BENEMÉRITA UNIVERSIDAD AUTÓNOMA DE PUEBLA

Facultad de Lenguas

Learning weather vocabulary from Ali and the Magic Carpet short story
through e-learning: a quasi-experimental study

A thesis submitted to the Faculty of Languages

For the degree of

Licenciatura en Lenguas Modernas: Inglés

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Puebla, México

December, 2021

"Learning weather vocabulary from Ali and the Magic Carpet short story
through e-learning: a quasi-experimental study"

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the requirement for the degree of

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Puebla, Mexico

December, 2021

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thanks to God, to the Universe and Life.

Thanks to my Mom, Luisa Romero Juarez † who is still caring for me from Heaven.

I am especially grateful to the professors Maria Leticia Temoltzin Espejel and Sandra Juarez Pacheco for all their invaluable patience and their guidance to do this research step by step. I would like to thank professor Jeanette Sandre Cuautle who accepted to read this research paper and her crucial time.

Thanks to all my sisters and family: Betty, Avril Lizeth, Belen, Miriam, Giovanna, and Ana. I do appreciate Josefina Tlatelpa Perez for all her noble and charitable help. I would like to thank my dad for finally understanding me while I finished my thesis. Thanks to my aunt Ofelia Cisneros † for giving me a home. Thanks to Santana Genis for everything. I really do appreciate all the patience and help from Johan Romeo in the process of this achievement.

Lastly, I would like to thank all the people who made this research possible. *Un immense merci du fond du mon cœur. Muchas gracias por haberme aceptado a este Seminario de Tesis.*

A investigar se aprende investigando - Carlos Sabino.

ABSTRACT

The educational system has changed since a year ago. Face to face classes were replaced for online classes. This situation was caused by COVID-19. Teachers confronted many different things to teach English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classes, one of these was the way to teach reading skill; "teaching reading is a complex process that draws upon an extensive knowledge base and repertoire of strategies" (Reading Rockets, 2021, p.1). As it is naturally complicated, it was needed to find almost one reading strategy in which students practice this activity in EFL online classes in a nice and enjoyable way. In addition, according to Hamra (2010) most teachers agree that reading material is a difficult task to find meanwhile students have a poor reading comprehension (p.33-34). Based on the previous claims, this quasi-experimental study focuses on how to teach specific vocabulary using reading in a creative manner. Storytelling was the activity to use in this study and *Ali and the magic carpet* was the short story to use because it has specific weather vocabulary on it. Thus, the objectives of this quasi-experimental study are to evaluate and analyze if the participants learned and comprehended weather vocabulary with the short story chosen. The results show that the short story was mostly useful for many students to learn specific vocabulary, but not enough for students who show difficulties in learning general at school.

CONTENT

LIST OF GRAPHS

LIST OF CHARTS

CHAPTER I

Introduction

Schools in Mexico and all over the world have been forced to close face-to- face classes at schools because of COVID-19. Due to this pandemic, all people had to protect themselves inside their houses and students had to take classes online or through e-learning. According to Bagapova, Koviloba & Yuldasheva (2020), distance learning has a lot of benefits for students who want to study inside home such as: the speed of learning according to their own situation and ability and studying at their own pace. It is flexible; they can stay in one area, and finally it can save time, energy and money. Thus, e-learning is much more practical during pandemic time. Moreover, reading is one of the most important skills that students, either in face to face or virtual classes, should develop properly. However, many students are not interested in doing it (Ortiz, 2019). Consequently, all the good things that reading brings for children's lives are not transmitted. "Reading is a lifelong skill to be used both at school and throughout life" (Bazarbaevna, 2017, p. 40); thus, every single kid must read as a daily activity. Therefore, the intended outcome of this study is to show how English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teachers work as storytellers to motivate students to take reading as a habit and learn *weather* vocabulary with the use of *Ali and the Magic Carpet* short story to comprehend the text. Consequently, this chapter presents firstly, the rationale for the topic selection and how this research will contribute to this area of study, at least in this particular context, and the gap that this research will fill in investigations made in a context like this. Secondly, the significance of the study is to contribute and convince

English Foreign Language (EFL) teachers of primary schools, namely the ones in this context, to not forget short stories and use these kinds of readings in EFL classes to teach specific vocabulary. Moreover, it explains how storytelling, short stories and reading go together and describes some benefits when teachers use these activities in students of early ages. Third, the context of the research explains why such a population had been chosen and describes them in detail. Fourth, the aim of the study describes what is expected to be achieved in a specific population sample and what is expected to be discovered in students' perceptions about the short story. Then, the objectives are related with the aim of the study and focus on the main procedures that will help to answer the research questions. Finally, the research questions for this quasi-experimental study are presented.

1.1 Rationale for the topic selection

Unfortunately, in many current contexts there are teachers who skip the reading skill in the English Foreign Language (EFL) classroom, or they simply do not pay attention to it (Vazquez, 2014). Also, it is difficult for teachers to teach students this skill. According to Bazarbaevna (2017), "despite its importance, reading is one of the most challenging areas in the education system" (p. 40). Thus, reading can be a complicated task in the classroom. On the other hand, "storytelling is a natural way of language transmission" (Romanelli, 2016, p.1). Thus, teachers may use this in their English language teaching practice through e-learning to inspire future teachers to consider using short stories and storytelling as teaching materials as resources to teach vocabulary.

In fact, reading can be a difficult task for children who are learning English as a foreign language. Thus, "a child may not read because he or she does not like or understand the

text" (Spear-Swerling 2016, P. 518); Based on this, some children show negative attitudes towards reading any text that the EFL teacher provides. Seeing as how both students and teachers can forget about reading, this study is focused on storytelling in EFL classes which are given through e-learning. Another reason behind choosing this research topic is that EFL teachers have noticed that the lack of vocabulary limits successful communication between students who want to express their ideas in this language. Wilkins (1972, p. 111) states that "without grammar, very little can be conveyed. Without vocabulary, nothing can be conveyed." Therefore, it can be assumed that vocabulary is the skeleton of any language. Hence, students from an early age must start learning vocabulary to achieve effective communication. Based on these assumptions, the present study focuses on providing evidence that children are able to learn vocabulary through storytelling and reading.

1.2 Significance of the Study

The importance of education during elementary school is well known as well as the idea that reading is one of the first skills introduced to students. It is important to have the ability to read proficiently in early education. Moreover, it plays a significant role in children's basic learning. Despite the fact that reading is a skill learned at a young age, it may be complex for beginners. Some of them need the opportunity to ask questions, understand words, or foretell what will happen because it is possible students may not completely understand what they read (Merrimack College, 2021, n.p.). So, for elementary school learners, it is possible to find the ability of reading hard, and they could find it even harder to learn this skill in foreign language learning.

For this reason, EFL teachers of elementary education must have strategies to assist students to interpret complex sentences, understand vocabulary, and information. Educators have to increase their teaching skills to face the challenges of children learning to read. "Good reading skills are the foundation for academic achievements" (Merrimack College, 2021, n.p.).

Kruse (1990) supports the fact that initial stages of foreign language teaching should be devoted to vocabulary development. Moreover, according to Abdul-ameer (2017), "teachers dealing with primary level learners must always consider such a strategy especially in vocabulary teaching" (p.203). Thus, learning vocabulary is more than necessary for elementary school students to learn a language and develop effective communication. Therefore, this study is important because it aims to consider short stories as material to teach vocabulary in elementary schools. In particular, this study focuses on teaching weather vocabulary through a short story named *Ali and the magic carpet.* Also, this study is significant because it aims to give EFL students other perceptions about reading. They will be able to recognize this study as an example of how elementary school students can learn vocabulary with the use of a short story since it has been demonstrated that vocabulary acquisition is possible from listening to stories (Mason, 2005).

Undoubtedly, short stories and storytelling are strong tools to develop reading skills. That is why, this study focuses on those as a toolkit to learn vocabulary through reading. Indeed, using reading to teach second languages has several advantages such as: developing higher language proficiency, contributing to a better linguistic understanding, and the development of others skills (Ceylan, 2016). Hence, this study

cannot be handled without reading, considering that storytelling goes together with this skill. As Nassim (2018) points out, storytelling is a necessary activity in English language classes. Thus, storytelling is always a motivating pedagogical tool to develop, improve, and enhance students´ reading skills. It is an ingenious activity to involve students actively in language learning through the process of reading.

Furthermore, Mason also (2005) suggests teaching previous vocabulary before presenting the story because it relates the vocabulary meaning with the context. Thus, students directly pay attention to the key words when they hear such vocabulary (p.5). Therefore, storytelling in English language classes presents a benefit for promoting children's language skills, especially their expressive language and vocabulary learning. Indeed, the effects on vocabulary development were positive and large effects for expressive vocabulary (Vaahtoranta, et al., 2019). Consequently, it is expected that EFL teachers and schools find this study as an innovative form of integrating reading in their lessons when teaching specific vocabulary. Taking this into consideration, it can be said that "storytelling is a powerful tool that can be an effective activity in schools" (Robin, 2016, p.27) as well as in e-learning environments.

1.3 The Context of the Research

This study is applied in a private elementary school located in Santa Ana Xalmimilulco, Huejotzingo in the state of Puebla, Mexico. This school is called *Instituto Cuauhtemoc*. This school has two educational levels, preschool and elementary school. In the preschool level, there is one group per school year: first, second and third grades. For the elementary school level, there is one group for each grade from first till sixth grade.

Both educational levels have face to face morning classes to learn basic subjects and only the elementary school level has online English classes in the afternoons. Students receive four hours of English classes per week from Monday to Thursday; the groups are according to students´ English level: basic, intermediate and advanced. In the basic English level there are two groups, basic A and basic B. Students of basic group A take classes from Monday to Thursday from 2:00 to 3:00 pm and there are 34 students. Students of basic B take classes from Monday to Thursday from 3:00 to 4:00 pm and there are 33 students. In the intermediate English level there are 33 students. They take classes from Monday to Thursday from 4:00 to 5:00 pm. In the advanced English level group there are 20 students who take classes from Monday to Thursday from 5:00 to 6:00 pm.

This quasi-experimental study is conducted at an intermediate level because students have basic knowledge in the language, but not enough to know specific vocabulary such as the one used in this research, weather vocabulary. Besides that, students who take intermediate English level classes are in third grade and they are eight years old. According to Verywellfamily (2020), children who are eight years old have great gains in their cognitive development, even more so the ones who read a lot expand and develop their vocabularies. This is why this group was the selected one for the present research.

1.4 Aim of the Study

The main aim of this research is to examine if the short story named *Ali and the magic carpet* is useful to learn and comprehend weather vocabulary for English as a Foreign Language (EFL) in elementary school students. Also, as they learn English from an

early age, it is important to evaluate students´ perceptions about reading English as a second language as well as what the perception of students about storytelling is, specifically about the short story that was chosen.

1.5 Objectives

In order to achieve the aim of examining whether the short story named *Ali and the magic carpet,* it is useful to learn and comprehend weather vocabulary for EFL students, the objectives for this study are:

(a) To provide evidence of whether participants learnt and comprehend specific vocabulary taught with the short story *Ali and the magic carpet.*

(b) To identify what participants interpret and comprehend about storytelling.

(c) To provide evidence on whether or not participants perceive reading skill as a positive and beneficial practice.

The next section presents the research questions that will guide this study and that will serve as the basis in order to achieve these objectives.

1.6 Research Questions

The following are the research questions established for this quasi-experimental study:

1. - To what extent do participants learn and comprehend the vocabulary from *Ali and the Magic Carpet* short story?

2. - What are the participants` perceptions about the chosen short story *Ali and the Magic Carpet* to learn *weather* vocabulary through reading?

In order to respond to the research questions, the methodology to follow for this study consists of applying the pre-test to diagnose EFL students' knowledge about weather vocabulary. Second, a short story to teach EFL vocabulary of weather to the participants was used. Then, a post-test to prove if participants learnt and comprehend the vocabulary taught during classes was applied . Lastly, a questionnaire to ask participants about the use of the chosen short story to learn and comprehend specific vocabulary was applied. These steps are further explained in Chapter 3.

The purpose of chapter one was to present this quasi-experimental study which has its roots in the COVID -19 pandemic situation and the implied shift of the educational system to e-learning. As reading is a complex skill for teachers to teach and for students to understand in EFL, this study is focused on *Ali and the magic carpet* in order to take the reading skill and storytelling as tools for EFL teachers and for students to learn weather vocabulary. The following chapter presents the literature review and the theoretical framework which includes the ideas of different experts in the area and some of their corresponding studies. This constitutes the theoretical ground of this study.

CHAPTER II

Literature Review

This part of the study presents arguments of authors who affirm that reading, short stories and storytelling involve many aspects in EFL teaching and learning. The second point describes how reading is useful in EFL teaching; the third section talks about teachers as storytellers; the fourth section is about the use of short stories as teaching material as well as how to teach vocabulary with this kind of material. Finally, e-learning together with short stories is mentioned as an important part of this research.

2.1 Teaching EFL through reading

In order to find the most adequate skill to teach and practice EFL for young students, the reading skill was chosen for this quasi-experimental study. Alyousef (2006) argues that the reading skill is the one which involves different facts to teach EFL. These facts are: previous experience, background knowledge, vocabulary knowledge, concepts, ideas, and language competence such as morphology, syntax, and grammar. These facts make teaching reading in EFL helpful for EFL teachers.

In addition, Pourhosein (2016) claims "reading is an interactive process in which readers construct a meaningful representation of a text using effective reading strategies" (p. 229). Also Hamra (2010) mentions that to carry out this skill in EFL classes, "students need previous knowledge in the language to understand what they read" (p.28). Hamra (2010) also says that the previous knowledge students need to understand reading is: prior background information, having an idea of paragraphs'

meaning as well as students need to understand the meaning of sentences, vocabulary, words and phrases. All this previous knowledge is important or needed for comprehension and reading participation. Hamra (2010) still supports that previous information in students is relevant to comprehend reading in a text. That is why, in this study strategies were applied to make students understand vocabulary and phrases and achieve the main aim of this research.

Hamra's strategies have to be taught and managed by the English teachers in order to have successful learning in EFL through reading. Above all, students need help in learning EFL through reading. That is why, the EFL learning and teaching process should be designed in a way to increase the reading motivation and interest of the students. This quasi-experimental study´s lesson plans were designed following and using the strategies this author recommends. Having stated that, teachers have to support and help students in their EFL learning through strategies and instructions for reading (Bazarbaevna, 2017). That is why some of the strategies mentioned below were applied according to the age and level of the participants. These strategies were: questioning, predicting, inferring, summarizing, visualizing and making connections. It is important to explain how to use these strategies and how they are named in general EFL contexts as well as how they were used in this study. These strategies are:

Questioning: during this process, students search answers for the questions provided by the teacher. This process makes students reread the text to find the answer and reinforce the comprehension in the text in EFL. Students have access to the information every time they need it. This strategy makes students ask each other, understand meaning, look for answers, find problems solutions, look for information and increase knowledge.

Predicting: this strategy is when students set an objective from a reading, for example: learning specific vocabulary, understanding verbs, looking for phrasal verbs, etc.

Inferring: This is a very useful strategy; and it is used in storytelling. With this strategy, students have many activities to do from reading. For example some activities can be using pictures to guess the meaning of a text; making drawings related to the reading, making predictions, or using information to create meaning from text. All of this helps students to construct knowledge.

Summarizing: this strategy is when students select the most important ideas and information of a text in English. By doing this, students will be able to remember the main idea.

Visualizing: this strategy goes together with imagination. Students can make a drawing about the reading or describe the pictures on a reading. This reinforces students' reading comprehension about the reading and makes them remember about it.

Making connections: this strategy makes learning EFL easier. Students make relations with their own previous knowledge and experience through making connections with the main idea of a text. With this, reading becomes meaningful for students who are learning a foreing language.

As Hamra (2010) and Bazarbaevna (2017) agree, reading strategies, background knowledge and previous vocabulary are essential and necessary in reading in EFL classes. This is why these were important to use in the application of this research. At the same time, using reading to teach EFL helps students to apply different strategies to increase knowledge. A Bazarbaevna (2017) research shows that "good readers are

actively involved with the text, and they are aware of the processes they use to understand what they read" (p.40). Thus, by using reading strategies "not only do students perceive reading as easy and pleasant, but also they enjoy reading in English and they want to read more" (Mason, 1960, par. 21). Based on this, the present research focuses on the reading skill in EFL teaching and learning. Hamra (2010) recommends that teachers take reading as one of the most important skills to teach in an EFL classroom. Furthermore, the author claims that "reading is an inseparable part of any English course" (p. 28). Considering this, to teach EFL through reading is not only an option, but it is fundamental for EFL young students.

2.1.1 English teachers as a storyteller

Historically, storytelling has been important in education because it "contributes uniquely to children's language and literacy development in speech and written composition" (Wang & Zhan, 2010, p.77) and it distributes knowledge in society. As Wang & Zhan (2010) support, storytelling has been the main source for the preservation of heritage, distributing knowledge, principles, beliefs and culture to future generations around the world.

Furthermore, storytelling is the art of telling stories (Robin, 2016). Teachers may use this art in EFL teaching because "storytelling method is an inevitable part of English Language classes" (Nassim, 2018, p.14). And focusing on how it is very useful in education in the EFL teaching, teachers need to take the risk to use storytelling in the classroom (Wang & Zhan, 2010). By telling stories in EFL about any topic that happens in the world, teachers expose learners to the existing world of knowledge where learners

can learn, construct, and further develop their own knowledge, at the same time, students learn specific vocabulary and acquire the foreing language by listening to complex elements. This way, learners reflect their learning processes and obtain life experience (Wang & Zhan, 2010).

Apart from this, in previous educational times, storytelling was mainly used for children's education as a learning tool and an instructional strategy, but researchers found the advantages of storytelling and it was applied with activities which complement storytelling such as creating and narrating personal stories or fables. Consequently, young learners acquire and develop language skills in the process of plotting, writing, revising, and narrating their stories (Wang & Zhan, 2010, p. 76). Thus, since early education, storytelling has helped EFL students to develop reading and listening skills in conjunction with language literacy, progress in speech, and written composition (Wang & Zhan, 2010, p. 76). Similarly, the study of Nassim found that students improved their vocabulary and sentence structure. Also, they improved in using simple past tense, the paraphrasing skill, and gained confidence in reading with correct pronunciation and they made less spelling mistakes (2018, p. 25). "Findings of this study reflect that students have improved their language skills, specifically reading and writing" (Nassim, 2018, p. 25) Therefore, storytelling provides pupils a new learning experience and not just reading a story. Besides, it supports students' understanding (Nassim, 2018, p. 26).

Likewise, there are other useful factors which storytelling has for EFL teachers. Firstly, it can be adapted for the teacher to involve many activities because the nature of storytelling is dynamic with a pleasant learning. Hence, students have the option to

create their own stories to share to classmates about experiences, feelings, reflections or other understandings. Secondly, storytelling creates a positive classroom environment. It makes teachers and students have a better relationship which facilitates EFL teaching and learning. (Wang &Zhan, 2010). Undoubtedly, "these identified advantages further encourage more educators to utilize digital storytelling in their instructional practice" (Wang & Zhan, 2010, p. 80). Above all, storytelling is considered a very powerful tool for EFL teaching, Romanelli (2016) affirms that teachers may consider taking time for storytelling in the EFL classroom because it may be the most powerful tool in the teachers´strategies (p.2). Nassim (2018) supports that storytelling is a powerful tool to integrate in EFL teaching, it creates exciting learning environments, it is perfect for all skill areas of language (p.16). For Robin (2016) "storytelling can be a powerful educational tool for students at all ages and grade levels who are tasked with creating their own stories" (p.19). In addition, "storytelling is not only effective in early child education, but also effective in all areas of higher education" (Wang & Zhan, 2010, p.77).

This use of storytelling exploits in students the desire to learn, to organize their ideas, ask questions, express opinions, participate in storytelling, tell and write stories on their own; and visit the library. All this together develops communication skills. In addition, students gain experience, emotional intelligence as well as social learning. Whereas teachers need to catch students' attention during class time, storytelling helps achieve this. Maybe storytelling is one of the most effective activities to keep students awake and connect well with them. All the storytelling performance helps students' memorization, they remember the story easier. This activity is less boring for students.

2.2 Short stories as teaching material

The purpose of this section is to present short stories as teaching material. Likewise, it explains how literature, reading and short stories are related to teaching English as a foreign language and how these encourage EFL students' learning.

Literature is elemental and it is an important part of culture transmission, so it has to be included in EFL classes. "As it is written for the native users of the language, it is an authentic material and presents good examples of target language. Reading literary works gives students great opportunities to improve their language". (Saka, 2014, p. 278). For a long time, literature has been one of the basic materials for language learning. "The advocates of the use of the short-stories for developing language skills argue that the use of short stories offers the material which is real, creative and rich in language selection, as well as is amusing and motivational in nature. It is also considered as a highly effective approach for teaching and learning of foreign languages like English and is recommended for the same reasons by eminent intellectuals" (Pathan, 2018, p.28).

Siyabi (2017) argues short stories are authentic materials. These kinds of material capture students' attention, encourage students' curiosity and their desire to read. Above all, it is sure that young students will remember the story they read. Additionally, the author (2017) affirms that including short stories provides students perceptions into the target culture and it passes to other cultures as values and beliefs. This way, students recognize differences and similarities among others cultures and customs, making "students gain a real knowledge of the world by exploring authentic materials" (Siyabi,

2017, p.165). Literature is a demonstration of cultural society and it is an important part of the language for EFL learners. For this, it is included in all educational areas (Saka, 2014). The author affirms that "literature is an authentic material and by reading literary texts students face language written for native speakers and try to understand the texts" (p.278).

Likewise Pathan (2013) reinforces:

The use of short-stories in ELT classroom offers the teaching and learning material which is motivating, authentic and has great educational value. Stories help students to understand another culture and work as a stimulus for language acquisition. They also develop students' interpretative abilities and help in expanding their language awareness. Stories also encourage students to express their opinions and feelings and make language learning fun by bringing a bit of excitement to a classroom which can work as a change of routine and a new recipe

(p.30).

For its many good factors, "teachers should incorporate reading time into their classes" (Siyabi, 2017, p.166), especially for EFL young students because "reading is a complex process that combines the use of skills to arrive at comprehension," (Maibodi, 2008, p.44) which is excellent for students of early ages. Young EFL readers require reading materials that will help to build and strengthen beginning reading skills, such as analysis, acquiring grammar structures, dictionary use, making inferences and learning the meaning of words from the context (Maibodi, 2008). Another benefit for EFL young

students is that while they are reading something, learners engage in a process of making meanings (Sentürk & Kahraman, 2017). Therefore, "literature is a good material in which making meanings through contextualization is best presented" (Sentürk & Kahraman, 2017, p.537).

Siyabi (2017) mentions another important fact about short stories as authentic teaching material: short stories represent real events and these are full of authentic input. This input is more meaningful than other kinds of materials or texts´ input for young students. They interact with the text and this motivates students to read and adquire a meaningful knowledge. Siyabi (2017) continues affirming that short stories are good teaching materials. As this material is manageable, students are interested and motivated to be attentive to the exposure of English literature. Last but not least, the incorporation of short stories into language classes has had good results, it has been proved that using authentic materials as short stories in EFL teaching and learning has a positive impact on students' performance (Siyabi, 2017). All these arguments support the incorporation of short stories in the language classroom, which is why the present study focuses on the use of a short story to learn vocabulary. The teaching of vocabulary through short stories is presented in the next section.

2.2.1 Short stories to teach new vocabulary

With short stories students not only improve, learn and acquire new vocabulary, they also practice other skills. For example, Siyabi (2017) found many "potential benefits of integrating true short stories into English classes" (p.165). If students domain vocabulary in EFL, it helps them in speaking skill when they talk to other people, of

course when they are writing in EFL or translating a text, and vocabulary helps students in reading and listening skills comprehension (Al-Dersi, 2013). Also, as Arias (2017) states, "a lack of vocabulary could be an obstacle in students' communication" (p.112). Moreover, Mubarak Pathan (2018) says that evidently, short-stories in English are designed with linguistic structures as sentences and vocabulary to use in context and make learning of foreign language skills easy and simple. Short stories help to improve EFL learners' vocabulary and motivate them to learn the four language skills: listening, speaking, reading and writing more efficiently. In addition, not only do short stories help to learn new vocabulary, short stories help to develop it.

> "The benefit of using short stories in EFL classrooms for developing vocabulary is that stories offer new words with actual usage in many forms. This can help EFL learners to understand not only the meaning of the new word learned but also the usage in context"
>
> (Al-Dersi, 2013, p.80).

This stimulates language acquisition, students' awareness about what they read between new words and context and fosters reading proficiency which is very important for enriching EFL vocabulary reading for the youngest students in EFL classes. Al- Dersi (2013) also affirms, the best method and strategy of teaching vocabulary in EFL young students is the use of short stories. This plays an important role in expanding vocabulary knowledge. Accordingly, if EFL teachers want students to be successful in the reading skill and learn vocabulary, the best reading material to apply are short stories; it is naturally enjoyable, low cost and high effective. This material makes learning easy, motivational, independent and memorable. It is very adaptive to different activities to

learn vocabulary and learn other skills. The use of short stories is more helpful to learn a foreign language, it integrates all skills and students practice them, if teachers apply it in the classroom, EFL students enjoy the activity, and they acquire vocabulary.

2.3 E- learning

The term "E-learning" was coined in 1998 by Jay Cross who stated that e-learning is a popular way of developing education by technological breakthroughs. "E- learning can be delivered electronically enhancing students' learning via any suitable information and communication technologies" (Liyali & Al-Sholiwoy, 2020, p. 97). For the pandemic time situation, e-learning was a very useful implementation for continuing classes. The importance of e-learning during a pandemic is that it is more helpful and secure to save people's lives (Bagapova et al., 2020). This is why this case study was applied through e-learning. In addition, the materials used in this research used multimodality components to make this case study work through e-learning, since all kids learn differently (Prodigy, 2020). As a result, different modes were used in the EFL classes through e-learning for young students. Such modes were: the use of picture, illustration, audio, speech, writing and print, movement, gestures, facial expressions and colors. These multimodality strategies were intended to achieve the proposed outcome of this case study. Apart from the possibility to use multimodal texts, e-learning has other advantages. For example, it makes students construct their own knowledge from experience as it is an effective tool to help teachers in language teaching and promote learners' interactive learning with the use of electronic devices, e-learning has a significant effect on enhancing learners' motivation (Shen, 2011). So, e-learning is a

good option for young students who are learning EFL and they need to substitute face to face classes during the pandemic time. E-learning, can give students the opportunity to practice language areas and learn vocabulary with multimodal texts; this surely gives students success in their preparation of learning.

2.3.1 E-learning and short stories

Short stories are considered one of the most effective, enjoyable, and easier tools for young students to learn how to read and practice new vocabulary. This material provides vocabulary and is an opportunity to practice the language. Also, this material helps teachers to handle all their objectives and involves other skills such as listening, speaking or grammar. As there is not a specific method to use short stories, this study proposes to use this material in e-learning classes. Short stories have "the potential to engage learners in integrated approaches to learning with digital media" (Smeda, Dakich & Sharda, 2010, p.8). The use of short stories and storytelling in e-learning entertain young students because these are less complex than just huge stories written. (Scott, 2008). Also Smeda et al. (2010) affirms that short stories are powerful tools for "creating e-learning environments based on constructivist principles of teaching and learning" (p.8). Similarly, Scott (2008) advises teachers to use short stories for storytelling in e-learning because they catch learners' attention and they make lessons enjoyable. Hence, teachers need to look for specific short stories according to their own purposes or intended outcome on their lesson plans, as well as their students' ages and English level. In addition they may have extra material or activities and decide if they use this through e-learning or face to face classes according to their own situations.

In this chapter, the reading skill using short stories as teaching material and how EFL teachers may use these with storytelling to teach vocabulary through e-learning was analyzed thoroughly. It was affirmed by different authors that reading, short stories and storytelling are powerful tools which teachers have to use for all the advantages these bring. In the next chapter it is presented how this quasi-experimental study was done. It explains the approach and methodology, the instruments used, the participants, the place where this study was applied, plus how the process was and the data analysis with detail.

CHAPTER III

Research Methodology

This chapter describes the methodology used to carry out this investigation, the kind of approach it uses, and the reasons this research was considered quasi-experimental and qualitative. This study uses four different instruments. These as well as the context and participants in which such instruments were applied are mentioned and described. After this, there is a description of how the instruments were used in the overall research design. Following this, the data analysis will be described and the conclusion obtained from the results of this research is presented at the end.

3.1 Research Approach and Methodology

The method used in this research was qualitative because it attempts to present the data from the perspectives of the subjects. There are different authors who define qualitative research with different words but with the same concept. As Smythe & Giddings (2007) defines: qualitative study always "searches and observes to find the matter which affects in certain cases to study" (p.37). Mohr (1999) addresses that qualitative investigation is a study to determine impact on certain cases in the natural world between the proposed cause and effect.

A pre-test and a post-test were applied, thus, it is noticed the approach used in this research is quasi-experimental. As Shuttleworth (2009) says "for many experimental designs, pretest- posttest designs are the preferred method to compare participant groups and measure the degree of change occurring as a result of treatments or interventions" (n.p.). As one of the instruments to use is a short story, certain variables managed may

affect how students perform both tests, pre and post. in order to see what changed and happened after. So, to see if this proposed material made a change or not later it is explained what happened before and after applying this material in the next sections. This method and approach was selected because it is the one that adjusts according to the requirements of the investigation.

3.1.1. Quasi-experimental study

The authors Wong, Hwang, Choo & Khadijah (2020) affirm that a quasi-experimental design is appropriate in a study where the pre-post testing is done; an applied pre-test is examined before the experiment begins to measure students´ knowledge and proficiency. Then, the experiment is carried out. Afterwards, a post-test is applied to evaluate students´ learning and achievements.

Based on this, this is a quasi-experimental study because the procedure involved a pre-test to measure participant's weather vocabulary knowledge. Also, it involves an experiment, which was to use the short story selected with storytelling and through e-learning. After this, a post-test and a questionnaire were required in order to measure participant's weather vocabulary knowledge after the experiment and to learn about the experience students had using the material designed for this research.

Similarly, the quasi-experimental study allows better control of confounding variables. It may be used for ethical and practical reasons and participants are not randomly selected (Scribbr, 2021). Thus, participants in this study were not randomly selected, their age was an important factor to choose them, besides, this quasi-experimental study considered it unethical to take students who were seven years old out of the study

because they are in the same third grade group, so it was decided to be a fairer study and apply the study to the whole group without excluding anyone.

3.2 Context

As explained in chapter I, this research took place in an elementary school called *Instituto Cuauhtemoc.* It is a private school which is located in *Santa Ana Xalmimilulco, Huejotzingo, Puebla.* The *Instituto Cuauhtemoc* is based on the *Secretaria de Educacion* (SEP) program. This school has kindergarten and elementary school. The classes for these two school levels are only given during the morning. The kindergarten level has 62 pupils, where 28 are females and 34 are males and there are 3 teachers. Also, the elementary school has 175 pupils, of which 89 are females and 86 are males and there are 6 teachers. It is important to point out that the participants know almost a basic level of English, so according to the CEFR, the student's English level is A1 considering that the story is in such language.

3.3 Participants

A group of students from this elementary school was chosen. The criteria to select these students were that they had basic English knowledge because they had already taken previous courses of EFL classes during the first and second grade of elementary school. These students were chosen because they have previous basic English knowledge, but they did not know specific weather vocabulary. Also, these participants are in third grade and they take English classes in the intermediate level of the school. Another criterion to select these students was their ages; some of them are eight years old. Typically students in third grade are eight years old. These students develop more

complex language skills; they improve pronunciation, reading skills become more advanced, they realize that some words have more than one meaning; they read because of the content, and they like to do it (GrowbyWebMD, 2021). There are students who are seven years old; these students were taken as participants for the study too. For ethical reasons, it was considered not to reject them. Scribbr (2021) states quasi-experimental study is chosen to be used for ethical and practical reasons.

Table 1 describes the participants, they are named by pseudonyms, The *X* indicates if they are girls or boys and next to their ages in each case; they are nine girls and six boys. There are fifteen in total. Five girls are eight years old and four girls are seven years old. Five boys are eight years old, and only one boy is seven years old.

Table 1: *Student´s Age and Gender*

Participants	Girl	Boy	Age
Aran	**x**		8
Emy	x		8
Josh	x		8
Karl	x		8
Sao	x		8
Avi	x		7
Gloi	x		7
Lili	x		7
Ren	x		7

Eli		x	8
Eze		x	8
Mik		x	8
San		x	8
Yos		x	8
Jua		x	7
Total = 15	**9 girls**	**6 boys**	

* There were three participants more who did not answer the post-test and the questionnaire, these participants are not in this table.

3.4 Description of the instruments

This study is designed based on the quasi-experimental method. This type of research is distinguished by having used four different instruments: a pre-test, a short story, a post-test and a questionnaire. It is important to mention that all these instruments were reviewed by expert professors of the faculty of languages of BUAP. Each one of the instruments is described in these sections.

3.4.1 Pre-test

The instrument used before the reading for this quasi-experimental research was the pre-test. "A pre-test can be used to refer to an initial measurement before an experimental treatment is administered and subsequent measurements are taken" (Insights Association, 2021, p.). To handle this measurement, the pre-test was designed as follows: it is written in the English language, it has a title *weather vocabulary,* and a subtitle *pre-test*. After this, there is a blank space where the students´ name is written by

the student, and next the instructions for the pre-test are written. Then, there is a list with the specific weather vocabulary labeled in parts from A to N, and next to this there is a table with different drawings and each one has a number from one to fourteen. Students have to match the parts from A to N to the numbers of each drawing as they think or know it corresponds. Burns (2009) gives pieces of advice to design resources and materials, to make these appropriate, easy and attractive for the participants. Taking this into account, the researcher added onto this pre-test worksheet drawings to catch students' attention. To see the pre-test, see appendix B.

3.4.2 Reading

The short story used to carry out this quasi-experimental study was *Ali and the magic carpet.* It was written by Sue Clarke in 2009 for kids from ages seven to eleven years old. This was selected from the British Council web page and as this is a short reading, it only has 181 words in total.

This reading is a popular story about different geographical locations and its weather. The short story is about a boy named Ali who goes to his uncle's shop and he finds a magic carpet, they fly to diverse places, and Ali experiences different weather in each one of the places where the magic carpet brought him. This short story was selected not only because it was written mainly for kids but for the specific weather vocabulary written in it as well. Such weather vocabulary taken from this short story was: hot, dry, freezing, snow, air, windy, raining, wet, lighting, thunder, storm, foggy and ice. All these words can be found written in it. To read the short story, see appendix A.

3.4.3 Post-test

After the application of the experiment, the short story with storytelling, a post-test was applied. A post-test is answered after some course, program or training to measure any changes or knowledge gained from it (Lexico, 2021). Having stated that, participants answered a post-test to measure the specific vocabulary learned. The post-test worksheet has a title called *weather vocabulary* and a subtitle *post-test*. Then, there is a part to write the student's name and age, and below it, there are the instructions which are in Spanish to make it easier for the participants. Following this, there is a list of the weather vocabulary from number one to fourteen. Next to the list there are pictures and a space under them. Participants have to write the vocabulary in the space under each one of the pictures. The pictures used in this test are different from the pre-test. To see the post-test, see Appendix C.

3.4.4 Questionnaire

One of the instruments utilized to carry out this study is a questionnaire. As McLeod (2018) states, "a questionnaire is a research instrument consisting of a series of questions for the purpose of gathering information from respondents" (SimplyPsychology, 2018, p.1). The purpose of this questionnaire is to provide evidence of what participants think about the reading skill and know their perceptions about the short story. This was designed to obtain attitudinal information about the participants' opinions, beliefs, interests and of course attitudes (Burns, 2009).

This questionnaire is in the Spanish language to make it easier and clearer for the young participants. The questionnaire includes specific instructions to tell participants what to

do. After that, there are nine items, from items one to four there are closed-ended questions in which students have to select one of the three options: yes/neutral/no. When the participants may not have an advanced English level or they are very young, these kinds of items are used to limit the choice of answers (Burns, 2009). In addition, questions numbered five to seven are guided items. With these kinds of items, participants select answers when researchers need concrete information (Burns, 2009). The answers are in a table with the specific weather vocabulary on it. Students have to select the words. In a similar way, question number eight is a guided item but this one has different options of answers in a table too. Finally, question number nine is an open item where students can write another opinion. In this kind of item, participants are free to answer what they want or feel; they are free to express any extra information (Burns, 2009). In this questionnaire there are emojis and drawings to make it friendly and attractive for the young participants. This questionnaire was used to ask students what they think about the short story and about the reading skill. This questionnaire can be seen on appendix D.

3.5 Overall research design

Firstly, it is important to mention this quasi-experimental study was carried out in four days. Two classes were given through e-learning and the other two were face to face classes. As the SEP ordered that students come back to schools by hybrid educational system on the 30th of August, 2021, this quasi-experimental study was adapted to this system and following health protocols.

The first EFL lesson was a face to face class. It was instructed by the teacher on the 13th of September, 2021. The first activity applied was to distribute the pre-test to the

selected participants; they took around fifteen to twenty minutes to answer it. After that, the teacher taught previous vocabulary related to the short story to make it easier to understand.

The second EFL lesson was through e-learning on the 14th of September, 2021, the platform used was Microsoft Teams. In this class, the teacher concentrated on teaching the specific weather vocabulary and started to use storytelling; in this platform the teacher could see that participants liked the storytelling because some of the young participants shared likes, hearts and claps.

The third EFL lesson was through e-learning as well on the 15th of September, 2021. Again, the activities were focused on studying the specific weather vocabulary, repetition of the weather vocabulary, reading, listening, writing and of course storytelling. At this time, the teacher noticed that students occasionally were disinterested, but she always tried to catch their attention by asking them questions using guesses or repetition.

The fourth EFL lesson was a face to face class on the 17th of September, 2021, where the students played a final game related to the specific vocabulary, then the post-test was distributed and participants answered it in about ten to fifteen minutes. As they were finishing, the teacher gave them the questionnaire. The teacher noticed their surprised or afraid expressions, most of the students thought the questionnaire was too long and some of them needed help to understand how to answer it. As there were some students who did not attend the last face to face class, they were not considered as

participants for this study because their post-tests and questionnaires were not answered.

3.6 Data Analysis

The data analysis used in this study was to look for the results of the use of a short story used with seven and eight year olds in the third grade of primary school in this quasi-experimental study. These three instruments, the pre and post tests and the questionnaire were analyzed as follows: First, the pre-test was used in order to know how much weather vocabulary participants know. Second, the post-test was given in order to know how much weather vocabulary participants learned when the experiment was performed during EFL classes through e-learning. The answers in the pre-test and post-test of each one of the participants had to be compared to obtain the results.

Besides the tests, the questionnaire was analyzed in different parts: the first part of the questionnaire was from question number one to four with the purpose of obtaining information about participants´ perceptions to learn weather vocabulary with the short story *Ali and the magic carpet*. The second part of the questionnaire was from question number five to nine. This second part had each question analyzed using a graph.

Question number five was made with the intention to know what words were learned for the students about the specific weather vocabulary. Question number six with the interest of recognizing which words were the easiest to learn for the participants. Question number seven with the intention of having information of which words were the most difficult to learn for the participants. Finally, the last part were questions eight and nine for the purpose of being informed about what were the participants' opinion

about the short story *Ali and the magic carpet*. To obtain and represent the results of the tests and questionnaire, tables and graphs will be presented in chapter IV "Results".

The kind of methodology and approach this study follows was decided to be a quasi-experimental study and its methodology is qualitative. The short story was an instrument designed for young students. There were four different instruments utilized in this study, but only the pre and post tests and the questionnaire are analyzed in Chapter III. Meanwhile, the short story was the instrument applied for the experiment. In the next chapter the results are presented in detail.

CHAPTER IV

Results

This chapter presents the results and findings of the data analysis in the process of this quasi-experimental study of the fifteen participants that were seven to eight years old. The instruments, a pre-test and a post-test were used in order to find to what extent students learned the weather vocabulary from the short story *Ali and the magic carpet* using storytelling; the questionnaire was used to gather evidence of what the perceptions of this short story are. This chapter discusses first the answers to the research questions. Then the discussion is presented; the chapter ends with a conclusion of the findings.

4.1 Obtained Results of the Pre-test and the Post-test.

This is a quasi-experimental study. The number of items in the pre-test and post-test tests were fourteen. The participant´s results from both tests are presented in table 2. The participants are named by pseudonyms.

Table 2: *Obtained Participant´s Results of the Pre-test and the Post-tests*

Participant	Girl	Boy	Age	Pre-test results	Post-test results
Aran	X		8	6	14
Emy	X		8	5	14
Josh	X		8	5	12

Karl	X		8	3	8
Sao	X		8	3	11
Avi	X		7	3	14
Gloi	X		7	1	1
Lili	X		7	0	2
Ren	X		7	3	12
Eli		X	8	4	14
Eze		X	8	2	1
Mik		X	8	1	10
San		X	8	0	6
Yos		X	8	3	2
Jua		X	7	1	5
Total=15	9 Girls	6 Boys			

Based on table 3, it can be noted that some students learned specific weather vocabulary from the short story *Ali and the magic carpet* as the post-test´s results of Aran, Emy, Avi, and Eli all had correct answers. Other good post-test results were obtained by Josh, Sao, Ren and Mik. Besides those participants, Karl, San, Jua and even Lili demonstrated that they learned a few vocabulary words. However, there was no vocabulary learning in some students, as in the cases of Glio, Eze and Yos who did not obtain good results. It is assumed that it could be due to many factors which caused such results. They probably learn with another kind of style or activities. If not, it was too difficult for them to comprehend the vocabulary, or maybe it was a lot of words to learn for those three

participants. Also, it was supposed that the young participants were not motivated enough to pay attention or it was complicated for them to learn through e-learning. For example, Erarslan & Topkaya (2017) claims, "although the success or failure of a student depends on various factors, students' efforts on language out of class is also another important factor in language learning" (p.82). In these cases, it is not certain what the exact causes were for why they did not learn any word or words from the short story but at least they liked it. They considered it fun or interesting and this is proved in their questionnaire's answers. Table 3 shows the words learned by each one of the participants according to the pre-test and post-test results.

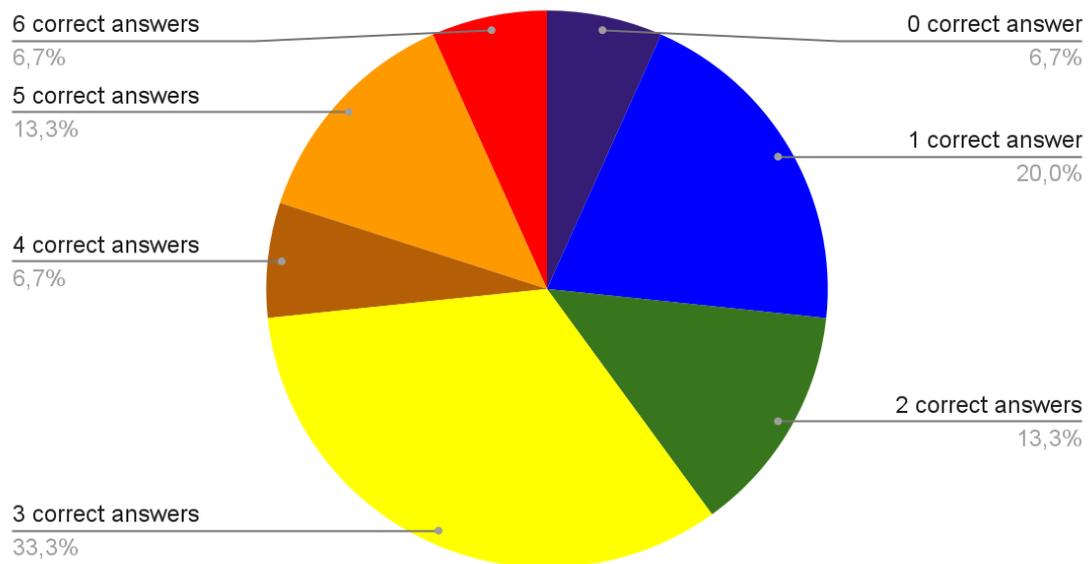**Table 3:** *Words Learned by each Participant According to the Results*

Participants	Pre-test results	Post-test results	Learned words
Aran	6	14	8
Emy	5	14	9
Josh	5	12	7
Karl	3	8	5
Sao	3	11	8
Avi	3	14	11
Gloi	1	1	0
Lili	0	2	2
Ren	3	12	9
Eli	4	14	10

Eze	2	1	0
Mik	1	10	9
San	0	6	6
Yos	3	2	0
Jua	1	5	4

As it can be seen, the words learned by the participants ranged from zero to eleven words, meaning that some students learned many new words while others did not learn any new ones at all. In the next graph (graph 1), it represents the participants' percentage according to the correct answers obtained by them in the pre-test.

Graph 1: *Pre-test Result by Percentages*

Graph 1: Pre-test results by percentages

6 correct answers 6,7%
5 correct answers 13,3%
4 correct answers 6,7%
3 correct answers 33,3%
0 correct answer 6,7%
1 correct answer 20,0%
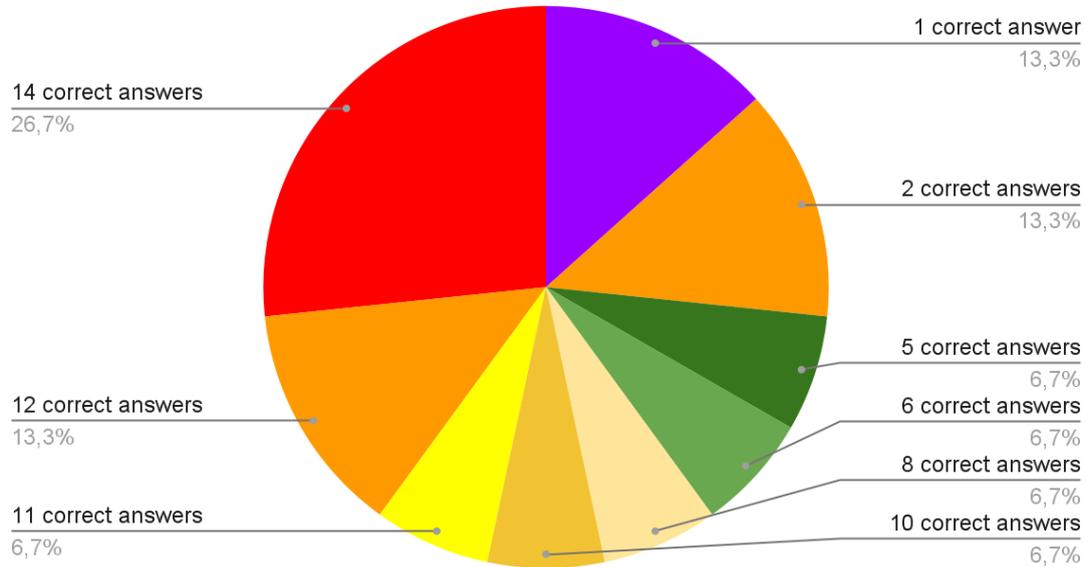2 correct answers 13,3%

The total items of the pretest were fourteen. The graph 1 only represents 6 items because it was the highest score obtained by the participants. Based on it, there was one

participant who obtained zero correct answers who represents 6.7%. Then, there were three participants who obtained one correct answer representing 20.0%. Next, there were two participants who obtained two correct answers who represent the 13,3%. After, there were five participants who obtained three correct answers representing 33.3%. Then, there was one participant who obtained four correct answers representing 6.7%. After, there were two participants who obtained five correct answers representing 13.3%. Lastly, there was one participant who obtained six correct answers representing the 6.7%. Observing this information, the participants did not know enough vocabulary about weather. Nevertheless, the researcher considers that some of the correct answers and words could have been obtained by the participants through guesses. It denotes that guessing is a strategy which students can practice by context or they may relate the words observing the pictures, moreover teachers can use this strategy in EFL classes as well. Graph 2 represents the participants' percentage based on their correct answers in the post-test.

Graph 2: Post-test results by percentages.

1 correct answer
13,3%

14 correct answers
26,7%

2 correct answers
13,3%

5 correct answers
6,7%

6 correct answers
6,7%

12 correct answers
13,3%

8 correct answers
6,7%

11 correct answers
6,7%

10 correct answers
6,7%

Observing this information, from graphs 1 and 2, the highest score obtained by the participants in the pre-test was 6.7% while the highest score in the post-test was 26.7%. On the other hand, the lowest score obtained by the participants in the pre-test was 6.7%, meanwhile, the lowest score obtained in the post-test was 13.3%. It means that even though there were students who did not demonstrate they learned vocabulary from the short story there were positive results in the majority of the participants. There were participants who learned all the weather vocabulary of the instrument used for the experiment that was the short story. Meanwhile, others learned some of such vocabulary, and others only a few of these. Last of all, there were participants who did not learn any of the specific weather vocabulary.

4.2 Obtained Results of Questionnaire.

In this section the results of the questionnaire are presented. The objective of the first part of the questionnaire was to have an idea about student's perceptions of the short story to learn weather vocabulary. In this first part, there are closed-ended questions from one to four where participants had three options to select: yes, neutral or not. These questions are represented with their results in graph 3 and table 4.

Table 4: *Questions One to Four in the Questionnaire First Part*

Question	Yes	Neutral	No
1.-Did you like the short story?	15		
2.-Was it easy to understand the short story?	12	2	
3.-Was the short story helpful to learn new weather vocabulary?	10	4	1
4.-If you read the short story again, would you remember the weather vocabulary?	12	1	2

* In question number two; one of the participants did not answer this question. He was not added to the table only for this question.

Graph 3: *Questionnaire First Part*
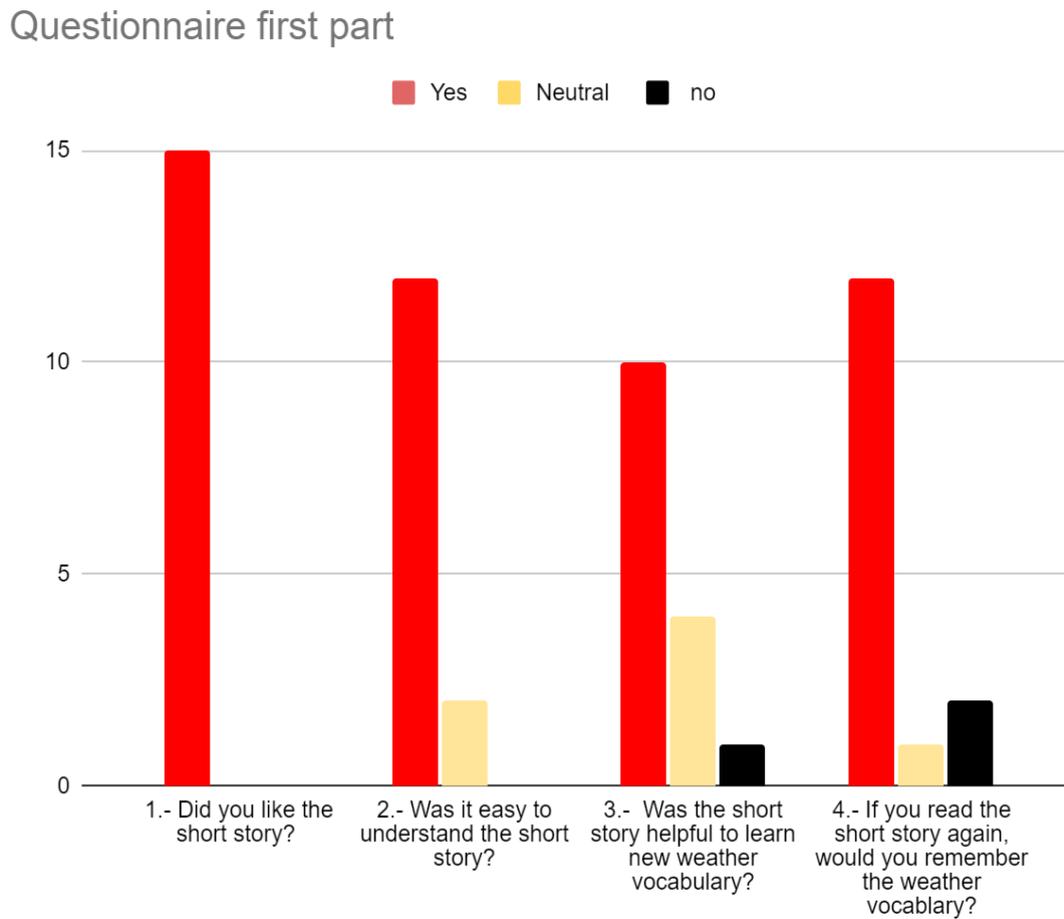
Graph 3 represents whether participants like the short story, if they perceive it as easy or not, if it was helpful to learn weather vocabulary and in case they read this short story would they remember the vocabulary. As the results showed, all the fifteen participants liked the short story. For the second question, twelve participants thought it was easy to understand the reading but two participants marked neutral. In this particular question one participant did not answer the question so he was not added on the table for that question. For the third question, ten participants thought it was helpful to learn weather vocabulary, four participants marked neutral and one participant answered not. For the fourth question twelve participants marked that if they would read again the story they

would remember the weather vocabulary, but one participant marked neutral and two participants marked not. As it was noticed, all participants had a positive opinion about the short story since all of them answered they liked it. Most of them the reading was easy and helpful to learn weather vocabulary and only a minority do not think it was easy and helpful. The participant´s results from question five are shown in graph 4

Graph 4: *Words learned by students*

Learned words by students
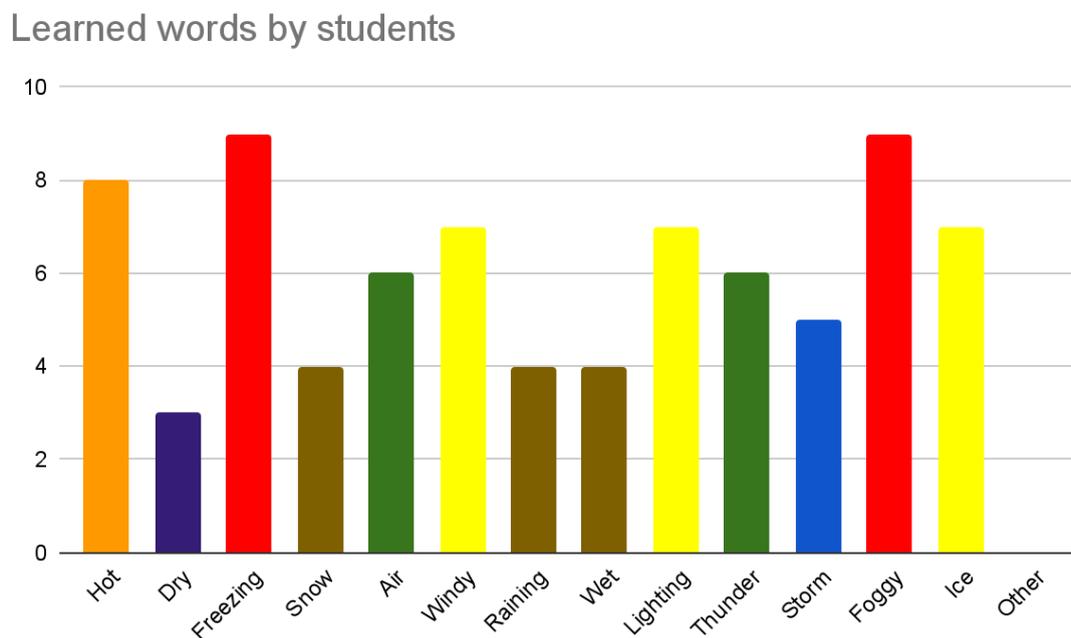
As the graph results showed *freezing* and *foggy* were the words which students obtained better results. There were nine students who marked these words as learned. After these, *hot* was another word which students considered they learned better and it was marked by eight students. Then, the words *windy*, *lighting* and *ice* were marked in each one of the questionnaires by seven participants. Next, *air* and *thunder* were marked by six of the participants. After, the word *storm* was marked by five participants. Then, *snow,*

raining and *wet* were marked by four participants. Lastly, *dry* was only marked for three participants. The results of the sixth question (which were the easiest words to learn about the weather vocabulary in the short story Ali and the magic carpet?) are presented in graph 5.

Graph 5: *Easy words to learn for students*

Easy words to learn for students
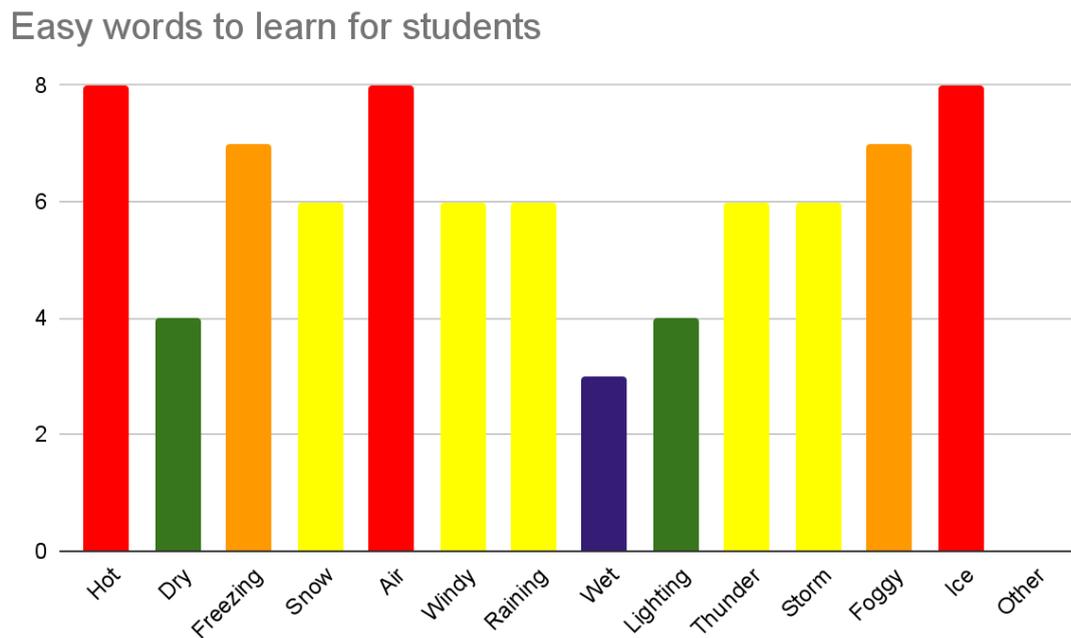
It can be observed in the graph that the words *hot, air* and *ice* were the easiest words to learn for the students, each one of these words were chosen by eight participants. Then, the words *freezing* and *foggy* were selected by seven students. After that, the words *snow*, *windy*, *raining*, *thunder* and *storm* were selected by six students. Next, the words *dry* and *lightning* were marked by four students. At last the word *wet* was selected by three students. Only to mention none of the students marked or wrote any word in the *other*. These results are discussed in the next sections of this chapter.

As the participants already marked that they learned weather vocabulary, they marked which words were the most difficult for them to learn in the question number seven that was: which were the most difficult words to learn about the weather vocabulary for the short story *Ali and the magic carpet*? Such words are presented in the next graph 6.

Graph 6: *Difficult words to learn for students*

Difficult words to learn for students
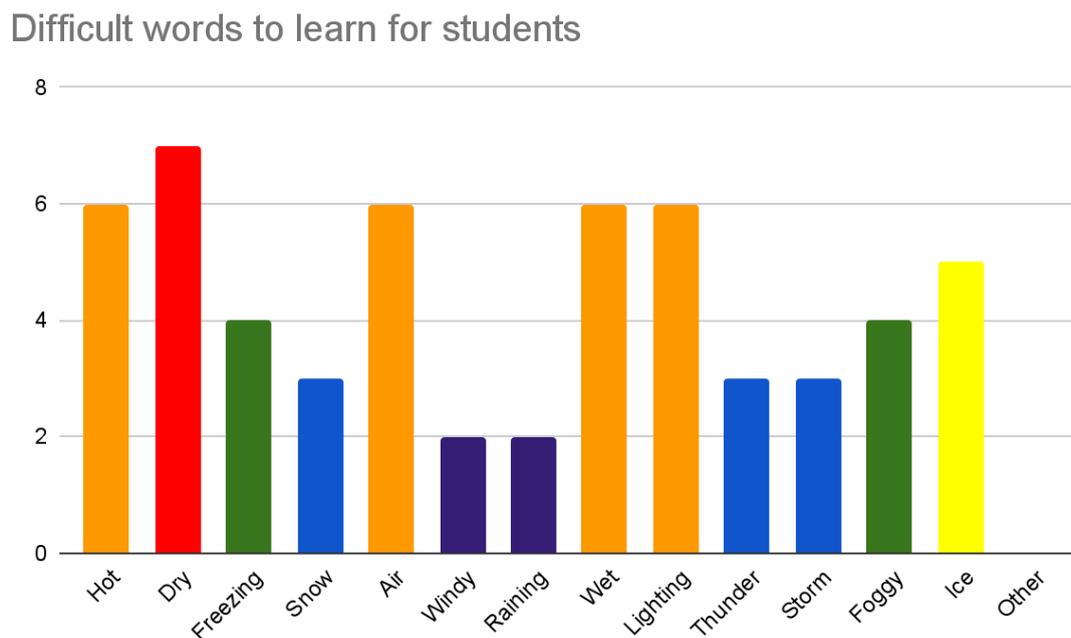
In general, the word *dry* was the most marked by the students, since seven of them selected it. Then the words *hot*, *air*, *wet* and *lightning* were considered difficult to learn by six of the participants. Subsequently, the word *ice* was difficult for five participants. The words *freezing* and *foggy* were marked for four students. Meanwhile the words *snow*, *thunder* and *storm* were marked by three students. Finally the words *windy* and *raining* were selected by two students. No one else wrote something in *other*.

The next graph, number 7, presents the last part of the questionnaire that involved the question number eight: What do you think about the short story *Ali and the magic*

carpet? The last part that was an open question, other comments. These questions were designed in order to know a bit more about what students believe about the short story. The results are presented as follows.

Graph 7: *Students´thoughts about the short story*

Students´ thoughts about the short story
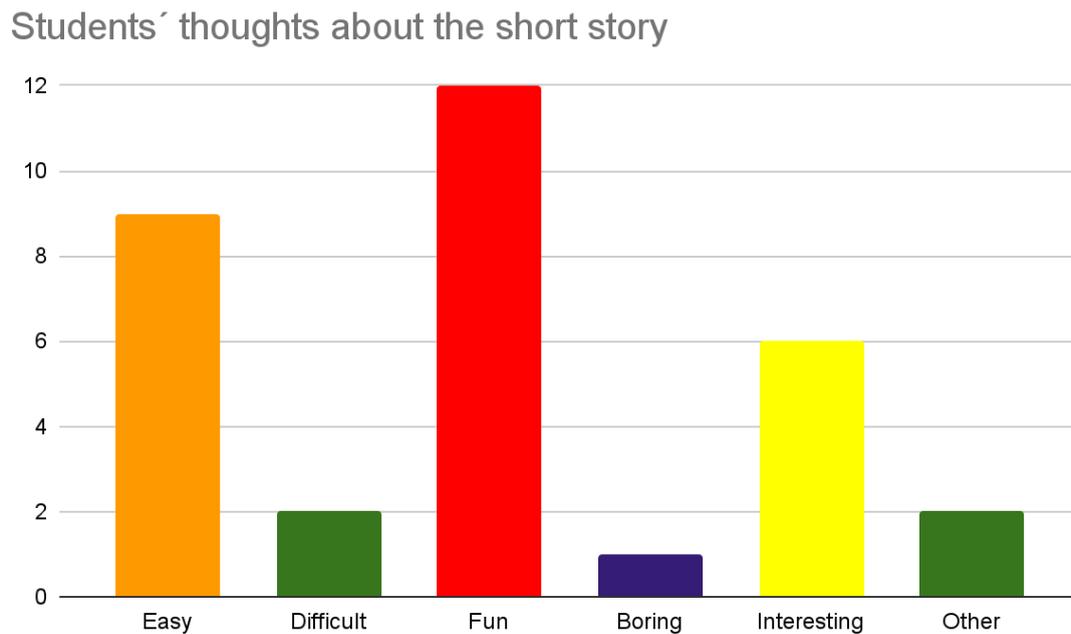
Twelve participants found the story *fun*, then nine participants selected the option *easy*. Only six students marked the alternative *interesting*. Two students prefer to select the option *difficult*. Only one student selected the option *boring*, but, in the last part one student wrote *fantastic*, and another one wrote *entertaining*. These two last words showed that students had a good experience during the weather vocabulary learning with the short story as these two words´meaning were interpreted as positive reactions about the short story.

Foggy and *freezing* were the words which students learned better. One possible answer was because when the experiment was applied the weather those days were as such and

it became meaningful learning for the participants. Also, the researcher observed that the easiest words to learn for participants are short words of one salable, as in the case of the words, *hot*, *air* and *ice*. Meanwhile the word *dry* was the least learned by the participants. It may be caused by the material used during the classes. For this particular word, there was only one flashcard to teach it; it was referring to both words "*dry*" and "*hot*". The researcher considered that the material was not appropriate for them because those words have almost the same meaning, and when the teacher showed it they immediately connected it with the words *hot* instead of *dry*. This could have confused students and the teacher did not teach this word very well. Another alternative could be that students were afraid to ask their doubts, but there is no certainty as to why these words were easier to learn. Based on these results, the answers to the research questions and the discussion are presented in the next section.

4.3 Research Questions' Answers

Based on the results. These are the main findings of the present research. The results answer each of the research questions.

Based on the previous information, the difference between the highest scores concerning the pre-test is 6.7% which represents one student who obtained six correct answers, and the post-test is 26.7% which represents four students who obtained all fourteen correct answers. The difference is 20.0%. This means many students comprehended the main aim of this research that was to examine if the short story *Ali and the magic carpet* was useful to learn weather vocabulary. Such students demonstrated that this short story was useful to learn such specific vocabulary. As Ceylan (2016) resumes: Generally, the use of short stories and literature has numerous

advantages in lexical competence and syntactic knowledge in EFL learning; since reading is taught or done for self- pleasure, it contributes not only to acquire more vocabulary but also students use the words they already know. Moreover, this contributes to listening comprehension; as well as an increase in students' interest, motivation and reading appreciation. Meanwhile, Wang & Zhan (2010) summarized the advantages of using storytelling through e-learning in education, which involves young EFL learners in the process of learning, supporting students in writing processes, reading fluency and vocabulary acquisition in a meaningful way; it is a favorable instructional strategy which brings positive effects to young EFL learners. Fortunately, most of the participants reflected the benefits of storytelling through e-learning and multimodal materials used to carry out the process of the experiment used in this quasi-experimental study.

Unfortunately, there were not totally positive results in the post-test after the application of the experiment. The lowest score obtained in the pre-test was 6.7% which represents one student who obtained zero correct answers. However, the lowest score in the post-test was 13.3% which represents two students who obtained only one correct answer in their tests, and observing table 3, one student obtained only one correct answer in both tests while the other student obtained two correct answers in the pre-test and only one correct answer in his post-test. Also, a different participant obtained three correct answers in his pre-test and only two correct answers in his post-test. Based upon this, they did not learn any word about the specific vocabulary from this experiment. It may be caused because of many circumstances; Hamra (2010) found students face different difficulties in EFL learning with any kind of text in the English language for

many reasons: lack of motivation and interest, lack of vocabulary or language knowledge, lack of learning support or lack of the application of reading strategies (p.34). Taking these reasons into account, the researcher reflected that maybe the support for these three students was decadent or the strategies were not good enough to have meaningful learning. Mahyoob (2020) argues that another factor could be that the teacher's teaching style did not match with their learning style (p.355). During the process of the experiment of this quasi-experimental study, the participants took two classes through e-learning. Also, Mahyoob (2020) shared the success or failure in e-learning of a student depends on how e-learning can benefit or affect the process of learning English (p.127). That is to say, in this case the strategies and methods were the correct ones to teach the short story and using them through e-learning had a positive or negative effect in the learning in some students to learn the specific weather vocabulary. Apart from this, it is possible that the students did not connect with the story, they did not like it, or they did not understand it. Saka (2014) recognized that there are students who believe that in general, literature is unnecessary, boring, and difficult to understand. These students believe that they cannot understand the text. Teachers who want to practice the reading skill in EFL classes face these kinds of circumstances (p.279-278). Reflecting on the investigation, the researcher believed it was a lot of vocabulary to learn for some young students. Pourhosein (2016) says, for certain students and readers there are particular difficulties in EFL. They are not able to keep in his/her memory the meaning of every word or it is not possible to connect one word to the other words in a text (p.232). Even though the participants and the teacher desired they learn all the vocabulary, perhaps it is not possible for their style of learning. Another important factor is as Erarslan & Topkaya (2017) say, "although the success or failure of a student

depends on various factors, students' efforts on language out of class is also another important factor in language learning" (p.82). It is noticed that in spite of the fact that two of these participants are eight years old, they did not learn any word of the specific weather vocabulary. Perhaps they were not interested in learning the specific vocabulary or simply they were not able to learn it

Research Question 2: What are the participants` perceptions about the chosen short story *Ali and the Magic Carpet* to learn *weather* vocabulary through reading?

Following this, the answer for research number two is discussed starting with the analysis to obtain results about students´ perceptions surrounding reading English in EFL classes and storytelling specifically for the short story *Ali and the Magic Carpet,* results showed that:

1) All of the fifteen participants liked the short story *Ali and the magic carpet.*

2) Twelve of the participants found the short story easy to understand while two other participants had a neutral experience understanding the short story and storytelling.

3) Fortunately, for ten of the participants the use of the short story *Ali and the magic carpet* was helpful to learn specific weather vocabulary. Following them, four other participants found it neutral and only one student selected the option "no". This particular participant did not find the short story helpful to learn specific weather vocabulary.

4) Twelve of the participants believed that if they read the short story, they would remember the specific weather vocabulary in it. One of the participants found it as

neutral and two other participants noted that they would not remember such specific weather vocabulary in it.

The results of the questionnaire further showed that 80% of the students considered this experiment as fun, 40% considered it as interesting, and 100% of the students gave positive responses in relation to their perception about the reading skill as an enjoyable practice in EFL classes. This means that although some students did not learn the specific weather vocabulary from the short story, they liked and enjoyed the narration of the short story. Ceylan (2016) says that basically the majority of the students of EFL perceive short stories as interesting materials and for self-enjoyment in the learning of all language skills (p.312). Short stories are naturally enjoyable for young students. For that reason, 80% of the participants found the short story easy to understand and 13.3% perceived it as neutral. Saka (2014) supports short stories as the easiest material to introduce literature to the students because they are easy to understand (p.280). This kind of material is very helpful to develop EFL knowledge for young students. Naturally, "vocabulary is one of the most important parts of language acquisition" (Al-Dersi, 2013, p.75). 67% of the students perceived the short story *Ali and the magic carpet* helpful to learn specific weather vocabulary; meanwhile, 27% chose it as neutral and only 6% did not find it helpful to learn weather vocabulary. Adding to this, Siyabi (2017) argues, the different situations in a short story are easy to compile in students´ minds and can be significant for later conversations because stories are easy to memorize and remember (p.166). Having stated that, 80% of the young participants believed they would remember the specific weather vocabulary in the short story if they read it again, 6% said they might remember it, and 14% said they would not remember

the specific weather vocabulary in the case they read the short story another time. With this, the researcher found that there were students who did not obtain the benefits of the storytelling to learn the specific weather vocabulary in the short story. In spite of the fact that they had a good experience, the qualitative data obtained by the students´ questionnaires indicated that the young pupils enjoyed the experiment. It may provide them a new learning experience in their EFL learning. As Al-Dersi (2013) says "success of any methodology, strategy or material used depends on the nature of the material and perceptions of EFL learners towards that methodology, strategy and material" (p.72).

4.4 Discussion

The results have shown that the short story selected was useful for students to learn specific vocabulary but not for all of them. After analyzing the results and the questionnaires of the students who did not obtain good results in the post test, it was noticed that they were the one who found the short story difficult or boring. Also these are the students who show a disinterest in classes, or they were difficult to manage as students, they were distracted or very shy personalities or they show a low competency in the language. One of the participants who had zero learned words in the experiment selected in the questionnaire about the perceptions of the choices: easy, difficult, fun and bored. It is noticed the perceptions this student had were contradictory. Perhaps the material used and the strategies were not correct to teach EFL in such students in spite of the material being designed with multimodal aspects. Even if not all participants achieved the intended outcome of this quasi-experimental study, they had a positive perception about the short story and the reading skill considering that all of them liked the short story, and they found it easy and fun. After obtaining the results in the

instruments, the researcher mostly focused on the participants who did not obtain a good score, although they were a minority, and something that obviously caused the unsuccessful result were the students' attitudes. As Erarslan & Topkaya (2017) affirmed, the learners attitude is a strong factor which benefits and impacts in the success of the students own EFL learning (p.83).

This chapter described the approach and methodology used to carry out this research, the tables and graphs were explained. In conclusion, as short stories, storytelling and reading activities are very helpful; it is not enough for some students. The data obtained was helpful to see if the short story works for teachers to teach weather vocabulary and also for students to learn such vocabulary.

As mentioned before, some students obtained more right answers in the pre-test than the post-test. Something remarkable was that the students who did not show the desirable results were the ones who had difficulties learning. In other words, these students learn in a different manner, as all children are intelligent in different areas. It is important to find the right method, strategies and activities to teach English to children, even specific vocabulary. Another relevant fact was that all participants liked the short story. In the next chapter the results are presented in detail.

CHAPTER V

Conclusion

This chapter presents the conclusion of this quasi-experimental study. It presents its main highlights of the research, followed by the limitations of the study identified throughout the development of this work and suggestions for further research upon the reflection of the whole work. Finally the conclusion closes the investigation.

5.1 Research contributions

This quasi-experimental study contributes to advising teachers in the micro context how to manage storytelling or the use of short stories material through e-learning, to implement storytelling as a strategy to teach reading skill in EFL as well as to teach vocabulary or maybe grammar. Short stories and storytelling bring many different advantages in EFL, and practicing these activities in classes for young students may assist teachers to realize that these make the reading skill easy to carry out in teaching and it is pleasant for all students. Furthermore, these activities go well in teaching reading skills through E-learning. As in the results obtained by the study of Erarslan & Topkaya (2017), the majority of the participants, 61% of them, did not have difficulties in the reading activities managed through E-learning while the minority, 12.7%, had difficulties with this skill. Their analysis showed that learners had positive attitudes towards reading activities in contrast to other skills in the cases of writing or listening in the E-learning course. The researchers concluded students had complications in the writing and listening skill, but they had positive and beneficial learning towards the reading skill through E-learning. It is of course noticed that it is not useful for 100% of

all students, but for teachers it works to catch the students´ attention and students are acquiring vocabulary. In addition, the reading skill is a positive exercise that students may practice in the pandemic time and teachers may motivate students to practice it with short stories and storytelling in the EFL classes through E-learning. So, the experiment for this quasi-experimental study had the use of only one short story; teachers may use different readings in their classes to offer students significant learning considering that students start learning from an early age.

5.2 Limitations of the study

There are several limitations in this study. A limitation was that at the beginning of the study, all classes were e-learned but there were two classes given face to face. Also, the research design was planned for students of eight years old, but for ethics we took students of seven years old as participants. In addition, the equipment in the school was not adequate since some cables were missing to project slides. In spite of the fact that the short story was designed to learn weather vocabulary, the researcher considers there are missing other basic words such as: sunny, cold, cloudy, to give some examples.

5.3 Suggestions for further research

This study suggests studying the kind or style of learning in each one of the participants to plan the project according to their necessities or learning style to have better results. Other suggestions, students may participate in storytelling or practice it. For future researchers, their objectives select very carefully their participants. Or maybe to apply this research with students of different ages or levels and prove other results. Future

research could try to learn EFL vocabulary learning with other kinds of literature, such as short stories or formal tests.

5.4 Reflection

Through the experience of carrying out this quasi-experimental study to teach specific vocabulary with the short story selected, it was noticed that the storytelling was very helpful to catch students´ attention in every moment.

Apart from this, the researcher noticed that the students´ attitude to learn EFL is another important factor to have a successful learning while using any other strategy or method to teach. Thinking about it, the researcher considers that teachers have to pay attention all the time supporting, helping and assisting students. This is because a teacher´s challenge is to recognize what happened to students about their feelings, emotions, thoughts, and notice what they need. Also, teachers in this particular context have to be well prepared because at any moment the education system can change and they have to adapt activities, strategies and methods according to what they face.

5.5 Conclusion

The purpose of the story was to improve reading strategies in order for all students to gain EFL learning during their lessons. With teacher motivation, patience and dedication students find significant learning in EFL. This research concludes that the narration of short stories is a really good strategy to teach the reading skill, it involves other skills and it is very useful to teach vocabulary. Also, teachers can teach whenever they want or need with the use of storytelling. Pathan (2018) argues that the use of short stories is one of the best methods in EFL teaching, "short stories can create miracles not

only in the development of language skill" but also in many other areas (p.39). It obtained good results in the intended outcome of this quasi-experimental study, at the same time it was discovered that it was not effective for all students. From this, another question was born for the researcher: why did these students not learn any word of the specific weather vocabulary from the chosen short story? For this question, the researcher also concludes that the success or failure in the learning of any student is caused by various factors and one of the issues came from the environment at home. Xie & Zhuodan (2020) say students may fail to learn for many factors and one of the main factors is the family conditions of students (p.539). Having stated that, teachers cannot exactly know what happens at home and it may be affecting students' learning. For this, teachers should encourage the habit of reading, not only through e-learning, also face to face classes expectantly students gain the habit of reading which brings many positive aspects to their own life; motivating students to read not only in their mother tongue, as well as in the foreign language.

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Appendix A

Ali and the magic carpet *Short story*

One very hot day Ali finds a carpet in his uncle's shop. 'What's this?'

Suddenly the carpet jumps! It moves and flies off into the air. 'Hey! What's happening?'

A loud booming voice comes from the carpet. 'Welcome, O master. I am a magic carpet.'

First they fly high up into the sky and then they land in a jungle. It is hot and wet and it's raining. 'It's raining! Yuck!'

Then they fly to the desert. It is very, very hot and dry. 'It is very, very hot today!'

After that they fly to the South Pole. There is lots of ice and snow. It's freezing. 'Brrr!'

'Where are we now? I can't see!' 'In the mountains. Can you see me?' 'It's very foggy.'

Then they fly to a forest. It's very windy there. 'Oh, it's windy in the forest!'

Then they fly to an island in the sea. There is thunder and lightning. 'Aaagh! Let's go home!' 'What a storm!'

Finally they fly back home. The carpet lands in the shop and Ali gets off. 'Wow! What an adventure!'

By Sue Clarke.

Appendix B

Pre-test

WEATHER VOCABULARTY

POST-TEST

Student´s name: _____ Age: _____

Instrucciones: Escribe debajo de cada imagen el tipo de clima que le corresponde.

1) 1) It's a hot day
2) 2) It's foggy
3) 3) It's windy
4) 4) It's a lightning
5) 5) It's freezing
6) 6) It's hot
7) 7) It's raining
8) 8) It's a thunder
9) It's dry and hot
9) 10) It's the snow
10) 11) It's the air
11) 12) It's wet
12) 13) It's a storm
13) 14) It's ice

Appendix D

Questionnaire

NOMBRE:_____

Instrucciones: lee las preguntas y selecciona una respuesta.

QUESTIONNARIE
"Ali and the Magic Carpet"

1) ¿Te gusto el cuento corto *Ali and the magic carpet*?

SI 😊   Neutral 😐   No 🙁

2) ¿Fue fácil entender el cuento corto *Ali and the magic carpet*?

SI 😊   Neutral 😐   No 🙁

3) ¿El cuento corto *Ali and the magic carpet* te ayudo a aprender nuevo vocabulario sobre el Clima?

SI 😊   Neutral 😐   No 🙁

4) ¿Si tu leyeras nuevamente el cuento corto *Ali and the magic carpet* te recordarias el vocabulario sobre el clima?

SI 😊   Neutral 😐   No 🙁

5) ¿Qué palabras aprendiste del vocabulario de clima en el cuento corto *Ali and the magic carpet*? (Colore las palabras que aprendiste)

Hot	Freezing	Air	Raining	Lighting	Storm	Ice	
Dry	Snow	Windy	Wet	Thunder	Foggy	Otro:	

6) ¿Qué palabras fueron más fáciles de aprender sobre el clima en el cuento corto *Ali and the magic carpet*? (Colorea la o las palabras que fue más fácil para ti)

Hot	Freezing	Air	Raining	Lighting	Storm	Ice	
Dry	Snow	Windy	Wet	Thunder	Foggy	Otro:	

7) ¿Qué palabras fueron más difíciles de aprender sobre el vocabulario de clima en el cuento corto *Ali and the magic carpet*? (Colorea la o las palabras que fue más difícil de aprender para ti)

Hot	Freezing	Air	Raining	Lighting	Storm	Ice	
Dry	Snow	Windy	Wet	Thunder	Foggy	Otro:	

8) ¿Qué piensas del cuento corto *Ali and the magic carpet*? (puedes colorear más de una opción)

Fácil 😌	divertido 😆	Interesante 🤔
Difícil 😫	Aburrido 😴	Otro:

9) Otros comentarios:_____
_____
_____

GRACIAS 😊