the use of tablets benefits them because they are easy to carry, so they do not have to carry many books for the reading class, on the contrary, they can keep many books in their tablets what also benefits their health. In addition, they state that they do not need to write down their notes on paper, as they can save important information on their tablets.

In addition, 7% (2) of the student state that the use of tablets can be useful as these devices help them organize their work while reading. Some of the reasons students state are that these devices help them highlight, save, and organize their notes through the use of eye-catching notepads or apps which make their notes look neat and organized. Moreover, 4% (1) of the students argue that the use of tablets helps students get cheaper books, so they do not have to pay lots of money for a regular book, instead, they just need to download it. However, not all the students believe the use of tablets benefits their learning process. The 4% (1) of the pupils state that the use of tablets can affect their health negatively because they spend too much time looking at the screen and their eyes get irritated easily, their posture gets affected and they get tired while reading. Finally, the 11% (3) of the pupils state that as these devices depend on internet connection, they do not always work as expected and their performance while reading gets negatively affected.

#### 4.4.2.2 Students Frequency of the use of tablets

Graph # 4



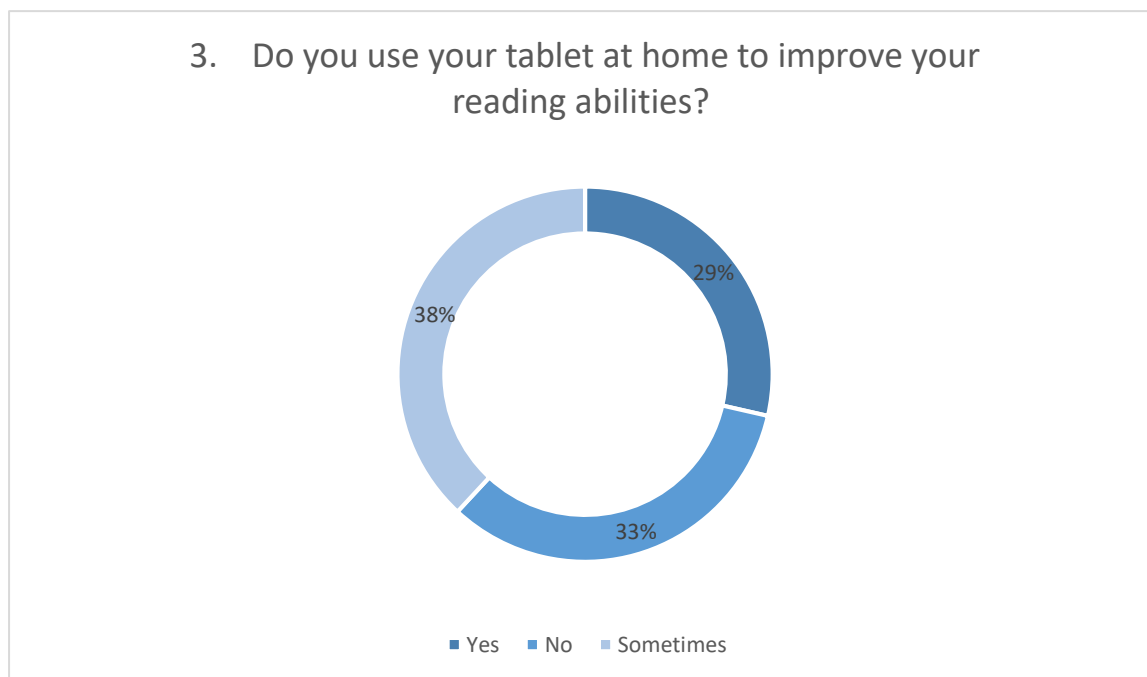
Source: Liz Mejías. Students' frequency when using tablets in class

In question number two of the questionnaire which shows the frequency of the use of tablets in the reading class, 44% (9) of the students say that they use their tablets almost always in their reading class. Some of the subjects state that as they have to read and analyze texts, the teacher always ask them to use the tablet. Also, 25% (5) of the students argue that they use their tablets in class frequently and 25% (5) of the students say that they use the technological devices twice a week when they have to

review some texts or take quizzes and practices related to the readings. Finally, 6% (2) of the students mention that they seldom use their tables in class. They mention that they could use their tablets not only for reading, but also for the grammar class. The majority of the students agree on the fact that the tablets frequently used in the reading comprehension class are what shows that technology plays a very important role in the English reading class.

#### 4.4.2.3 Frequency of the use of Tablets at Home

##### Graph # 5



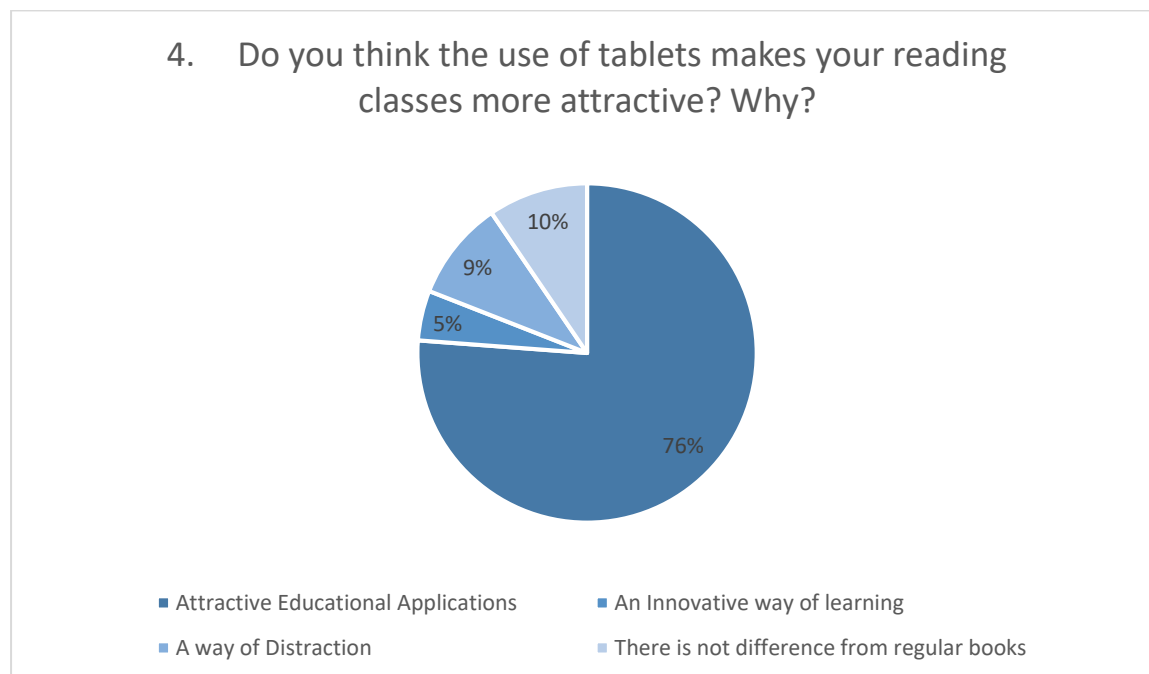
Source: Liz Mejías. Students' frequency when using tablets at home to improve their reading comprehension

It is shown that of the 21 students, 38% (8 participants) of state that sometimes they use their tablets at home to improve their reading comprehension skills. Some of the students say that they read digital books, play educational games, and listen to the

audio books whenever they have the chance. In addition, the 33% (7 subjects) of the students declare that they do not use their tablets to improve reading comprehension, however, they use them to watch videos or listen to music in English. Finally, the 29% (6 subjects) of the students say that they do use their tablets at home to improve their reading comprehension skills. Some of the students say that having the opportunity to access their texts and the applications they use in class helps them keep improving their reading and language skills.

#### 4.4.2.4 Influence of the use of tablets over the reading Comprehension Classes

**Graph # 6**



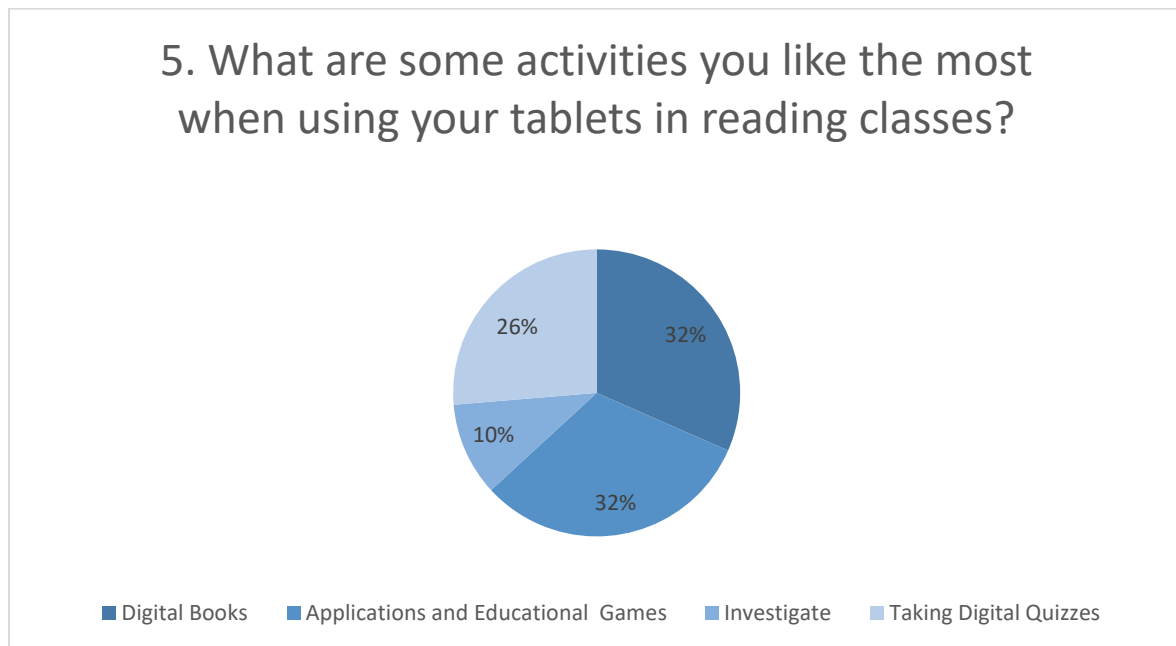
Source: Liz Mejías. Students' perceptions about the influence of the use of tablets on their reading classes

According to the subjects' opinions, the 76% (15) of the students state that they believe that the use of tablets does make the reading classes more interesting. One of the

reasons is the use of educational applications which offer students a more interactive and attractive way of learning through the use of educational games, audio books, digital books, and other applications such as Kahoot or Circle literature. In addition, the 5% (1) of the students say that the use of tablets in the class offers teachers and students an innovative way of learning that can catch students attention easily. However, the 10% (3) of the students say that the use of tablets can affect negatively their performance as it can become a distraction and the 9% (2) of the students say that they believe that the use of tablets does not make classes more interesting because it is almost the same as using a regular book.

#### 4.4.2.5 Favorite Activities through the use of tablets

**Graph # 7**

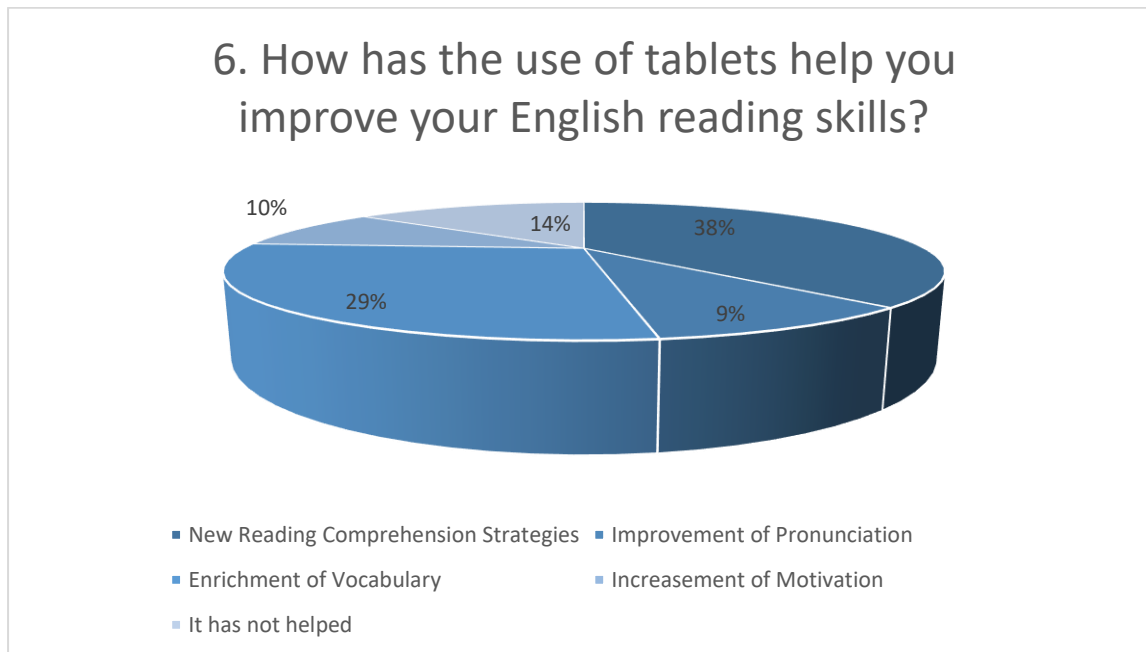


Source: Liz Mejías. Students' favorite activities through the use of tablets

Based on the results of the questionnaires, the students state that some of their favorite activities from the ones developed in the class through the use of tablets are the following: The 32% (6 participants) of the students say that their favorite activities are based on the use of digital books. Students argue that the use of digital books help them comprehend the texts as they offer images that guide them through the reading. Additionally, students say that these digital books help them enrich their vocabulary as they help students categorize words of the text which are highlighted depending on their use and category, so they have a clearer idea of the information they get. Also, the 32% (6 participants) of the students say that their favorite activities are based on the educational games and application which make their classes more interactive and attractive. In addition, the 26% (5 participants) of the students mention that their favorite activities are the quizzes and short practices they complete after reading. They say that the fact that they prove their reading comprehension immediately after finishing reading the text helps them realize what are the areas they need to improve and which ones are fine. Also, students state that it is easier completing quizzes on their tablets because the teacher gets their answers immediately through the internet connection, so they save time and paper. Finally, 10% (2 participants) of the students say that their favorite activities are the ones that require investigation, so they can use their skills and creativity to look for information about the topic studied and share it with the rest of the class.

#### 4.4.2.6 Improvement of Reading Skills through the use of Tablets

Graph # 8



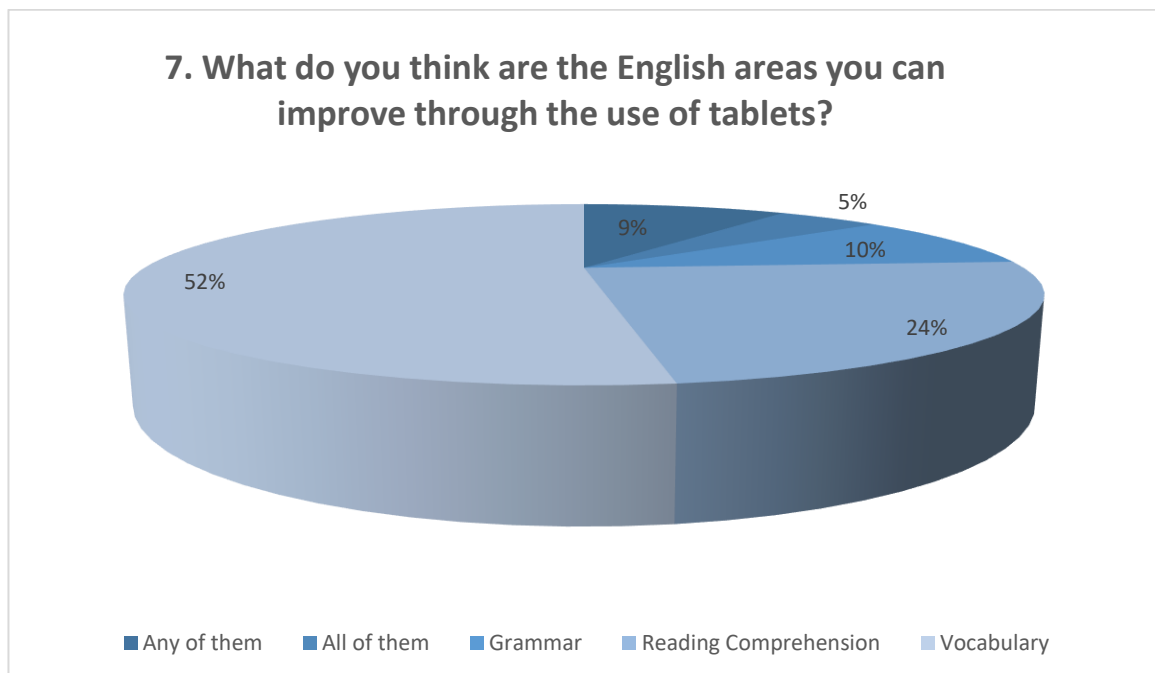
Source: Liz Mejías. Students perceptions about how the use of tablets helps them improve their English reading skills

Results show that 38% (8 participants) of the students say that the use of tablets has helped them improve their reading comprehension strategies by the use of digital books which help them understand the components of the text through the use of images, questionnaires based on the readings and short comments about the reading that help them better understand the main and secondary ideas of the text. Moreover, 29% (6 subjects) of the students say that the use of tablets has helped them improve enrich their vocabulary. Some of the reasons are that the applications and books they use through the use of tablets allow them to classify words and get a clearer idea of their corresponding uses and meaning, so their lexical knowledge can increase. In addition,

10% (2 subjects) of the students believe that the use of tablets has helped them improve their pronunciation. They say that the use of audio books does help them listen to the words while reading and learn how each word is pronounced. Also, they state that it benefits them as they do not have to stop their reading to look up for the meaning and pronunciation of words. The 9 % of the students believe that the use of tablets has helped increase their motivation towards reading, because of the attractive options these devices offer to them. Finally, 14% (3 subjects) of the students say that the use of tablets has not helped them improve their reading comprehension, they argue that these devices work as a regular book and distract them easily.

#### **4.4.2.7 Areas students can Improve Through the use of Tablets**

**Graph # 9**

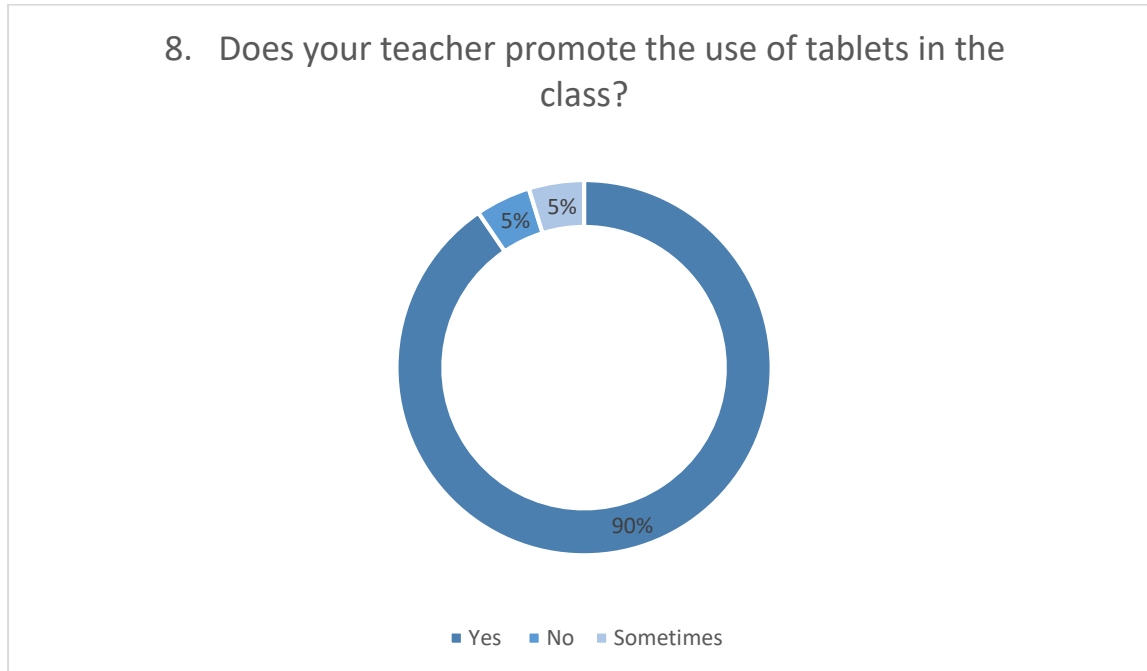


Source: Liz Mejías. Areas students can Improve Through the use of Tablets

Outcomes show that the majority of the students 56% (11 participants) state that the use of tablets help them improve their vocabulary. They say that the use of applications such as Kahoot, educational games and Duolingo have helped them increase their lexical knowledge through the use of examples in contexts and also in isolation. Then, (24%) 5 of the students say that the use of tablets helps them improve reading comprehension as they feel more motivated to read digital books that make the regular reading classes more attractive and innovative. Also, 10% (2 participants) students state that these devices have helped them improve their grammar skills as they see words in contexts and the digital texts allow them to understand the components of the sentences, leading them to improve their syntax. Finally, 9% (2 participants) students argue that the use of tablets does not help them improve any of the areas because they feel these devices correct the mistakes they make while writing, so they do not develop the English areas as much as possible and (1 participants) 5% of the students says that these devices help students improve all the areas as students have access to audios and videos that improve listening, applications that allow them to improve grammar and vocabulary , consequently, they improve all their English areas

#### 4.4.2.8 Promotion of the use of tablets in the class

Graph # 9

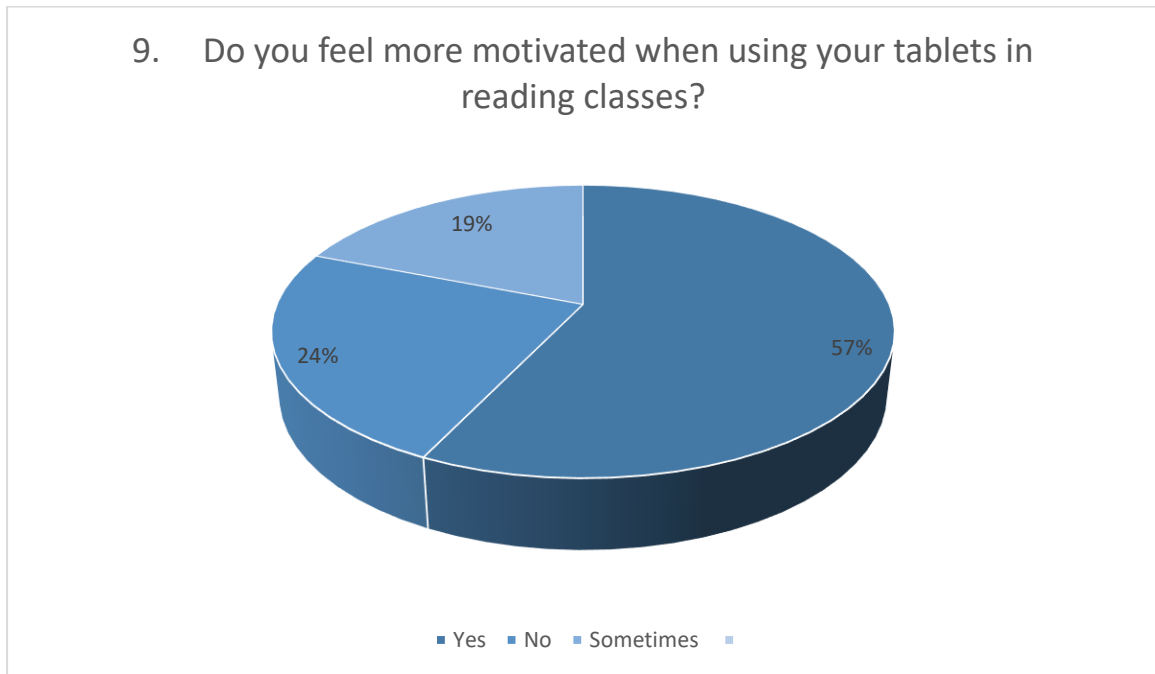


Source: Liz Mejías. Promotion of the use of tablets in the class

According to the results of the questionnaire, the majority of the students 90% (19 participants) of them say that their teacher promotes the use of tablets in the reading comprehension class. The (1 participant) 5% of the students says that sometimes the teacher promotes the use of tablets, while the other 5% (1 participant) say that she does not promote the use of tablets in the class. As it is shown, the majority of the students notice that the use of the tablets plays a very important role in their reading classes because of the importance of these devices for the teacher and her daily plans. On the contrary, few students believe that the teachers' promotion of the use of tablets is not evident.

#### 4.4.2.9 Motivation Through the use of Tablets in the Class

Graph # 10



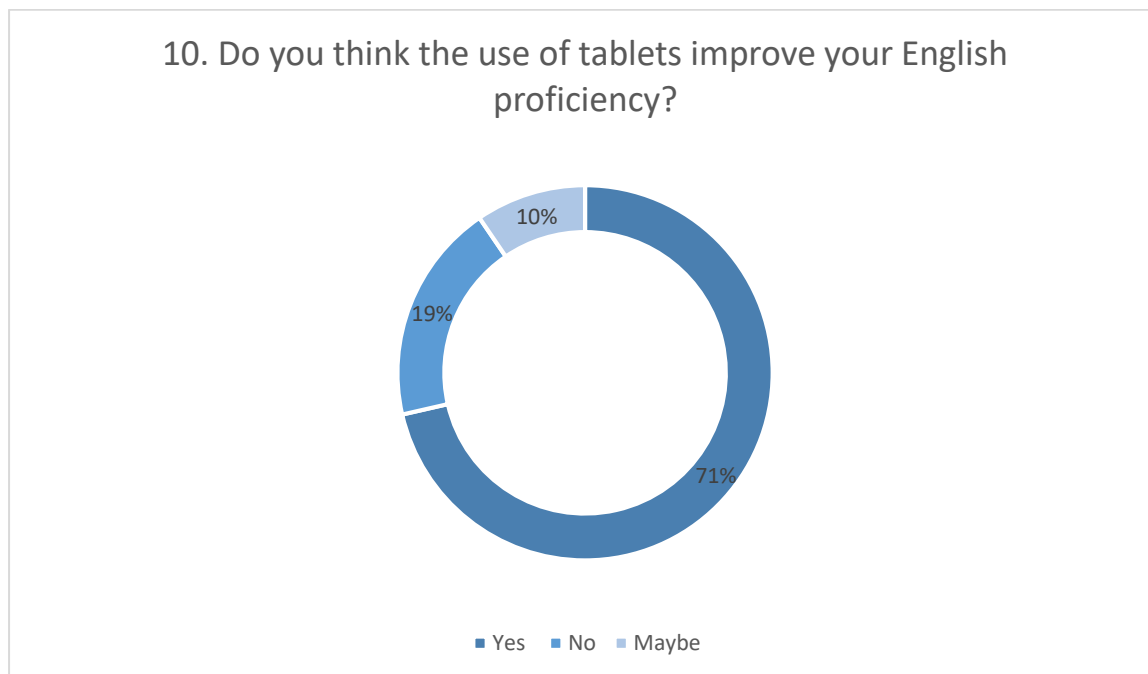
Source: Liz Mejías. Motivation through the use of tablets in the class

Results show that the use of tablets in the class does motivate the majority of the students in 7-2 grade. The 57% of the students (12 participants) say that they feel more motivated when using tablets in the reading class. Students say that having different materials from a regular book helps them feel more motivated. Aspects such as colorful images, applications, and games, easy to touch devices have helped them feel more into the reading class, helping them avoid getting bored. In addition, 24 % of the students (5 participants) say that they do not feel motivated

through the use of tablets. They declare that reading from tablets is basically the same as reading from a regular book and sometimes as the internet connection fails, they take more time to finish reading and sometimes it is a little annoying. Finally, the 19% of the students (4 of the subjects) state that sometimes they feel motivated. They say that it depends on the type of activities they develop in class through the use of tablets, sometimes activities are funnier and allow them to interact more.

#### 4.4.2.10 *Influence of the use of tablets over the English Proficiency*

**Graph # 11**



Based on the results, 71 % (15 participants) of the subjects believe that the use of tablets can improve their English proficiency. Students argue that through the use of videos, movies, applications and others they definitely improve their English especially areas such as vocabulary. In addition, students argue that having audio books also helps them improve their English proficiency as they listen to native speakers' pronunciation and can improve theirs at the same time. In addition, having the opportunity to access immediately to translators that help them understand the meaning of words and its pronunciation, use in context and other options such as synonyms and antonyms. In addition, the 10% (2 participants) of the students say that the use of tablets may help them improve their English proficiency, but there are factors such as the possibility to get distracted that may influence their performance. Finally, the 19% (4 participants) of the students say that the use of tablets does not help them improve their English proficiency, on the contrary, they believe that the use of tablets can be a distraction for them while working. Others believe that the use of tablets is just a secondary element, because what really matters is the use of teaching techniques that the teacher use in class. However, it is important to mention that an effective and adequate use of tablets in the class can help students improve their English proficiency.

**CHAPTER V**  
**COCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

## 5.1 Conclusions

Reading comprehension plays an important role in the learning process of a second language. Through reading, students can expand their knowledge and enrich their linguistic skills. However, it is imperative for teachers to understand that there is a need in education to look for more advanced methodologies and strategies that take technology as one of the main sources in order to help students develop the necessary skills to succeed professionally and academically in society.

In terms of meeting the purpose of this research which is to analyze how the use of tablets as a pedagogical tool influences the learning process of students from New Hope, basically the 7-2 group in their English reading comprehension class, it can be concluded from this experience that the use of tablets does influence students learning process and perspective towards the subject. Having these devices in English reading classes changes the regular reading comprehension classes to more innovated and attractive ones that students can enjoy and take advantage of to improve their reading skills. Marés (2012) clearly states that these devices definitely represent an innovated way to produce contents in education, as well as interaction and entertainment. Based on the objectives of this study and the results of the research carried out the following are some of the most important conclusions:

According to the methodologies that might be helpful in reading comprehension classes, it is concluded that the Content-Based Instruction and the Task-Based Approach are very good options teachers can develop in their reading classes. The principals of these methods which basically seek the development of the target

language in a flexible and realistic way that comprises students' needs, help students enrich their language and work on their reading skills as much as possible in an organized method. As these methodologies allow flexibility and interaction, they facilitate the incorporation of technical devices such as tablets, so the different applications, games, and all variety of interactive educational material that tablets offer can become a very helpful complement that teachers and students can take advantage of when reading.

Moreover, when it comes to the different reading comprehension strategies that can support students' reading, it is evident that techniques such as graphic designers, answering and asking questions, and skimming and scanning help students comprehend the text easier and successful. When using tablets as a pedagogical tool, the development of these strategies becomes even easier and more attractive.

Based on the results, it is evident that reading comprehension is benefited by the use of programs or educational material such as digital books offer students the facility of having regularly pop-up questions or short questionnaires that students can answer during or after reading helping them get a better understanding of the text. Also, access to simple programs that can allow students copy and save main and secondary ideas of the text in immediately helps students organize the important information in a neat, easy-reachable, eco-friendly, and eye-catching way that might help them when reviewing topics. As a result, it can be said that the use of tablets offers students more interesting and innovated strategies that can be applied to reading classes to help students improve reading comprehension.

Based on this study and the enrichment of vocabulary through reading, it can be resolved that it does not matter if it is incidentally or intentionally, reading comprehension does increase vocabulary acquisition. Reading regularly requires students to be exposed to different vocabulary and structures used in different contexts. Therefore, students have more chances to increase their lexical knowledge, as they take as a reference the context of the word studied inside the text to relate it to real-life situations. In addition, incorporating the use of tablets in reading classes complements reading and offers a more advanced and faster way to enrich vocabulary. It can be said that the fact that students have access to educational games or websites which can be used as extra material in the reading class helps students keep practicing new words. It is important to say that these applications offer students the advantage of finding categorized vocabulary used in context and also in isolation, so students can have more opportunities to acquire the new word than when using a regular book. In addition, having access to colorful images, songs or videos that illustrate vocabulary, allows students make a connection between the image and the word, so it might be easier for them to remember the words studied.

In addition, it is evident that having access to online translators, digital books, games, and applications that promote vocabulary also enables students to access to definitions, synonyms and antonyms, word category and others easily, helping them understand vocabulary and its use. As a result, not only the lexical knowledge might be increased, but also areas such as grammar can be improved. If students have access to applications which allows them to understand how sentences are composed and identify

the different word categories, students can also improve their grammar analysis. Consequently, reading comprehension might become easier and more enjoyable.

Finally, it can be inferred that the use of tablets does motivate students in their reading comprehension classes. Having access to interactive and colorful applications, games, and other educational sources make reading classes more attractive to the pupils and turn the regular class environment into a more interactive one. Marés (2018) states that the different technical tools that tablets offer to students, especially the ones for distribution and presentation of contents such as games, audios, videos, and educational programs can enrich their learning process and catch their attention easily. Based on this research, it can be said that the use of tablets in education facilitates the development of interesting activities and strategies. Having access to activities that promote cooperative and also individualized work depending on their purposes, can change the regular reading class into students' favorite one.

## **5.2 Recommendations**

- The following are some important recommendations in order to help students improve their reading comprehension:
- To keep motivating and engaging learners about the importance and benefits that being an active reading has. As New Hope high school has as one of its main purposes the preparation of bilingual students and the development of technological skills, teachers need to take advantage of the different technical

devices such as tablets, to encourage reading as a vital source to improve their English. As a result, motivation and engagement inspire learners to be more committed, enthusiastic.

- To start using the Action-Oriented method as an extra option to help students improve their reading comprehension. Using this method allows students to go beyond the reading comprehension action, to develop the target language in different contexts meaningfully. Teachers can use a balanced methodology to teach reading comprehension by using aspects of the three methodologies mentioned in this study that because of their flexibility, allow teachers and students enrich reading comprehension through the use of activities such as round tables, debates, oral presentations and others.
- To promote interactive activities such as the ones mentioned above, in order to facilitate students' comprehension of the texts as they share their ideas and learn from other learners' points of view. However. It is important for teachers to take into account the following aspects:
  - ✓ When using the action-oriented method or any of the others already mentioned, teachers have to consider learners' interest and needs towards reading, so they can develop the more appropriate method when necessary.
  - ✓ Teachers have to offer students opportunities to work in small groups, pairs, and as a whole class. By doing this, the students expand their perspectives towards the reading and come up with new conclusions.

- ✓ Teachers should provide students with different classroom designs, so the environment of the class benefits the interaction and development of the language. Chaves and Granados (2017) state that the use of traditional rows, chairs in a semicircle, and even no chairs at all are options of class designs that can benefit the development of the action-oriented methodology.
- To take into account the use of varied types of texts to help learners improve their comprehension and use of reading strategies. For instance, using intensive reading in the class helps students explore the meaning and basic reading strategies through the exposure to short texts, while the extensive reading allows students acquire cultural knowledge, improve his language competence working on the development of reading skills and independence.
- To use interesting applications as the “Readtheory”. This application offers teachers a very simple and useful way to evaluate reading learners’ reading comprehension. Through the use of short texts and quizzes that go from beginning elementary school to college- level passages, students have the opportunity to keep practicing reading comprehension through their tablets not only inside their free time in classes but also at home. This application promotes a more dynamic classroom setting, which also teachers get benefited. By using “Readtheory” in English reading classes teachers can provide more individualized feedback, as they get detailed reports that show students’ progress using strategies such as elaborated graphs and charts.

- To take into account that students need to practice not only silent reading, but also oral reading. Even though teachers in New Hope Highschool have the chance to use audio-books to help learners improve their pronunciation while promoting reading, teachers should ask students to practice oral reading. By doing this, students also have the opportunity to receive direct feedback and produce the language. As a result, students improve their pronunciation and develop the ability to monitor themselves.
- To take advantage as much as possible of these devices. Teachers can take advantage of authentic materials such as TV programs, songs, online text, videos and others to use them as a complement to the texts studied. By doing this, students have the opportunity to get a clearer and richer idea of the topic being studied through visual stimulation and interactive materials. Incorporating these types of materials in the reading class through the use of tablets, allows students interact with the language making connections between the texts being studied and the material students are accustomed to accessing through technological devices which are part of their daily routines.
- To motivate students to use the different reading strategies while reading. Students can use their creativity, so through the use of tablets they can apply different reading strategies that allow them to comprehend the texts being analyzed. Some of the reading strategies students can use are:
  - ✓ To analyze the purpose of the reading: Asking and answering questions before and after the reading.

- ✓ To categorize different types of vocabulary: students can look for specific words that might be necessary to understand the purpose of the text. If students categorize nouns, adverbs, adjectives and others, their reading comprehension might be richer.
- ✓ To identify main and secondary ideas: students can use their tablets to highlight and save ideas about the text that might be helpful.
- ✓ To use skimming and scanning techniques.
- ✓ To write down personal Vocabulary- Note: Students can take advantage of their tablets to create their own vocabulary list. They can look for information and meaning of words by accessing the internet connection and that save them immediately. By creating their own list of new vocabulary, students expand their lexical knowledge.
- ✓ To use decoding: Looking for suffixes and prefixes helps learners understand the use of words in different contexts (Freaht, 2015). Though the use of tablets, students have access to different websites that explain to them in easy ways the use of different prefixes and suffixes.
- ✓ To make graphic Organizers: Students can take advantage of the numerous applications and programs used in tablets in order to organize their ideas in a neat and attractive way. One option teachers can offer to students to use to create their own graphic organizers is the application “Good notes” which offers students colorful and innovative ways they can use to better organize their notes about each reading. In addition,

“Bamboo Paper” can be another option students can use to elaborate their own graphic organizers and conceptual maps.

Teachers must keep investigating the use of tablets in education. They need to keep innovating their materials and keep updating the methodologies and strategies they offer to students, so the reading classes can become even more interactive and interesting.

**CHAPTER VI**  
**PROPOSAL**



			minutes
Recognizes the meaning of words related to the topic studied	Use words in contexts	<p><b>Pre-reading:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The students are asked to write the list of vocabulary by using the application “Good notes” or “Bamboo Paper”, so they can keep it in their tablets.</li> </ul> <p><b>Vocabulary</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-global warming</li> <li>-overfishing</li> <li>-celled organisms</li> <li>-seaweed</li> <li>- kelp</li> <li>-seagrasses</li> <li>-hotspots</li> <li>-fangs</li> <li>-humankind</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ After the students write it down, the teacher asks the whole class if they know the meaning of some of the words.</li> <li>▪ In order to better understand the meaning of the words, students are asked to work in groups of four students, so by accessing to digital translators, they can get the meaning of the words and some examples in context.</li> <li>▪ Each group goes to the front of the class to share their findings and examples.</li> </ul> <p>The teacher asks the students to use their tablets to read the short passage “Oceans” which includes general ideas about the ocean. Video can be found here:  <a href="https://www.nationalgeographic.com/environment/hab">https://www.nationalgeographic.com/environment/hab</a></p>	40 minutes

		<p><a href="#">itats/ocean/</a></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Before starting reading the passage, the teacher asks the whole class to read the subtitles, so the students can guess what the reading is going to be about.</li> </ul>	
Analyzes short readings	Comprehend the main idea of the text	<p><b>During Reading</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students are asked to read the passage. While they read, they have to find the words studied before (the ones in the list of vocabulary) in context. Students have to copy and paste the sentences that contain the vocabulary studied on the document they created by using “Good notes” or “Bamboo Paper, so they can keep it to study whenever they want.</li> <li>After this, students compare the meaning of the words they had found before when using their translators to the sentences they found inside the text to see if their meanings match.</li> <li>Subsequently reading the passage, the teacher provides students with a questionnaire which is sent through google docs. This passage contains the following questions about the reading and others that make students think critically.</li> </ul> <p><b>Questionnaire</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ What is the percentage of the Earth surface that the ocean covers?</li> <li>✓ How many miles do the oceans hold in the Earth?</li> <li>✓ What are some of the plants that can be found in the oceans?</li> <li>✓ What are some of the animals that can be affected by the human impact over the oceans?</li> <li>✓ Do you think the human impact on oceans affects</li> </ul>	40 minutes
Uses reading strategies to enrich reading comprehension	Develop the adequate reading comprehension strategy		

<p>Answers correctly what is being asked</p>	<p>Develop coherent answers</p>	<p>humans beings' lives?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ What strategies can human beings use to decrease pollution in the oceans?</li> <li>✓ What are you going to do to preserve the natural resources, especially the ones found in the oceans?</li> </ul>	
<p>Elaborates a poster</p>	<p>Use creativity and technical skills</p>	<p><b>Post-reading</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Students are asked to create a digital poster by using the interactive application “Good notes” in which they summarize what they learn about the oceans. After this, each student sends his digital poster to the rest of the students via email or by a shared document using google docs or even Dropbox.</li> </ul> <p><b>Wrap up</b></p> <p>The teacher retells some of the aspects studied in the class and the new ideas that emerged.</p>	<p>20 minutes</p>

		<p><b>Extra Material:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Pair work / Feedback</b></li> <li>▪ The teacher provides the students with the following videos: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=L2baeF2Bp9E">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=L2baeF2Bp9E</a></li> <li><a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ju_2NuK5O-E">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ju_2NuK5O-E</a></li> </ul> </li> <li>▪ Students are asked to work in pairs. Each student has the chance to choose one of the videos to write down a reflective short essay about the chosen video. After this, each student sends (via email or through the school platform) his essay to his corresponding pair. The idea of this activity is that each student gets the chance to give feedback to his peer.</li> <li>▪ Based on the essays written, students have a round table next class in which they discuss the importance of taking care of the oceans and some solutions to this problem.</li> </ul>	

Based on this proposal, teachers have the opportunity to have more interactive and innovative reading classes. Some of the advantages of using a teaching plan as the presented here are:

**Independence is promoted:** The fact that students have to look for meanings and ideas by accessing websites, makes them work independently without the necessity of having the teacher near giving him instructions.

**Students' based Class:** Through the use of digital devices, teachers have the opportunity to check students' work whenever it is necessary, however, it is important to mention that the development of the Action-Oriented Method in reading classes allows students take control over the class and produce the language as much as possible.

**Creativity Promotion:** Having access to innovative applications and programs helps students create amazing innovative posters that not only promote creativity, but also are eco-friendly.

**Increase of Vocabulary:** Having access to digital dictionaries helps students get not only the meaning of new words, but also get many examples of the words used in context helping them to get a clearer scenario of the word and facilitate its acquisition.

**Money Safe Materials:** It is important to mention that using these types of educational materials and applications, do not require the institution to spend money. Students can easily download the applications suggested to work on their tablets for free without any problem, because applications are available for Android and IOS.

**Richer Reading Comprehension:** It is imperative to mention that through the use of the action-oriented method teachers have more flexibility to include pair or group work and develop interactive activities. In order to make reading comprehension classes in New Hope Highschool, teachers can take advantage of this method to motivate students to

practice reading. Teachers should know that the use of tablets does promote reading, but also benefits other skills such as writing, speaking and listening at the same time.

**Technical Skills:** Finally, it can be said that developing class plans as the one proposed, the use of tablets inside the reading classes can promote the development of technical skills that every student needs for their professional preparation.

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## **ANNEXESS**

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Instrumento de Medición para Trabajo de Tesis

Analyze techniques for the use of tablets in the process of English reading classes: applied to the seventh-grade students in their reading classes in the first trimester of the academic year 2018 in the New Hope School in San Juan de Santa Bárbara, Heredia.

Bach. Liz Mejías Rodríguez



OBSERVATION FORM # 1

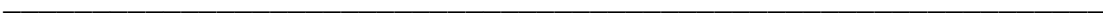
Observer's name: \_\_\_\_\_

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

Time: \_\_\_\_\_

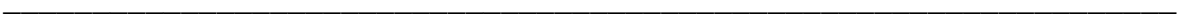
Observed group: \_\_\_\_\_

Description of the classroom: \_\_\_\_\_

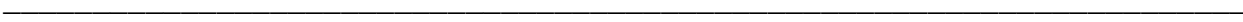
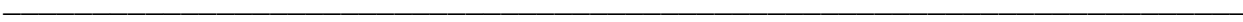


Reason for the observation: Teaching methodologies

Which methodology does the teacher use?



Define the methodology that the teacher is using and the different activities



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How do the students react towards the methodology?

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Which are the strategies used through the use of this methodology?

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Which are the positive aspects for the use of the methodology applied by the teacher?

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Comments:

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Universidad Hispanoamericana



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OBSERVATION FORM # 2

Observer's name: \_\_\_\_\_

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

Time: \_\_\_\_\_

Observed group: \_\_\_\_\_

Description of the classroom: \_\_\_\_\_

Reason for the observation: **Technology use in Reading Classes**

1. Technology in the class in reading comprehension classes

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

2. Is evident the use of tablets in the classroom?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

3. Which is the main purpose of the use of tablets in the reading class?

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4. How are the tablets used in the classroom?

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5. Which reading activities were developed through the use of tables?

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6. How do the students react towards the use of tablets in the reading class?

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Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

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Universidad Hispanoamericana



Instrumento de Medición para Trabajo de Tesis

Analyze techniques for the use of tablets in the process of English reading classes: applied to the seventh-grade students in their reading classes in the first trimester of the academic year 2018 in the New Hope School in San Juan de Santa Bárbara, Heredia.

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**Questionnaire for seventh grader- students of New Hope School**

**Instruction:** Read the following questions and answer what is being asked.

1. What do you think about the use of tablets in English reading classes?

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2. How often do you use your tablet in reading class? Do you use it at home to improve your reading abilities?

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3. Do you think the use of tablets makes your reading classes more attractive? Why?

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4. What are some activities you like the most when using your tablets in reading classes?

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5. How has the use of tablets help you improve your English reading skills?

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6. What do you think are the English areas you can improve through the use of tablets? (vocabulary, grammar, reading comprehension...)

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7. Does your teacher promote the use of tablets in the class?

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8. Do you feel more motivated when using your tablets in reading classes?

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9. Do you think the use of tablets improve your English proficiency?

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Comments:

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Universidad Hispanoamericana



Instrumento de Medición para Trabajo de Tesis

### INTERVIEW FORM

**Instructions:** The aim of this instrument is to gather information about the implementation of tablets in the reading class and how it influences the process of acquiring reading skills. This instrument is part of the academic research to obtain the Licenciatura degree in English Teaching at Universidad Hispanoamericana. The information provided is confidential and there is not right or wrong answer, please provide your personal opinion.

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#### Teachers' Instrument

1. What do you think about the use of tablets in English reading classes?

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2. What are some the benefits of using tablets in reading comprehension classes?

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3. How often do you use tablets in the reading class?

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4. Which are the disadvantages of the use of tablets in the reading classes?

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5. Explain the difference between the traditional class and classes where the tablet (technology) is the main didactic element?

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6. What are some of the positive academic results you have noticed in your seventh grader students?

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7. Which are some other areas of the Language that students can improve through the use of tablets?

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8. How do you monitor the use of tablets in the reading classes?

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9. Which are some of the apps you use in class through the use of tablets?

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10. How do you provide feedback to your students when they use the tablet? Do you apply any strategy?

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Comments:

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Autorizo que el Trabajo Final de Graduación, se exhiba en la Sección de tesis, que se encuentra en la página web [www.cenit.uh.ac.cr](http://www.cenit.uh.ac.cr), de la Universidad Hispanoamericana, para ser consultada por estudiantes y profesores de la institución.