

**UNIVERSITY OF EL SALVADOR
SCHOOL OF ARTS AND SCIENCES
FOREIGN LANGUAGE DEPARTMENT**



“The Use of Digital Resources from the Commercial Series *Breakthrough* Intro as a Way to Improve English Language Learning of Students of Journalism Registered in Intensive English I, semester I, 2019 at the University of El Salvador”

PRESENTED BY:

Jeimy Karina Cruz Merino	CM12112
Brenda Marisela Vigil Vigil	VV14018
Veronica Marcela Mendoza Padilla	MP13023

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ADVISOR

MsE. Miguel Ángel Carranza Campos

Main Campus, September 11th, 2019

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COORDINATOR OF THE GRADUATION PROCESS

MSD. MIGUEL ÁNGEL CARRANZA CAMPOS

ADVISOR

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Introduction

Communication is indispensable for everyone; it is as essential as water for plants and seeds to grow. Nowadays, in the period of globalization the way people communicate has extremely changed all around the world. Although in our country English is not official language, we can easily find advertisements, articles and sometimes important news reported in English. It means that no matter where we are, foreign languages can literally knock at doors. According to the Journalist Poonam Vaydia (March,2017), in her article Why a Journalist Should Know Good English explains that a Journalist should know English as a need to build better communication models and reach out the entire world because English has become an international language. In few words, English nowadays is a useful tool for everybody in order to communicate with others no matter our profession. However, in the case of journalists, English has become an indispensable tool not only because of their daily action with different people around the world but also because of their need to access and understand first source information from around the world in order to inform without unintentionally misunderstands of the information they want to spread.

According to Professor Rodriguez de Carranza (2019), in the current year, at the Journalism Department in the University of El Salvador there are (60) students registered in Intensive English I. According to the registration system in the last five years, 32% of the students have failed English I one or two semesters before. As a

result, it emerges a concern because of the importance that English has in their professional world in order to succeed.

In order to address this problem, *the Breakthrough Book* will implement a digital resource in order to give students the opportunity to put into practice what they are learning inside the classroom. The main objective of this research is to analyze the impact of using an educational digital resource for learning English to students registered in Intensive English I this current semester.

Chapter I

1.1 Research Topic: “The Use of Digital Resources from the Commercial Series *Breakthrough* Intro as a Way to Improve English Language Learning of Students of Journalism Registered in Intensive English I, semester I, 2019 at the University of El Salvador”

1.2 Statement Of The Problem

For long time English, has been a useful language around the world. As time goes by, this language has spread everywhere in different countries, cultures and people. Nowadays many schools and universities are in charge of incorporating English in the academic programs, because institutions know that people require many abilities in a globalized world.

Because of the importance of English language, new strategies and techniques are searched constantly in order to facilitate learning and teaching process of this language. A clear example of this is the incorporation of technology as a pedagogical tool thus creating new educational strategies.

According to the book “The Practice of English Language Teaching, (2001)” by Jeremy Harmer, digital programs for teaching languages give the students the opportunity of practicing conversations and readings, doing grammar and vocabulary exercises and also listening to authentic audios and to even record their voices. Therefore, technology usefulness and the degree of motivation for students are undeniable.

The research will take place at The University of El Salvador, specifically in the Journalism Department with students from semester I registered in Intensive English I. This course, gives students the opportunity to learn general and basic structures to communicate in English as a foreign language; students develop the ability to read, write and speak; likewise, grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation will be an implicit part of every topic of the semester.

The methodological strategy in this course requires constant practice of the language to promote the use among students. The classes are delivered completely in English. Students will increase oral skills through practices in pairs or small groups. Each week classes will be reinforced with the use of visual, audios resources and other types of tasks the teachers will determine. Furthermore, outside the classroom students will work with an online platform of the commercial series: Breakthrough, which will be graded as part of the evaluation system.

In the last five years English Intensive I, in the Journalism Department has reported 32% of academic failure in the course (according to Professor Rodriguez de Carranza, 2019). Additionally, it is also observed that some students in the English courses offered in the Journalism Department have registered this course in second, third and even fourth matriculation. These problems have not been addressed and continue affecting students in their improvement of their English Language Learning and also their academic hopes and aspirations.

1.3 Research Questions

General Question:

- ✓ What is the impact the Breakthrough intro educational digital resources has on the English language learning of students registered in Intensive English I at the Journalism Department, semester I, 2019, at the University of El Salvador?

Specific Questions:

- ✓ How do students respond to the use of educational digital resources from the *Breakthrough intro series*?
- ✓ What are the advantages and disadvantages of *Breakthrough* educational digital resources for students?
- ✓ Do students improve their final grade through their work with the digital resources?

1.4 Objectives:

General Objective:

- . To analyze the impact of educational digital resources of the book *Breakthrough intro*, on the English language learning of students registered in Intensive English I at the Journalism Department in the University of El Salvador.

Specific Objectives:

- To investigate what the advantages and disadvantages of using educational digital resources are for students and professors.
- To determine how educational digital resources impact students in their English language learning.
- To determine students improvement of their grades through the use of Digital Resources of the book BT Intro.

1.5 Rationale:

According to Professor Rodriguez de Carranza (2010), in her article: Why Should journalist know the English Language, she explains the importance of English for journalists "because of the technological and cultural display that the same phenomenon brings". Information in English is considered the main source of the news, many news in mass media are written and delivered in this language. Furthermore, this language is one of the language most used in internet the same as scientific and educational information. At the same time, breakthroughs and programs to edit videos, photographs and audios are first carried out in developed countries where English is spoken as a result journalists cannot avoid the contact with this language in their professional field.

In the last five years, at the Journalism Department, it has been perceived a high percentage of academic failure of students in the English courses. This situation contrast with what it is expected on the importance of the command of English Language has for Journalists. A high percentage of failure of such important subject means a situation that needs to be solved finding the adequate manner in order to help students to learn more and better, but at the same time to give them the chance to put into practice all the content to reach the communicative level that is required as a Journalist.

In order to analyze the impact of educational digital resources of the book *Breakthrough intro*, on the English language learning of students registered in Intensive English I at Journalism Department, this research will be carried out. This

research is intended to investigate the advantages and disadvantages of using educational digital resources, for students registered in group I. At the same time, researchers are going to describe how students respond to the use of this type of digital tool to support their learning process of this beautiful but, somehow puzzle Language.

For the research team, the term Digital Resources is used to refer to all resources that can be read and scanned by means of electronic media.

1.6 Delimitation of the Problem:

In order to carry out this research, the team decided to observe group 3 of Intensive English I, at the Journalism Department, University of El Salvador, semester 1, 2019.

Chapter II

Theoretical Framework

2.1 Historical Background

The use of computers for educational purposes is not a new phenomenon. In the 70's promoters of this claimed that it would transform and save education (Lockard & Abrams, 1994). The late 1980's saw a growing change towards computer integration which emphasized the curriculum not the tool. Its proponents felt that students would learn new skills as they need them in order to make the computer work for them. However, nowadays computers are view more as a partner as opposed to a competitor and could be treated in a more natural manner (Lockard & Abrams, 1994). The 1990's saw a focus on increasing the use of computer and technologies in the classroom.

Teaching has been changing through time in our society. Today where the use of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) is demanded. ICT has become as a block for building modern societies and modern teaching strategies yet it is necessary to prepare students for the information age since todays' students will spend their learning process in a very dynamic technological environment (Mbwesa, 2003). Observers and proponents of ICT suggest that the increasingly use of technologies would continue to the extent that technological literacy nowadays is a basic functional requirement not only for our work, social and personal lives.

In order to have a better understanding of the researcher's study purpose key terms such as: Information Communication Technology, digital resources, blended learning; educational platforms are define in this research.

2.2 Information Communication Technology

There are many definitions given to the term ICT. This term is defined as a diverse set of tools and resources used to communicate, create, disseminate, store and manage information. It is a term used to refer to any communication device, radio, television, cell phones, network hardware as well as videos and tools such as platforms or digital resources. In other words, they are tools that can be used to improve the learning process in an interesting way that catches students' attention in order to facilitate the acquirement of a foreign language through exposure. According to Khan et al. (2015) information technology refers to technologies that provide access to information through communications and applications.

2.2.1 Advantages of ICT in education

Using ICTs in the classroom can provide several advantages not only for learners but also for teachers. For example, ICTs have several advantages ranging from facilitating exposure to authentic language by providing access to wider sources of information. It enhances development of learners' autonomy and creates avenue for learners to get information and communicate easily with their teachers and classmates.

In the case of teachers, through the use of computers they can have the opportunity to help students with particular needs (Samantha et al. 2004). Besides,

through ICT, teachers are also able to create interactive classes and make the lessons more enjoyable which would improve student's attendance and concentration (Stephen, 2015). In addition, teachers can effectively solve problems such as inattentive students, disruptive students and enrich the learning process of visual learners through the use of a variety of ICT materials such as pictures and videos. As a result, students' interest arouses in the learning process and at the same time teachers can have more productive lessons by including interesting material.

Through the use of ICT audiovisual materials, students get involved in the lesson because this type of material is more enjoyable. ICT help students to have good retention since they are motivated by what they see and hear. Furthermore, ICT is a tool that students can use to search for extra information and extra exposure related to the content that is being received from the course. Through the use of digital resources such as educational platforms or digital resources students' academic achievement may have a positive impact since they are able to practice as much as students want.

2.2.2 Disadvantages of ICT for education in Third World Countries

According to Loveless (1996) there are some barriers associated with ICT integration that fall within the physical realm and beyond the direct control of the teacher. The use of ICT in education is not new. However, some teachers (in third world countries) do not have adequate skills to use ICT effectively in the process of teaching-learning. According to Beggs (2000) one of the three top barriers to

teachers' use of ICT in teaching students was the lack of training. In addition, Al-Oteawi (2002) added that the lack of technological competences is the main barrier to accept and adapt ICT in the classroom. Also, using ICT inside and outside the classroom needs a budget which in third world country can be perceived as expensive since these countries are not capable of affording for these educational tools. Commonly, problems such as not having technological devices in public schools and the training required to run on this methodology as a result it illustrate a different reality from those countries where ICT where used long time ago. In addition, some learners are not used to running technology to achieve academic goals as a result some of them may not feel as interested in working on platforms or digital resources as expected.

2.3 Classification of different types of ICT tools used for educational purposes

Information and Communication Technology consists of various tools and systems that can be used by a teacher who wants to improve teaching-learning process. This tools and applications can be integrated in teaching and learning (Melor Md Yunus, Lubis and Lin, 2009) as a strategy to facilitate the learning process. Some of these are:

- **Applications:**

Christenson (2008) defines an application, or application program as a software program that runs in a computer. He remarks that web browsers, e-mail programs, word processors, games and utilities are all applications. The word application is

employed because the users can utilize them as they need. In addition, applications can be chosen to be installed and used. It is important to recognize the difference between system software because it consists of programs that work together. Some examples of these are: assemblers, compilers, file management tools and the operating system. Furthermore, system software is installed automatically with the operating system.

There are different types of applications, these include:

a) Web app: this type of app is stored on a remote server and it is delivered over the Internet through a web browser interface in order to run on.

b) Native mobile app: it has been created for use on a particular platform or device such as a cellphone it is coded in a specific programming language. In addition, some of these do not need Internet connection to be run because they are created for specific platforms.

c) Hybrid app: this type of application combines elements of native and web applications. Commonly, these apps are used in mobile computing.

d) Killer app: a program that unintentionally gets you to buy the system the application runs on for example some games require a console to run on.

e) Legacy app: it has been inherited from languages, platforms and techniques earlier than the current technology.

- **Learning Platforms:**

Platforms nowadays are more than just a server working on a computer to be run. Platforms are being used not only in business field but also for educational purposes. The term learning platforms is used to refer to all those platforms that enable students to construct learning process through a collaborative learning since teacher is not only delivering information but also gives the chance to students to learn at their own pace, to clarify doubts, to increase curiosity and improve ICT skills. Furthermore it gives benefits to teachers. For example, they can put resources online, program activities and notify students about them, asses and monitor individual progress, increase their ICT competences. Defined by Timeless Learning Technology (2016) a learning platform is an integrated set of interactive online services that provides the teacher, learners, parents and others involved in education with information, tools and resources to support and enhance educational delivery and management.

According to Heidi Auvinen (2017) in her article Platforms for education and learning there are two topics under analysis related to educational platforms. On one hand, e-learning platforms used as a learning tool in formal education are analyzed. These platforms have been adopted by some schools and universities to manage their curriculums, to share learning materials with students assign homework, to support distance education or to complement traditional classroom in formal education rather than replacing it. On the other hand, online education resources and degrees to support fully online education are also analyzed. She

explains that in contrast to e-learning, online education typically offer open courses for all enabling worldwide attendance, and targeting mainly adults.

- **Moodle Platform:**

According to Christensson (2018) the word Moodle is an acronym for Modular Object-Oriented Dynamic Learning Environment. It is an on-line educational platform that provides custom learning environments for students. Moodle platform is a free platform that teachers can use in order to set up a course web, teachers have the possibility to administrate and choose between a wiki that students can or use a private web forum for online discussion, teachers can create quizzes on line, and students can have a chat room between their classmates and teacher to be communicated. In addition, this platform allows teachers to create online activities for their students for example: students can have access to various resources for oral production via online courses in this platform, store materials for them, and manage their students' grades.

- **Digital Resources:**

Digital resources are those materials that require computer access whether through laptops, notebooks or a mobile device such as cell phones and tablets. They can be divided in two classifications: multimedia resources, it consists of audio visual materials and interactive resources which are used to stimulate the user. Some examples of digital resources are: Digital Versatile Discs (DVDs) websites, CDROM, virtual libraries, e-books, PDF documents, videos, etc. Digital

Resources are used to vary the learning experience through the use of accurate and comprehensive materials that learner may get interested and motivated.

- **Blogs:**

The word blog is a short for web log. According to Christensson (2006) this term refers to a list of journal entries posted on a web page. Nowadays, blogs are being used to write confidential writings to share their feelings and experiences with a lot of people all over the world. In addition, these are updated daily or monthly. Furthermore, Blogs are asynchronous collaborative tools that allow anybody to express their ideas and thoughts and share them with the rest of the world. Blogs can be undeniable source of expressing in which teachers and students can share and exchange data and content in a whole environment of participation and collaboration. Ferdig and Trammel (2004) contend that blogs are more conducive to improve student and teacher relationships, active learning, and higher order of thinking and greater flexibility in teaching- learning process.

Likewise, according to Ray (2006), blogs in education can be used to communicate, as instructional resources as collaborative tools, and showcases for student projects. For example, teachers van post tips, explanations, or samples to help students to learn. As an electronic bulletin board, a Blog provides a fast efficient means of communication. It can be easily used to post class announcement for parents or providing schedule reminders for students.

2.4 Teaching Strategies Mixed with ICT to Facilitate Teaching-Learning Process

- **Computer-Mediated Communication**

This term refers to situations as diverse as communicating through the use of a computer to send emails, make video calls, and send audios across the Internet. Computer-Mediated Communication nowadays is being used in many courses to keep in constant contact with a group of students. This type of communication can be used both informally through chats or forums between students to discuss the last class or previous classes and formally with the tutor of the course in order to send emails to clarify questions or ask for their course material. Integrating this type of communication can be a great tool to use in groups where the number of students limits teacher to pay personal attention to students.

- **Virtual Learning Environment**

A virtual learning environment is an online system comprising a range of tools to support and manage learning (Jisc, 2010). Virtual learning environment is the term used to refer to all those tools used to support learning from the virtual world such as platforms online, digital resources in CDs or on line, Apps, forums, quizzes online, videos, and those. According to Green, Brown, and Robinson (2008) virtual learning environment are those courses in which software packages allow an instructor to deliver portions of a course or even an entire course via a web-based environment.

- **The Role of Virtual Learning Environment in Language Teaching**

The role of virtual learning environment is to support instructions by allowing teachers to select and use different resources and applications to review the content that is being received inside the classroom. This environment allows teachers to create online support and enroll students of languages to practice by themselves. In conclusion, the role of virtual learning environment is to merely support students' language learning through the use of exposure and practice of the language that they are learning.

- **Blended Learning**

The term blended learning originated in the business world in connection with corporate training (Sharma and Barrett, 2007) in this field it refers to a situation where an employee can continue working full time and simultaneously take a training course through a web-based platform and paper-based manuals. Then, it was applied in high education (Macdonald, 2006) as a self-study tool for students. Blended learning in the Digital Age has become more used not only in high level education but also in language teaching and learning in order to combine a face to face classroom with the appropriate use of technological resources to support students' enhancement and practice of the language that is being learned.

The term blended learning "is nothing new" (Claypole, 2003); however, as it was born in the corporate training and then introduced to the academic field in high level education as in the university level many claim that the term blended learning is not a term easy to define (Kerres and Witt, 2013; Oliver and Trigwell 2005;

Sharpe et al. 2006; Sharma and Barret,2007). According to Stracke (2007) the term used before was hybrid or mixed learning. On the other hand, Shepard (2005) explains that the correct term was e-learning. As an attempt to differentiate some of these terms by using percentages in order to give an exact definition to this term Smith and Kurthen (2007) created taxonomy of terms related to blending learning. See table 1.

Table 1: Taxonomy of terms related to blended learning (Smith and Kurthen 2007, in Gruba and Hinkelman 2012:4)

Term	Definition
Web-enhanced	Subjects that make use of minimal amount of online materials, such as posting a syllabus and class announcements.
Blended	Subjects that utilize some significant online activities in otherwise face to face learning, but less than 45 percent.
Hybrid	Subjects in which online activities replace 45-80 per cent of face to face class meetings.
Fully online	Subjects in which 80 per cent or more of learning materials are conducted online.

- **Advantages of Blended Learning**

Blended learning can greatly influence the motivation of learners because they may perceive the use of this type of resources as helpful. In addition, with technology nowadays many learners prefer using their computers, laptops, cell phones or tablets in order to solve multimedia exercises rather than solving a

paper-based exercise. Interactive exercises also add a variety to language courses because it provides them a chance to review language in a different way.

According to Singh and Reed (2001) there are four benefits to using blended learning solution, those are: improvement of learning effectiveness; extending the reach; optimize development of cost and time; optimize business results since it reduces travel costs and learning objectives are obtained in less time. Sharma and Barrett (2007) in addition to cost saving emphasizes the convenience of this type of learning because learners can study when they want. Students are allowed to be able to evaluate their progress, organize their time and choose the materials in which they want to work at their own pace.

Blended learning can be a tool in order to overcome those problems faced in overcrowded classes referring to the language teaching field Marsh et al. (2003) mention the use of blended learning to improve the teaching of large groups. Students may feel more confident by having extra exposure to the language through listening task or reading comprehension exercises whenever they need. As a result, learners can take advantage of studying independently and produce writing or tasks inside the classroom.

- **Disadvantages of Blended Learning**

The digital divide is one of blended learning disadvantage since not all schools are able to access to internet and computers only some schools are able to afford for this type of teaching. As a result, not all students are familiar with ICTs. According to Haggis T (2006) if students are unfamiliar with the process that this discipline of

learning requires they will not be able to accomplish institutional expectations and argues that it is necessary a little discussion with students about what is expected while using blended learning to have better outcomes.

In addition to unfamiliarity to this type of teaching, the cost seems to be another disadvantage. Unfortunately, the costs of books that include digital resources are not as affordable as they are in other countries since they are not much demanded their price exceed as a result students are not able to buy them.

Furthermore, defining teacher and technology roles are seem as a huge problem that occurs when a teacher wants to integrate into the new form of teaching that ICT's demand. Teachers that started to teach before the digital age may argue that technology will use the role of the teacher if blended learning is included as a new way of teaching. However, for those who started in the digital age may easily recognize how helpful technology may be to enhance students through exposure to the language and to what extent the guide of teacher and communication with their classmates is necessary. As a result, it is important to recognize the role of both teacher and technology if not blended learning will not be as significant tool as it has to be. Blended learning is integrated in language learning to help teacher to support their role no to play the teacher's role.

- **Description of the Book Breakthrough Intro and its Digital Resources**

Macmillan Education is a Publisher on English Language Teaching Materials. It is a company that operates in over 40 countries; one of them is El Salvador.

Macmillan has a lot of series of books; one of them is Breakthrough Plus. This series is divided in four books; the first is the Breakthrough Plus Intro, and this is the book the research will focus on. It introduces new English learning students to contents such as: greetings, life style, the family, different sports, food, vacation activities. Furthermore, this series offers students digital resources in order to support students' learning.

The book Breakthrough Plus Intro is composed of twelve units. It is developed from the basic topics, for example in unit number one students learn about greetings, these are topics that introduce students to English Language. In contrast unit twelve is about vacations where more complex vocabulary and grammar structures are necessary. Each unit starts with a warm-up, where topics are introduced by using pictures that motivate students to get engaged with the lesson that will be developed. The second part is a conversation where students listen to, read, and focus on the language. In the Third part students learn the new vocabulary that will be needed throughout the unit. In the fourth part students work in writing and listening skills, through a conversation where they have to fill in the blanks. Then in the fifth part, students have to work in pairs in order to make a conversation with vocabulary they use before. At the end of each unit there is a section called Expansion where extra exercises are presented in order students reinforce their knowledge. Every three units there is a review with activities and games that help students to enrich their English Language Learning. At the end of the twelve units, the book concludes with a series of sections. One of them is: "Communications Activities", where students can find exercises focused on speaking and writing

skills. In these activities students have to work in pairs because all exercises are divided in students A and B. “Grammar Reference” is another section which is basically a brief explanation of grammatical structures of each unit.

Digital resources accompany the textbook. In order to have access to these resources, students have to buy an original Macmillan Breakthrough Intro Plus textbook, which has a unique code that makes students access Macmillan platforms. Students have to make a profile with their email and create a user name and a password. These digital resources contain students’ book on line. It means that students can access online all the multimedia material and exercises that are in the book. Furthermore, the digital resources include extra practice section where students can develop different exercises related to grammar, vocabulary, speaking, listening, and reading. Also, it includes two tests where students can check their own learning progress. The exercises in the digital resources have an evaluation system that presents to students their errors and successes, graded from 0% to 100%.

An extra benefit that the digital resources offer is that the teacher was able to upload extra material like documents, videos and audios. The teacher also communicates with students through messages in order to give them instructions and feedback. In addition, in these digital resources students were capable of communicating among them.

The grammar sections of the digital resources include an extra explanation about all grammatical structures of each unit of the book. To enrich writing, the digital

resources present to students extra exercises with guides like clue words, grammar structures and examples in order to facilitate students' writing. Students were able to access to the audios of the textbook, as well.

Chapter III

3.1 Research Methodology:

a) Type of Study

For purposes of our study the non-experimental approach will be used. This is contingent to the nature of this research. The researchers cannot control, manipulate or alter the predictor variable or subjects, but instead, relies on interpretation, observation or interactions to come to a conclusion. Typically, this means the non-experimental researcher must rely on correlations, surveys or case studies, and cannot demonstrate a true cause-and-effect relationship. Non-experimental research tends to have a high level of external validity, meaning it can be generalized to a larger population.

b) Type of Approach

The type of research that is going to be used in this study is a mixed design. The mixed design involves qualitative and quantitative research used at the same time. The purpose of this design is to combine both methodologies because of its strengths in order to obtain complementary data about the same research problem. Qualitative researchers aim to gather an in-depth understanding of human behavior and the reasons that lead such behavior. The discipline investigates the “why” and “how” of decision making. Besides, the researchers will also examine the phenomenon through interviews and surveys. The results of qualitative research are descriptive rather than predictive.

On the other hand, the *necessity* to use statistics will lead this research make the study part of a quantitative research. Many characteristics are naturally numeric in nature (such as years of education, age, income, failure in a subject); for these numeric variables, the numbers used to measure the difference between students' results of years before when the platform was not used are meaningful in order to analyze the advantages and disadvantages this new methodology used at the Journalism Department will represent not only for teacher but also for students English learning.

c) Research Design

The current research to be used is descriptive. This methodology will be adopted to describe and analyze the information collected via the interviews and surveys. The interpretive framework used is going to be pragmatism since the main objective of this study is to analyze the impact of an educational platform, from the *Breakthrough series*, for English language learning. In order to determine how an educational platform helps student in their academic learning.

d) Research Instruments

The researchers will use different techniques such as, monitoring the use of the digital platform, surveys and interviews.

3.2 Population and Sample:

A. Population: The current research was done in the Journalism Department of the University of El Salvador, semester I-2019, San Salvador, El Salvador. The population was students from Journalism major registered in Intensive English I course, group 3.

B. Sample: The sampling technique is non-probabilistic. It is not a product of a randomized selection processes. Subjects in a non-probability sample are usually selected on the basis of their accessibility or by the purposive personal judgment of the researcher.

The method of non-probability sampling applied in this research was convenience sampling. It means that the sample was selected because of its accessibility to the researcher. That is why the convenience sampling was taken from the students who are taking Intensive English I, group 3; where there are 58 students.

Chapter IV

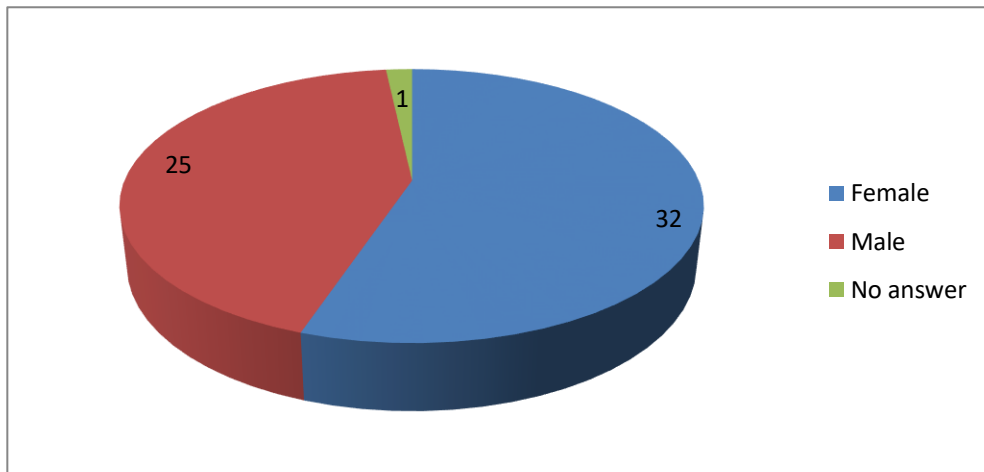
Data Analysis

4.1 Instrumental Analysis:

Personal Information

(Table 1)

Genre	Number
Female	32
Male	25
No answer	1
Total: 58	



(Graph 1)

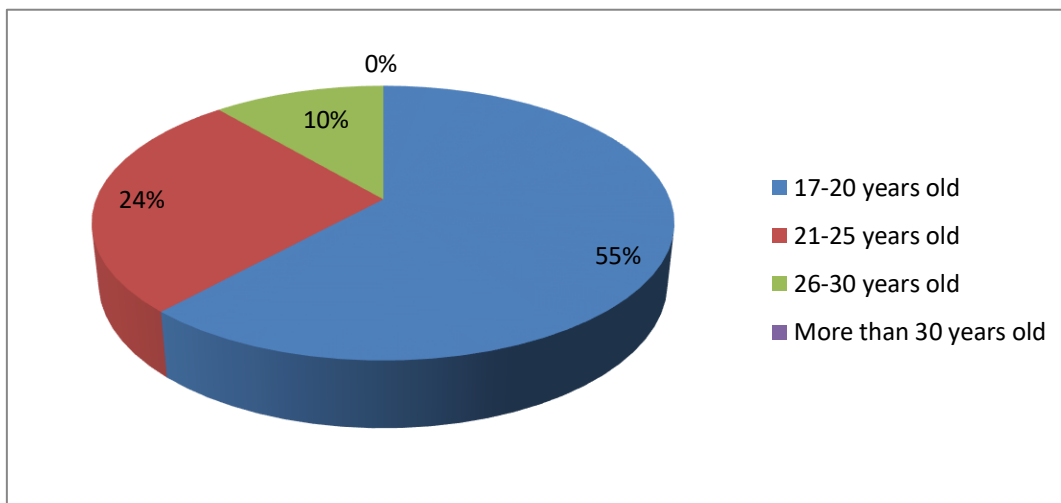
This graph represents the population interviewed in Intensive English I, group 3, where there are 58 students. 55% of them are female and 43% are male and 1% did not answer the question. In the sample, there are 12% more of women to men students.

Question 2:

(Table 2)

Ages	Number
17-20 years	32
21-25 years	20
26-30 years	6
Older than 30 years	0
	Total: 58

(Graph 2)



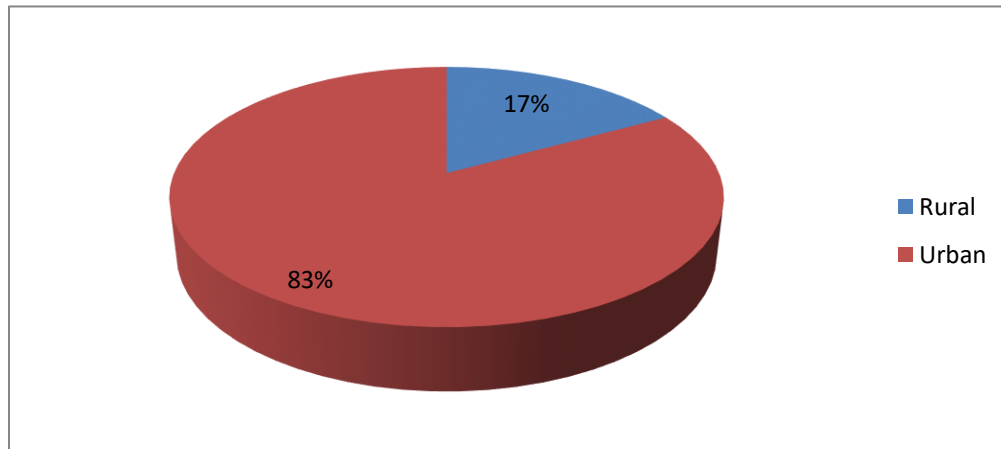
This graph illustrates the results obtained from students of Intensive English I, regarding their age, 55% percent are in a range of 17 to 20 years old. 24% are students between 21 to 25 years old, and just 10% of them are around 26 or 30 years old. Furthermore, we add another possible answer; it was older than 30 years old but no one selected this answer.

Question 3:

(Table 3)

Residence	Number
Urban	48
Rural	10
	Total: 58

(Graph 3)



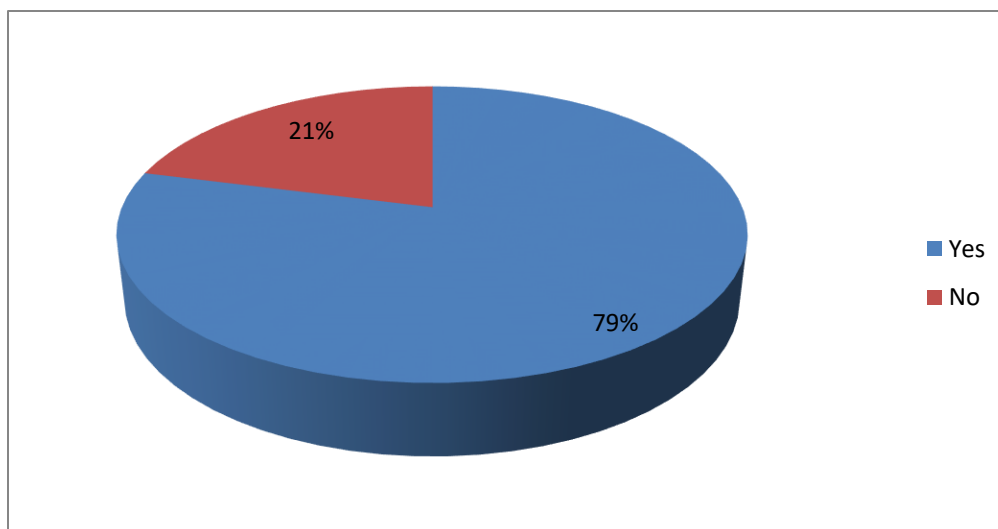
In order to investigate how easy it is for students to have access to internet we asked them if they lived in the urban or rural area. In this case, 83% belong to the urban area. In contrast, the 17% of them answered that they live in the rural area. It can be infer that in the rural area it could be more difficult to access to internet. On the other hand, in the urban area the availability to get connected to internet is easier.

Question 4:

(Table 4)

¿Do you have Access to internet in your house?	Number
Yes	46
No	12
	Total: 58

(Graph 4)



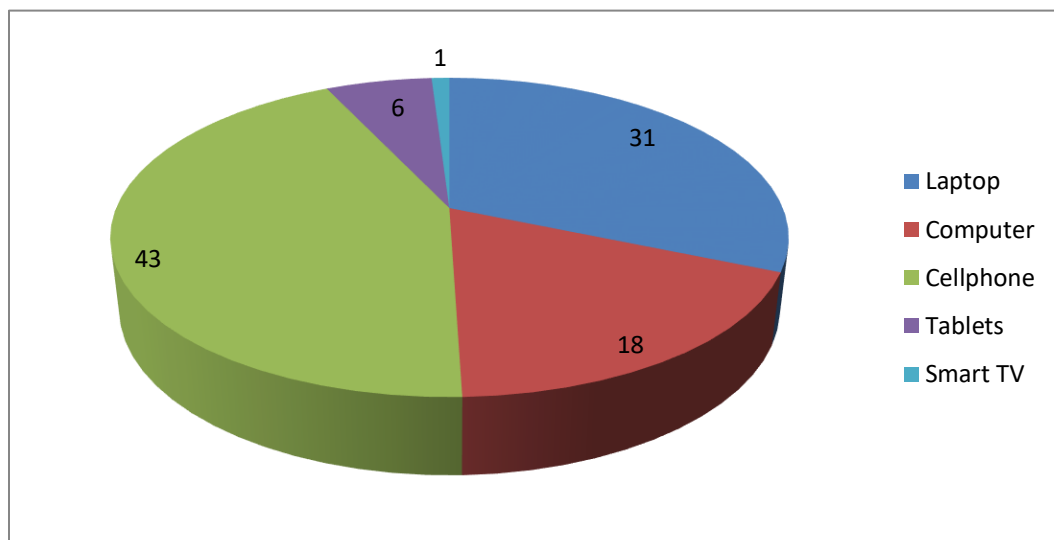
This graph represents the number of students who have access to internet in their houses. 79% of them said that they have access to internet. On the other hand, the 21% of them answered that they do not have access. Comparing the answers of question 3 we can affirm that students who live in the rural area have difficulties when trying to make use of internet when they are in their house.

Question 5:

(Table 5)

Which device do you use in order to surf in the internet?	Number
Laptop	31
Computer	18
Cellphone	43
Tablet	6
Others	Smart TV: 1

(Graph 5)



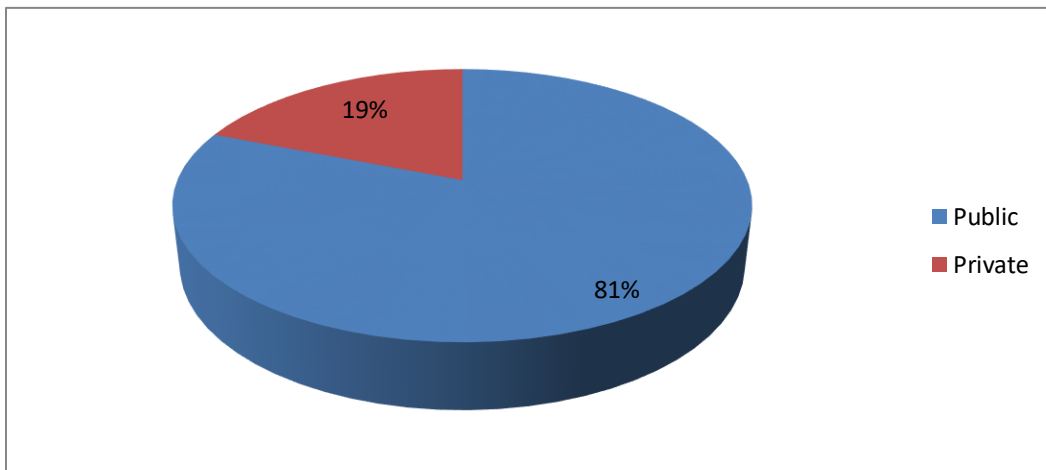
This graph shows that most of the students use their cellphones to have access to internet. 74% of them have a cellphone, where they can surf on internet. This device helps students to work on the digital resources. On the other hand student answered that is easier for them have access to internet since other devices, such as laptops, computers, tablets and smart TV's.

Question 6:

(Table 6)

What kind of high school did you graduate from?	Number
Public	47
Private	11
	Total: 58

(Graph 6)



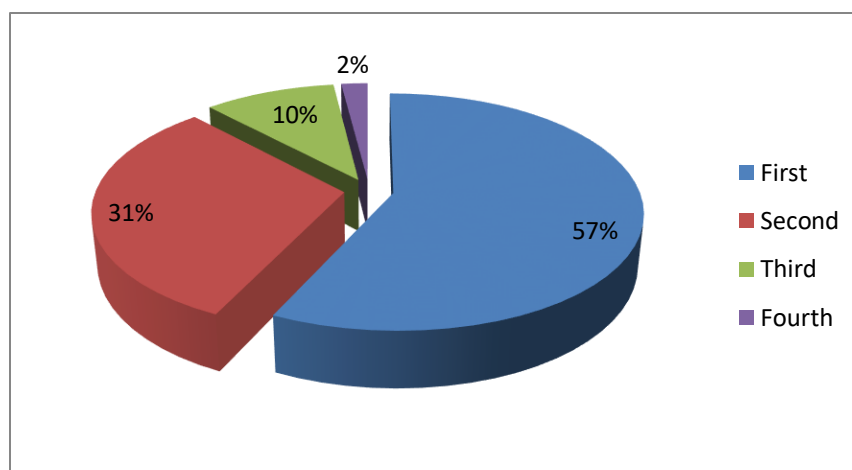
As an attempt to investigate if students had a base in English Language, we asked them where they graduated from. In our country, is common that in public schools English is taught since seventh grade. In contrast, some private schools emphasize English since kinder garden. It was find out that 81% of the students answered that they graduated from public school and only 19% of the students affirm that they graduated from a private school.

Question 7

(Table 7)

Are you taking your English course for the first time, second, third or fourth time?	Number
First	33
Second	18
Third	6
Fourth	1
	Total: 58

(Graph 7)



This graph shows the number of times students have failed Intensive English I. According to our research 32% of Journalism students failed English, in order to investigate how many times students have failed Intensive English I, we asked them in which matriculation they are taking the course. As a result we got that only 1% of students joined the course for the fourth time. In addition, 10% of them are taking Intensive English I for the third time and 31% have failed the course once this means that this is the second time they took it. 57% of students have taken it for the first time. We can conclude that the 43% of students have failed Intensive English I

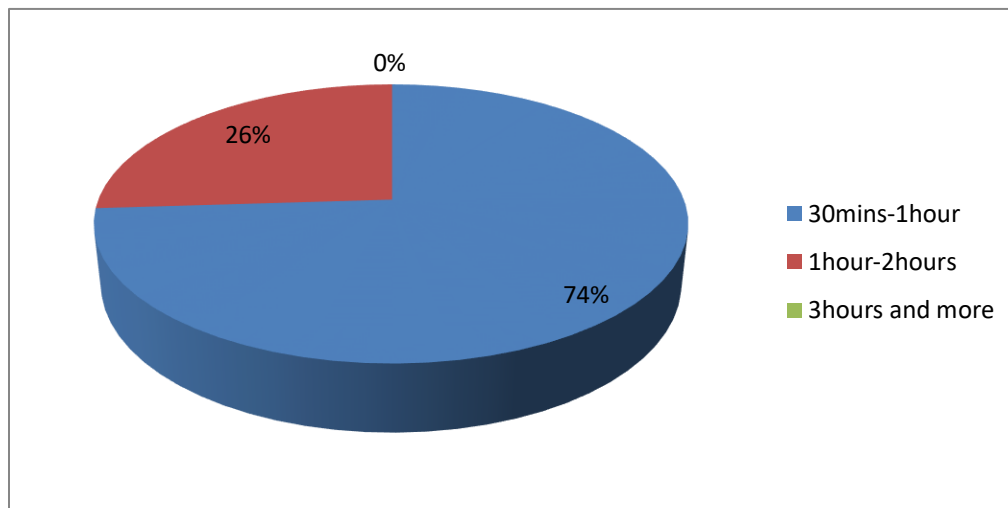
1.4.1 Specific Information:

Question 9:

(Table 9)

Approximately, How much time do you dedicate/practice in the digital resources of the book BT?	Number
30mins- 1 hour	43
1hour-2 hours	14
3 hours and more	0
	Total: 57

(Graph 9)



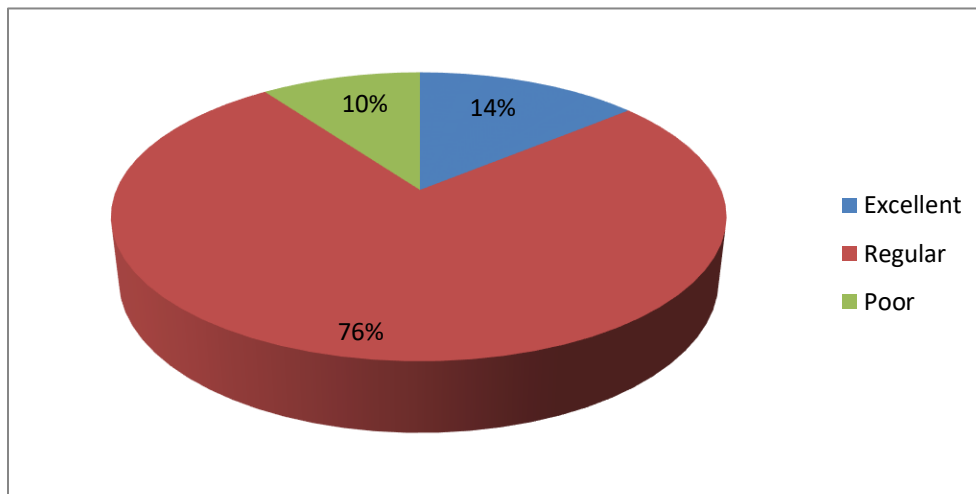
It was find out that most of the students do not spend much time practicing in the digital resources; 75% of them just practice/dedicate an average to 30 minutes to one hour only. Other 25% work in the digital resources more than an hour.

Question 10:

(Table 10)

How do you evaluate your learning based on the digital resources of the book BT?	Number
Excellent	8
Regular	44
Poor	5
	Total: 57

(Graph 10)



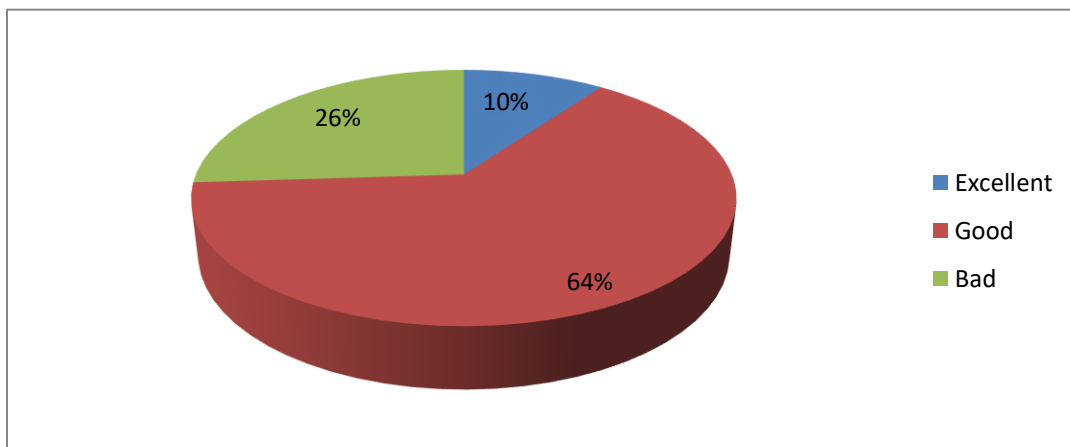
According to the results, 76% of students evaluate their learning through digital resources as regular. In addition 14% of them consider that their learning has been excellent and only a 10% answered that the impact that the digital resources had on them was poor.

Question 11:

(Table 11)

In your opinion, how do you evaluate the access and use of the digital resources of the book BT?	Number
Excellent	6
Good	37
Bad	15
	Total: 58

(Graph 11)



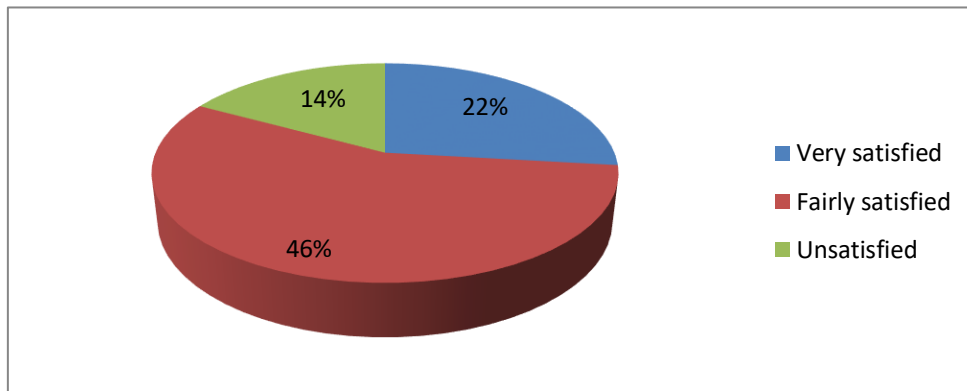
According to their answers, only 10% of the students evaluate the access and use of the digital resources as excellent and 64% considered it as good. On the other hand, only 26% of students answered that the access and use of the digital resources are bad.

Question 12:

(Table 12)

How satisfied are you with the digital resources of the book BT?	Number
Very satisfied	13
Fairly satisfied	27
A little satisfied	10
Unsatisfied	8
	Total: 58

(Graph 12)



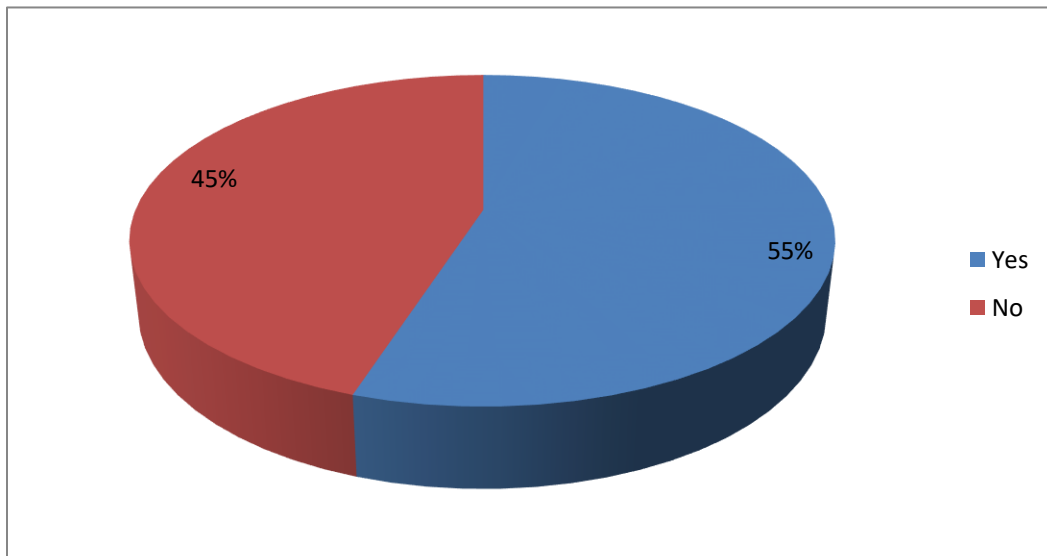
Almost 69% of the students answered that they are satisfied with the digital resources; on the contrary 31% of the students are unsatisfied because of the different problems they faced. Students answered that they have some difficulties with the password or the e-mail they registered, other said that the access to internet is limited for them.

Question 13:

(Table 13)

Have you face difficulties to access to the digital resources of the book BT?	Number
Yes	32
No	26
	Total:58

(Graph 13)

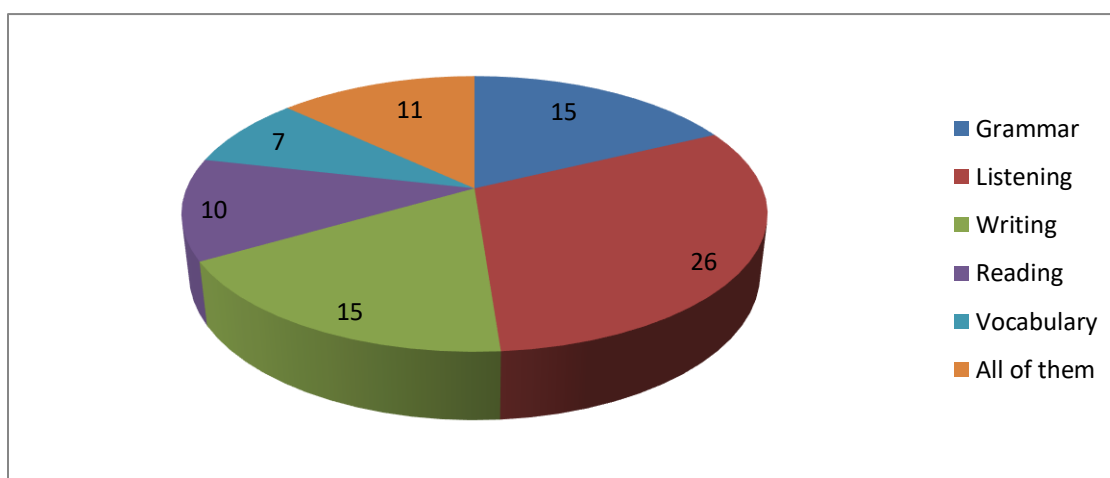


55% of students of Intensive English I answered that they had several difficulties at the time to access to the digital resources of the book BT. On the other hand, 45% reported that they did not have any problem with the access. Some of the difficulties that they have faced were: problems with the password and the email, they could not access through the cellphone and some of them were not able to enter to the digital resources because of the lack to internet access.

Question 14:

(Table 14)

According to you, what kind of exercises has contributed the most in your learning process?	Number
Grammar	15
Listening	26
Writing	15
Reading	10
Vocabulary	7
All of them	11
None	4



(Graph 14)

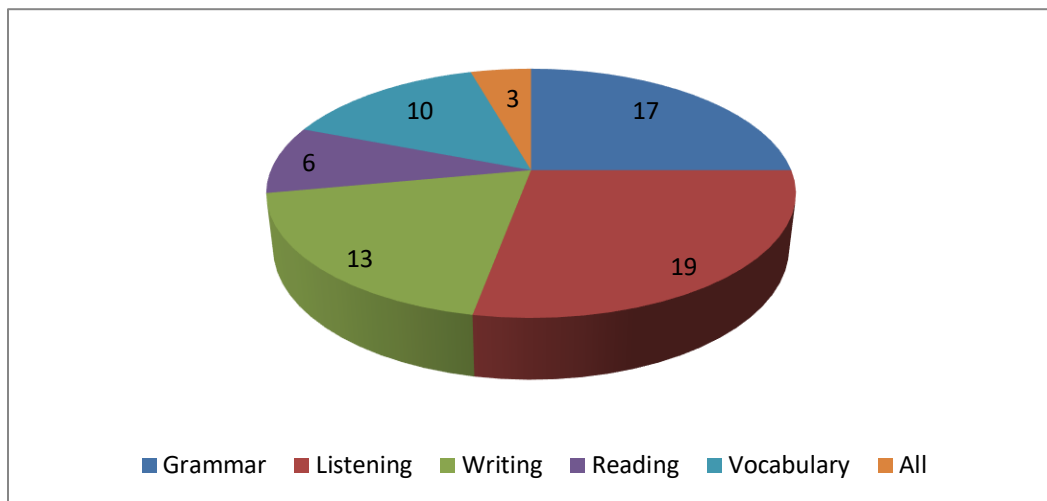
This graph shows the skills that help students the most in their English language learning. According to their answer, 45% of the students affirm that listening exercises have contributed the most in their learning process. In addition, 25% answered that grammar and writing exercises also contributed in their learning. However, only a 6% of the students answered that none of the exercises included in the digital resources have contributed to their learning process.

Question 15:

(Table 15)

What kind of exercises of the digital resources had been more difficult to understand?	Number
Grammar	17
Listening	19
Writing	13
Reading	6
Vocabulary	10
All	3
None	10
	Total:58

(Graph 15)



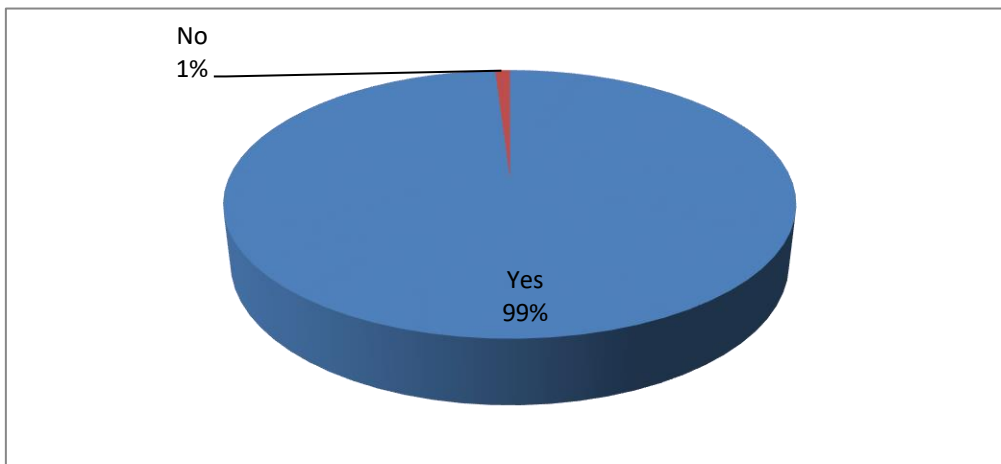
According to the results, 33% of the students considered that listening exercises had been difficult to understand. In addition, 29% answered that grammar exercises were difficult to understand and 22% considered writing exercises difficult. On the other hand, only 17% of the students answered that none of the exercises included in the digital resources were difficult to understand.

Question 16:

(Table 16)

Do you think it is necessary to add different contents in your book?	Number
Yes	57
No	1
	Total:58

(Graph 16)



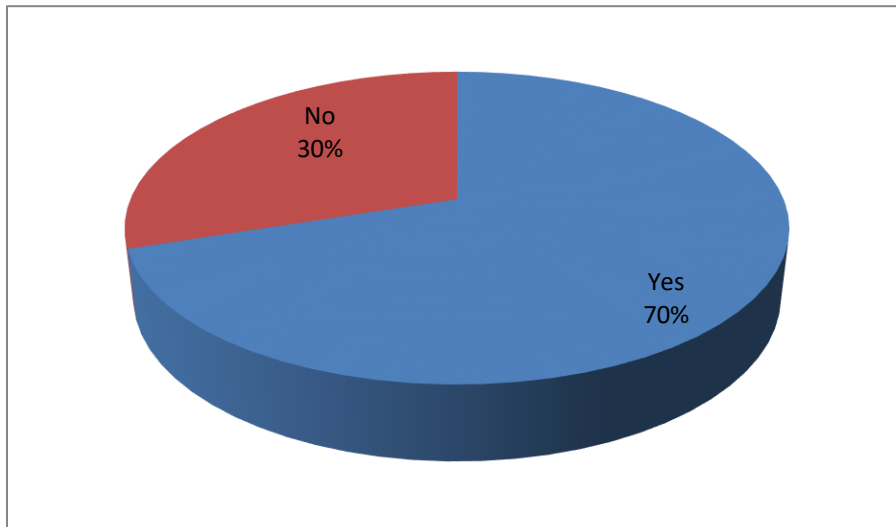
According to students' answers the book Breakthrough Plus Intro the course should add more contents related to the major they are studying. 99% of them think that the contents included are not enough. At the same time they said that it is also necessary add new exercises in the digital resources, different from that ones that are in the book. On the other hand 1% said that contents in the book are good.

Question 17:

(Table 17)

Do you recommend the use of the digital resources in the following courses?	Number
Yes	41
No	17
	Total:58

(Graph 17)



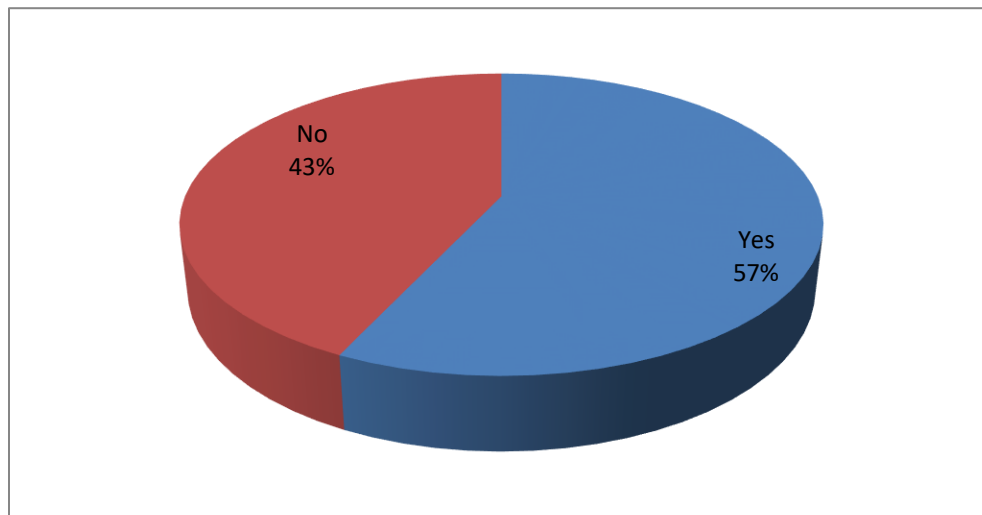
Students expressed that it is important to consider to include the use of digital resources in English classes. 70% of the students recommend the use of the digital resources in the following courses. In contrast, 29% of the students do not recommend it because of the problems that digital resources presented at the moment they wanted to access, making it a not friendly resource.

Question 18:

(Table 18)

Do you believe that the work of the exercises on the digital resources have to be considered as a part of the evaluation system?	Number
Yes	33
No	25
	Total:58

(Graph 18)



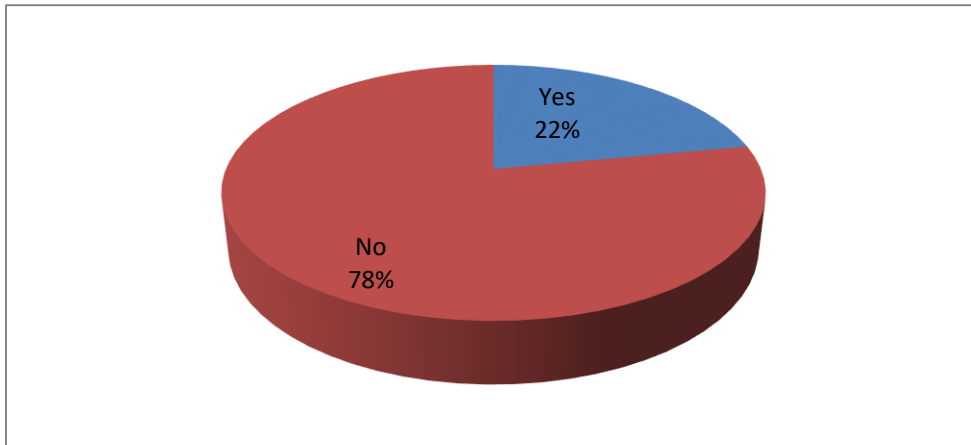
57% of students believe that the exercises done in the digital resources have to be graded in order to be considered part of the evaluation system. In contrast, 43% think that they do not have to be considered as a part of the evaluation system.

Question 19:

(Table 19)

In your opinion, do you think that the text book and the digital resources are worth the price?	Number
Yes	13
No	45
	Total:58

(Graph 19)



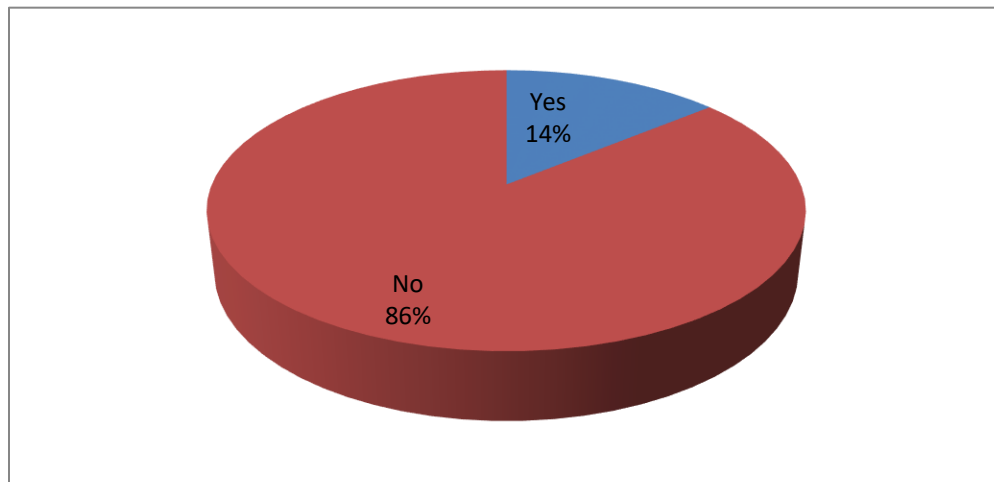
According to students' opinion only 22% of them expressed that the price is affordable, but the other 78% said that the contents included in the text book and the digital resources are not worth the price.

Question 20:

(Table 20)

Do you find the price of the book BT is reasonable?	Number
Yes	8
No	50
	Total:58

(Graph 20)



According to students' answers, 86% of them do not find the price of the book *Breakthrough plus Intro* reasonable; they think that \$25.00 for the book is too high and some of them cannot pay for it. Only 14% find the price reasonable.

4.2 ANSWERS TO THE RESEARCH QUESTIONS

What is the impact the Breakthrough Intro educational digital resources have on the English language learning of students registered in Intensive English I at the Journalism Department, semester I, 2019, at the University of El Salvador?

English Intensive I, in the last five years has reported 32% of academic failure in the course (according to Professor Rodriguez de Carranza, 2019). After the implementation of digital resources as part of the course and also as part of the evaluation system, the professor in charge of the course reported a 16.7% of academic failure; this means that the failure rate was reduced by half. This shows that the digital resources impacted students positively in order to improve their English language learning and their final grades

In addition, 90% of the students answered that the digital resources have contributed to their English language learning. We asked students to select which skill has contributed the most to their learning and the results showed that 45% of them affirmed that listening exercises have contributed the most in their learning process, followed by grammar and writing exercises with a 25% of students for each skill. Through the variety of exercises that the digital resources offered to students they had opportunity to enrich listening, grammar and writing skills. These tools impact students in a positive way because they have the opportunity to practice the skills they want to focus the most.

Through surveys 75% of students said that they devote a day to the digital resources of the book BT an average of thirty minutes to one hour. 25% of students work in the digital resources more than an hour per day, but at the end of the semester the digital resources registered that 82.7% of students had worked an average of one hour to two and a half per day. This means that the digital resources impacted students since the moment they dedicated more time to their English Language Learning process, they not only studied at the moment of the class but also they practiced in their houses, outside the University or wherever they wanted to complete the exercise of the digital resources.

Specific Questions:

How do students respond to the use of educational digital resources from the *Breakthrough intro series*?

Students expressed through the results of the surveys their satisfaction with the digital resources. 22% of students said that they are very satisfied with the digital resources and the 47% said that they are fairly satisfied with it. This makes a total of 69% of the students that are satisfied with the digital resources. On the contrary the 31% of the students are unsatisfied because of the different problems they face with it.

This satisfaction is reflected on the time students spent using the digital resources. At the end of the semester the digital resources registered that 82.7% of students had worked an average of one hour to two and a half per day.

Students also improved their grades. At the end of the semester 83% of students approved the course, if we compare the level of failure 5 years ago we can affirm that in semester I, 2019 the percentage of failure reduced 15%.

Year	Number of students	Approved	Failed
2014	70	50	29%
2015	52	29	44%
2016	65	45	31%
2017	56	42	25%
2018	54	37	31%
2019	58	48	17%

Despite students' problems with the use of digital resources, most of them responded positively to the use of digital resources. At the end of the semester, digital resources helped students improve their English language learning.

What are the advantages and disadvantages of *Breakthrough* educational digital resources for students?

Advantages:

Digital resources of the BT book offered to students some benefits in order to motivate them to improve their English language learning. Since the moment students had access to exercises, audios, videos and the different materials that the digital resources offered they dedicated more time to the English course. Students had the possibility to practice not only in the University at the moment

they were in class but also anywhere. This tool helped them to reinforce topics that were seen in class outside the classroom.

It is important to mention that students could access the digital resources, through the use of different kind of devices such as cellphones, computers, laptops, tablets, smart TV's, etc. however it is merely to have internet in order to access. Trough surveys most of the students said that they use their cellphones to have access to internet. 74% of students confirm that they have cellphones which makes them easier the access to internet and also to work in the digital resources. Digital resources helped students to enrich independent learning.

Digital resources gave students the opportunity to have more contact with the English Language. They had access to exercises that enriched all skills (grammar, listening, writing and reading), through them students had a lot of exposure and more opportunities to learn the language. Digital resources gave students enough exposure to examples of language in different contexts and from different speakers and also use natural input from audios, video, web sites, and articles.

Disadvantages:

Digital resources of the BT book do not have friendly access. 55% of students of Intensive English I answered that they had several difficulties at the time to access to the digital resources of the book BT. The most common difficulties that students mentioned was that the password and the e-mail do not work at the moment they wanted to log in, (sometimes they forgot the information they used to access). The codes used to have access to the digital resources were not correct, so students

had to ask for another code to log in. Students said that the steps they have to follow for create their Macmillan account and have access to the digital resources were very difficult to understand because they expressed that the process was too long and directions were not clear.

To have access to the digital resources, students need internet. In the survey 21% of students answered that they do not have access to internet. For this percentage of students working in the digital resources is difficult because they have to look for solutions in order to have access to internet and develop exercises from the digital resources.

In order to have access to digital resources students must buy the original Breakthrough Intro Plus book from the Macmillan series. The book Breakthrough Intro had a price of \$25.00, and through surveys 78% of students answered that the price for the book was too high. This means that students who cannot buy the original book will not have access to the digital resources. According to the academic registered the exercises from the digital resources have a 15% of the final grade, so students who do not buy the book automatically won't have the 15% of the final grade at the end of the semester.

Do students improve their final grade through their work on the digital resources?

Yes, they do. Students of Intensive English I at the Journalism Department have improved their final grade thanks to their work on the digital resources of the Breakthrough intro. In the last five years the Journalism Department has reported a 32% of academic failure in the English course. The use of digital resources was

implemented as part of the course and also as part of the evaluation. At the end of the semester, the teacher in charge of the course reported a 17% of academic failure; this means that the failure rate was reduced almost by half. This shows that the digital resources facilitate the students learning in order to improve their final grades.

Chapter V

CONCLUSIONS:

- After all this research, it can be concluded that the impact of the Breakthrough into educational digital resources was positive because the academic failure of students registered in Intensive English I reduced significantly. In this semester, the percentage of failure was 17%. This means that 83% of students approved the course. In the last five years an average of 32% students have failed the course, but this percentage was reduced to the half.
- Through the use of the educational resources students can have access to digital material in English language as a result the process of learning becomes easier since exposure is fundamental to increase vocabulary. At the same time, students would practice the correct pronunciation of words, sentences and questions.
- In addition, students expressed that they were motivated to practice the assigned exercises, since the grade received from the digital resources was taken into account.
- The use of digital resource allowed students to dedicate more time to their English language learning. Students had the possibility to work outside the classroom in their English material class, at the same time they did it through devices they use the most as cellphones, tablets, computers, etc.

Chapter VI

RECOMMENDATIONS:

To the Head of the Journalism Department:

- a) She should promote professional development courses related to the use of ICT and technological devices in order to innovate the ways of teaching English in order to help students to success.
- b) She should organize an optional introduction course to English before the semester starts, in order to introduce students to Basic English topics, because many students expressed that they did not study English before.
- c) She should reduce the number of students registered in the groups. If there were fewer students in a classroom, it would be easier not only for students but also for teachers to have control of the teaching/ learning process.

To the Teachers:

- a) It is necessary to continue using this kind of tools as digital resources in order to facilitate the students' learning process. At the same time the students get ICT skills which are really helpful to their future jobs.
- b) It is important to motivate students to take advantage of the Digital resources to practice their English whenever they want to and wherever they are.

- c) Teachers should continue assigning grades in the evaluation system to the Digital resources because it motivates students to work on it and dedicate more time to their English learning process.

To the Students:

- a) It is really important for students to recognize the importance that English has for journalist because for this profession it is a requirement to know more languages.
- b) Students should recognize the advantages and benefits that using digital resources can represent for them.
- c) It is important that students dedicate more time to their English language process, not only when the course starts but also before. This can help them in order to be preparing for the topics that will be studied.

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ANNEXES



Instruments

UNIVERSITY OF EL SALVADOR
SCHOOL OF ARTS AND SCIENCES
FOREIGN LANGUAGE DEPARTMENT



Professor's Interview:

Title: “The Use of Digital Resources from the Commercial Series *Breakthrough* Intro, as a way to Improve English Language Learning of Students of Journalism registered in Intensive English I, semester I, 2019 at the University of El Salvador”

Objective: To know Professor's opinion about the impact of educational digital resources of the book *Breakthrough intro*, on the English language learning of students registered in Intensive English I at the Journalism Department in the University of El Salvador.

1. How long have you been teaching English at the Journalism Department?
2. On average, what is the number of students registered in intensive English I each year, at least for the last 5 years?
3. Do you consider this number of students is affecting their learning process?
4. What are other factors (academic and non-academic) you think affect students' learning process?
5. In the statistics we have gathered, we notice that there is a 32% of students who fail the course in a semester, why do you think it is difficult for students to pass the English courses?
6. Do you consider students are conscious about the importance of the English language in their professional field?
7. Do you think the authorities are aware of the problem of failure in this Department? Are they doing something to solve them?
8. We understand that since the last year you are using digital resources, what are your thoughts about them? What are the advantages and disadvantages?

9. Do you think more students will pass the course with the use of digital resources



UNIVERSIDAD DE EL SALVADOR
ESCUELA DE ARTES
DEPARTAMENTO DE LENGUAS EXTRANJERAS



Entrevista:

Título: “El uso de recursos digitales de la serie comercial Breakthrough intro, como una forma de mejorar el aprendizaje del idioma inglés en los estudiantes de periodismo registrados en inglés intensivo I, semestre I, 2019 en la Universidad de El Salvador”

Objetivo: conocer la opinión de un experto acerca de la importancia del idioma ingles en el Departamento de Periodismo de la Universidad de El Salvador.

1. ¿Cuánto tiempo tiene trabajando en la Universidad de El Salvador?
2. ¿Recuerda usted cuantas cátedras de inglés tenía su plan de estudio?
3. ¿Conoce usted en que año se agrega la asignatura de inglés como parte de la malla curricular en el Departamento de Periodismo?
4. Desde su experiencia como Licenciado en Periodismo, ¿Cuál es la importancia del idioma Ingles en los estudiantes de su Departamento?
5. Tenemos estadísticas que nos muestran que en los últimos 5 años el número de reprobación de estudiantes que han cursado Ingles I ha sido del 32%, ¿Considera usted que estos porcentajes son un problema para el Departamento?
6. ¿Por qué cree usted que se da este problema de reprobación?
7. ¿Conoce usted qué medidas han implementado las autoridades del Departamento de Periodismo para reducir estos porcentajes de reprobación?
8. ¿Considera usted suficientes los 4 cursos de inglés establecidos en la malla curricular de la carrera?

Muchas gracias por su tiempo

UNIVERSIDAD DE EL SALVADOR
FACULTAD DE CIENCIAS Y HUMANIDADES
DEPARTAMENTO DE IDIOMAS EXTRANJEROS



Cuestionario para estudiantes inscritos en la materia de Inglés Intensivo I, de la Licenciatura en Periodismo.

Tema: *“El Uso de Recursos Digitales del Libro Breakthrough Intro, como una Forma de Mejorar el Aprendizaje del Idioma Inglés en los Estudiantes de Periodismo Registrados en Inglés Intensivo I, Semestre I, 2019 en la Universidad de El Salvador”*

Objetivo: Obtener información relacionada al aprendizaje del Idioma Inglés por parte de los estudiantes de Periodismo que actualmente cursan Inglés Intensivo I.

Instrucciones: Por favor lea cuidadosamente cada una de las siguientes preguntas y rellene el círculo que se encuentra a la par de cada una de las respuestas que más se apegue su caso.

Información Personal

Género: Masculino Femenino

Edad: 17-20 años 21-25 años 26-30 años
 Mayor de 30

Lugar de Residencia: Urbano Rural

¿Cuenta usted con servicio de Internet Residencial?

Sí No

¿Qué dispositivo utiliza usted para navegar en internet?

Laptop Computadora de Escritorio Celular
 Tablet Otros (Especifique) _____

Información Académica

1. ¿De qué tipo de Institución se graduó usted?

Pública Privada

2. ¿Tiene usted algún tipo de conocimiento del Idioma Inglés?

Sí No

(Si su respuesta es NO pasar a la pregunta número 5)

3. ¿En qué tipo de Institución aprendió usted el Idioma Inglés?

Instituto Público Instituto Privado

Academias de Inglés Por sí mismo

Otros (Especifique) _____

4. ¿Qué nivel de inglés considera usted que posee?

- Básico Intermedio Avanzado

5. ¿En qué matrícula está usted cursando Inglés Intensivo I?

- Primera Segunda Tercera
- Cuarta

Información Específica

1. ¿Se le han presentado dificultades al acceder a los recursos digitales de su libro Breakthrough?

- Sí No

¿Cuáles son? _____

2. ¿Considera razonable el precio pagado por el libro Breakthrough Intro?

- Sí No

3. En su opinión, ¿Cree usted que los recursos ofrecidos por la serie Breakthrough compensan su costo?

- Sí No

¿Por qué? _____

4. ¿Cuán satisfecho se siente usted con los recursos digitales del libro Breakthrough?

- Muy satisfecho Medianamente satisfecho
- Poco satisfecho Insatisfecho

5. Aproximadamente, ¿Cuánto tiempo le practica/dedica a los recursos digitales del libro Breakthrough?

- 30 mins-1 hora 1 hora-2 horas
 3 en adelante

6. ¿Considera usted que los recursos digitales del libro Breakthrough le han permitido mejorar su aprendizaje?

- Sí No

¿Por qué?

7. En su opinión, ¿Cómo califica el manejo de los recursos digitales de su libro Breakthrough?

- Fácil Intermedio Difícil

8. Según usted, ¿Qué tipo de ejercicios han contribuido a su aprendizaje?

- Gramática Escucha Escritura Lectura
 Vocabulario

9. ¿Qué tipo de ejercicios le ha sido más difícil de comprender?

- Gramática Escucha Escritura Lectura
 Vocabulario

10. ¿Cree necesario la incorporación de contenidos/ ejercicios diferentes a los ya incluidos en su libro?

- Sí No

¿Cuáles recomienda?

11. ¿Recomienda usted que en los siguientes cursos se siga utilizando este tipo de recursos digitales?

Sí No

¿Por qué?

12. ¿Considera usted que el contenido de los recursos digitales del libro se apega a sus necesidades como futuros periodistas?

Sí No

¿Por qué?
