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Faculty of Education

Thesis Submitted to Obtain the Licentiate Degree in English for I and II Cycle

The Effectiveness of Implementing “Who Am I?” Online Guessing Game Based on the Communicative Approach to Enhance the Pronunciation of Long and Short Vowel Sounds in Oral Production Activities in Two Groups of Second Grade and Two Groups of Fifth Grade from Herradura Elementary School in Garabito, Puntarenas in 2025.

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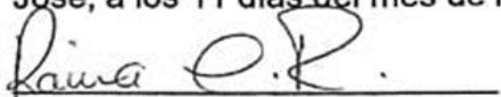
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**Carrera**

**Estimado señor**

La estudiante Noily Karina Carmona Rojas, cédula de identidad 203690486, me ha presentado para efectos de revisión y aprobación, el trabajo de investigación denominado "The Effectiveness of Implementing "Who Am I?" Online Guessing Game Based on the Communicative Approach to Enhance the Pronunciation of Long and Short Vowel Sounds in Oral Production Activities in Two Groups of Second Grade and Two Groups of Fifth Grade from Herradura Elementary School in Garabito, Puntarenas in 2025", el cual ha elaborado para obtener su grado de Licenciatura en Inglés para I y II Ciclo.

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 éstos 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.

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## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS LETTER

First, I thank God for giving me the strength, health, and wisdom to reach this point. His presence has been essential throughout this journey, guiding me in moments of doubt and helping me move forward with faith and determination.

To my husband, thank you for your support. To my son and daughter, thank you for your unconditional love and for being my constant motivation. You are my inspiration and my greatest joy. I also want to thank my family, and especially my friends, Asdrúbal Carballo Ch., and Mayela Solano R. for his continued encouragement and for always helping me believe in myself.

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Finally, I am deeply grateful to Universidad Hispanoamericana for offering the academic foundation, tools, and space that have allowed me to grow and complete this important chapter of my life.

*"I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me."*

Philippians 4:13

Noily Karina Carmona Rojas.

**Abstract**

This project aims to investigate the effectiveness of online guessing games based on the communicative approach to improving the pronunciation of long and short vowel sounds in oral production activities. The research focuses on two second grade and two fifth-grade groups from Herradura de Garabito Elementary School, located in the province of Puntarenas, Costa Rica.

Through this study, we seek to demonstrate how interactive online games, particularly guessing games, can positively influence the learning of a second language, in this case, English. To do so, playful, and dynamic activities are designed to focus on the accurate pronunciation of short and long vowels, which will allow students to develop greater confidence and fluency in their oral expression.

The selected groups actively participate in the online guessing games, which have been strategically designed to reinforce the pronunciation of vowels through meaningful communicative interactions. These activities encourage immersive learning, where students can constantly practice and receive immediate feedback, contributing to a progressive improvement in their linguistic performance.

Given the advances of technology and the rise of interactive games focused on learning, teachers must take advantage of these innovative tools to enrich the educational process. The integration of these digital resources in the classroom not only strengthens the teaching of pronunciation but also motivates students to actively participate in their learning, promoting a dynamic and stimulating environment.

In addition, primary school students are increasingly exposed to new technologies and are highly familiar with electronic devices such as tablets, mobile phones, and laptops.

This facilitates the implementation of interactive games within the classroom since students perceive them as part of their daily environment, thus promoting greater adaptation and acceptance of these teaching strategies.

This project also seeks to provide teachers at Herradura Elementary School with an online database of guessing games that can be implemented not only in teaching the pronunciation of long and short vowels but also in a wide variety of topics related to learning the English language. In this way, it is intended to offer teachers versatile and easily accessible tools that contribute to the development of language skills in students, promoting meaningful and lasting learning.

### **Key words**

Online guessing games – meaningful learning – teaching strategies - stimulating environment.

### **Resumen**

Este proyecto tiene como objetivo investigar la efectividad de los juegos de adivinanzas en línea basados en el enfoque comunicativo para mejorar la pronunciación de los sonidos vocálicos largos y cortos en actividades de producción oral. La investigación se centra en dos grupos de segundo grado y dos de quinto grado de la Escuela Primaria Herradura de Garabito, ubicada en la provincia de Puntarenas, Costa Rica.

A través de este estudio, se busca demostrar cómo los juegos interactivos en línea, particularmente los juegos de adivinanzas pueden influir positivamente en el aprendizaje de una segunda lengua, en este caso, el inglés. Para ello, se diseñan actividades lúdicas y

dinámicas enfocadas en la pronunciación precisa de las vocales cortas y largas, que permitirán a los estudiantes desarrollar una mayor confianza y fluidez en su expresión oral.

Los grupos seleccionados participan activamente en los juegos de adivinanzas en línea, los cuales han sido diseñados estratégicamente para reforzar la pronunciación de las vocales a través de interacciones comunicativas significativas. Estas actividades fomentan el aprendizaje inmersivo, donde los estudiantes pueden practicar constantemente y recibir retroalimentación inmediata, contribuyendo a una mejora progresiva en su desempeño lingüístico.

Ante el avance de la tecnología y el auge de los juegos interactivos enfocados al aprendizaje, es fundamental que los docentes aprovechen estas herramientas innovadoras para enriquecer el proceso educativo. La integración de estos recursos digitales en el aula no solo fortalece la enseñanza de la pronunciación, sino que también motiva a los estudiantes a participar activamente en su aprendizaje, promoviendo un ambiente dinámico y estimulante.

Además, los estudiantes de primaria están cada vez más expuestos a las nuevas tecnologías y tienen un alto grado de familiaridad con dispositivos electrónicos como tabletas, teléfonos móviles y computadoras portátiles. Esto facilita la implementación de juegos interactivos dentro del aula, ya que los estudiantes los perciben como parte de su entorno cotidiano, promoviendo así una mayor adaptación y aceptación de estas estrategias de enseñanza.

El proyecto también busca brindar a los docentes de la Escuela Primaria Herradura una base de datos en línea de juegos de adivinanzas que puedan implementarse no solo en

la enseñanza de la pronunciación de vocales largas y cortas, sino también en una amplia variedad de temas relacionados con el aprendizaje del idioma inglés.

De esta manera, se pretende ofrecer a los docentes herramientas versátiles y de fácil acceso que contribuyan al desarrollo de habilidades lingüísticas en los estudiantes, promoviendo un aprendizaje significativo y duradero.

**Palabras clave**

Juegos de adivinanzas en línea – aprendizaje significativo – estrategias de enseñanza – entorno estimulante.

## **CHAPTER I: RESEARCH PROBLEM**

## 1.1 Introduction

The world is constantly changing, and technological advances mark a difference between every generation of learners who are more exposed to technology use every day. These represent tools and resources that must be used to the teachers' advantage. Due to the fast development of CALL (Computer-Assisted Language Learning), second language teachers and researchers must cope with growing pressure to become more technologically oriented, combined with a growing expansion of mobile applications (Godwin, 2015).

Genç (2015) states that computer-based activities provide learners with rapid information and appropriate materials. They continue that internet materials motivate learners to learn more. In addition, by being exposed to various technologies, learners feel engaged with their use in all areas. Therefore, teachers must be aware of their students' interests and utilize them to motivate students to learn and work on the different curriculum content. This view is by the idea that technology has changed the teaching method. The researchers continued that the application of technology helps learners learn based on their interests.

Likewise, curricular themes and content can be applied creatively through the technological resources currently available in classrooms. Teachers must stay up-to-date and be aware that their knowledge is extremely supportive during the teaching-learning process (Pourhosein, 2017). Additionally, the author notes that the technology plan must be closely aligned with the curriculum standards. Teachers should know what educational approach is the most effective when integrating technologies in the classroom. The learners' behavior observation concerning the use of different methodologies should be a tool for teachers to improve the process of target language acquisition.

Genç (2015) emphasized that teachers should encourage learners to find appropriate activities by using computer technology to be successful in language learning. Also, as a teacher, you should encourage learners to find, through technology, a fun and creative way to absorb knowledge and solve exercises. In addition, they find technology an ally to facilitate the assimilation of some content that may be difficult.

On the other hand, gamification can be considered a pleasurable and engaging approach for facilitating the acquisition of English as a Second Language (ESL) and bridging the divide between students' learning and educational implementation. As a reflection of the proliferation of games in education, they have been incorporated into a wide range of subjects (Domínguez et al., 2013; Sheldon, 2012).

Most gamification systems use reinforcement elements (points, levels, badges, leaderboards, etc). to promote engagement and motivation in users (Dicheva et al., 2015). Likewise, learning a second language can be a challenge for students; however, through play, especially digital games, students can feel more motivated and interested in learning. Besides its benefits on students' motivation and engagement, CALL also provides high-quality and authentic linguistic materials and immediate and individualized feedback (Li, 2016). However, when discussing gamification, teachers are faced with a wide variety of games available through various websites and applications on the network, offering students and teachers numerous options to work both in class and remotely at home. Also, one of these options is online guessing games.

According to Suglia, Konstas, and Lemon (2023), interactive language games are essential for grounding meaning in neural models, as they help resolve ambiguities about object referents and action plans through communication. Furthermore, games provide a platform for

formulating valid answers and exploring climate change and potential preventative measures (Anastasiadis et al, 2018). These types of games are highly versatile, as they can be used to individual or group evaluation strategies and can be adapted to a wide range of topics contained in educational programs. Through game options such as online guessing games, students can self-assess, as many of these sites offer instant feedback and provide individualized work strategies. Some exercises can be developed in teams or by the whole class with activities led by the teacher.

Finally, teachers must be open to the help that the use of new technologies and teaching methodologies can bring us. The aim is to benefit students during the teaching-learning process in the assimilation of a second language and in the development of their linguistic skills, through a more interesting, enriching, and more in line with what students experience today in terms of the use of applications and electronic devices.

## **1.2 Background of the problem**

Considering the need to find new resources to develop the linguistic abilities of learners and awaken their interest in curricular content, teachers find an ally in technology. Based on different research works, such as Carrillo's (2020) , who seeks to demonstrate how the use of educational games combined with the TPR (Total Physical Response) method can be a tool to rouse students' engagement and develop their capabilities using technologies applied to the educational process through games.

Furthermore, the main areas of interest to develop through educational games are oral expression and expanding vocabulary for instance, the researcher seeks to give tools to teachers to reinforce these areas, in search of the best use of available resources. Also, the researcher's objectives are to identify game characteristics and implement them in the class,

seeking to strengthen students' oral skills and vocabulary, as well as to know the perspective of students and teachers regarding their use.

Thus, the population of the investigation is 7 (4 girls and 3 boys) fourth graders of la Puebla school in Heredia, selected according to their age. These students were chosen due to their low performance in terms of vocabulary, considering the level they are at. It is concluded that different methods, like the TPR combined with games, are a good support resource for teachers and students. Likewise, through play, students become more involved in learning a second language.

Summarizing, most of the students' state that they enjoy games as part of their learning and help them express themselves; however, a small number of students do not feel comfortable expressing themselves in front of their classmates, even if they are part of a game. Nevertheless, these games help some shy students lose their shyness and get involved in the game. Finally, some recommendations from the researchers are for the Ministry of Education that teachers must be constantly trained in using different methodologies to teach. Furthermore, they should take recreational activities as an essential tool in teaching young learners and not just as another resource.

Whereas Salas's (2023) research paper focuses on demonstrating how technology use influences the learning process of a new language, in this case, English. Also, this project seeks to determine how much it can benefit or, on the contrary, harm the development of acquiring a second language. Besides, the researcher emphasizes the fact that it is not the only research work that refers to the use of technologies in the teaching of English, but that they all focus on different populations in addition to the fact that technological advances occur second by second.

In the case of this research, the population subject of inquiry is tenth-grade students of the LEB in San Ramón. And the author seeks to correlate the use of technology with the progress made by the tenth-grade students of the LEB in San Ramon. Likewise, make innovative proposals on their use to strengthen the linguistic skills of learners.

Furthermore, the researcher throughout the study discovered that incorporating Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) into the second language learning process has a substantial impact, mainly because a significant number of students are drawn to utilizing technology to both learn and reinforce their acquired knowledge. Since the findings obtained affirm that, from a statistical perspective, ICTs have a positive effect on tenth-grade students at LEB San Ramon, underscoring the significant assistance that ICTs provide in the acquisition of English as a second language.

Likewise, some of the recommendations are for students, others for teachers. As part of the recommendations to students, it is mentioned that they should always follow the teacher's instructions, as well as make correct use of ICTs and continue using them, considering that they are an aid and a valuable resource for the learning process. Also, the researcher invites the teachers to use the manual that he created on the use of ICTs to achieve better use of the technological resources available, in addition to always being creative and innovative, being at the forefront, and being trained regarding advances in technology.

Additionally, the purpose of García (2022) in her research is to show the important role of cloud computing in the classroom environment for learning English as a foreign language. Using online games and songs (these as part of cloud computing), English teachers can teach their lessons and make learning more enjoyable for their ninth-grade

students at the Liceo Jose Martí. This research aims to demonstrate the impact of using games and songs in cloud computing activities as part of the English language learning process. Likewise, identify some of the technological resources used and identify the challenges of using them in the classrooms during the English language teaching process.

To sum up some of the conclusions of the research on the use of games and songs as part of cloud computing on vocabulary teaching are positive, this is because the students express that if it has helped them improve their linguistic skills, in this case, teachers and students agree in the fact that is helpful. Also concludes that due to advances in center equipment as part of virtuality, students and, teachers have more access to technology and a wide variety of online games that allow students to better develop their skills in the English language.

Finally, the researcher makes recommendations to teachers so that they are motivated to investigate and train more on the use of new resources, in this case, technologies to enrich the English teaching process. Likewise, the relevant institutions in this case, the MEP, must provide educational centers with the technology and internet access necessary to teach lessons with these supports.

### **1.3 Justification**

Considering the research works related to the problematization observed in Herradura School and how other investigations by other researchers are related to the fact that the use of technologies, the Internet, and interactive online games has an impact on how the teaching-learning process of a second language is developed. The implementation of digital games in gamification strategies is considered an excellent resource to enhance the active participation of students in oral production activities.

The goal is to relate the topics from MEP's program with interactive digital guessing games, with the App Wordwall and the "Who Am I"? games seeking to enhance the learner's skills in the pronunciation of vowel sounds in oral production activities, with the main objective that students who do not normally participate get involved naturally and have fun through the game. According to the observation, students see the activities that are developed while playing as simpler (although the level of difficulty does not vary), more fun, and more attractive. Likewise, the use of technology is attractive for learners because it is part of their daily lives, children are exposed to games, the Internet, videos, and digital platforms, which is why their use is engaging for them.

The proposal also focuses on developing oral skills in the pronunciation of vowel sounds in oral production activities, with a digital learning App. The barriers that a student can sometimes face are limited to the simple fact of being very shy or being afraid of being mocked for not pronouncing correctly, or not being sure of their answers, therefore important to find different resources that contribute to the students functioning naturally in a class. This is supposed to not only motivate the student to participate and enhance pronunciation skills but also collaborate in their development of critical thinking with the implementation of diverse digital games.

In addition, there are a lot of different games, a suggestion could be, for example, guessing games or memory games. Hayati (2020) states a guessing game is a kind of joyful and interesting game that is almost loved by everyone. Because it can promote interactions among groups of people. It is one of the simple games which can be applied in the class involving all students. Guessing games is a part of the Communicative Language Teaching Approach (CLTA). It is best understood as an approach, not a method. It is based on the

theory of the nature of language and language learning and teaching. It is a system for the expression of meaning. Its primary function is interaction and communication.

Furthermore, the goal of language learning and teaching is to develop communicative competence. The basic role of guessing games is very simple, one person knows something that another one wants to find out. The thing to be guessed can differ greatly from game to game. Guessing games have been shown to significantly improve English speaking skills among secondary school students, providing an engaging way to practice language use and communication (Agnesia & Astutik, 2023). Consequently, guessing games can develop different areas related to critical thinking and challenge their pairs in a healthy teaching environment.

#### **1.4 Problematization**

Nowadays students are naturally linked to technology, and this can be a distractor if it is not used in favor of the learning process. However, technology is also part of the daily life of learners, therefore, this factor must be considered when implementing significant learning techniques. Currently, mastery of a second language is an essential tool in the professional development of citizens around the world, and learning and mastery of the English language is mandatory in daily life.

On the other hand, Costa Rica is characterized by being a country with a large influx of tourists from all over the world, therefore, mastering the English language, which is a kind of universal language, is essential. Students from an early age must understand the importance of learning a second language, however, this is difficult due to factors such as lack of interest or means to do so. However, in Costa Rica, The Public Minister of Education (MEP) public institutions have tried to implement in public institutions the

teaching of foreign languages within the curriculum as a tool for the development of globally competitive citizens.

Moreover, integrating interactive digital tools, particularly game-based applications, has proven to be an effective way to encourage student participation. When learning activities involve interactive guessing games, students become more engaged and their willingness to participate orally increases significantly.

Since external factors, rather than cognitive challenges, often influence students' ability to express themselves, it is essential to incorporate resources that promote a more dynamic and supportive learning environment. Digital games create an engaging and competitive atmosphere where students feel more comfortable practicing pronunciation. Unlike traditional methods that require direct responses in front of the class, interactive activities allow all students to participate simultaneously, which reduces anxiety and increases motivation to improve their speaking skills.

By leveraging technology in language learning, educators can provide meaningful opportunities for students to develop their pronunciation and communication skills in a way that feels natural and enjoyable.

Meanwhile, (Ahmadi 2018, p.118) asserted that the use of computer technology leads to the improvement of teachers teaching and learners' learning in the classes. Computer technology helps teachers meet their learner's "educational needs." The application of computer technology enables teachers and learners to make local and global societies that connect them with the people and expand opportunities for their learning.

They continued that the positive effect of computer technology does not come automatically; it depends on how teachers use it in their language classroom.

Likewise, currently, public institutions have mostly dedicated themselves to providing classrooms with technological tools, at least with the most basic ones, such as the presence of laptops, smart TVs, video beams, and internet access. This is with the aim that students can have access to all types of resources and teachers use them seeking to ensure that everyone actively participates in the process, for example, students with autism who only interact through technology or students who have hearing disabilities will be through video images that could be involved in the learning process.

However, this has not always been the case and in the past students' possibilities could have been limited by the lack of this type of resource, even due to teachers' lack of knowledge of their use. Furthermore, this does not mean that they are the only resources to be used in the classroom, but they are more related to what the new generations of students experience outside the classrooms, therefore this digitalization must be transferred to the classrooms.

Also, as part of the DUA (Universal Design for Learning), it is new way of thinking about education. Digital educational games have been shown to significantly promote students' computational thinking, a key aspect of critical thinking, across multiple studies (Sun, Guo, & Hu, 2021). The MEP (Ministry of Public Education) seeks that all students have the same opportunities to develop meaningful learning in all areas, one of these being the mastery of a second language such as English. Students need to be motivated by new methodologies and activities that involve them in the process.

## **1.5 Research Question**

What is The Effectiveness of Implementing “Who Am I”? Online Guessing Game Based on the Communicative Approach to Enhance the Pronunciation of Long and Short Vowel Sounds in Oral Production Activities in Two Groups of Second Grade and Two Groups of Fifth Grade from Herradura Elementary School in Garabito, Puntarenas in 2025?

## **1.6 General Objective**

To determine the effectiveness of using the Communicative Approach through the online guessing game “Who Am I?” to enhance rhythm and intonation in long and short vowel sound pronunciation in two groups of second grade and two groups of fifth grade from Herradura Elementary School in Garabito, Puntarenas in 2025.

## **1.7 Specific Objectives**

**1.7.1** To describe the process of learning vowels in oral production through the implementation of online guessing games in two groups of second grade and two groups of fifth-grade students from Herradura Elementary School in Garabito, Puntarenas in 2025.

**1.7.2** To evaluate the advantages and disadvantages of incorporating online guessing games in two groups of second and fifth-grade students from Herradura Elementary School in Garabito, Puntarenas, in 2025.

**1.7.3** To examine the effect of using online guessing games as a resource used in the pronunciation of different words that contain vowel sounds in two groups of second grade and two groups of fifth-grade students from Herradura Elementary School in Garabito, Puntarenas, in 2025.

## **1.8 Scope and limitations**

### ***1.8.1 Scope***

This research work is focused on enhancing the pronunciation of long and short vowel sounds in the pronunciation in oral production activities of primary students. It involves second and fifth grade students from Herradura Primary School, for a total of 97 students. Student's ages range between 7 and 11 years, respectively. And they are part of a huge student population, 1163 students. The intention is to demonstrate how the use of digital guessing games through an application is a way to enhance pronunciation skills in the English teaching process. This application will be used by the researcher and focus on the Communicative Learning Approach.

### ***1.8.2 Limitations***

Like any research project, this study has certain limitations that must be acknowledged. First, it was carried out in a very specific context: Herradura Primary School, a public school in Puntarenas, Costa Rica. While the school has a large student population, the research only worked with two grade levels second and fifth grade and involved 97 students. For this reason, the results cannot be generalized to all public schools in Costa Rica, since each school faces different realities in terms of resources, teacher training, and students' exposure to English.

Another limitation relates to the scope of the study itself. The focus was placed on improving the pronunciation of long and short vowel sounds, which are often a challenge for young learners. However, pronunciation is a broad skill, and important elements such as rhythm, stress, or intonation were not part of this project. This narrow focus means the

findings are useful for understanding progress in one area of pronunciation, but they do not provide a complete picture of students' oral performance in English.

The reliance on a digital guessing game as the main tool for practice also presented certain constraints. Although this application helped make the learning process more engaging, not all students had the same familiarity or comfort level with technology, which may have influenced how quickly they adapted to the activities. In addition, as is common in many public schools in Costa Rica, access to technological resources can sometimes be limited, which could affect how easily such strategies are replicated in other contexts.

Finally, the intervention was developed over a relatively short period of time. This allowed us to observe immediate improvements between the pre-test and post-test, but it does not tell us whether these gains will be maintained in the long term or transferred to spontaneous communication outside the classroom. A longer follow-up period would be necessary to better understand the lasting impact of the strategy.

### **1.8.3 Delimitations of the Study**

The scope of this research was intentionally restricted by several researcher-imposed boundaries, which define what was included and, more importantly, what was excluded from the study.

The study was strictly delimited to a single educational institution, Herradura Elementary School in Garabito, Puntarenas. This means the findings are specific to the context and resources of this school and are not intended to be generalized to other educational settings or regions.

The research was confined to a specific and limited population of 97 students across two levels: Second Grade and Fifth Grade. This specific choice was made to compare the intervention's effectiveness across distinct developmental stages in language acquisition, and students from all other grade levels were purposefully excluded.

The intervention and assessment exclusively focused on enhancing the pronunciation of long and short English vowel sounds in oral production activities. The study deliberately excluded the measurement or instruction of other critical aspects of English pronunciation, such as rhythm, stress, and intonation.

The main resource for the intervention was "Who Am I?" Online Guessing Game. The research excluded the use of other technology tools, digital platforms, or traditional instructional methods to ensure the observed effects could be attributed to this specific game-based approach.

The project was designed and conducted over a short, defined period to observe immediate changes in pronunciation. Consequently, the research did not include a long-term follow-up component to track the sustained retention or continued improvement of the vowel sounds beyond the immediate intervention phase.

## **CHAPTER II THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

## **2.1 HISTORICAL CONTEXT**

### **2.1.1 Background of the institution**

The investigation was settled at Herradura Elementary School, located in Puntarenas, more specifically, in the community of Herradura on the northwest side of the sports plaza. The school belongs to circuit 05 of the Direccion Regional de Aguirre, is a Direccion 5 (population over 1000 students), and its budget code is 3737.

According to Arce (2025), the institution was founded in 1946 and began with a wooden classroom named “Juan Santa María School”, but this name was not made official. Then, due to differences between the inhabitants, it was decided to remove the name, and it was forgotten. The couple, Concepcion Gonzalez and Dimas Araya, donated the land for the construction of the institution.

Later, in 1966, a cement classroom was built, and in 1970, the second classroom was finished, also made of concrete. In Herradura, the Public School built the third classroom in 1992 and two more classrooms in 1995 and 1997 with the collaboration of the School Board (group of parents dedicated to looking after the institution and meeting needs through events and community fairs). The preschool section was built in 1997.

Over the years, the community of Herradura grew, and more families decided to be part of the community. Also, immigrants from countries such as Nicaragua, Colombia, and the United States came to populate the area. Thus, the institution grew, and therefore, the number of classrooms required to serve the large student population of the school. This was possible thanks to the support of the government, the inhabitants of the area, and large hotel chains such as the Marriott Los Sueños hotel, which began operating in Herradura in 1999,

bringing great benefits for the institution. This information was provided by Naranjo, a person from the community of Herradura.

For example, thanks to the Marriott Los Sueños Hotel, larger bathrooms were built according to the needs of the student population, and green areas were created for student recreation. Likewise, other non-profit foundations have arrived over time, such as the Genius Foundation, which provides students with school uniforms and has provided the institution with a team of around 120 tablets to be able to carry out Ministry of Education projects such as the ABC Mouse project.

Herradura school belonging to the circuit 05 of the Aguirre Regional Education, is the technical and administrative instance responsible for providing quality service through the implementation of educational policy in the institutional sphere promoting knowledge construction, values promotion, cooperative culture, protection of natural resources and maximum utilization of the available resources, for the benefit of the educational community, this information was provided by Muñoz the librarian of Herradura Elementary School.

Regarding its mission, Solis, the principal of the institution established the following as its main goal:

La escuela de Herradura perteneciente al circuito 05 de la regional de educación Aguirre, es la instancia técnica y administrativa encargada de brindar servicio de calidad mediante la implementación de la política educativa en el ámbito institucional propiciando la construcción del conocimiento, el fomento de los valores, la cultura cooperativa, la protección de los recursos naturales y el máximo aprovechamiento de

los recursos disponibles, en beneficio de la comunidad educativa (Solis, 2025) (comunicado personalmente).

Herradura School, belonging to Circuit 05 of the Aguirre Regional Education Office, is the technical and administrative entity responsible for providing quality service through the implementation of educational policy at the institutional level, fostering knowledge construction, the promotion of values, cooperative culture, the protection of natural resources, and the optimal use of available resources for the benefit of the educational community, (own translation).

Herradura Elementary School established the following as its vision:

Ofrecer una política educativa acorde con los desafíos de la sociedad que garantice la calidad de la educación en cada modalidad, propiciando el mejoramiento de la educación en la escuela y comunidad de Herradura, buscando una formación integral altamente competitiva que responda a los retos actuales (Solis, 2025).

[To offer an education policy in line with society's challenges that guarantees quality education in every modality, promoting educational improvement in Horseshoe school and community, seeking a highly competitive comprehensive education that responds to current challenges, (own translation).

Herradura school has the particularity of being located in a highly touristic area, but at the same time, it has a large population of immigrants who live in an area of precarious settlements, therefore, many of these students have problems of domestic violence, drug trafficking, prostitution, and crime. Likewise, many of them live in extreme poverty. On the

other hand, Herradura offers a large number of facilities that are located near the institution, you can find large restaurants and supermarket chains.

Currently, Herradura School has 19 classrooms for regular teachers, 6 classrooms for educational support services, 7 preschool classrooms, a gymnasium, a cafeteria, a computer lab, a library, a principal's office, a student waiting room, and a school cooperative. The staff is also made up of 18 core subject teachers (math, Spanish, social studies, science), 3 English teachers, 7 preschool teachers, 8 special education teachers, 2 music teachers, 2 physical Education teachers, 2 technological training teachers and 1 religion teacher, 1 librarian, and 16 in the administrative staff .

According to the principal Dr. Efrain Solis Rojas, nowadays, Herradura Elementary School has a student population of 1,075 students, of which 565 are girls and 510 are boys in the primary and preschool levels. In addition, there is an adult education program in the evening. Thus, this educational institution is the largest in the whole region of Aguirre in the province of Puntarenas.

The information was compiled with the contribution of Mr. Alexander Naranjo Serrano, who is part of the first families that populated the Herradura community, the Herradura School principal, Doctor Efrain Solis Rojas, and Mrs. Lupita Delgado, librarian of the Herradura elementary school by personal interviews. Also, the article in the Herencia Magazine "Herradura: its history" (2017).

## **2.2 History of English Teaching**

### **2.2.1 English Teaching in Costa Rica**

English teaching has increased due to commercial expansion and globalization in countries worldwide. English has been considered a tool that demonstrates competitiveness and a relevant achievement that increases the attraction of companies. Since the 19<sup>th</sup> century, English teaching has been implemented in the Costa Rican Education system (Barrantes et al., 2023; Gamboa et al., 2021). In this sense, commercials with foreign countries such as England were one of the main incentives for the institutionalization of English teaching.

By the year of 1957, the English Teaching major of the University of Costa Rica (UCR) was designated as the profession of the year (Barahona et al., 2011). This exemplifies its significance in this developing country. However, this profession has been historically criticized and misunderstood. By comparing the performance of Costa Rican English teachers to international indexes (e.g., English Proficiency Index [EPI], Program for International Students Assessment [PISA]), it was revealed that nearly 40% of professionals lack the requirements to teach English as a Foreign Language (EFL) (Barrantes et al, 2023).

In Costa Rica, several programs have been developed aiming to increase the English proficiency of the country (Barrantes et al, 2023). In 2008, the *English National Plan* was institutionalized, composed of plenty state institutions. This project aimed to increase the English proficiency and align it to the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR). Among these initiatives, *Multilingual Costa Rica* favored the preparation of teachers to improve their application of EFL strategies and overall proficiency. The plan design was based on the results from the Test of English for International Communication (TOEIC) conducted among English teachers in Costa Rica. The screening supported the

idea obtained by the international Indexes, with most teachers obtaining a grade in the B2 and B1 bands (32% and 28%, respectively) (Costa Rica Multilingüe, 2009). This proficiency level is considered insufficient to adequately teach English.

Regardless of the efforts, Costa Rica obtained negative results from the EPI until 2015. This could be related to the implementation of certain regulations for English teachers and teaching strategies. For instance, the need for a B2 or C1 CEFR level in the TOEIC (every two years) and several changes in the English syllabus for each level of education (e.g., preschool, primary, secondary education) (Barrantes et al, 2023). Similarly, a new TOEIC screening revealed a subtle improvement in the English level, but still insufficient for teaching.

In 2022, the EPI showed that Costa Rica had significantly risen from low to moderate proficiency. This year, Costa Rica obtained the second place in Latin America, after Argentina, and the 37<sup>th</sup> place worldwide (Education First, 2022). This demonstrated that although the *English National Plan* and *Multilingual Costa Rica* had poor short-term effects, their implementation (in collaboration with other strategies) allowed a relevant improvement in the long term.

More recently, Costa Rica launched in 2019 the *Toward Bilingual Costa Rica* project (Presidencia de la República, 2020). This program is focused on teaching strategies in the public education system to ensure that all students can understand, speak, and write English before 2040 (Barrantes-Elizondo & Olivares-Garita, 2023). Along with the establishment of this plan, the 2021 pandemic forced teachers and students to the virtual, severely challenging the teaching strategies (López-Estrada et al., 2025; Zúñiga-Vargas et al., 2021). Although these were considered hard times for the Costa Rican Education System, it made

the possibility of incorporating digital and virtual games within English teaching strategies. In this regard, the use of these approaches seems like a promising methodology to improve the Teaching of English as a Foreign Language (TEFL).

### **2.2.2 Methodologies of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century in Costa Rica**

Until recently 2017, the English Teaching strategies were conducted according to the Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) approach. CLT is considered the capacity to produce sentences in a language (Richards, 2006). This methodology consists of inducing English speaking in real circumstances, to promote discussion and communication (Rodriguez et al, 2021). The CLT allows students to work at their own pace, work independently, and develop skills. This approach is focused on transforming English students into functional members of society by favoring conversations in realistic settings (Navarro et al, 2021).

As a student-centered approach, the CLT implies a change in the teacher's role. In this sense, the professor is considered a tool to the student that provides oral intervention (Navarro et al, 2021). The expected outcomes of this methodology aim to develop students speaking confidently in the target language (English) with few to no errors in their sentences. In addition, due to the realistic scenery provided in the topics, it is expected that students can discuss real-world conversations in generating sentences with purpose and meaning (Rodriguez, 2021).

Regardless of the advantages and positive results from the CLT approach, the Ministry of Public Education (MEP, acronym in Spanish) decided to change the syllabus. This was based on the required skills for English speaking and the job market of the current 21<sup>st</sup>

Century. Nowadays, students need to express opinions, analyze, solve, and speak up in situations (Navarro-Céspedes, 2021). It was considered that these skills were at a disadvantage by using the CLT approach, and to overcome these challenges, the Action-Oriented Approach (AOA) was implemented by MEP (Vargas-Solís et al., 2023).

AOA is a product-oriented methodology that can be considered an extension of the CLT approach. Here, students are required to engage in real-world scenarios and have meaningful conversations. However, in contrast to CLT, AOA considers cognitive, emotional, and volitional resources (Cadenas-Bogantes & Castro-Miranda, 2021). As a product-oriented approach, AOA favors the development and improvement of 21<sup>st</sup> Century skills, mostly directed at the job market.

This English Teaching scheme provides greater flexibility to the teachers to decide how to direct the classes. They become responsible for fulfilling the syllabus topics in their creative way while following the AOA principles (Vargas-Solís et al., 2023). Similar to the CLT, the teacher becomes a facilitator who guides students to develop their knowledge, as in any student-centered approach. In this sense, both the AOA and the CLT English teaching approaches allow the teachers to implement novel teaching techniques based on digital methods to favor the TELF (Cadenas-Bogantes & Castro-Miranda, 2021; Vargas-Solís et al., 2023).

### **2.2.3 Educational System in Costa Rica: Primary**

The Costa Rican Education System is divided in four main sections: kindergarten, primary, secondary, and post-secondary education (college, undergraduate and postgraduate studies). From these, only the first two academic stages are considered obligatory by the

Costa Rican Government. Kindergarten, in accordance with expectations, comprises children from 4 to 6 years of age and primary includes 7 to 12 years old. In most cases, the first interaction of students with English is at the primary level (also known as elementary school) as only a private institution offers bilingual kindergarten.

The implementation of English courses in primary schools dates to the 1940s. However, before this time, these classes were already included in secondary education institutions (Solano-Campos, 2012). Initially, these classes were imparted by foreign instructors, mostly native speakers. After the UCR graduated the first batch of trained professionals for English teaching, it was possible to implement national professors into the English programs. However, the non-native speakers as teachers are still widely criticized due to the results from the international indexes about their proficiency (Barrantes-Elizondo & Olivares-Garita, 2023).

The Public Education System of Costa Rica considered English as a *special* subject until 1997, when it was re-established as a *basic* subject (Solano-Campos, 2012). Currently, the improvement of the overall English proficiency of Costa Rica is one key objective in the MEP, as exemplified by the *Toward Bilingual Costa Rica* project (Presidencia de la República, 2020). Several efforts have been widely implemented since early education levels, including primary school as to face the challenges of the pandemic's academic blackout (López-Estrada et al., 2025). For this, the new English syllabus of MEP comprises all education levels since primary, and methods for fostering 21<sup>st</sup> Century skills are actively explored for elementary school English teaching (Narváez Pérez, 2023).

## **2.3 Approaches to Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL)**

### **2.3.1 Audiolingual Approach**

The audiolingual method is a well-known approach for Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL). In this sense, this strategy has a focus on the speaking and writing skills of English (Sidabutar, 2021). It is based on the teacher as the model that produces the main sentences repeated by the student, ensuring adequate pronunciation and deciphering of the grammatical structures of the sentences (Mart, 2013; Novianty & Irawati, 2021). This model is a teacher-centered technique where the main responsibility regarding the correct learning and pedagogical methods, relying on the preparation of classes towards specific topics (Djauhar, 2021). This approach aims to develop both communicative and grammatical competence based on fictional circumstances (Mart, 2013).

The audiolingual methodology was one of the first strategies for TEFL. However, it has been widely criticized due to its nature. The use of teacher-centered approaches for TEFL was rejected in modern times as this process is considered poorly enjoyed by learners (Richards, 2006). In addition, teaching through imitation and repetition, particularly in fictional scenarios, results in individuals with concise knowledge of the grammatical structures, but little competence in the cultural context of the English language (Holbekova et al., 2021; Richards, 2006). This decreases the ability of foreign speakers to produce meaningful and/or real-life conversations due to a lack of confidence to freely speak in the target language.

### **2.3.2 Structural-Situational Approach**

The Structural-Situational Approach (hereafter Structural Approach) emerged as a response to the limitations of the Audiolingual Approach. This technique employs the grammatical structures and sentences as the learning unit for English (Imankulova & Oskolkova, 2023). The methodology is considered to be mostly focused on the grammatical part of the English language but engages learners in realistic scenarios that favor confidence in speaking the target language (Arcos & Vega, 2024). There are several ways to conduct the structural approach in the TEFL classrooms (e.g., using videos, recordings). However, in principle, it requires a so-called *P-P-P cycle*: presentation, practice, and production (Richards, 2006). This cycle corresponds to the stages of the learning process and the expected outcomes.

For instance, the learners are presented with grammatically correct sentences by the teachers to take as a model to learn their structure. After integrating the structural aspects of sentence preparation, students are encouraged to create their own sentences with the teacher's supervision and repeat them to practice their oral skills. During this step, the intervention of the instructor is pertinent to address pronunciation errors and ensure the correct development of speaking proficiency.

Finally, learners are set to practice the creation of their sentences in various circumstances based on realistic situations to facilitate their ability to respond in the real world (Imankulova & Oskolkova, 2023; Richards, 2006). It is worth noticing that this approach is teacher-centered and posits a great responsibility in the instructor to prepare, organize, and conduct the proposed activities and syllabus.

### **2.3.3 Grammar Translation Approach**

The Grammar Translation Approach is another grammar-based technique of English teaching. It is, next to the audiolingual system, one of the first methodologies designed for TEFL. This scheme consists of learning the target language through the extensive comprehension of text and memorizing vocabulary (Djauhar, 2021; Khan & Mansoor, 2016). It prioritizes the grammatical rules and their practice by the creation of new sentences by first translating the model sentences into their mother language (Khan & Mansoor, 2016). In this way, the students are able to understand completely the meaning and purpose of the conversation. Among other advantages of this system, the students have clear comprehension of grammatical structures, demonstrating high proficiency in this skill.

This methodology is teacher-centered, resulting in little interactions between students and relying on the instructor to explain the specific vocabulary studied in the syllabus (Chang, 2011). The use of a grammar translation approach in TEFL classrooms had little to no speaking exercises (Chang, 2011). Such methodology might result in poor oral skills in the learners with little proficiency in this same aspect. In addition, this technique neglects the principle that languages cannot be directly translated in many cases and the use of real-life scenarios (Khan & Mansoor, 2016). Therefore, the method is considered deficient for English learning, as it is strictly methodical and heavily focused on the grammatical aspects.

#### **2.3.4 Communicative Approach: General details**

The Communicative Approach is an English Teaching scheme that focuses on interactions as the mediator and the goal of study (Richards, 2006). As previously mentioned, this methodology is student-centered, allowing the students to learn independently, providing skills to develop more confident speaking (Navarro-Céspedes,

2021). By the principles of this approach, the teacher becomes a tool that students use to perfect grammar and correct errors in their sentences. However, part of this approach favors the use of language in and outside of class, fomenting a more realistic use of language beyond the traditional grammar (Holbekova et al., 2021). Other methods are highly methodical and challenge real-world daily communication in English. This is an obstacle that can be overcome by the communicative approach. It is considered that this scheme encourages students to experience real-life conversation to develop skills in diverse situations, generating functional society members (Navarro-Céspedes, 2021).

In Costa Rica, this approach has been the standard in the English Teaching syllabus for several decades. Although the AOA scheme was implemented most recently, it is an extension of the common CLT method previously used (Vargas-Solís et al., 2023). In this sense, the AOA and the Education System of Costa Rica still focus on the improvement of English proficiency through techniques that invite students to practice speaking. Particularly, this methodology aims to allow students to create sentences based on critical thinking on purpose to have meaningful conversations based on context (Rodríguez-Vargas, 2021).

## **2.4 Communicative Approach in the Process of Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL)**

### **2.4.1 Historical Background of the Communicative Approach in the Process of Teaching English**

Before the development of the Communicative Approach, Teaching English as a Foreign Language was conducted under repetitive practice of sentences. These methodologies were dominant in the late 1980s when students were presented with

grammar rules and structure to create sentences or, on the contrary, with examples of sentences for them to deduce the grammatical features (Richards, 2006). Moreover, other techniques included the memorization of conversations, answering questions, and guided speaking and writing (Richards, 2006). Such approaches were known as Audiolingualism and the Structural-Situational Approach.

The Audiolingual aimed to provide learners with extensive comprehension of the foreign language, spoken speed, and favor grammatical correctness (Mart, 2013). This method involved the repetition of certain sentences to improve pronunciation, intonation, assess mistakes and breakdown the grammatical structures and rules (Mart, 2013; Novianty & Irawati, 2021). After this, students are guidance toward generic textbooks to perform follow-up reading and vocabulary activities. Moreover, the structural-situational approach was based on the use of grammatical structures as a learning unit for English teaching (Imankulova & Oskolkova, 2023).

This system involved the presentation of three stages that were considered as the *P-P-P cycle*: presentation, practice, and production. Here, the students were presented with grammatical structures and learned the basis of their components. Later, they practice these sentences by creating their own with the supervision of the teachers to finally produce structures for a vast variety of contexts based on new information provided by professors (Imankulova & Oskolkova, 2023; Richards, 2006).

Both methods focused on the grammar skills (Imankulova & Oskolkova, 2023; Mart, 2013; Novianty & Irawati, 2021), neglecting the oral component of English and neglecting in most cases, the cultural context for the use of the language. To overcome this issue, the communicative approach was developed in the early 1970s based on a fluency-first

pedagogy (Richards, 2006). This stemmed from a reaction to the traditional teaching and learning approaches, as it was considered that English proficiency was beyond competence in grammatical structures. The introduction of the communicative approach allowed the design of a TELF syllabus based on sociolinguistics with a focus on the oral skills and cultural aspects of the language (Richards, 2006). In this sense, the purposes, meaning, realistic settings, and language functions received major relevance in the process, considering the intrinsic learning of grammatical structures. The effectiveness of this approach to create functional members of society rather than *experts* in English grammar with poor communicative skills allowed the expansion and implementation worldwide (Holbekova et al., 2021; Rashov, 2024; Richards, 2006). Further aspects, features, advantages, and disadvantages of this methodology are explored in the following subsections.

#### **2.4.2 Features of the Communicative Approach in English Teaching**

The Communicative Approach is based on the three main principles: i) meaning is priority: the focus of this methodology is to allow the students to comprehend the meaning of various expressions intended by speakers and writers (Holbekova et al., 2021; Richards, 2006). ii) relevance to linguistics: under this scheme, constant communication allows the learners to indulge the functions of linguistic structures rather than memorizing sentence patterns (Holbekova et al., 2021). iii) teaching language: similar to the previous principle, the communicative method incentivizes the use of language as the mechanism to learn a new language instead of it being the object of study (Holbekova et al., 2021). Such principles favor the creation of functional members of society able to respond to several realistic situations.

By implementing these principles, the communicative approach involves several features and aspects in its English learning scheme (Holbekova et al., 2021; Rashov, 2024; Richards, 2006). For instance, students under this methodology are expected to know how to use language for various realistic proactivity various meaning and functionalities, be able to create, understand, and interpretate text, lectures, listen recordings, and oral speeches with ease, and have active and continuous dialogue regardless of the language knowledge or speaking difficulties. All these characteristics are meant to promote confidence, flexibility, and multi-purpose lexicon in learners, facilitating its inclusion in the English language culture.

#### **2.4.3 Role of the Teacher in the Implementation of the Communicative Approach**

The Communicative Approach is a student-centered learning methodology. In this sense, the teacher loses the role of the model for repetition and learning of sentences and becomes a facilitator of the language (Richards, 2006). Rather than relying on textbooks or methodical systems, teachers are up to promote continuity of the conversation or discussion and favor the development of oral skills (Holbekova et al., 2021). For this, the teacher can include the use of real-life material such as newspapers, videos, songs, and others that expose the students to the English language. Such an approach improves both speaking and listening skills and incentivizes students to take control of dialogues (Rashov, 2024).

#### **2.4.4 Role of the Students in the Implementation of the Communicative Approach**

As the main focus of the Communicative Approach implies, the students take the principal roles in the learning of EFL. Here, students are meant to participate actively in activities that involve both cooperativism and individualism (Richards, 2006). For instance,

learners are set to listen to their peers discuss different topics in the sense of real-life conversations and responses with meaningful sentences that add value to the interchange. By this student-centered scheme for learning, students can generate spoken sentences each time with fewer errors, increasing their confidence and ability to speak freely in various circumstances (Richards, 2006). In addition, this allows students to take control of the conversation, including personal experiences that ease the learning process and focus them on enjoying the experience (Holbekova et al., 2021).

#### **2.4.5 Advantages in the Implementation of the Communicative Approach in English Teaching**

Several advantages are present when using the Communicative Approach to improve the English learning process. Among these: i) meaningful conversation: this scheme prioritizes that the students can conduct dialogues to have real meaning in real-life activities (Rashov, 2024). This prevents students from having repetitive conversations and memorizing the grammatical rules of this foreign language. Although it is considered relevant to the correct speaking, listening, and writing, it has been stated by learners under other methodical schemes that they did not realistically learn the language (Holbekova et al., 2021). In this sense, the Communicative Approach favors real-life situations that transform students into functional members of society, able to dialogue with culture. Additionally, this provides greater flexibility to the development of the students' lexicon and language acquisitions (Stakanova & Tolstikhina, 2014).

It is a student-centered approach: the idea of learners as the main active subjects of the learning process allows improved learning experience (Rashov, 2024). In addition, the activities performed in groups and pairs allow the development of cooperative,

communicative, and other 21st-century desired skills for the job market (Narváez Pérez, 2023; Navarro-Céspedes, 2021). iii) Improvement of various English skills: the communicative approach with its nature and guidance of the teacher based on audiovisual materials (e.g., videos, recordings) favors the development of both speaking and listening skills (Rashov, 2024). In addition, the continuous facilitation of sentence error correction by the professors intrinsically promotes grammar skills. Overall, this scheme transforms the learning process into an enjoyable experience for the learner without compromising the integrity of the learned language (Vargas et al., 2023).

#### **2.4.6 Disadvantages in the Implementation of the Communicative Approach in English Teaching**

Regardless of the demonstrated effectiveness of the Communicative approach, this scheme continues to be widely criticized due to three main factors: i) challenging class management, ii) difficulties correcting errors, and iii) neglect of grammatical rules and structures. First, the promotion of dialogue through activities requires two implications: the student is interested in learning, and the class is strongly organized (Holbekova et al., 2021; Rashov, 2024). These two suppositions are not always true for all classrooms, which comes with severe difficulties for the teacher to create a syllabus that covers the needs of learners and permits the conduct of activities clearly and concisely. In this sense, classroom management can sometimes be challenging, resulting in an inadequate implementation of the communicative approach.

Second, due to the dynamic nature of the communicative scheme, the traditional assessment of sentence error is not necessarily effective (Rashov, 2024). For instance, the correction of grammatical errors in the sentences and pronunciation might be difficult

during the teaching activities (Pedrazzini, 2016; Rashov, 2024). It is important to avoid the interruption of the learning process while students conduct their one conversation, to incentivize confidence; therefore, difficulty correction is complicated.

To overcome this challenge, there is a recurring need for the development of new strategies that prioritize the learning experience's integrity. Finally, a constant doubt in the communicative approach is whether the grammatical skills are correctly developed by the intrinsic nature of the learning process (Holbekova et al., 2021). As mentioned above, exposure to real conversations and discussions inherently teaches grammar structures and rules, but the need for explicit teaching of these aspects is required. This incentive worries English teachers about the neglect of grammatical rules and the overall proficiency of the learners in these skills.

## **2.5 Technology in Education**

### **2.5.1 Use of Technology in Education**

Nowadays, technology is immersed in any activity performed by human beings, and even in very remote places, information can be disseminated through digital media and social networks. Likewise, the use of technology is immersed in the different fields of arts, science, communication, and education. Increased accessibility to technology and digital resources now allows for better learning opportunities for all types of learners. Technology access, when equitable, can help close the digital divide and make transformative learning opportunities available to all learners" (King & South, 2017).

According to King & South (2017), technology can enable personalized learning or experiences that are more engaging and relevant. Thus, in the educational field, technology

has been allowing teachers to design strategies that allow students to learn in ways that are more attractive to them. It also provides them with a variety of tools and resources that were not so readily available in the past, which are now just a click away. This provides the possibility of being aligned with the preferences and digital environments in which children and young people develop today.

Furthermore, hand in hand with the use of technology in education is the rise of social networks, through which students interact in various environments, compared with the other learning activities, sharing and obtaining materials (i.e. materials exchange) are perhaps the most consistent students' activities in their learning practice through the means of social media (Li, 2017).

In addition, schools must use their authority and expertise in teaching to foster a working culture and remain competitive in the 21st century. This includes the “development of critical thinking, complex problem solving, collaboration, such as the conventional use of multimedia communication. Moreover, the students must have the chance to build up a positive sense of learning and the idea that they will be successful in school (King & South, 2017).

Moreover, technology offers many advantages in the educational field. According to Boholano (2017), it motivates learners and keeps them engaged in learning. Also, improve attainment levels, raise standards, and personalize learning, and give learners a voice. Teachers should take advantage of all that technology has to offer to improve achievement and provide an individualized learning option to suit the different learning styles of students.

Furthermore, methodologies are now being sought that are both streamlined and effective at the same time to assimilate content that may be very heavy or complicated, breaking the gap between what may seem boring or very difficult, and making the same content attractive and easy to understand. Technology makes difficult and abstract concepts easier to explore, saves time and is more efficient, and reaches the hard-to-reach (Boholano, 2017).

### **2.5.2 Inclusion of Games in the Process of Learning English as a Foreign Language (EFL)**

With the arrival of new technologies, innovative strategies are also being developed to teach and implement in different fields of study, including the learning of a second language. Recent years have witnessed the emergence and utilization of digital gamification in EFL/ESL teaching and learning (Dehghanzadeh et al., 2019). This gave way to the gamification strategies, thereby diversifying and adapting the use of games in different contexts. In the past decade, the popularity of gamification has increased rapidly, and various cases are known in which businesses, web designers, and education workers have used gamification to engage and motivate a target group with successful outcomes (Chou, 2017).

The concept of gamification is relatively new; it was conceived in 2010. And the most recognized definition is according to Detering et al. (2011): “Gamification is the concept of gamifying non-game contexts by incorporating games or gameful experiences”. This refers to the fact that gamification can be used in environments that do not precisely involve a game, but can be adapted to these to modify experiences. This is why it is implicit

in the classroom environment of a second language as part of the elements that can enrich the learning experience through play.

Gamification has come to be used in different areas, not only educational but also commercial, becoming a multidisciplinary strategy capable of adapting to different contexts, without being limited to a specific area. Authors argue that “Gamification is a multidisciplinary concept spanning a range of theoretical and empirical knowledge, technological domains and platforms, and is driven by an array of practical motivations” (Seaborn & Fels, 2015).

On the other hand, the use of gamification in education deals with motivational purposes, seeking different ways to engage and awaken learners' interests and developing skills. Gamification of education is a developing approach for increasing learners' motivation and engagement by incorporating game design elements in educational environments. (Dicheva, 2017).

Additionally, the use of gamification strategies has been integrated with the teaching-learning process of a second language to ensure that learners can find a more attractive way of learning. When using gamification in education, various methodologies, strategies, and approaches are involved. Gamification not only uses game elements and game design techniques in non-game contexts (Werbach & Hunter, 2012) but also empowers and engages the learner with motivational skills toward a learning approach and sustaining a relaxing atmosphere.

### **2.5.3 “Who Am I? online guessing game**

The game “Who am I?” can be found in an educational application called Wordwall. This app starts because of the need to create interactive games and printed materials for students, with automation from the site doing the rest (Edwards, 2024). This application contains several games, including “Who am I?”, an interactive platform designed for players to guess who is a person, animal, object, or concept based on a series of descriptive clues that can be images or parts of the word to be guessed.

#### **2.5.3.1 Characteristics of “Who am I?” Online Guessing Game**

The online game “Who am I?” presents users, mostly English language learners, with a series of screens with pictures or incomplete words that give clues about topics such as animals, occupations, or vocabulary from the classroom environment. In this type of game, the teacher can organize participants to participate individually, in pairs, or in groups. For example, the “Jobs-Who am I?” game presents players with clues about various occupations and asks them to select the correct occupation from several options. It is a multiple-choice quiz with time pressure, lifelines, and a bonus round (Irmakschools, 2025).

#### **2.5.3.2 Advantages in the Use of “Who am I?” Online Guessing Game**

Online games contribute in different ways to the teaching and learning process, and some of the advantages that the game “Who am I?” offers are: contributes to the development of students' critical thinking, the understanding of topics that may be difficult to assimilate, and the acquisition of new vocabulary. “As I believe in the success of gamified learning, I have used this tool to help with practicing words and phonemes in a motivating and interactive way” (Edwards, 2024).

Games can be a fun method, a low-stakes formative assessment for new content. This can be done through points, knowledge organizers, or reporting (Harding, 2023). This point of view states that there are multiple ways to introduce and use games as assessment strategies or evaluation tools.

According to Harding (2023), a useful point about digital games is that teachers and learners can track information about where mistakes have been made to help them identify where gaps in learning are, and which content requires more game-playing and practice to get it right.

### **2.5.3.3 Disadvantages in the Use of “Who am I?” Online Guessing Game**

Although online games provide many advantages in the teaching and learning of a second language there may also be some disadvantages to their use, therefore the teacher should always analyze and observe the behaviors and results of their use in the classroom, since not all students react in the same way to the use of technology in class.

Therefore, as part of the disadvantages that the use of the same can present are: the distraction of the learning objectives since some students can focus more on the elements of the game than on the educational content, which would not provide significant learning. Learning is not going to take place if the subject matter is relevant, but the game itself is too easy or far too complex for the learner to play (Harding, 2023).

Likewise, even educational games can generate or increase the dependence on screens and virtual interaction of some students who are in their daily environment very exposed to their use and have already developed this type of unhealthy dependence on

virtual environments and the use of electronic devices. Some learners may find the temptation to keep playing the game too irresistible, and so a clear expectation about learning time needs to be agreed upon with students. (Harding, 2023)

## **2.6 Skills in the Process of Learning English as a Foreign Language (EFL)**

### **2.6.1 Listening Skills**

Listening is the process in which information is put and analyzed based on what is heard (Afriyuninda & Oktaviani, 2021). It is considered that this skill represents the most important element to the learning of English as a Foreign Language (EFL). The impact of listening in the learning process is widely underestimated; however, the exposure to listening sessions has an immediate effect mainly on speaking skills (Ali, 2022). In this sense, listening ensures students speak more fluently, confidently, precisely, and with better pronunciation (Ali, 2022).

In addition, it favors the expansion of vocabulary in a seamless way. The importance of listening in the process of learning languages is better represented by the idea that those deprived of the sense are inherently unable to speak due to the lack of hearing. Regardless of this, listening skills are one of the most difficult to perfect due to the extreme concentration required and the inconsistency of the English pronunciation and speaking speed (Alzamil, 2021). Therefore, the implementation of listening activities is consistent across learning techniques by listening to videos, recordings, and/or other audiovisuals that engage in conversations, writing, or serve as model sentences for grammatical structures analysis.

### **2.6.2 Reading Skills**

Reading is one of the most popular learning skills to demonstrate proficiency in English and other languages. It is defined as the ability to understand and decode written orthography and find meaning in the stated (Hakim & Wahyuni, 2024). Particularly, reading skills are considered a test for the overall comprehension of the target language as it is the most important skill in the educational context (Hakim & Wahyuni, 2024). Through reading, students are able to assess their ability to understand sentences, symbols, and images and extract and process information from these (Dwipayana, 2021; Hakim & Wahyuni, 2024). It improves the expansion of vocabulary, correct analysis of grammatical structures, and gains understanding of the English language culture. It can be commonly performed for entertaining; however, in the learning process, it involves the exploration of meaning in text to stimulate critical thinking (Ali, 2022). Most of the modern TEFL techniques do not include reading activities within the common approach. Therefore, the promotion of these must be consistent and active to ensure an integrative and improved learning experience.

### **2.6.3 Writing Skills**

The English writing skills in language are considered a productive skill as they require more attention and proficiency than other skills. Academics consider this as the reproduction of all language skills into a single activity (Ali, 2022). This skill involves the ability to listen, read, speak, and generate error-free sentences to demonstrate overall proficiency in the language. Writing is separated into two main sectors: academic writing and personal writing (Nenotek et al., 2022). Academic writing is more systematic, diverse, and formal than personal writing, which is defined as informal. In this sense, academic

writing is different for each sector of academia, resulting in higher complexity and difficulty expressing ideas, discussion, and avoiding plagiarism (Nenotek et al., 2022).

This skillset teaches learners the use of appropriate words in socially and grammatically adequate circumstances, facilitating the independent production and acquisition of knowledge (Rohmi & Wahyuni, 2023). It is conveyed that writing skills are the most challenging for students learning English as a Foreign Language, due to their demanding proficiency in the other skills (Ali, 2022; Nenotek et al., 2022; Rohmi & Wahyuni, 2023). Therefore, the recurrent practice and guidance allow the complete mastery of this skill.

#### **2.6.4 Speaking Skills**

English speaking is part of the most relevant skills in current times due to its relevance in communication for the job market and other international affairs. It is defined as the production of systematic verbal sentences with purpose and meaning (Sidabutar, 2021). Around this concept, it is pertinent that the sound and enunciation can be understood for the addressed to allow good communication. The speaking skills is considered as the most difficult to master for most learners due to the complexity of pronunciation and poor activities involving conversation in the traditional English teaching methods (Sidabutar, 2021). In this regard, the improvement of speaking skills has gained attention in the last decades, resulting in novel teaching techniques that use oral activities as the tools to learn English rather than the aim of study. For instance, the communicative approach explored here is the extension implemented by the Costa Rican Ministry of Education (Action-Oriented Approach, AOA).

## **2.7 Speaking Skills in the Process of Learning English as a Foreign Language (EFL)**

### **2.7.1 The Role of Phonetics in the Process of Learning English as a Foreign Language**

In linguistics, phonetics corresponds to a branch of this area that is in charge of the study of the production, transmission, and reception of sound (Sharifboyeva & Juraqliy, 2024). This is commonly divided into three sub-disciplines: i) articulatory phonetics, based on the movements to produce speech, ii) acoustic phonetics, properties of the resulting sound, and iii) auditory phonetics, transformation of sound into information (Rogers, 2014). It is known that phonetics plays a crucial role in the English learning process as the recognition of sound allows the imitation of adequate pronunciation and listening to words. In this sense, English pupils must start by learning the sound of those words uttered by English native speakers to be able to understand those sounds not unique to English, not emitted in their native language (Rogers, 2014).

Phonetics provides students with academic subjects, materials, and knowledge to start the process of pronunciation. Pronunciation is known as the practice of particular sounds corresponding to a language, which is heavily dependent on the discipline of learners to achieve what is considered the “correct pronunciation” (A. Brown, 2014). Therefore, the implementation of speaking activities and the communicative approach of TEFL has gained attention in the last decades. In this regard, the study of phonetics is pertinent to ensure the improvement of the teaching techniques to favor the development of English skills in foreign learners (A. Brown, 2014; Rogers, 2014).

### **2.7.2 The Role of Vowels and Consonants in English Teaching**

Vowels and consonants are letters that play key roles in the structural understanding of words in English. Based on the English alphabet, vowels are defined as the letters “a,” “e,” “i,” “o,” and “u,” while consonant comprises the rest. It is considered that the understanding and correct identification of these are relevant in the English learning process. For instance, consonants are more suited for the detection, identification, and understanding of words than vowels (Lubis et al., 2024). Vowels are related to the intonation and rhythm of words, being divided into two categories depending on their pronunciation: long and short vowels (Lubis et al., 2024; Treiman et al., 2023). The relationship and functionality of consonants and vowels is known as the Consonant-Vowel hypothesis (CV hypothesis).

The study and assessment of pronunciation of both consonants and vowels is pertinent, as the adequacy is challenged by the nature of the mother language of the learners (Chaves-Fernández et al., 2024). Particularly, the Spanish pronunciation of Latin American countries has been widely neglected in this regard. Current studies assessing this issue are focused on techniques for European learners from different mother languages (e.g., German, French, Italian, and Spanish from Spain) (Chaves-Fernández et al., 2024). This highlights the importance of developing speaking activities that allow the correction of vowel and consonant pronunciation in Costa Rican students.

### **2.7.3 Long and Short Vowels in English**

As mentioned above, the definition of long and short vowels refers to the length of the intonation of the letter in certain words. For instance, the letter “e” is considered long in the

word “paper,” but its pronunciation is short in the word “pepper.” This is a common concept used among teachers; however, in reality, this distinction is abstract and not always directly related to the phonetic properties (Altmiller et al., 2023).

Furthermore, each vowel has a long and short form pronunciation. The following chart shows the phonemic symbols of the long and short vowel sounds.

Long Vowels (tense)		Short Vowels (lax)	
Letter	IPA	Letter	IPA
A = cake	/eɪ/	a = cat	/æ/
E = eat, Y = happy	/i/	e = bed	/ɛ/
I = ice, Y = my	/aɪ/	i = his, y = gym	/ɪ/
O = coke	/oʊ/, /əʊ/	o = hot	/ɑ/ /ɔ/ /a/
U = true	/u/	u = sun	/ʌ, ə/

**Figure 1**

*American English vowel chart with IPA symbols and example words.*

Note. Adapted from *American English Vowel Sounds with IPA Symbols (International Phonetic Alphabet)* by Barb, 2022. Used under educational fair use. Retrieved from

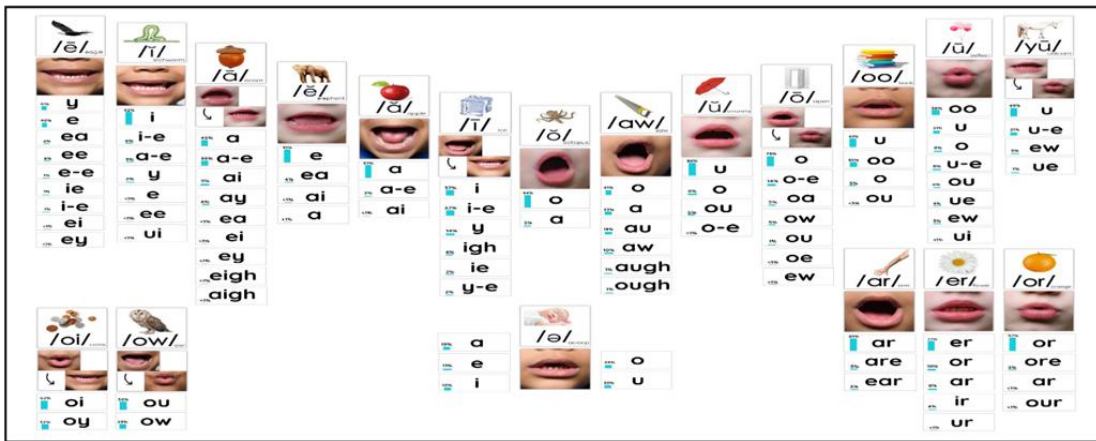
[https://www.speechactive.com/english-vowels-ipa-international-phonetic-](https://www.speechactive.com/english-vowels-ipa-international-phonetic-alphabet/?v=324d8a1d3f81)

[alphabet/?v=324d8a1d3f81](https://www.speechactive.com/english-vowels-ipa-international-phonetic-alphabet/?v=324d8a1d3f81)

One of the main indicators of pronunciation in regards of vowels is spelling. It has been demonstrated that elementary students use this as their principal tool to determine whether short or long vowels must be used. In this sense, the use of short vowels has a higher success rate than long vowels, but this does not ensure that long vowels are correctly

pronounced by learners (Altmiller et al., 2023). Therefore, this principle does not ensure proficiency in speaking.

Previous studies have demonstrated that the ability to correctly pronounce the short and long vowels is related to the habit of listening and reading (Hasyim et al., 2022). In this sense, the constant implication of speaking, listening, and reading activities is pertinent to favor the development of English proficiency in active learners. For this, the nature of the communicative approach and the activities widely involved within this learning technique are pertinent to ensure accurate English learning.



**Figure 2**

*American English vowel chart with IPA symbols and mouth positions.*

*Note. Adapted from Let's Learn the IPA! American English Vowels, by San Diego Voice & Accent, n.d. Used with permission. Retrieved from*

<https://sandiegovoiceandaccent.com/international-phonetic-alphabet/lets-learn-the-ipa-american-english-vowels>

#### **2.7. 4 Activities to Enhance Oral Production as Part of the Speaking Skill**

Several approaches have been studied to enhance the speaking skills in English learning students. Among them: monologue speaking tasks, dialogue, digital storytelling, and other technology-based tools. The monologue speaking tasks are different from dialogue in the sense that the speaker is a single character projecting their speech without the need of a partner. The application of strategy for improving English learning has been widely studied (Karpovich et al., 2021). In this sense, it has been proven that self-confidence and speaking skills can be improved by conducting oral production, describing experience, answering questions, and providing information (Karpovich et al., 2021). Although the implementation of this activity allows great improvement among learners, its complementation with dialogue and other peers interactions seems to have a better result in the students' speaking skills (H. D. Brown & Lee, 2015; Karpovich et al., 2021).

The dialogue corresponds to the most common approach to enhance speaking skills. It consists in inducing a conversation between individuals to practice the production of sentences that are understood by the addresser and addressee. This activity has proven to favor the improvement of speaking skills mostly in real-life situations, favoring the interchange of information and generation of meaningful error-free sentences (H. D. Brown & Lee, 2015).

Moreover, digital storytelling refers to the activity of producing spoken sentences through technology with textual characteristics (e.g., short movies) (Arroba & Acosta, 2021). This corresponds to a new and modern system for English teaching that grabs better attention of young learners and promote their willingness to partake in the learning process (Arroba & Acosta, 2021).

The implementation of technological strategies increases the motivation of learners and therefore the development of English skills through independent approaches (Sosas, 2021). In this regard, the use of technology is favored in student-centered systems, such as communicative techniques. For instance, the use of videos, conferences, and discussions has a better engagement of students in realistic environments and situations (Sosas, 2021). Such methodologies have been demonstrated to allow the fast development of speaking skills, confidence, fluency, and accuracy in produced words (Afzal, 2019; Sosas, 2021). In addition, the use of technology is known to have a positive impact on vocabulary improvement. Overall, different strategies and activities have been used to increase the speaking and oral skills of English learners, increasing the proficiency in the target language.

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

### **3.1 Type of Investigation**

In this chapter, the author develops the methodological framework, which aims to determine different aspects of the research, such as the type of investigation and whether the research is theoretical or applied. Besides subtopics such as the purpose, the framework, the nature, the character, and the temporal dimension. Also, the subjects and sources of information, the sampling, and the techniques and instruments.

The purpose of the methodological framework is to conduct the research work in an orderly and systematic manner, serving as a guide for researchers to follow, ensuring that the research is conducted rigorously and transparently. Likewise, the methodological framework improves consistency and quality of the research, standardizing approaches, and maximizing the reliability of findings.

Also, the instruments and techniques are briefly described in this chapter, giving an idea of which ones will be used, taking into account that those that best adapt to the type of research and the sample, as well as the objectives of the research, will be used.

#### **3.1.1 Purpose (Applied)**

Research aimed at addressing specific real-world difficulties is known as applied research because it seeks to solve practical, tangible problems (Conference Inc., 2025). In this case, this investigation is applied because it seeks to solve the reason kids have trouble pronouncing vowels with the correct rhythm and intonation.

The purpose of this project is to provide information on how the use of technology, and the use of different approaches can be a way to enhance kids' language skills, in this case, rhythm and intonation in the pronunciation of vowels.

### **3.1.2 Temporal Dimension**

The provided research is indeed a cross-sectional study because it collects data at a single point in time to analyze a phenomenon in depth. Creswell (2014) defines a cross-sectional study as a research design where data are collected at a single point in time. This approach is used to assess a particular issue, such as the immediate effects of an educational intervention on students' pronunciation skills, without tracking changes over a long period. This is a fundamental characteristic of cross-sectional designs, which capture a snapshot of a population at a particular moment.

The study's focus on a single data collection period from two groups of second graders and two groups of fifth graders, all at the same public elementary school in Costa Rica, perfectly aligns with this methodological approach. Instead of tracking the students' development over an extended period, the study aims to understand the impact of an educational intervention on pronunciation by evaluating the pretest and posttest results from this specific group of 97 students. This design allows for an in-depth analysis of the immediate effects of the intervention.

The current study, by not re-evaluating the students at later intervals, is not concerned with long-term changes but rather with the immediate outcomes. This is a crucial distinction and the reason the research is correctly classified as cross-sectional.

The choice of a cross-sectional design is a practical and effective one for this project. It allows researchers to gather detailed information about the intervention's impact on a specific group of students without the significant time and resource commitment required for a longitudinal study (Creswell, 2014). The data collected from the 97 students, while limited to a single point in time, provides valuable insights into the immediate efficacy of the game-based learning intervention for pronunciation practice. This design is robust for its purpose and is a widely accepted method in educational research for assessing the immediate effects of an intervention.

### **3.1.3 Framework**

The mega, macro, and micro frameworks are related to the size and range of the institutions or organizations to the areas to be covered by the research.

Ariñez (2018) mentions that “this means the magnitude and extension of the organization, areas, subject matter that is meant to be investigated. This refers to how much the research will cover, which depends on the existence of economic resources, time, number of researchers, and the amount of knowledge of the subject matter. (p.28).

The research study conducted has a micro framework because it focuses on specific, localized educational contexts within a small population. This micro-level approach allows for an in-depth understanding of the unique challenges and dynamics present in the classroom, such as individual student behaviors, teacher-student interactions, and the immediate learning environment.

By examining the experiences and responses of these particular groups, the research can provide specific insights and recommendations that may be more relevant and

applicable to educators working directly with these students, rather than broader, generalized conclusions applicable to larger populations. This specificity increases the relevance and applicability of the study's findings to the immediate educational setting.

### **3.1.4 Nature**

Research papers can be of different natures, qualitative, quantitative, or mixed, depending on the form in which the information will be collected through the project. In the case of the present project the nature of the research is mixed. Creswell and Plano Clark (2018) define mixed methods research as "an approach to inquiry involving collecting both quantitative and qualitative data, integrating the two forms of data, and using distinct designs that may involve philosophical assumptions and theoretical frameworks" (p. 5). This combination allows for triangulation, validation, and a deeper analysis, ultimately strengthening the research's conclusions.

A mixed-methods research paper is characterized by its integration of both numerical data and narrative information to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the research problem. This approach is particularly useful when neither qualitative nor quantitative methods alone can sufficiently capture the complexity of the topic being studied. For instance, quantitative data can identify patterns or general trends, while qualitative insights help explain the reasons behind those trends.

### **3.1.5 Character**

#### **3.1.5.1 Exploratory**

Research projects can be descriptive, exploratory, correlational, or explanatory, among others. These are related to how the information collected will be measured and the

variables that will be developed during the research. Likewise, this research is considered exploratory because it is based on investigating facts that have not been previously studied or of which little information and knowledge is available.

George (2021) suggests that exploratory research is a methodology approach that investigates research questions that have not previously been studied in depth. Exploratory research is often qualitative and primary. However, a study with a large sample conducted in an exploratory manner can be quantitative as well.

### **3.1.5.2 Correlational**

Also, the type of research is correlational because seeks to relate two or more independent variables seeks to relate two or more independent variables, in this case, how to enhance rhythm and how to enhance vowel pronunciation. Furthermore, according to Cherry (2023), correlational research refers to a type of non-experimental research method that evaluates the relationship between the variables with the help of statistical analysis. Correlational research design does not study the effects of extraneous variables on the variables under study.

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

### **3.2.1 Units of analysis (objects or subjects of study)**

The population to be studied must be properly documented and categorized in this section of the project and is determined as the universe and the sample. Also, the universe refers to the set of all the units, which possess a variable characteristic under study. According to Shukla (2020), it is a group or set of all such units that possess the variable characteristic under study. Until and unless clarification is given, the universe

accommodates all the units that possess the characteristics to be studied and have existence in the entire universe or the area of research. Additionally, in the case of this research, the universe is all the students of the Herradura Elementary School.

Additionally, a part of the population that represents it completely is known as a sample. It means, the units elected from the population as a sample, must represent all kinds of characteristics of different types of units of the population (Shukla, 2020). Likewise, the sample in this case are two second and fifth grade students of the Herradura elementary school.

### 3.2.2 First-Hand Sources

**Table 1**

*Firsthand sources used in the research process:*

<b>Author(s)</b>	<b>University or Organization</b>	<b>Country</b>	<b>Year</b>
Conference Inc.	Conference Inc.	USA	2025
Costa Rica Multilingüe	Costa Rica Multilingüe Program	Costa Rica	2009
López-Estrada, P., Elizondo-Mejías, J., & Sancho-Chacón, S.	Universidad Nacional (UNA)	Costa Rica	2025
Lubis, Y., Ramadhany, C. A., Widyana, A., Mahara, E. F., & Sarahseti, D. F.	Universitas Negeri Medan / Zenodo	Indonesia	2024
Narváez Pérez, E.	Universidad de Costa Rica (UCR)	Costa Rica	2023
Navarro-Céspedes, V.	Universidad Nacional (UNA)	Costa Rica	2021
Nenotek, S. A., Tlonaen, Z. A., & Manubulu, H. A.	Universitas Kristen Artha Wacana	Indonesia	2022
Novianty, M., & Irawati, M.	Enrich Journal	Indonesia	2021

Mart, C. T.	Ishik University	Iraq	2013
Solano-Campos, A.	University of Massachusetts Amherst	Costa Rica / USA	2012
Sosas, R. V.	Journal of Language and Linguistic Studies / INFORMIT	Philippines	2021
Zúñiga-Vargas, J. P. et al.	Universidad Nacional (UNA)	Costa Rica	2021

*Source: Developed by Noily Karina Carmona Rojas (2025)*

### 3.2.3 Secondhand sources

**Table 2**

*Secondhand sources used in the research process:*

<b>Author(s)</b>	<b>Book Title</b>	<b>Year</b>
Boholano, H. B.	Smart Social Networking: 21st Century Teaching and Learning Skills	2017
Brown, H. D., & Lee, H.	Teaching by Principles: An Interactive Approach to Language Pedagogy (4th ed.)	2015
Brown, A.	Pronunciation and Phonetics: A Practical Guide for English Language Teachers	2014
Chang, S.-C.	A Contrastive Study of Grammar Translation Method and Communicative Approach in Teaching English Grammar (Published in English Language Teaching, 4(2))	2011
Ahmadi, R. M.	The Use of Technology in English Language Learning: A Literature Review	

*Source: Developed by Noily Karina Carmona Rojas (2025)*

### 3.2.4 Third-hand sources

**Table 3**

*Third-hand sources used in the research process:*

<b>Author</b>	<b>Article</b>	<b>Year</b>
Presidencia de la República	MEP presenta ruta “hacia la Costa Rica Bilingüe”	2020

Rashov, O.	Modern Methods of Teaching Foreign Languages. International Scientific and Current Research Conferences, 1, 158–164	2024
Richards, J. C.	Communicative Language Teaching Today (1st ed.)	2006
Rodriguez-Vargas, G.	The promotion of online student-centered classes to achieve Communicative Language Teaching with the help offered by technological tools. In Zúñiga-Vargas & Barrantes-León (Eds.), English Language Teaching in Costa Rica: Reflections on Emergent Challenges	2021

*Source: Developed by Noily Karina Carmona Rojas (2025)*

### 3.3 Sample Selection

#### 3.3.1 The population

Population refers to the set or group of all the units on which the findings of the research are to be applied. Referring to the definition of population, Shukla (2020) states that it consists of all the units on which the research findings can be applied. In other words, the population is a set of all the units that possess variable characteristics under study and for which findings of research can be generalized.

The population “constitutes the total universe in which the research is made and can be shaped by communities, groups, people, situations, and organizations” (Ariñez, 2018). In this case, the population is the total number of students of the Herradura Elementary School. Furthermore, Herradura Elementary School was chosen for this research because it is a school with a huge student population, in addition to being a school that has the technological resources for the application of the following technologies.

#### 3.3.2 Sample

The concept of a sample is central to quantitative research methodology. As stated by Akman (2023), it's a "condensed, controllable representation of a larger group." The goal is for the sample to be as representative as possible, meaning its characteristics (like

age, grade, and prior knowledge) mirror those of the population. By focusing on a specific sample of 97 students from a total school population of 1000, the researchers can conduct a focused and efficient study, with the understanding that the results can provide valuable insights into how the intervention might affect other students at the school or in similar educational settings.

The sample in a research investigation is a smaller, manageable subgroup of a larger population that is selected to participate in the study. It's a group of individuals who possess the characteristics of the wider population the researcher wants to study. The purpose of using a sample is to draw conclusions about the entire population without having to study every single member, which is often impractical or impossible.

In this particular study, the population are students at Herradura Elementary School, and the sample consists specifically of the two groups of second and two groups of fifth graders who participated. This selection allows the researchers to generalize their findings about the game-based learning intervention to a larger student body.

### **3.3.3 Non-probabilistic**

Sampling is an essential component of the research design as it gathers information that can be used in a research study. Probability sampling and non-probability sampling are the essential methodologies that define sampling techniques. (Akman 2023). Likewise, sampling is the way the researcher delimits the study to a certain part of the population.

According to Akman, (2023), a non-probabilistic sampling is employed when you wish to limit the results' applicability to a particular group or organization rather than the

broader populace. Besides, the disposition of the students and the regular teacher to participate in the research helped to deciding on this sampling. Also, convenience sampling can be one of those that are easiest to research by the researcher, in the case of this research that is one of the main reasons.

### **3.4 Techniques and Instruments to Collect Data**

In research work, it is necessary to collect the data that yields the results of such research. Data collection is a fundamental process in research, and the means used should be carefully chosen as not all methods work for all types of research. According to Simplilearn (2023). The process of gathering and analyzing accurate data from various sources to find answers to research problems, trends, probabilities, etc., to evaluate possible outcomes is known as Data Collection.

Therefore, it is mandatory to use different data collection methods. For example, methods such as interviews, observations, surveys, checklists, and others can be used. During data collection, the researchers must identify the data types, the sources of data, and what methods are being used (Simplilearn, 2023).

In the present research work, the method to be used for data collection is observations using a checklist, surveys, and interviews. Observation is a systematic process of watching and recording behaviors or events as they occur in their natural setting. Using a checklist allows the researcher to focus on predetermined aspects and ensure consistency in data collection (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

Also, surveys are instruments designed to collect data from a group of participants through a set of structured questions. They are commonly used to gather information on

attitudes, opinions, or self-reported behaviors (Dillman, Smyth, & Christian, 2014). And interviews involve direct, face to face, or virtual interaction between the researcher and participants, where open-ended or structured questions are asked to gain deeper insights into participants' experiences and perspectives (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2015).

These are the methods best suited to the type of research and the sample with which we will be working. Related to the first objective, which is to describe the process of learning vowels in oral production by implementing the online guessing game "Who Am I?", the instruments applied are a pretest with an observation checklist, a survey for the students, and a survey for the English teacher of the area. In the application of the pretest, the students will be presented with a list of words, and they are going to pronounce the words individually. The information about the results will be collected through an observation in a checklist. Also, a survey will be carried out among the groups of students.

Referring to the second objective, which is to evaluate the advantages and disadvantages of incorporating the online guessing game "Who Am I?" an interview will be conducted with four students. Then, a survey for English teachers who work in different institutions in the area will be conducted. Finally, a survey for the English Advisor of the Dirección "Who Am I?" as a resource used in the pronunciation of different words that contain vowel sounds, a checklist of a pretest observation and a survey for the students will be conducted.

### **3.5 Operationalization of Variables**

The chart illustrating the operationalization of variables is presented in the following pages to demonstrate how the researcher analyzes different research variables

and the instruments applied to the studied population to validate the variable in the research problem (Learnovate 2022). The operationalization of variables involves a set of techniques and methods that allow the measurement of the variable in research, and it is a process of separating and analyzing the variable in its components that enable its measurement.

Moreover, it consists of activities carried out by the researcher to collect population data and assign categories or identify components of the variable. Operationalization is the process of defining a variable in terms of the specific Operations used to measure or manipulate it. In research, operationalization allows for greater clarity and precision when investigating relationships between variables. (Learnovate 2022).

#### **Table 4**

The Effectiveness of Implementing “Who Am I”? Online Guessing Game Based on the Communicative Approach to Enhance the Pronunciation of Long and Short Vowel Sounds in Oral Production Activities in Two Groups of Second Grade and Two Groups of Fifth Grade from Herradura Elementary School in Garabito, Puntarenas in 2025.

### **3.6 Variables chart**

#### **General Objective**

To determine the effectiveness of using the Communicative Approach through online guessing games to enhance rhythm and intonation in long and short vowel sound pronunciation in two groups of second grade and two groups of fifth grade from Herradura Elementary School in Garabito, Puntarenas in 2025.

**Table: Operationalization of the variables**

<b>Specific Objective</b>	<b>Variable</b>	<b>Conceptual Definition</b>	<b>Instrumental Definition</b>	<b>Operational Definition</b>
To describe the process of learning vowels in oral production through the implementation of online guessing games in two groups of second grade and two groups of fifth grade students from Herradura Elementary School in Garabito, Puntarenas in 2025.	Learning process of vowel sounds through guessing games	Learning vowel sounds involves developing phonemic awareness and the ability to identify and produce vowel phonemes correctly (Yopp & Yopp, 2000).	<b>Observation:</b> To identify which vowels are challenging during oral tasks. <b>Checklist:</b> Used to track correct/incorrect pronunciation. <b>Survey:</b> To collect students' perceptions about vowel difficulty and the use of the App.	Students will pronounce selected words containing vowel sounds. The observer will use a checklist to track pronunciation accuracy. A survey will be administered to determine perceived difficulty. At least 60% of students are expected to show correct articulation of the targeted vowel sounds by the end of the intervention.
To evaluate the advantages and disadvantages of incorporating online guessing games in two groups of second and fifth grade students from Herradura Elementary School in Garabito, Puntarenas, in 2025.	Perceived usefulness and challenges of guessing games in English class	Educational games support engagement, motivation, and language development, though implementation may pose technical or pedagogical challenges (Gee, 2003; Prensky, 2007).	<b>Survey:</b> For students and teachers to report perceived benefits or challenges. <b>Interview:</b> With teachers to deepen understanding of game integration in lessons.	Survey data will identify general opinions on the use of online games. Teacher interviews will reveal deeper insights into instructional planning and observed effects.

<p>To examine the effect of using online guessing games as a resource used in the pronunciation of different words that contain vowel sounds in two groups of second grade and two groups of fifth grade students.</p>	<p>Impact of online guessing games on vowel pronunciation accuracy</p>	<p>Digital tools such as apps and games improve pronunciation through repetition, feedback, and multisensory engagement (Godwin-Jones, 2011).</p>	<p><b>Observation:</b> To note changes in pronunciation before and after using the game. <b>Checklist:</b> For tracking students' progress with specific vowel sounds.</p>	<p>Before-and-after observations will be conducted while using the app. A checklist will be used to record whether students show improvement in vowel pronunciation. An increase of at least 20% in pronunciation accuracy from pre-test to post-test is expected.</p>
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*Source: Developed by Noily Karina Carmona Rojas (2025).*

## **CHAPTER IV**

### **ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA**

## **4.1 Analysis and Interpretation of Data**

The following chapter presents the analysis and interpretation of the data obtained through the application of the various instruments proposed in this project, including observations, interviews, and surveys. These were applied to compile the results as a diagnosis and to improve the pronunciation of vowel sounds in second- and fifth-grade students after using the proposed application.

Likewise, the instruments applied are described and analyzed in depth to demonstrate the results obtained. Furthermore, interviews were conducted with English teachers, students, and the regional English advisor to gather information about the students' knowledge before and after the use of the proposed tool and methodology, as well as the opinions and knowledge of professionals in the area.

The main objective of such data analysis is to answer the research questions and give way to conclusions and recommendations regarding the findings.

### **4.1.1 Survey of English Teachers**

The surveys as one of the proposed instruments were conducted with a group of 6 English teachers from Aguirre's area to know their opinion about the application in the classrooms of the Communicative Approach and the use of technological tools such as guessing games as “Who am I”? as a support to improve oral production and pronunciation of vowel sounds, as well as the advantages and disadvantages that they consider when using them and their recommendations.

The survey covers aspects such as years of experience, utilizing guessing games as a tool to enhance oral production, and elements considered to be improved through the use of technology and the Communicative Approach.

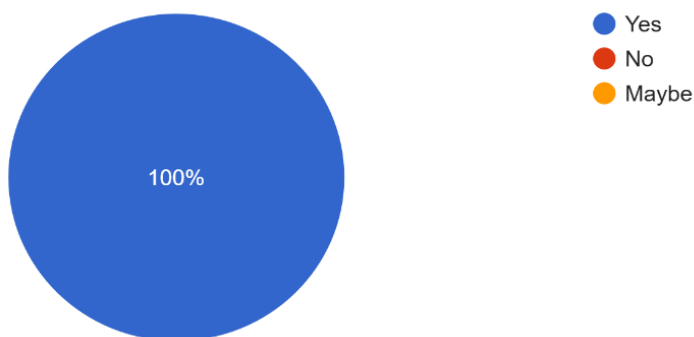
Next, the results of the survey conducted with teachers from the Aguirre area are presented.

### **Enhance Pronunciation of Vowel Sounds Based on the Communicative Approach and the “Who am I”? Online Guessing Game**

**Graph 1**

1. Have you been teaching English at the elementary level for more than 2 years?

6 respuestas



*Source: Developed by Noily Karina Carmona Rojas (2025).*

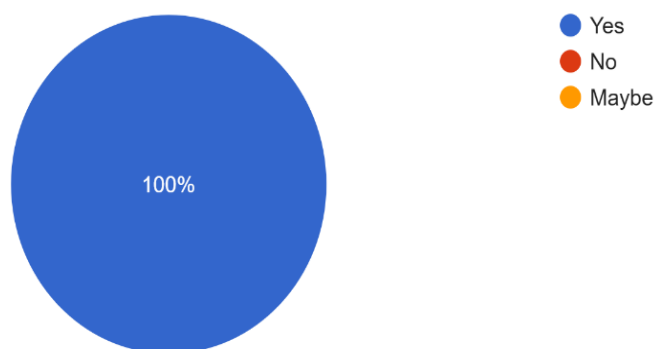
This result suggests that the sample comprises experienced English teachers at the elementary level, which may positively influence the reliability of their insights regarding teaching practices and methodologies, particularly those related to the implementation of pronunciation instruction or technological tools.

The insight that the sample comprises experienced English teachers aligns with research on teacher expertise and professional development. Experienced teachers often possess a deeper understanding of pedagogical strategies and are better equipped to integrate new tools and methods into their instruction. This finding suggests that the positive outcomes of the game-based learning intervention were likely supported by the teachers' ability to effectively implement the tool and guide students' use of it. This highlights the crucial role of the educator in mediating the success of technological interventions in the classroom (Darling-Hammond et al, 2017).

### Graph 2

2. Have you used digital tools or online games in your English lessons before?

6 respuestas



*Source: Developed by Noily Karina Carmona Rojas (2025).*

All the surveyed teachers selected “Yes,” indicating that they have previously incorporated digital tools or online games into their English lessons, which represents 100%. There were no responses for the options “No” or “Maybe.”

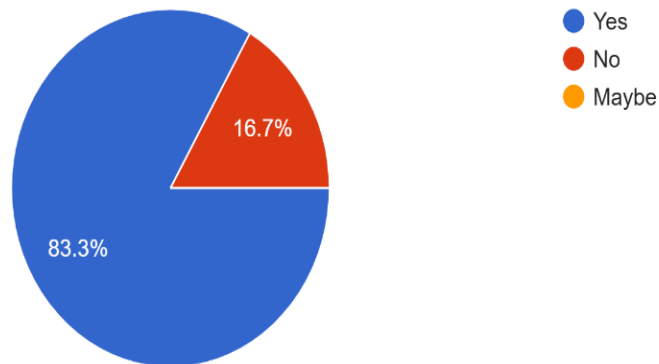
The response suggests familiarity and positive engagement with digital resources among the participants. Their consistent use of such tools may imply a favorable attitude toward integrating technology in language instruction, also indicating an openness to innovative strategies, such as online pronunciation games or apps for enhancing student participation and language skills.

Also, their technological readiness and positive attitude toward integrating technology into language instruction. This finding aligns with Mishra's (2006) research on TPACK (Technological Pedagogical Content Knowledge), a framework that describes the knowledge required for effective technology integration in teaching. The teachers' prior experience suggests they possess a solid foundation in both the technological and pedagogical aspects of their profession, which is crucial for the successful implementation of innovative strategies like online pronunciation games. Their openness to digital resources likely contributed significantly to the success of the intervention, as teacher buy-in and proficiency are key determinants of a new tool's effectiveness in the classroom.

### Graph 3

3. Do your students react positively when you use online guessing games in pronunciation activities?

6 respuestas



*Source: Developed by Noily Karina Carmona Rojas (2025).*

The surveyed teachers answered five of them “Yes,” for 83.3%. “This indicates that their students reacted positively when online guessing games were used in pronunciation activities. One “No” for 16.7%. While none chose “Maybe.”

This result demonstrates a generally favorable perception of student engagement and response when pronunciation practice is delivered through interactive online guessing games. The data suggests that such digital tools may effectively enhance motivation and participation in pronunciation instruction. However, the presence of one dissenting response may point to variability in classroom contexts or student preferences that could be explored in future qualitative analysis.

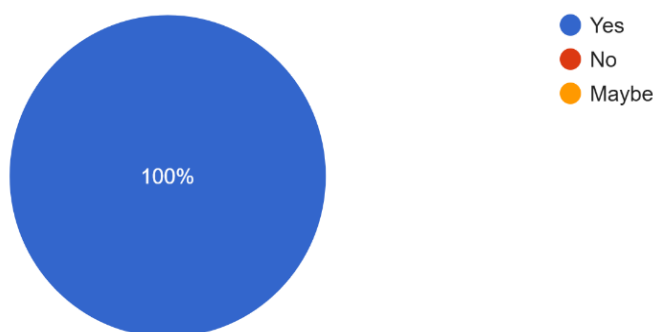
The positive student reactions to using online games for pronunciation activities align with the principles of affective factors in second language acquisition. This finding

supports the idea that a positive emotional state, which includes enjoyment and a reduction in anxiety, can significantly enhance a learner's ability to acquire language skills. As Stephen Krashen's Affective Filter Hypothesis (1982) suggests, a low-anxiety and highly motivated learning environment allows for greater language input and, consequently, better acquisition. The students' favorable response indicates that the game successfully lowered their "affective filter," making them more open to practicing and learning.

#### Graph 4

4. Have you noticed more student engagement with online games compared to traditional pronunciation exercises?

6 respuestas



*Source: Developed by Noily Karina Carmona Rojas (2025).*

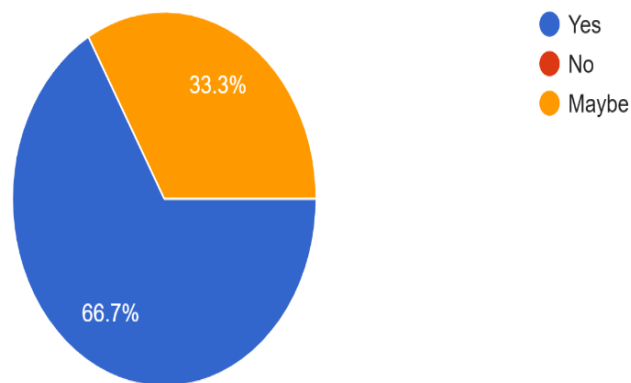
All 6 participants, which means 100%, answered that they have noticed more student engagement with online games compared to traditional pronunciation exercises. This indicates a unanimous positive perception of online games as an engaging educational tool among the surveyed group. The absence of responses in the "No" and "Maybe" categories suggests a strong preference or perceived effectiveness of online games in increasing student engagement.

Furthermore, the data strongly support integrating online games into language learning curricula to enhance student engagement. The unanimous response from teachers that online games increase student engagement compared to traditional exercises aligns with key principles of gamification in education. This finding supports the idea that using game elements in non-game contexts can significantly boost motivation and participation. According to the ARCS Model of Motivational Design (Keller, 1987), such tools effectively capture and maintain student Attention and can build a sense of Satisfaction through a more enjoyable learning process. The teachers' collective observation confirms that integrating online games is a highly effective strategy for creating a more dynamic and engaging learning environment, leading to better student outcomes.

### Graph 5

5. Do you think online guessing games help students feel more comfortable speaking English in class?

6 respuestas



*Source: Developed by Noily Karina Carmona Rojas (2025).*

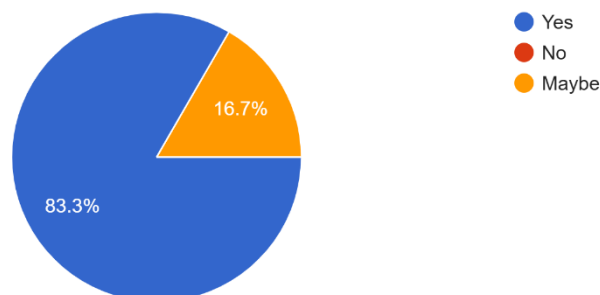
In the survey conducted with six participants, 4 of them, or 66.7%, believe these games help them feel more confident, while the remaining 2 of them, 33.3%, do not see a benefit. No participants responded with "Maybe." This suggests that most of the teachers surveyed perceive online guessing games as a useful tool for increasing comfort level when speaking English. These findings advocate that incorporating online guessing games could be an effective strategy to enhance students' confidence and speaking skills in English.

The finding that a majority of teachers (66.7%) perceive online guessing games as a tool for increasing students' comfort levels with speaking English aligns with the Affective Filter Hypothesis (Krashen, 1982). This theory posits that learners' emotional states, such as anxiety and low confidence, can act as a mental block that hinders language acquisition. By providing a low-stakes, enjoyable environment, the game likely reduces this "affective filter," making students more willing to take risks and use the target language. The fact that two teachers did not see this benefit suggests that while the tool is effective for many, it may not be a universal solution and that teacher and student perceptions of confidence can vary.

### Graph 6

6. Have you seen improvement in students' pronunciation of long and short vowels after using online guessing games?

6 respuestas



*Source: Developed by Noily Karina Carmona Rojas (2025).*

In the survey conducted with six teachers, the majority, five of them, 83.3%, reported that they have observed an improvement in their pronunciation of long and short vowels after using online guessing games. However, one participant, representing 16.7%, indicated that they have not noticed any improvement. No one chose the "Maybe" option.

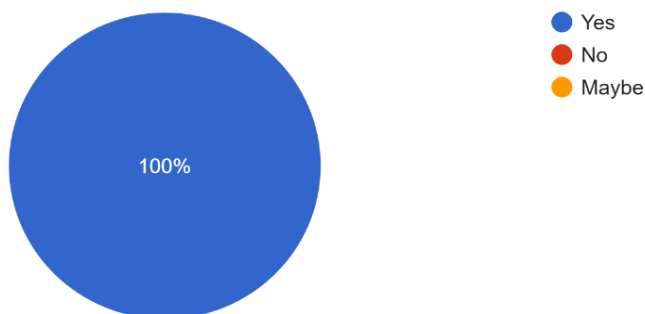
These results suggest that most teachers perceive online guessing games as an effective tool for enhancing pronunciation skills, highlighting their potential value in language learning contexts. The observation by the teachers aligns with constructivist learning theory. This perspective, supported by scholar Jerome Bruner (1996), emphasizes that learners actively construct their own knowledge and understanding through experience and interaction.

Likewise, the game, by providing a hands-on and engaging environment, allowed students to actively practice and experiment with vowel sounds rather than passively receiving instruction. The fact that a single teacher did not observe improvement highlights the importance of individual learning styles and the need for diverse instructional methods to cater to all learners.

### Graph 7

7. Do you believe online guessing games are effective for teaching vowel pronunciation?

6 respuestas



*Source: Developed by Noily Karina Carmona Rojas (2025).*

In the survey involving six teachers, all of them, which accounts for 100%, believe that online guessing games are effective for teaching vowel pronunciation. There were no responses indicating disagreement or uncertainty.

These findings suggest that the entire sample perceives online guessing games as a valuable tool for improving vowel pronunciation skills. Their responses align with the principles of Technological Pedagogical Content Knowledge (TPACK). This framework, developed by Mishra and Koehler (2006), highlights the intersection of teachers'

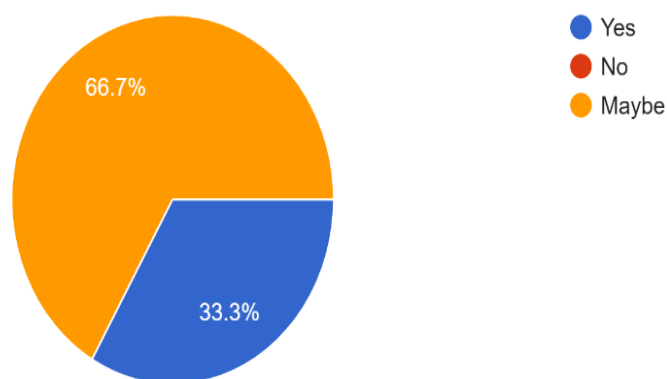
knowledge of their subject matter (Content Knowledge), their teaching methods (Pedagogical Knowledge), and their understanding of technology (Technological Knowledge). The 100% positive response suggests that these educators possess a high degree of TPACK, enabling them to effectively integrate the technological tool into their pedagogical strategies to improve a specific area of content vowel pronunciation.

This result validates the game's potential as a valuable and well-received instructional tool in the language learning classroom.

### Graph 8

8. Do students seem more confident in their oral production after practicing with these games?

6 respuestas



*Source: Developed by Noily Karina Carmona Rojas (2025).*

Based on the survey, a total of 6 teachers responded. Out of these, 2 teachers answered "Yes," which represents approximately 33.3% of the responses. The other 4 teachers answered "No," accounting for about 66.7%.

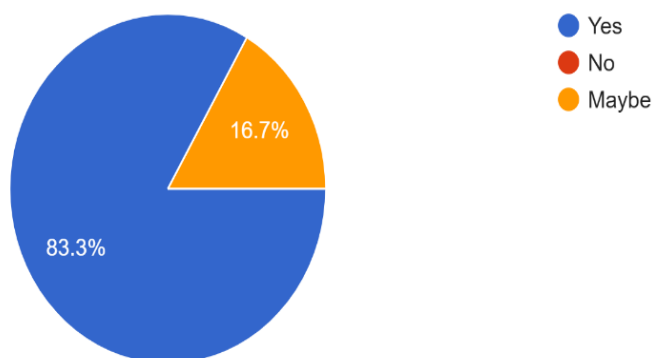
This data shows that the majority of teachers (two-thirds) believe that students do not feel more confident after practicing with the games. Only a third of the teachers think that the games help students become more confident in their speaking skills.

The survey results show that only a third of teachers believe the game helps students feel more confident in their speaking skills highlight a significant disconnect between teacher perception and student experience. This finding, where a majority of teachers reported no benefit to student confidence, contrasts with the students' own self-reported confidence gains from a previous survey, where almost half (46%) felt more confident. This disparity can be explained by a few factors. It could be that teachers' criteria for evaluating "confidence" are different from the students', or that the students' confidence gains are not always visible in a traditional classroom setting. This finding underscores the importance of gathering both teacher and student perspectives to get a complete picture of an intervention's impact.

### Graph 9

9. Have you experienced challenges when using online guessing games in pronunciation lessons?

6 respuestas



*Source: Developed by Noily Karina Carmona Rojas (2025).*

The results show that 5 teachers answered "Yes," which is about 83.3%. On the other hand, one teacher, 16.7%, has not experienced any challenges. This small percentage indicates that the majority of educators find implementing these games somewhat complex or frustrating at times.

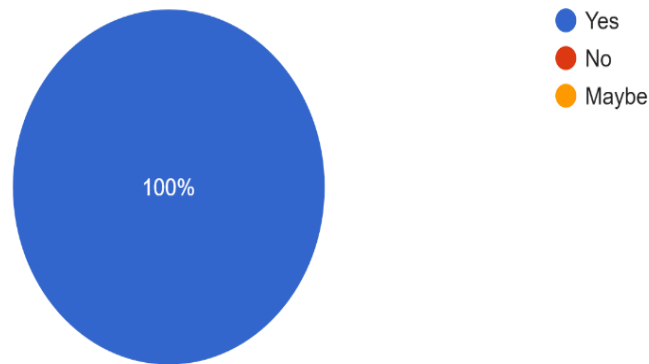
This information reveals that while online guessing games are popular and potentially engaging tools, their effectiveness can be limited by practical challenges. Teachers might need additional training, better technological support, or alternative strategies to overcome these issues. The finding that the majority of teachers (83.3%) experienced challenges in implementing the games, despite their positive perception of them, highlights a critical issue in educational technology: the implementation gap. In simpler terms, it's when a new tool doesn't work as well in practice as it did in theory, often due to real-world challenges like lack of training or technical issues.

This difficulty aligns with a body of literature on technology adoption in education, which suggests that even with great tools, teachers may face obstacles such as a lack of training, limited technical support, or difficulties integrating the tool into an existing curriculum. The one teacher who experienced no challenges could represent an individual with higher Technological Pedagogical Content Knowledge (TPACK), underscoring the importance of professional development in the successful adoption of new technologies.

**Graph 10**

10. Do you think online guessing games should be used more often in pronunciation lessons?

6 respuestas



*Source: Developed by Noily Karina Carmona Rojas (2025).*

Regarding the question "Do you think online guessing games should be used more often in pronunciation lessons?" all 6 teachers answered "Yes" for 100%. This clearly shows that all the teachers agree on the value of using online guessing games more frequently. They see these games as beneficial tools for pronunciation practice and believe that increasing their use could improve students' learning experiences. This strong support suggests that teachers recognize the potential of online guessing games to make pronunciation lessons more engaging and effective.

It also indicates a shared confidence in the benefits of these activities, which could encourage schools and educators to incorporate them more regularly into their teaching strategies. The unanimous support from teachers for using online guessing games more often aligns with the principles of Technological Pedagogical Content Knowledge (TPACK). The teachers' collective belief that games are beneficial tools for pronunciation

practice demonstrates a strong understanding of how to effectively integrate technology into their teaching methods to achieve a specific instructional goal. This finding confirms that these educators recognize the potential of online games not just as innovation but as a valuable and sustainable strategy for making lessons more engaging and effective.

#### **4.1.2 Survey of Students**

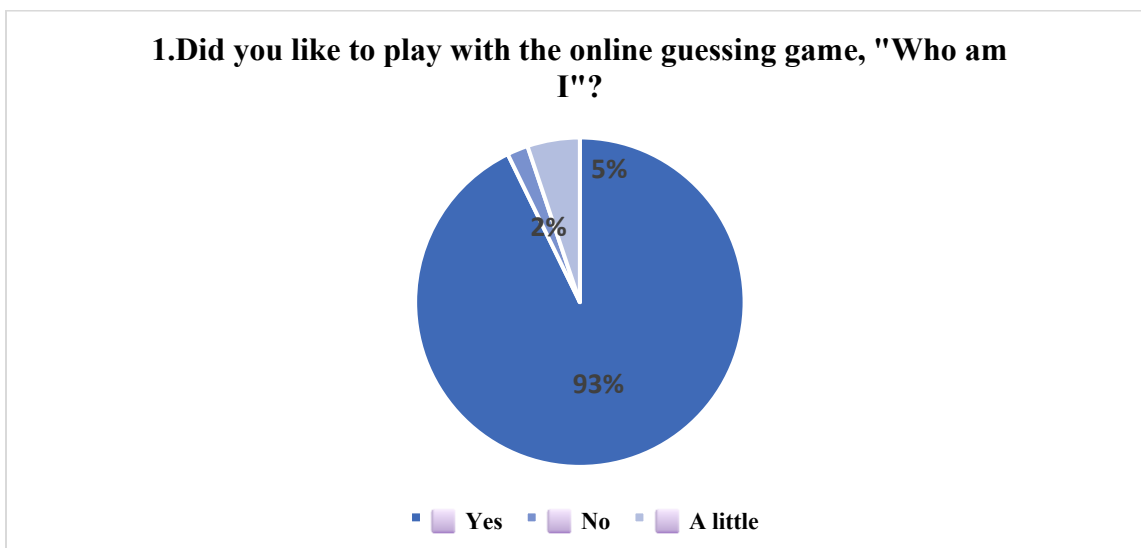
The survey was conducted with 97 second and fifth-grade students from Herradura Elementary School in order to collect data on what they experienced after using the application several times, containing the “Who am I”? Guessing game as a tool to enhance the oral production of long and short vowel sounds.

They were asked about the difficulty of using the game and if they considered that this game would help them feel more confident and secure when speaking in English, and if it is a game that is entertaining and engaging to them.

The results of the survey conducted with students of the second and fifth grades are presented below.

**Use of the guessing game “Who am I?” to enhance pronunciation of long and short vowel sounds.**

**Graph 11**



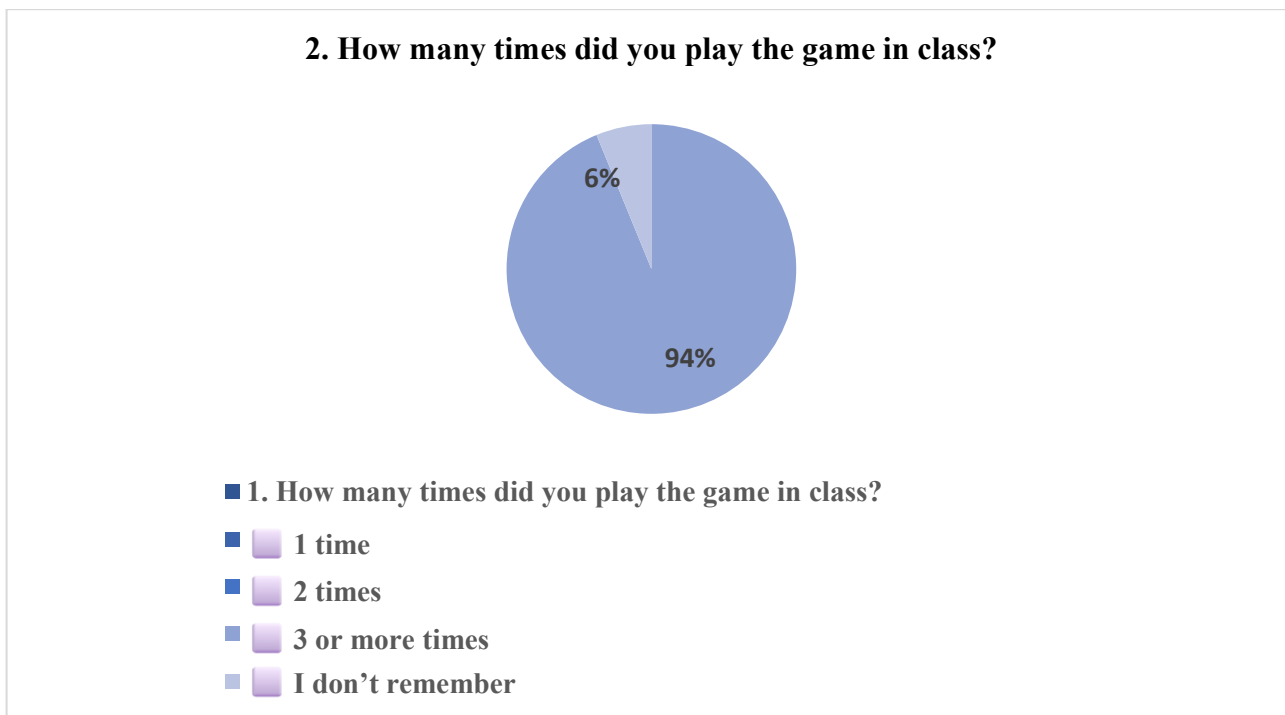
*Source: Developed by Noily Karina Carmona Rojas (2025).*

The results show that 90 students, about 92.8%, enjoyed playing the "Who am I?" guessing game. And 2, around 2.1%, did not like it, and 5 of them 5.2% liked it a little. This suggests that the game is very popular and engaging for students. When students enjoy learning activities, they tend to participate more and stay motivated. The high percentage of positive responses indicates that this game can be an effective tool to make pronunciation practice fun and interesting. However, the few students who did not enjoy the game might have different preferences or face technical issues.

The high level of student enjoyment for the "Who am I?" guessing game aligns with the principles of game-based learning and intrinsic motivation. When learning is designed to be engaging and enjoyable, it taps into students' internal drive to participate and succeed. This is consistent with Self-Determination Theory (Deci & Ryan, 1985), which states that learners are more motivated when they feel a sense of autonomy and competence. The

game's fun, interactive nature likely fostered these feelings, making students more willing to practice pronunciation and increasing the tool's effectiveness.

**Graph 12**



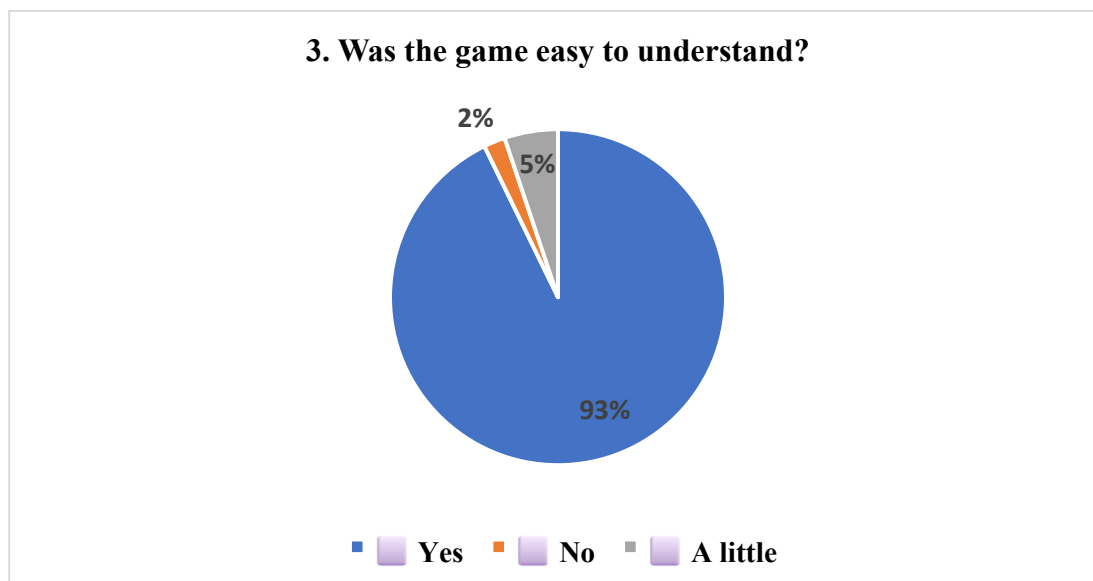
*Source: Developed by Noily Karina Carmona Rojas (2025).*

The results for the question; how many times did you play the pronunciation game during class? Out of 97 students, 91 of them, or 94%, said they played the game three or more times. No students reported playing once or twice, which shows that the game was consistently part of their lessons rather than used only occasionally. On the other part 6 students for, 6% couldn't remember how many times they played, indicating some uncertainty or forgetfulness.

Overall, these findings suggest that the game was regularly included in classroom activities, helping students reinforce their pronunciation skills through frequent practice and

exposure. The finding that almost all students played the game three or more times during class is a strong indicator of its successful pedagogical integration and sustained engagement. This consistent use suggests that the game was not a one-off innovation but a regular and valued component of the curriculum. This aligns with the principles of spaced repetition and distributed practice, which are key to effective learning. By playing the game multiple times, students were able to reinforce their pronunciation skills and move the new information from short-term to long-term memory. The high frequency of use indicates that the game was a practical and effective tool for teachers to use in the classroom to ensure students had consistent exposure to the target sounds.

**Graph 13**



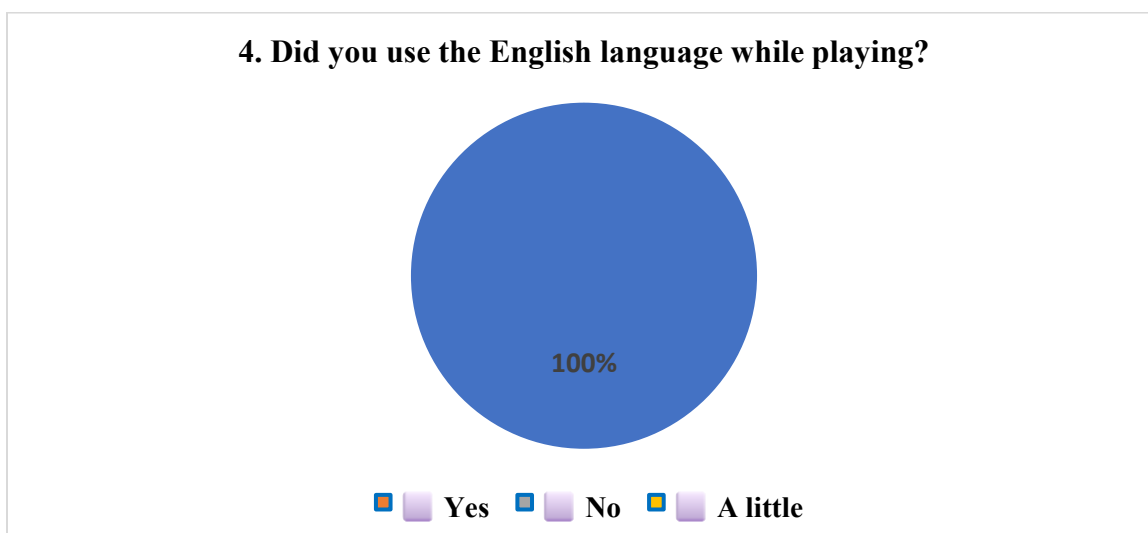
*Source: Developed by Noily Karina Carmona Rojas (2025).*

The results show how students felt about the clarity of the pronunciation game. In this case, 82 students, or 85%, answered "Yes," meaning they found the game easy to understand. Another 13 students answered "A little, for" 13%, which suggests that while

they generally understood the game, they may have had minor difficulties. On the other hand, 2 students or 2% answered with "No," indicating that just a few students found the game confusing.

The finding that an overwhelming majority of students found the game easy to understand directly supports the principles of Cognitive Load Theory, developed by John Sweller (1988). This theory asserts that instructional design should minimize extraneous cognitive load, which is the mental effort wasted on navigating a confusing interface or understanding unclear instructions. The game's high usability score indicates that it successfully allowed students to focus their cognitive resources on the primary task pronunciation practice rather than on figuring out how to play the game itself. This accessibility is a crucial factor in the effectiveness of any educational tool.

In general, these results are encouraging. They show that the majority of students were able to follow along without much trouble. When learning tools are easy to understand, students are more likely to engage with them and benefit from the experience.

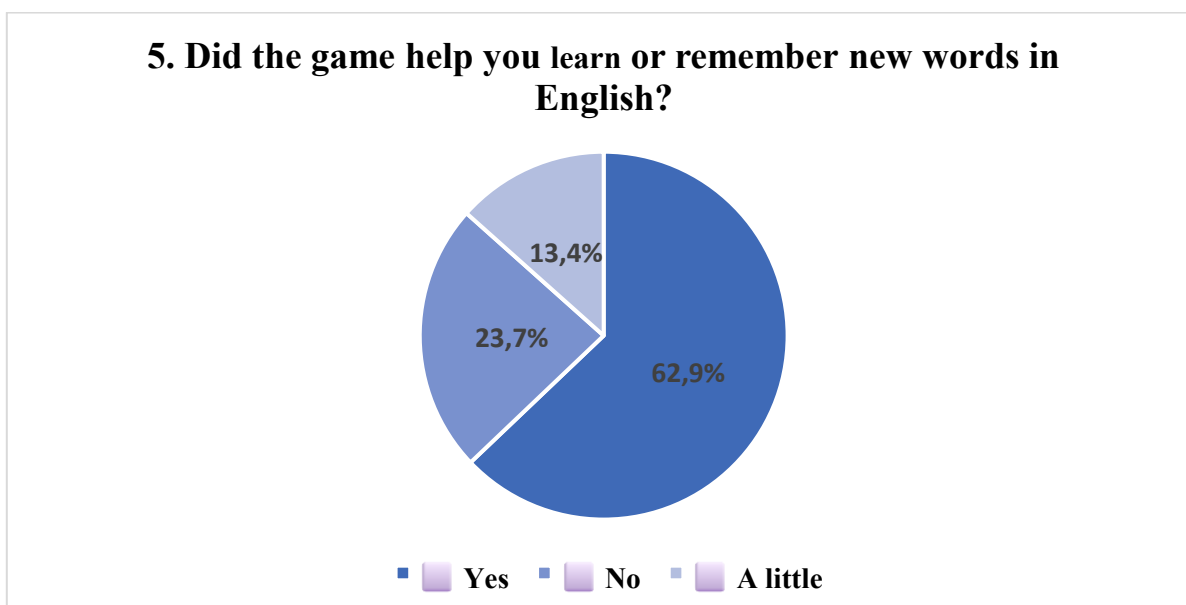
**Graph 14**

*Source: Developed by Noily Karina Carmona Rojas (2025).*

As the results show a 100% of the 97 students answered “Yes” to the question, did you use English while playing the guessing game “Who am I”? Which means that the use of the guessing game “Who am I”? encourages and challenges them to use the target language to complete the tasks.

The finding that all 97 students used English while playing the game demonstrates the success of the intervention in creating a communicative and low-anxiety environment. This result aligns with Stephen Krashen's Input Hypothesis (1982), which suggests that language acquisition occurs when learners are exposed to comprehensible input in a low-anxiety setting. The game effectively encouraged students to use the target language to complete tasks, thus providing them with a meaningful context for language practice. This level of active engagement is crucial for language development, as it moves students from passive learning to active production.

Graph 15



*Source: Developed by Noily Karina Carmona Rojas (2025).*

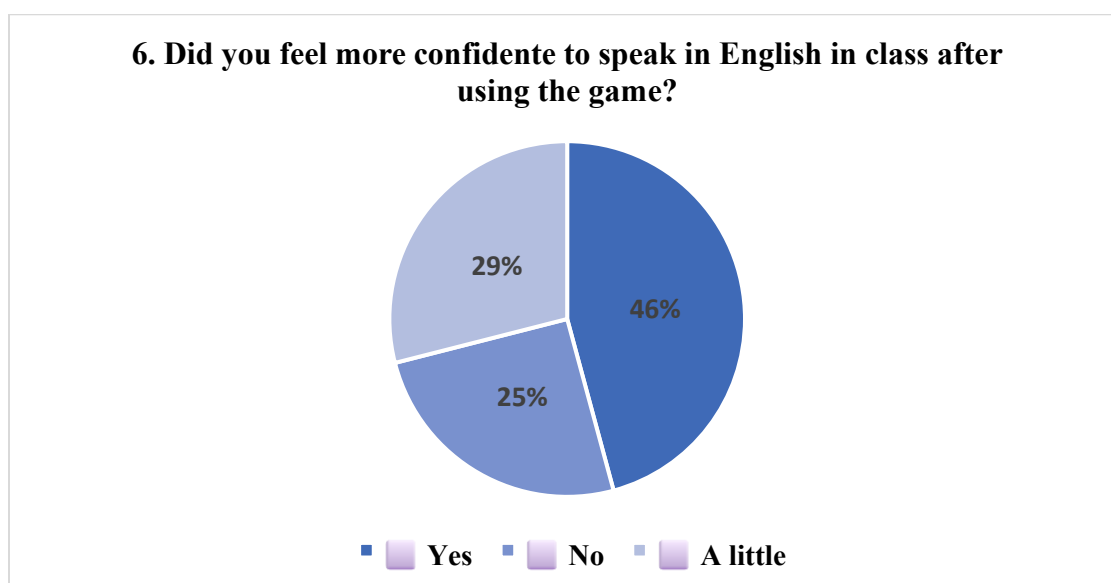
Regarding the question, does the game help to learn or remember new words in English? Of the total 97 students, 63 answered “Yes”, 63, 9%. This suggests that most students find the game to be a useful learning tool for expanding their vocabulary. Another 23 students answered no for 23, 7%, indicating that nearly a quarter of the students do not feel the game aids their vocabulary learning. Finally, 13 students answered a little for 13, 4%, showing that for a smaller group, the game has a limited impact.

The majority of people believe that the game is good for vocabulary development overall, although a sizable minority are either dubious or think it is just somewhat useful. This raises the possibility of enhancing the game's efficacy or modifying it to better suit the requirements of every student.

The results indicate that a majority of students found the game helpful for vocabulary learning, and a sizable minority are unsure or find it unhelpful connects to the

principles of learning transfer and individual differences. The game's effectiveness in helping students remember new words suggests it successfully facilitated the transfer of learning from the game-based environment to their cognitive skills. However, the varied responses highlight that the learning experience is not universal. Some students may benefit more from rote memorization, while others thrive in an interactive, visual context. This underscores the need for a differentiated instruction approach, where educators offer a variety of tools and methods to meet the diverse learning needs of all students (Tomlinson, 2014).

**Graph 16**

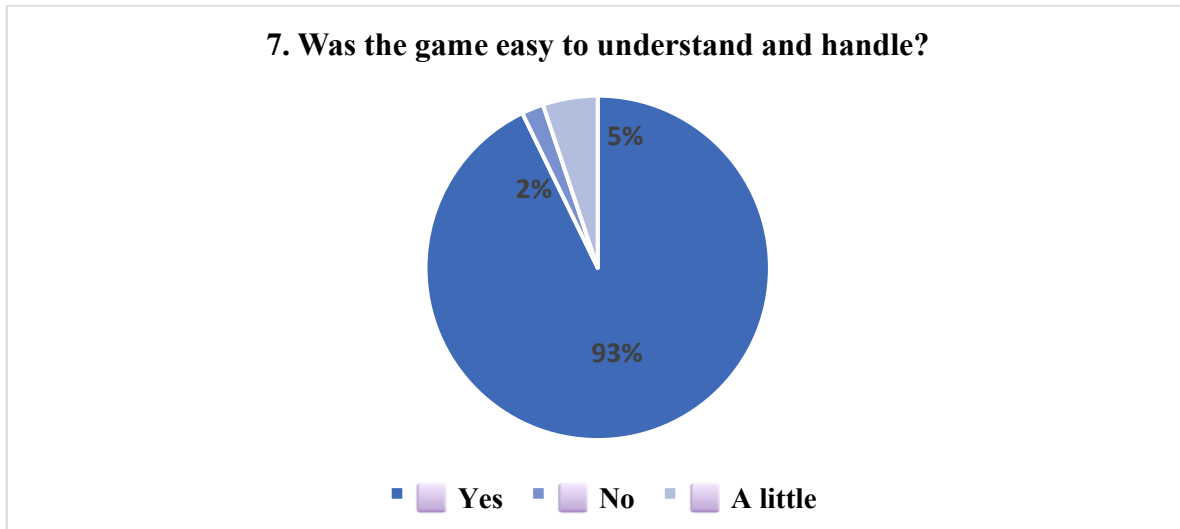


*Source: Developed by Noily Karina Carmona Rojas (2025).*

As a result, for the question did you feel more confident to speak in English in class after using the game? From the total 97 students, 49 of them, a 46% answered “Yes”, which means that a majority considered that the game made them acquire confidence to employ the target language in class. Also, 27 students answered “No” for 25%, which

means that a considerable part of the students don't think they gain the confidence to use the English language more in class after using the game. Finally, 31 students, for 29%, considered that the game helps "A little," indicating that the game barely increased the confidence of certain students.

According to the data, almost half of the students reported feeling more confident after playing the game, demonstrating its effectiveness in fostering language confidence. This result aligns with the Affective Filter Hypothesis, proposed by Stephen Krashen (1982), which suggests that emotional states, such as a lack of confidence or high anxiety, can act as a filter that blocks language input from reaching the brain's language acquisition centers. By providing a low-pressure, enjoyable environment, the game likely lowered this filter, making students more willing to take risks and practice their English in a safe space. The students who answered "No" or "A little" may have a higher affective filter that requires more time or a different type of intervention to overcome. This demonstrates the game's potential to be a valuable tool for boosting student confidence and reducing language-learning anxiety.

**Graph 17**

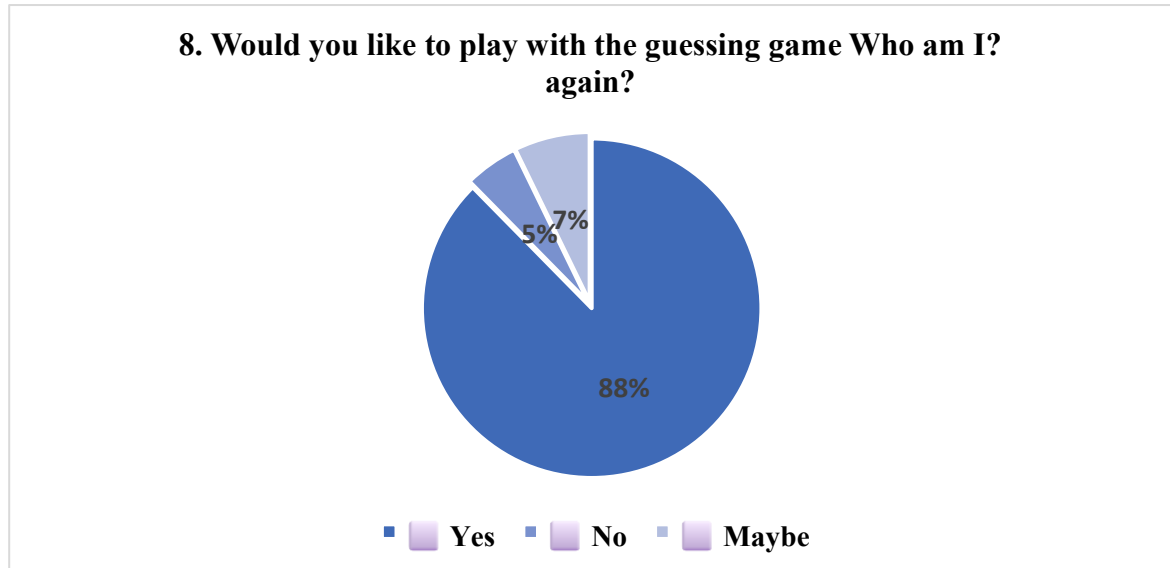
*Source: Developed by Noily Karina Carmona Rojas (2025).*

According to the 97 students surveyed, the data shows that most found the game "Who am I?" easy to use. Specifically, 93 students, 93%, answered "Yes," indicating they thought it was easy to handle. Also, 5 students, 5%, said it helped "A little," and only 2 students, 2% answered "No."

Furthermore, the majority of students found the game easy to use, suggesting it was accessible and user-friendly for most. The data indicating that a vast majority of students (93%) found the game "Who am I?" easy to use is a strong validation of its usability and instructional design. This high percentage suggests that the game had a low cognitive load, a key concept in educational psychology. Cognitive load theory, developed by John Sweller (1988), posits that learning is most effective when the mental effort required to process the material is minimized. By creating a user-friendly and intuitive interface, the game allowed students to focus their cognitive resources on the primary learning objective, pronunciation, rather than on figuring out how to play the game itself. The fact that very few students

found the game difficult or confusing is a testament to its effective design and its potential as an accessible learning tool.

**Graph 18**



*Source: Developed by Noily Karina Carmona Rojas (2025).*

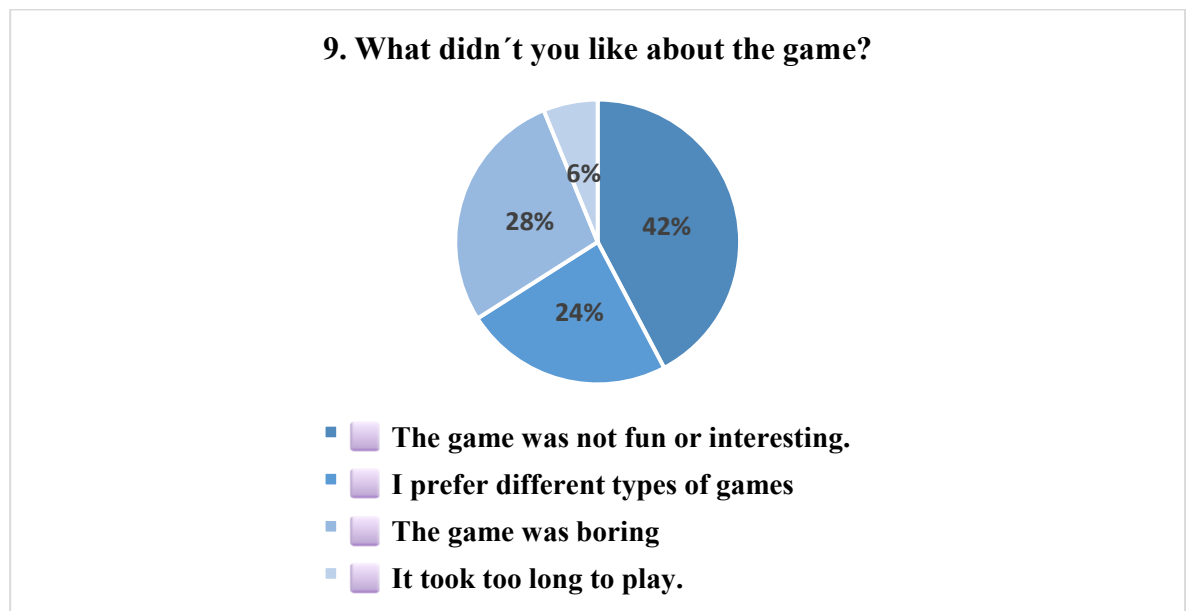
In regards of the answers of the 97 students, 85 of them, or 88%, indicate that “Yes”, representing a high level of enjoyment and willingness to repeat the experience. Also, a group of 7 students, 7 %, selected "Maybe", suggesting that while they were not entirely certain, they were at least open to the possibility of playing again. Finally, 5 students, 5.2%, answered "No", showing some level of dissatisfaction or lack of interest.

The results suggest that the game was highly effective and positively received by most students, making it a valuable tool for future classroom use.

The overwhelming student enjoyment and willingness to repeat the game experience aligns with established theories of intrinsic motivation and flow state in

learning. This finding supports the idea that when learning is perceived as a pleasant and self-driven activity, students are more likely to participate, leading to a higher likelihood of skill development and retention (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990). The small percentages of students who were uncertain or negative highlight the importance of individual learning preferences and the need for a variety of teaching tools to meet the diverse needs of all students.

**Graph 19**



*Source: Developed by Noily Karina Carmona Rojas (2025).*

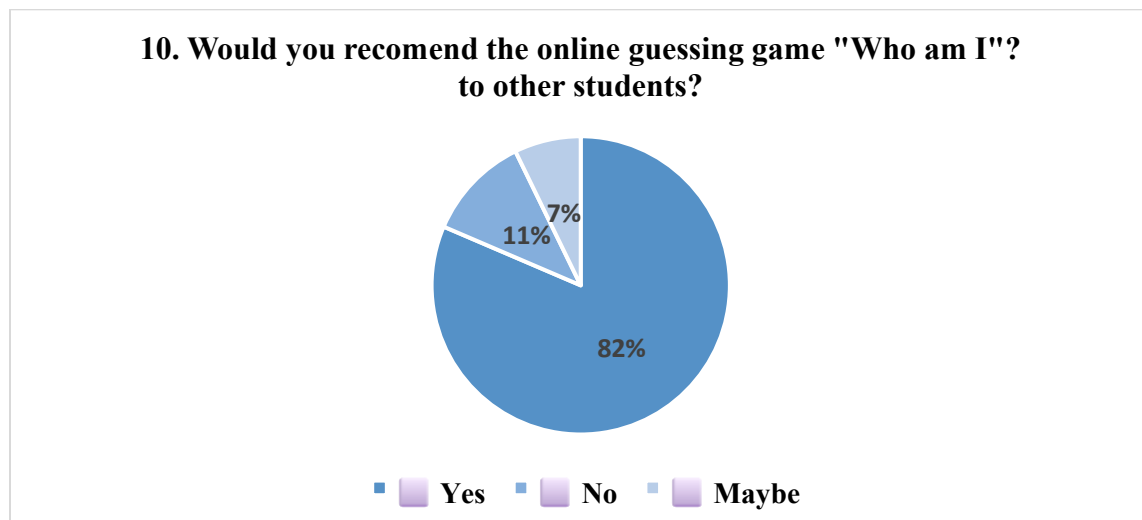
Based on the 97 students surveyed, the analysis shows that 42% of the students, which is approximately 41 individuals, stated that they did not find the game fun or interesting. This was the most common reason for their dissatisfaction. Additionally, about 28% of the 27 students mentioned that they found the game boring. A smaller group, around 24 students or 24%, indicated that they preferred different types of games,

suggesting that personal preferences played a role in their negative perception. Lastly, only about 6 students, or 6%, felt that the game took too long to play, indicating that game duration was less of an issue overall.

Overall, the data suggests that the main concerns were related to enjoyment and engagement, with most students wishing for a more interesting gaming experience.

Based on the survey of 97 students, the finding that a significant number of participants did not find the game fun or interesting directly relates to the ARCS Model of Motivational Design, developed by John Keller (1987). This model posits that for learning to be effective, instructional materials must capture and maintain a learner's Attention. The feedback that the game was "boring" or "not fun" suggests it failed to maintain the attention of a portion of the students, which is a key component for successful and engaging learning.

**Graph 20**



*Source: Developed by Noily Karina Carmona Rojas (2025).*

Regarding the answers of the 97 students, the data indicates a strong overall approval of the online guessing game "Who am I?" among the participants. Specifically, approximately 82% of the students, which is about 80 individuals, would recommend the game to other students. A smaller group, around 11%, or 11 students, responded negatively, indicating they would not recommend the game. Additionally, about 7%, or 6 students, expressed uncertainty by selecting "Maybe."

This high level of positive feedback suggests that the game successfully tapped into intrinsic motivation, making the learning process more engaging and enjoyable. The findings are consistent with the Self-Determination Theory (Deci & Ryan, 1985), which posits that learners are more motivated and engaged when they experience a sense of autonomy and competence.

#### **4.1.3 Interview with the Aguirre English Advisor**

To gain the perspective of a person with experience working with a large number of teachers in various schools and methodologies, an interview was conducted with the regional English advisor at Aguirre. She has huge experience as a teacher of I and II Cycles and has also worked as an advisor for about 3 years. In this way, it is sought that the questions posed to the advisor get the point of view of a professional with a broad and updated vision in the area of English teaching.

<b>Interview Question</b>	<b>Answer</b>
1. Could you please state your name and current role or position?	My name is Mailyn Leiva Badilla, and I am the Aguirre English Advisor.

<p>2. How long have you been working as an English advisor?</p>	<p>I have been working for 2 years as an English advisor.</p> <p>Confirms current involvement in language education and understanding of recent methodologies, reinforcing the relevance of her perspective.</p>
<p>3. What is your experience with pronunciation instruction at the primary level?</p>	<p>I worked as an English teacher for I and II Cycle for 15 years and I have a vast experience in the field of pronunciation instruction.</p> <p>Highlights extensive experience, supporting that observations are grounded in long-term pedagogical practice. Connects with Celce-Murcia et al. (2010), which emphasizes teacher expertise in guiding pronunciation learning.</p>
<p>4. Have you observed or reviewed the “Who Am I?” online guessing game used by the English teacher?</p>	<p>I already glanced at it to see what it's about the game.</p> <p>And I know what type of game it is.</p> <p>The answer suggests familiarity with digital learning tools in learning environments.</p>
<p>5. In your opinion, what are the main benefits of incorporating this type of game into the learning process for vowel sound pronunciation?</p>	<p>I consider that this type of game provides an engaging and interactive way to reinforce phonemic awareness.</p> <p>They encourage active listening, repeated exposure, and immediate feedback, which are all essential for developing accurate pronunciation, especially in young learners at the primary level.</p>

	<p>The answer supports the idea that interactive games enhance phonemic awareness and provide immediate feedback.</p>
<p>6. Do you believe the game effectively supports the distinction between long and short vowel sounds (specifically /ε/ and /oʊ/)? Why or why not?</p>	<p>Well, I haven't used the game, but in my opinion, this game is similar to others that I have used before. But, I consider it may support this distinction by offering repeated auditory input and allowing students to associate sounds with visual cues.</p> <p>The answer indicates that the advisor considers that repeated auditory and visual cues are important for distinguishing vowel length, aligning with multisensory learning approaches.</p>

<p>7. How do you see this tool supporting auditory discrimination and oral production in young learners?</p>	<p>These type of guessing games help develop auditory discrimination by training learners to notice fine sound contrasts. With enough repetition and modeling, students begin to self-correct and improve their oral production. Also, I think that those game-based formats also reduce anxiety and increase speaking confidence. The answer confirms that an experienced professional as an advisor consider that that type of games enhance auditory discrimination, self-correction, and confidence.</p>
<p>8. How does the use of this game align with current language teaching methodologies for primary students?</p>	<p>I consider that these games align well with communicative and task-based approaches, which emphasize interaction, real-world use of language, and learner engagement. It also supports the principles of multisensory learning and differentiation, which are widely recommended for primary education. The answer shows alignment with CLT and task-based language teaching (TBLT), emphasizing interaction, learner engagement, and differentiation (Tomlinson, 1999). Multisensory learning supports diverse learners.</p>

<p>9. What challenges or limitations do you foresee in implementing this type of online game in different classroom contexts (e.g., infrastructure, student engagement, differentiation)?</p>	<p>Some challenges include limited access to devices or internet connectivity, especially in low-resource settings. Additionally, student engagement may vary based on learning preferences, and the game might not meet the needs of students with specific learning difficulties unless properly adapted.</p> <p>With the answer the advisor highlights practical limitations on technology integration in low-resource contexts. Reinforces the need for teacher adaptation and differentiated instruction.</p>
<p>10. How would you compare the effectiveness of this interactive method with more traditional methods of pronunciation instruction?</p>	<p>Interactive games tend to be more engaging and student-centered than traditional drills. While traditional methods can be effective for accuracy, games promote motivation and increase the likelihood of long-term retention through active learning.</p> <p>The answer supports constructivist principles (Piaget, 1976) and active learning theory, suggesting that games foster retention and motivation better than drill-based approaches.</p>

<p>11. In your personal opinion, what teacher support or training would be necessary to use the game more effectively?</p>	<p>Teachers need training in phonetics, specifically in identifying and modeling target vowel sounds. They should also learn how to integrate the game into broader lesson plans and assess its impact on student learning. Familiarity with basic apps and tech use is also essential.</p> <p>The answer highlights the importance of teacher competence in phonetics and technology integration, aligning with Godwin-Jones (2011) on professional development for effective language learning using digital tools.</p>
<p>12. Would you recommend the continued use or expansion of this game in English pronunciation lessons? Why or why not?</p>	<p>Yes, of course. I really recommend including online games as a tool to support and improve English teaching. I recommend it because, as teachers, we must take advantage of any resources we have on hand to widen the possibilities of achieving the best results in our classrooms.</p> <p>The answer points out the pedagogical value of game-based learning for pronunciation improvement, reinforcing CLT and multisensory learning theories. Also emphasizes the practical application of digital tools to enhance learning outcomes.</p>

*Source: Developed by Noily Karina Carmona Rojas (2025).*

#### **4.1.4 Results of initial and Final Observation**

As part of the data collection instruments, two observations were made of the students' performance in pronouncing words containing some vowel sounds. The first observation was carried out through the application of a posttest designed to find out how they pronounced a list of words selected for the test. Similarly, after the use of the guessing game "Who Am I?", a posttest was conducted in which the students were asked to repeat the selected list of words in order to observe if there were any changes or improvements in the pronunciation of the words.

The analysis aims to compare the results obtained in a pretest and a posttest applied to 97 students of the second and fifth grades. The comparison is based on the pronunciation of short and long vowel sounds in specific words, evaluating students' progress after an educational intervention.

Next word by word-by-word proposed for the pretest and the posttest are analyzed.

##### **Pronunciation of the short vowel sound /ε/**

###### **1. Word "Pen"**

- a. Pretest: Most students showed difficulties in differentiating the vowel sound /ε/, resulting in pronunciations influenced by their native language.
- b. Posttest: Although progress was observed in the pronunciation of some students, it was still evident that certain groups failed to consolidate the sound, while others made limited progress, pronouncing the word correctly on some occasions.

###### **2. Word: "Bed"**

- a. Pretest: Students pronounced this word with minor errors it was easy for most of them to identify the sound /ε/.
- b. Posttest: There was a noticeable improvement in the students, who struggled in the pretest, and they were able to correctly articulate the short vowel sound /ε/. However, one small group showed no progress.

### **3. Word: “Red”**

- a. Pretest: Minor errors in the pronunciation of this word, but some students changed the /ε/ sound to more familiar variants.
- b. Posttest: An improvement in pronunciation accuracy was observed in a significant group of students, while others continued to face difficulties, and some made partial improvements.

### **4. Word: “Net”**

- a. Pretest: Pronunciation of this word was not a problem for most of the students; some tended to omit or modify the /ε/ sound.
- b. Posttest: Although several students were able to produce the sound correctly, others continued to present difficulties with accurate articulation, and some made limited progress.

## **Pronunciation of the long vowel sound /i/**

### **5. Word: “He”**

- a. Pretest: Students showed frequent errors, especially in the duration of the long vowel sound /i:/, which was often reduced or modified.

- b. Posttest: A noticeable improvement was observed in several students, who managed to maintain the proper duration of the sound. However, one group continued to face difficulties, while others made limited progress.

**6. Word: “See”**

- a. Pretest: Many students failed to differentiate the /i:/ sound, sometimes replacing it with a short sound or modifying it.
- b. Posttest: Although some students made significant improvement, others continued to show errors, especially in consistency in pronouncing the word.

**7. Word: “Bee”**

- a. Pretest: Most students had problems producing the long sound /i:/, resulting in incorrect pronunciations.
- b. Posttest: There were significant gains in several students, although one group still showed little improvement, and some managed to articulate the word correctly only in specific situations.

**8. Word: “Tree”**

- a. Pretest: Common errors included reduction of the long vowel sound or partial omission of the long vowel sound.
- b. Posttest: Progress was observed in one group of students, who were able to articulate the word correctly, while others continued struggling with the sound.

**9. Word: “Pete”**

- a. Pretest: This word was particularly difficult for students, who tended to shorten the long vowel sound or replace it with a sound more common in their native language, and also pronounce the final e.

- b. Posttest: Although several students managed to improve, progress was not uniform, as some continued to face difficulties and others made limited progress.

### **Pronunciation of the short vowel sound /ɑ/**

#### **10. Word: “Pot”**

- a. Pretest: Students frequently modified the /ɑ/ sound, resulting in inaccurate pronunciations.
- b. Posttest: Improvement was evident in many students, although some continued to face difficulties in the pronunciation of this sound.

#### **11. Word: “Top”**

- a. Pretest: Most students had difficulty producing the short vowel sound /ɑ/ correctly.
- b. Posttest: Although improvement was observed in several students, others continued to make frequent errors, while some made partial progress.

#### **12. Word: “Box”**

- a. Pretest: Common errors included substitution of the /a/ sound with more familiar variants.
- b. Posttest: A significant group of students achieved improvement, although others continued struggling with the sound.

#### **13. Word: “Dog”**

- a. Pretest: Few students struggled in correctly producing the short vowel sound /ɑ/, especially in combination with the consonant sounds of this word.
- b. Posttest: Improvement was observed in a group of students, although others continued with frequent errors, and some made limited progress.

**14. Word: “Log”**

- a. Pretest: Errors in this word included modifying the /a/ sound or replacing it with a more familiar sound.
- b. Posttest: Although several students were able to articulate the sound correctly, others continued to face difficulties and some made limited progress.

**Pronunciation of the long vowel sound /oo/**

**15. Word: “Go”**

- a. Pretest: Students tended to shorten or modify the long vowel sound /oo/.
- b. Posttest: Improvement was observed in many students, although some continued with frequent errors and others made partial progress.

**16. Word: “No”**

- a. Pretest: Most students failed to maintain the proper duration of the /oo/ sound, resulting in inaccurate pronunciations.
- b. Posttest: Although several students managed to improve, others continued to face difficulties and some made partial progress.

**17. Word: “Nose”**

- a. Pretest: Common errors included partial omission of the long sound or its substitution with a short vowel sound.

- b. Posttest: Progress was evident in one group of students, although others continued with frequent errors and some showed partial improvement.

**18. Word: “Rope”**

- a. Pretest: The production of the long vowel sound /oʊ/ was particularly difficult for many students.
- b. Posttest: Although several managed to improve, others continued to have problems with consistency in pronouncing this word.

**19. Word: “Bone”**

- a. Pretest: Students frequently shortened the /oʊ/ sound or substituted a more familiar sound.
- b. Posttest: Improvement was observed in several students, although others continued to face difficulties, and some made limited progress.

The detailed comparison between pretest and posttest demonstrates that the educational intervention had a positive impact on pronunciation for many students. However, it was also clear that some continued to face difficulties, especially in words that require precise articulation of long or short vowel sounds. This suggests the need for differentiated pedagogical approaches and more practice time to consolidate gains and address persistent difficulties.

The observation that some students continued to struggle with precise articulation, particularly with vowel sounds, despite an overall positive impact, is consistent with core theories in Second Language Acquisition (SLA). The persistent difficulties described align with the concept of “fossilization”, a term mentioned by Selinker (1992). Fossilization refers to a process where certain errors in a learner's interlanguage (the unique linguistic

system they've developed) become deeply ingrained and resistant to correction, even with continued instruction. In this case, the difficulty with long and short vowel sounds is likely due to the influence of the students' native language. If their native language doesn't have a similar vowel distinction, they may struggle to perceive and produce the difference, leading to these errors becoming a permanent feature of their speech.

This finding also connects to the Speech Learning Model (SLM) proposed by James Flege (1995). The SLM explains that learners create new phonetic categories for sounds in a second language only if they perceive them as different from their native language sounds. If the difference is subtle, like between English's short and long 'i' sounds, the second language sound may be assimilated into an existing native language category. This explains why some students continue to struggle, as they may not have successfully formed a distinct category for the second language vowel sound. The need for "differentiated pedagogical approaches" directly addresses this, as it acknowledges that learners' native language backgrounds create unique challenges that require targeted instruction.

#### **4.1.5 Interview with second and fifth-grade students**

Following the use of the online guessing game “Who am I”? an interview was conducted with 2 second grade and 2 fifth grade students. This was done to find out their perception about the use of the application, their opinion about what they learned in the game, and if they would recommend the game to other students. The interview was conducted in Spanish for a better understanding and translated to English for this research paper.

<b>Interview Questions</b>	<b>Answers</b>

<p><b>Question 1</b></p> <p>1. What is the name of your school?</p>	<p>All students indicated that they are from Herradura Elementary School.</p> <p>This shows that the group is homogeneous, making it easier to observe how the same school context influences their learning experience.</p> <p>Creswell (2014) states that a consistent research setting helps maintain focus on the intervention being studied.</p>
<p><b>Question 2</b></p> <p>2. What grade are you in?</p>	<p>The students are two in second grade and two in fifth grade.</p> <p>Having students from different grades allows for comparison of how age and maturity influence game-based learning.</p>
<p><b>Question 3</b></p> <p>3. Have you ever used Apps to practice pronunciation of the English language?</p>	<p>Three of the four students answered that they have used Apps to practice pronunciation and one of them didn't.</p> <p>This question establishes the students' prior experience with technology-assisted language learning. The fact that three out of four have used apps suggests a degree of</p>

	<p>digital literacy and a potential familiarity with this learning modality. This context is important for interpreting their reactions to the "Who am I?" game, as their enjoyment could be a reflection of prior positive experiences rather than the innovation of the game itself.</p>
<p><b>Question 4</b></p> <p>4. Did you enjoy playing the guessing game "Who am I?"</p>	<p>All students answered that they enjoyed playing the guessing game.</p> <p>All students' positive response indicates a high level of learner engagement. This is a key principle in game-based learning theory, which suggests that engagement, fun, and intrinsic motivation are crucial for effective learning. The enjoyment of the game can lead to increased practice time and a more positive attitude toward the subject matter. This aligns with the work of Malone and Lepper (1998) on the motivational aspects of instructional design.</p>

<p><b>Question 5</b></p> <p>5. What did you like the most about the game?</p>	<p>One of the students mentioned that they enjoy the activities, the other one mentioned that likes the pictures, the third one preferred the tasks, and the fourth student loves to guess the vowel sound.</p> <p>The variety of answers ("activities," "pictures," "tasks," "guessing the vowel sound") points to the game's multifaceted appeal. This demonstrates that the game effectively uses a combination of visual, kinesthetic, and auditory learning modalities. The finding that one student loved guessing the vowel sound is particularly significant, as it suggests the game directly addressed the learning objective in a way that was both engaging and effective for that individual.</p>
<p><b>Question 6</b></p> <p>6. Was anything difficult or confusing about the game?</p>	<p>All four students agreed that the game was easy to understand, and they found the instructions straightforward and easy to follow.</p>

	<p>The unanimous response points out that the guessing game “Who Am I?” allowed students to focus on the pronunciation task itself rather than on navigating the interface, which improves learning efficiency and reduces frustration.</p>
<p><b>Question 7</b></p> <p>7. Do you think the game helped you say the /ε/ sound better? (Like in “pen”)</p>	<p>The students considered that the game helped them to pronounce better, only one of them said that the game didn’t help.</p> <p>The mixed responses (three positive, one negative) are important. While the game had a positive impact on the majority, the one student who didn't feel helped could represent an instance of individualized learning needs. This could be due to differences in prior knowledge, learning style, or the influence of their native language.</p>
<p><b>Question 8</b></p> <p>8. Do you think the game helped you say the /a/ sound better? (Like in “pot”)</p>	<p>Three of the four students agreed that the game helped them, one of them said that the game didn’t help.</p>

	<p>This finding directly supports the need for differentiated instruction; all approaches are rarely effective for all students. The positive feedback from the other three students confirms that the intervention was successful for a majority of the participants.</p>
<p><b>Question 9</b></p> <p>9. Was it easier to learn these sounds using the game, or is it easier with normal class activities?</p>	<p>Based on the opinions of the four students, three of them mentioned that learning was easier with a game, while only one student said it was easier with normal classes.</p> <p>The preference for the game-based approach highlights the impact of gamification and technology integration in the classroom. The one student who preferred normal classes might have a learning style that is more aligned with traditional methods, or may simply be less comfortable with technology.</p>
<p><b>Question 10</b></p>	<p>According to the four students, two of them said that the game is repetitive, and one mentioned that it is boring. On the</p>

<p>10. What do you think is not so good about using the app to practice vowel sounds?</p>	<p>other hand, one student said there is nothing bad about the game.</p> <p>The feedback that the game is "repetitive" and "boring" points out the fact that repetition is necessary for skill consolidation, it can also lead to lack of interest. Also, to the need for a balance between structured practice and innovation.</p>
<p><b>Question 11</b></p> <p>11. Would you like to use online guessing games to practice more vocabulary?</p>	<p>In this question three of the four students said that they would like to practice more with the game, on the other hand one of t</p> <p>The majority of positive responses confirms that the students are receptive to this type of learning.</p> <p>This question serves as a proof of concept for future applications. The fact that one student disliked guessing games also reinforces the importance of offering choices to accommodate different learning preferences.</p>

*Source: Developed by Noily Karina Carmona Rojas (2025).*



## **CHAPTER VI CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

## **5.1 Conclusions**

In this chapter, the researcher presents the conclusions obtained based on the results of the data collection and concerning the objectives proposed for developing the research in the implementation of the guessing game "Who Am I?"

### **5.1.1 Regarding the Problem Solution**

Regarding the problematization, what is The Effectiveness of implementing 'Who Am I'? Online Guessing Game Based on the Communicative Approach to Enhance the Pronunciation of Long and Short Vowel Sounds in Oral Production Activities in Two Groups of Second Grade and Two Groups of Fifth Grade from Herradura Elementary School in Garabito, Puntarenas in 2025? It is concluded that the use of an application that contains interactive online games such as the guessing game "Who Am I"?, contributes not significantly to the development of strategies that are more attractive for students to perform oral production activities and improve the pronunciation of vowel sounds, which commonly represent a barrier due to confusion with the native language. Therefore, the use of technological resources brings benefits to students' oral production.

Furthermore, it can be stated that the use of online "Who am I?" guessing games based on the communicative approach does not lead to a significant improvement in the process of learning the pronunciation of long and short vowel sounds in learners. However, the game is considered a valuable technological aid that learners can use to improve and develop their interest in oral production activities. Even if the expected results in terms of performance improvement are not achieved, the use of interactive and digital tools such as this game can promote a dynamic learning environment and help learners learn to rely on

themselves and their learning abilities sustainably and innovatively. It can therefore be used as an additional resource to support traditional classroom teaching methods.

### **5.1.2 Regarding the General Objective**

In the present research, the general objective was to determine the effectiveness of using the Communicative Approach through online guessing games to enhance rhythm and intonation in long and short vowel sound pronunciation in two groups of second grade and two groups of fifth grade from Herradura Elementary School in Garabito, Puntarenas in 2025. Additionally, as a conclusion, the results obtained from data collection through teacher surveys and student observations indicate that the implementation of the Communicative Approach using online guessing games had a mixed impact on improving rhythm and intonation in the pronunciation of long and short vowel sounds among second and fifth grade students.

Although students showed considerable interest and engagement in the activities, this enthusiasm did not translate significantly into improvements in their pronunciation skills. These findings suggest that, although online guessing games serve as an effective tool to promote student engagement, additional strategies and resources may be necessary to make more substantial gains in their oral production skills.

### **5.1.3 Regarding the Specific Objectives**

According to the instruments applied and the data collection stated in Chapter V, conclusions are presented based on each specific objective.

The first objective was to describe the process of learning vowels in oral production through the implementation of online guessing games. It is concluded that students have

almost no knowledge of the subject of English vowel pronunciation and how it differs completely from the sounds they know in their native language, Spanish. Therefore, they generally confuse these sounds since they take as reference that the vowels are the same, but not the sounds. Therefore, when applying the pretest instrument, the students had difficulties with the pronunciation and intonation of most of the given words. However, they showed interest in knowing the correct pronunciation of the words.

In relation to the second specific objective which was to evaluate the advantages and disadvantages of incorporating online guessing games. It is concluded through surveys carried out to teachers of the area and the regional English advisor, as well as to a sample of the total of the students participating in the research, that the online guessing games foster the interest and the engagement of students in certain topics such as the pronunciation and intonation of long and short vowel sounds.

Likewise, this type of game is an alternative to apply group activities that favor the participation in oral production activities of all students. However, some disadvantages may be that these activities with online riddle games may not be completed or adapted to the needs of students with learning barriers. In addition, the lack of technological resources and access to the Internet may be a disadvantage.

Finally both the advisor and the teachers surveyed agree that although they are a good support tool, they are just that, one more resource that cannot replace other methods and that it will depend on the subject, to align it with the contents of the educational curriculum and how the teacher implements the tool in the classes.

Regarding the third specific objective, which was to examine the effect of using online guessing games as a resource used in the pronunciation of different words that contain vowel sounds. In conclusion to the observation and survey instruments applied before, during and after the use of the “Who am I”?, guessing games in the pronunciation of short and long vowel sounds, it is determined that their application did show some improvement in the intonation and pronunciation of the selected words, however it is not a significant improvement.

Whereas the students listened and repeated or guessed the sounds during the development of the online game, some of them still repeated the sounds in the same wrong way, highlighting the fact that how the vowels are pronounced in the native language influences too much. Therefore, the tool proved to be not so effective, even though it did arouse the students' interest, and they said that they would like to continue using tools like this or similar ones.

## **5.2 Recommendations**

Based on the conclusions drawn from the research regarding the effectiveness of implementing the "Who Am I?" online guessing game to enhance vowel sound pronunciation, the following recommendations can be made for future thesis projects:

Integration of different approaches and learning techniques that collaborate and improve students' comprehension and retention of vowel sounds, addressing the confusion derived from their native language.

Regarding the fact that games are not always adapted to the needs of students with learning barriers, look for alternative games that can be developed by the whole class

without exclusion from these students, adapting them to their level of understanding of the contents.

Another recommendation is comprehensive teacher training. Implement training programs on the effective integration of technology in language teaching. This should focus on how to align technology resources with curricular objectives and adapt them to meet the diverse needs of their students. Although there are currently many alternatives and even the teacher is looking to be updated on the use of technology, this is not always the case.

One more recommendation is to encourage the combination of traditional teaching methods with technological resources. This hybrid approach can provide a more complete educational experience, reinforcing learning through various formats and tools.

Another recommendation is to encourage the combination of traditional teaching methods with technological resources. This hybrid approach can provide a more complete educational experience, reinforcing learning through various formats and tools.

Continually research technology options and applications with different types of online games or interactive activities to compare their effectiveness in improving pronunciation and engagement. This could help identify the formats that have the best acceptance and results with learners.

Also, as a recommendation, organize workshops specifically focused on pronunciation, rhythm, and intonation in English. This could provide a structured environment in which students receive direct, hands-on instruction, complementing interactive, game-based learning.

Likewise, an important recommendation is to explore ways to get parents engaged, identified, and involved in the learning process. This will give the teacher the ability to provide resources or suggestions to continue the learning process at home. Involving parents can help reinforce learning and interest outside the classroom.

Consider making notes to assess the long-term impact of using online guessing games on pronunciation skills. This would provide valuable information on the sustainability of the learning outcomes achieved.

An important recommendation is that as a professional, teachers should always aim to be up to date and could focus on further investigating the influence of the first language pronunciation on English vowel sounds. Understanding this relationship could lead to more targeted teaching strategies that address the specific challenges faced by learners.

To summarize, these recommendations aim to build upon the findings of the current study, enhancing the effectiveness of online guessing games and other technological resources in promoting students' oral production skills in a meaningful and sustainable way.

**CHAPTER VI**  
**PROPOSAL**

## **6.1 Name of the Proposal**

For the proposal of this investigation, the title assigned is: “Enhancing English Pronunciation through Interactive Online Games.” This project supports the research: “The Effectiveness of Implementing “Who Am I”? Online Guessing Game Based on the Communicative Approach to Enhance the Pronunciation of Long and Short Vowel Sounds in Oral Production Activities in Two Groups of Second Grade and Two Groups of Fifth Grade from Herradura Elementary School in Garabito, Puntarenas in 2025.”

## **6.2 Description**

The proposal consists of implementing an online guessing game titled “Who Am I”? to support pronunciation learning through fun and engaging oral production activities. The project applies the Communicative Approach to help students distinguish and produce long and short vowel sounds correctly.

The project will be implemented over 10 English lessons, focusing on improving pronunciation through contextual guessing activities. The game promotes active listening, speaking, and meaningful interaction, helping students internalize proper vowel pronunciation. A pre-test and post-test will measure improvement in pronunciation accuracy.

## **6.3 Place to be developed**

This proposal will be implemented at Herradura Elementary School, located in Garabito, Puntarenas. The school has basic access to digital resources, allowing the integration of online activities such as the “Who Am I”? Guessing game.

## **6.4 Organization**

Herradura Elementary School is committed to improving English oral skills and pronunciation accuracy among students. As part of its efforts to modernize English teaching, the school administration supports the implementation of innovative, student-centered projects aligned with the Ministry of Public Education's guidelines. The project is expected to be carried out during the school year **2025**.

## **6.5 Involved Population**

The population involved in this project consists of two groups of second and fifth grade students. Each group consists of approximately 20 to 25 students, giving a total of around 97 students. These students represent two different developmental stages, allowing for a broader analysis of the game's effectiveness at varying levels of cognitive and language development.

## **6.6 Objectives of the Proposal**

### **6.6.1 General Objective**

To assess the effectiveness of the "Who Am I"? online guessing game, based on the Communicative Approach, in improve the pronunciation of long and short vowel sounds in second and fifth-grade students.

### **6.6.2 Specific Objectives**

- a) To implement the "Who Am I"? guessing game to target vowel pronunciation during English class.
- b) To apply the Communicative Approach to foster oral interaction and pronunciation

practice.

c) To measure the progress in students' ability to produce long and short vowel sounds before and after the intervention.

### 6.7 Chronogram of Activities

Lessons	Activity/Schedule
1 & 2	Apply the pre-test on long and short vowel pronunciation.  Focus on long /i:/ vs. short /ɛ/.  Focus on long /oʊ/ vs. short /a/.
3 & 4	Introduce the “Who Am I”? game and demonstrate how to play.  Practice with the game “Who Am I”?
5 & 6	Mixed-practice game rounds: reviewing all target vowels in randomized clues.
7 & 8	Conduct a general review through a team-based competition.  Apply the post-test on long and short vowel to assess pronunciation improvement.
9 & 10	Apply the survey and the interview.

*Source: Developed by Noily Karina Carmona Rojas, 2025.*

### 6.8 Budget for its Implementation

This project requires no monetary budget, as it uses free online tools and school-provided technological equipment (such as tablets or computers with internet access). The “Who Am I”? guessing game is developed using simple presentation software or

educational platforms (e.g., Wordwall, Kahoot, or Google Slides), requiring only time and preparation by the instructor.

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## **ANEXXES**

## ANNEXES

### Annex A

Universidad Hispanoamericana

English Teaching for the First and Second Cycles of Primary Education

Thesis Project

#### Observation of students

This observation is conducted in order to collect data for a thesis focused on the effectiveness of implementing “Who Am I?”, an online guessing game based on the communicative approach, to improve the pronunciation of long and short vowel sounds in oral production activities among second and fifth-grade students, respectively. All information provided will be used for academic purposes only and will remain confidential.

**Objective:** To describe the process of learning vowels in oral production by implementing the online guessing game “Who Am I?” in two groups of second grade and two groups of fifth-grade students from Herradura Elementary School in Garabito, Puntarenas, in 2025.

Observation Checklists: Learning Vowels with the App "Who Am I"

#### Checklist 1: Vowel Recognition and Understanding

Criteria	Yes	No
Student pronounced the short vowel sound /ε/ in the word “ten” correctly.		
Student pronounced the short vowel sound /ε/ in the word “pen” correctly.		

Student pronounced the short vowel sound /ε/ in the word “bed” correctly.		
Student pronounced the short vowel sound /ε/ in the word “red” correctly.		
Student pronounced the short vowel sound /ε/ in the word “net” correctly.		
Student pronounced the long vowel sound /i:/ in the word “he” correctly.		
Student pronounced the long vowel sound /i:/ in the word “see” correctly.		
Student pronounced the long vowel sound /i:/ in the word “bee” correctly.		
Student pronounced the long vowel sound /i:/ in the word “tree” correctly.		
Student pronounced the long vowel sound /i:/ in the word “Pete” correctly.		
Student pronounced the short vowel sound /a/ in the word “pot” correctly.		
Student pronounced the short vowel sound /a/ in the word “top” correctly.		

Student pronounced the short vowel sound /a/ in the word “box” correctly.		
Student pronounced the short vowel sound /a/ in the word “dog” correctly.		
Student pronounced the short vowel sound /a/ in the word “log” correctly.		
Student pronounced the long vowel sound /oo/ in the word “go” correctly.		
Student pronounced the long vowel sound /oo/ in the word “no” correctly.		
Student pronounced the long vowel sound /oo/ in the word “nose” correctly.		
Student pronounced the long vowel sound /oo/ in the word “rope” correctly.		
Student pronounced the long vowel sound /oo/ in the word “bone” correctly.		

## Annex B

Universidad Hispanoamericana

English Teaching for the First and Second Cycles of Primary Education

Thesis Project

### Survey for English Teachers

This survey is conducted to collect data for a thesis focused on the effectiveness of implementing “Who Am I?”, an online guessing game based on the communicative approach, to improve the pronunciation of long and short vowel sounds in oral production activities among second- and fifth-grade students, respectively. All information provided will be used solely for academic purposes and will remain confidential.

This survey explores your observations regarding using online guessing games to improve students' pronunciation. Your responses will be used solely for research purposes. Feel free to share your honest opinions and experiences.

**Objective:** To evaluate the advantages and disadvantages of incorporating the online guessing game “Who Am I?” in two groups of second and fifth-grade students from Herradura Elementary School in Garabito, Puntarenas, in 2025.

**Instructions:** Answer the questions according to the information you have based on your experience as an English teacher.

#### Questions

1. Have you been teaching English at the elementary level for more than 2 years?

Yes

No

Maybe

2. Have you used digital tools or online games in your English lessons before?

Yes

No

Maybe

3. Do your students react positively when you use online guessing games in pronunciation activities?

Yes

No

Maybe

4. Have you noticed more student engagement with online games compared to traditional pronunciation exercises?

Yes

No

Maybe

5. Do you think online guessing games help students feel more comfortable speaking English in class?

Yes

No

Maybe

6. Have you seen improvement in students' pronunciation of long and short vowels after using online guessing games?

- Yes
- No
- Maybe

7. Do you believe online guessing games are effective for teaching vowel pronunciation?

- Yes
- No
- Maybe

8. Do students seem more confident in their oral production after practicing with these games?

- Yes
- No
- Maybe

9. Have you experienced challenges when using online guessing games in pronunciation lessons?

- Yes
- No
- Maybe

10. Do you think online guessing games should be used more often in pronunciation lessons?

Yes

No

Maybe

## Annex C

Universidad Hispanoamericana

English Teaching for the First and Second Cycles of Primary Education

Thesis Project

### Interview with 4 students

This interview is being conducted to collect data for a thesis focused on the effectiveness of implementing “Who Am I?”, an online guessing game based on the communicative approach, to improve the pronunciation of long and short vowel sounds in oral production activities among second and fifth grade students, respectively. All information provided will be used for academic purposes only and will remain confidential.

**Objective:** To evaluate the advantages and disadvantages of incorporating the online guessing game “Who Am I?” in two groups of second and fifth-grade students from Herradura Elementary School in Garabito, Puntarenas, in 2025.

**Instructions:** Answer the questions based on your experience using the online guessing game “Who Am I?”

Questions.

1. What is the name of your school?
2. What grade are you in?
3. Have you ever used apps to practice pronunciation of vowel sounds in English before?
4. Did you enjoy playing the "Who Am I?" guessing game?

5. What did you like the most about the game?
6. Was anything difficult or confusing about the game?
7. Do you think the game helped you say the /ε/ sound better? (Like in “pen”)
8. Do you think the game helped you say the /a/ sound better? (Like in “pot”)
9. Was it easier to learn these sounds using the game, or is it easier with normal class activities?
10. What do you think is not so good about using the app to practice vowel sounds?
11. Would you like to use online guessing games to practice more vocabulary?

## Annex D

Universidad Hispanoamericana

English Teaching for the First and Second Cycles of Primary Education

Thesis Project

### **Interview to the Regional English Advisor of Aguirre**

This interview is being conducted to collect data for a thesis focused on the effectiveness of implementing “Who Am I?”, an online guessing game based on the communicative approach, to improve the pronunciation of long and short vowel sounds in oral production activities among second- and fifth-grade students, respectively. All information provided will be used solely for academic purposes and will remain confidential.

**Objective:** To evaluate the advantages and disadvantages of incorporating the online guessing game “Who Am I?” in two groups of second and fifth grade students from Herradura Elementary School in Garabito, Puntarenas, in 2025.

1. Could you please state your name and current role or position?
2. How long have you been working as an English advisor?
3. What is your experience with pronunciation instruction at the primary level?
4. Have you observed or reviewed the “Who Am I?” online guessing game used by the English teacher?
5. In your opinion, what are the main benefits of incorporating this type of game into the learning process for vowel sound pronunciation?
6. Do you believe the game effectively supports the distinction between long and short vowel sounds (specifically /ε/ and /ou/)? Why or why not?

7. How do you see this tool supporting auditory discrimination and oral production in young learners?
8. How does the use of this game align with current language teaching methodologies for primary students?
9. What challenges or limitations do you foresee in implementing this type of online game in different classroom contexts (e.g., infrastructure, student engagement, differentiation)?
10. How would you compare the effectiveness of this interactive method with more traditional methods of pronunciation instruction?
11. In your view, what teacher support or training would be necessary to use the game more effectively?
12. Would you recommend the continued use or expansion of this game in English pronunciation lessons? Why or why not?

## Annex E

Universidad Hispanoamericana

English Teaching for the First and Second Cycles of Primary Education

Thesis Project

### Survey to students

This survey is being conducted to collect data for a thesis focused on the effectiveness of implementing “Who Am I?”, an online guessing game based on the communicative approach, to improve the pronunciation of long and short vowel sounds in oral production activities among second- and fifth-grade students, respectively. All information provided will be used solely for academic purposes and will remain confidential.

**Objective:** To examine the effect of using the online guessing game, “Who Am I?”, as a resource used in the pronunciation of different words that contain vowel sounds in two groups of second-grade and two groups of fifth-grade students from Herradura Elementary School in Garabito, Puntarenas, in 2025.

**Instructions:** Answer the questions based on your experience using the online guessing game Who Am I?

Questions

1. Did you enjoy playing the “Who Am I?” guessing game online?

Yes

No

A little

2. How many times did you play the game in class?
- 1 time
  - 2 times
  - 3 or more times
  - I don't remember
3. Was the game easy to understand?
- Yes
  - No
  - A little
4. Did you use English language while playing?
- Yes
  - No
  - A little
6. Did the game help you learn or remember new English words?
- Yes
  - No
  - A little

7. Was the game easy to understand?

Yes

No

A little

8. Would you like to play the game again?

Yes

No

Maybe

9. What didn't you like about the game?

The game was not fun or interesting

The game was boring

I prefer other games

It took too long to play

10. Would you recommend the game to students in other grades?

Yes

No

Maybe

## Annex F

Universidad Hispanoamericana

English Teaching for the First and Second Cycles of Primary Education

Thesis Project



### Pretest for students

This pretest is being administered to collect data for a thesis focused on the effectiveness of implementing “Who Am I?”, an online guessing game based on the communicative approach, to improve the pronunciation of long and short vowel sounds in oral production activities among second- and fifth-grade students, respectively. All information provided will be used solely for academic purposes and will remain confidential.

**Objective:** To examine the effect of using the online guessing game, “Who Am I?” as a resource used in the pronunciation of different words that contain vowel sounds in two groups of second-grade and two groups of fifth-grade students from Herradura Elementary School in Garabito, Puntarenas, in 2025.

**Instructions:** Fifth and Second-grade students practice pronunciation exercises with long and short vowel sounds, of the vowels e and o. The teacher shows them a flashcard with a word and a picture, and the students pronounce it.

#### Short Vowel sound /e/

Pen

Ten

Bed

Red

#### Short Vowel sound /o/

Pot

Top

Box

Dog

Net

**Long Vowel sound /i:/**

He

See

Bee

Tree

Pete

Log

**Long Vowel sound /o/**

Go

No

Nose

Rope

Bone

## Annex G

Universidad Hispanoamericana

English Teaching for the First and Second Cycles of Primary Education

Thesis Project



### Posttest to students

This posttest is being administered to collect data for a thesis focused on the effectiveness of using “Who Am I?”, an online guessing game based on the communicative approach, to improve the pronunciation of long and short vowel sounds during oral production activities among second- and fifth-grade students, respectively. All information collected will be used solely for academic purposes and will be handled confidentially.

**Objective:** To examine the effect of using the online guessing game, “Who Am I?” as a resource used in the pronunciation of different words that contain vowel sounds in two groups of second-grade and two groups of fifth-grade students from Herradura Elementary School in Garabito, Puntarenas, in 2025.

**Instructions:** Read the following words aloud.

#### Task 1: Word Pronunciation /ɛ/ and /i:/ vowel sounds and /oo/ and /a/

##### Short Vowel sound /ɛ/

Pen

Ten

Bed

Red

Net

##### Long Vowel sound /i:/

##### Short Vowel sound /a/

Pot

Top

Box

Dog

Log

##### Long Vowel sound /oo/

He	Go
See	No
Bee	Nose
Tree	Rope
Pete	Bone

**Posttest Checklist:** Pronunciation of /ε/ and /i:/ vowel sounds and /oo/ and /a/ vowel sounds.

Criteria	Yes	No
Student pronounced the short vowel sound /ε/ in the word “ten” correctly.		
Student pronounced the short vowel sound /ε/ in the word “pen” correctly.		
Student pronounced the short vowel sound /ε/ in the word “bed” correctly.		
Student pronounced the short vowel sound /ε/ in the word “red” correctly.		
Student pronounced the short vowel sound /ε/ in the word “net” correctly.		
Student pronounced the long vowel sound /i:/ in the word “he” correctly.		

Student pronounced the long vowel sound /i:/ in the word “see” correctly.		
Student pronounced the long vowel sound /i:/ in the word “bee” correctly.		
Student pronounced the long vowel sound /i:/ in the word “tree” correctly.		
Student pronounced the long vowel sound /i:/ in the word “Pete” correctly.		
Student pronounced the short vowel sound /a/ in the word “pot” correctly.		
Student pronounced the short vowel sound /a/ in the word “top” correctly.		
Student pronounced the short vowel sound /a/ in the word “box” correctly.		
Student pronounced the short vowel sound /a/ in the word “dog” correctly.		
Student pronounced the short vowel sound /a/ in the word “log” correctly.		

Student pronounced the long vowel sound /oʊ/ in the word “go” correctly.		
Student pronounced the long vowel sound /oʊ/ in the word “no” correctly.		
Student pronounced the long vowel sound /oʊ/ in the word “nose” correctly.		
Student pronounced the long vowel sound /oʊ/ in the word “rope” correctly.		
Student pronounced the long vowel sound /oʊ/ in the word “bone” correctly.		