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TASK-BASED LEARNING TO IMPROVE READING SKILLS IN SENIOR STUDENTS

AT "MARIO OÑA PERDOMO" HIGH SCHOOL IN SAN GABRIEL, 2021- 2022

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Technology as a didactic tool for teaching-learning English as a foreign language.

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The main objective of this research is to compile TBL activities for the development of reading skills in senior students in "Mario Oña Perdomo" high school in San Gabriel, 2021-2022. The specific aims are: to collect theoretical support about TBL for the development of reading comprehension, to identify the problems that hinder the enhancement of the reading comprehension of the students at " Mario Oña Perdomo" high school, to design a virtual guide with TBL activities for the improvement of reading comprehension and a tool to observe students' performance.

Quito, November 6th, 2022



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DEDICATION

I dedicate this project to my family who have been my source of motivation during these months.

Diego Xavier Peñafiel Romero

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I thank my parents and brother for their support along all these years.

To the UTN, for my professional training and for each educative experience lived with my partners and teachers.

Diego Xavier Peñafiel Romero

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RESUMEN

APRENDIZAJE BASADO EN TAREAS PARA MEJORAR LAS DESTREZAS LECTORAS EN LOS ESTUDIANTES DE TERCERO DE BACHILLERATO EN EL COLEGIO “MARIO OÑA PERDOMO” EN LA CIUDAD DE SAN GABRIEL, 2021-2022

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Este proyecto de investigación exploró tanto elementos pedagógicos como de aprendizaje referentes a la lectura en inglés por medio de una plataforma online que emplea el aprendizaje basado en tareas (TBL). El grupo que participó en el proyecto fueron estudiantes de tercero de bachillerato en la unidad educativa Mario Oña Perdomo de quienes se ha determinado un nivel bajo de comprensión lectora en inglés. Este proyecto explora conceptos teóricos de la metodología TBL al igual su implementación dentro de las clases de inglés; así mismo describiendo técnicas para mejorar la comprensión lectora en la lengua extranjera que fueron adaptadas a una plataforma online. Los estudiantes primeramente participaron en una encuesta de índole cualitativa para determinar hábitos y preferencias de lectura, así como problemas varios relacionados a la lectura en inglés. Luego, se realizaron una entrevista tanto al vicerrector como docente de inglés de tercero de bachillerato de la institución respecto a aspectos pedagógicos y didácticos. A través de toda la información reunida se determinó que introducir una plataforma online para el desarrollo de la destreza lectora basada en TBL compone una adición innovadora que puede mejorar de manera significativa las habilidades lectoras en inglés de los estudiantes del colegio Mario Oña Perdomo.

Palabras Clave: comprensión, lectura, tareas, plataforma.

ABSTRACT

TASK-BASED LEARNING TO IMPROVE READING SKILLS IN SENIOR STUDENTS
AT "MARIO OÑA PERDOMO" HIGH SCHOOL IN SAN GABRIEL, 2021- 2022

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This research project explored both pedagogical and learning elements of reading in English through an online platform that employs task-based learning (TBL). The group that participated in the project were third-year high school students in the Mario Oña Perdomo educational unit who possessed a low level of reading comprehension in English. This project explores theoretical concepts of the TBL methodology as well as its implementation within English classes; also describing techniques to improve reading comprehension in the foreign language that were adapted to an online platform. Thus, the students first participated in a qualitative survey to determine reading habits and preferences, as well as various problems related to reading in English. Subsequently, an interview was conducted with both the vice-rector and the English teacher in the third year of high school at the institution regarding pedagogical and didactic aspects. It is through all the information gathered that it was determined that the implementation of an online platform for the development of reading skills based on TBL constitutes an innovative addition that can significantly improve the skills of the students of the Mario Oña Perdomo school.

Palabras Clave: comprehension, reading, homework, platform.

CHAPTER I

THE PROBLEM

1. Introduction

According to AlKilabi (2015), one of the most important skills in the acquisition of any language is the ability to read. This ability aids students in their academic pursuits as well as in their daily lives (Dechant, 1991). Hence, for further development and increase of knowledge, reading becomes mandatory as this provides an insightful experience in any language.

Inside the English classroom, the traditional approach to reading provides limited results despite students being constantly exposed to reading activities in class (Villafuerte & Mosquera, 2020). A poor reading ability hinders the acquisition of a new language hence students tend to obtain little to no benefit from the reading activities usually presented in class (Collentine & Freed, 2004). Nevertheless, this situation is not exclusive to ESL students but also can be traced back to weak reading comprehension in the mother tongue.

According to Castillo (2021), the problem regarding reading has been attributed to financial problems and a lack of teachers at the elemental levels of Ecuadorian schools. This leads to deficiencies in some critical aspects of development, in this case reading comprehension. Therefore, a considerable number of children go further in scholarly instruction without overcoming deficiencies in the comprehension of written texts (Barrera et al., 2017). Consequently, the curricular approach considered for subjects like literature tends to be exceedingly difficult to follow for many students even if the program has been designed for their specific age group (Castillo-Torres & Bastardo-Contreras, 2021).

Considering the above mentioned, the endeavor of approaching English literature in the Ecuadorian classroom in a similar manner as in Spanish produces limited results. Although there have been introduced international standardized tests to accredit the level of proficiency in English, the problem resides in the manner students can meet those standards (Ortega & Aucchuallpa Fernández, 2017). As mentioned before, reading comprises a foundational stone from which the development of the other abilities stem and improve. Therefore, giving space to reading in class can potentially benefit the enhancement of communicative competencies. In this sense, a wide variety of alternative methodological approaches have been considered as a means to cope with poor reading skills, the one presented in this project is task-based learning.

Task-based learning (TBL) is a modern approach that involves assigning one or more tasks to students. To learn not only from the teacher's knowledge but also to build their knowledge pupils are required to become more participative (Bakhriddinova, 2020) . In a general sense, this is based on three stages: pre-task, task, and post-task. Besides, students' understanding of language can be deeper because real context or situations are used.

There are five chapters in the current research project.

Chapter I. refers to the generalities of the research problem, contemplated in the first level: Research topic, Problem statement, Justification, and Objectives.

Chapter II. starts analyzing the aspects of the theoretical framework, containing the subtitles: background, philosophical foundation, epistemological foundation, principal categories, and hypothesis.

Chapter III. defines and conceptualizes Methodology through Research focus, research basic modality, level and kind of research, population and sample of the study, matrix of variables operationalization, data compilation, and processing.

Chapter IV. analyzes and interprets the information compiled from the interviews with the vice principal and the teacher from the class and interprets data to confirm the research hypothesis and conclusions.

Chapter V. exposes the proposal to aid reading comprehension by including practical applications of the theory presented in the theoretical framework.

1.1. Problem description

Ecuador has low academic performance in English, a reality that the national educational system has not been able to change. According to Education First (2021), in Ecuador from 2011 to 2020, English proficiency scores range from low to very low. At the national level, the main causes for this phenomenon are attributed to a scarcity of proficient English teachers (Machado, 2019), and flaws in the government's proposed curriculum (Ortega & Fernández , *La Educación Ecuatoriana en Inglés: Nivel de Dominio y Competencias Lingüísticas de los Estudiantes Rurales*, 2017).

In addition, the covid pandemic has aggravated this situation due to students' inactivity following learning (Leli, 2021). In Ecuador, the initial confinement that lasted for months carried consequences in all levels of social structure from the highest spheres of government to the citizens that had to endure the crisis (Tenorio et al., 2021). Regarding education, the pandemic turned into an additional burn for an already troubled system. During the pandemic, there was reported that about 61.2% of students ranging from 10 to 19 years were learning less since the closing of schools (UNICEF, 2020). Therefore, the

consequences for education, in general, became more tangible and so greater efforts from teachers and other educative actors have become vital for avoiding irreversible consequences for the development of the young population.

In Mario Oña Perdomo high school, students have shown problems regarding retention skills when reading. The complexity of the reading passages and lexical knowledge are factors associated with the development of comprehension skills which are key for the acquisition of a new language. In this regard, employing resources that could serve as tools for supporting the development of comprehension skills through a friendlier approach to the reading task should become part of the instruction process. In this aspect, implementing new teaching methodologies that incentivize active participation and a structured program that covers crucial subskills from reading ought to become a priority. Therefore, Task-based learning has been determined as the methodology to be employed for the development of reading skills in Mario Oña Perdomo high school.

There is expected that the implementation of TBL through digital media helps Mario Oña students by employing a personalized and resourceful virtual environment that propitiates meaningful learning and that can be adapted to different levels of proficiency. Using TBL embeds work in stages, and so this presents the opportunity for the teacher to trace the deficiencies of individual students and so present alternative activities for them not to halt the process. Additionally, the resources to be employed are free, plentiful, and adaptative as these are taken directly from the extensive library of documents uploaded to the net. As (Mustakim et al., 2018) explain, presenting resources that appeal to students can significantly improve their comprehension and by the same token their communicative competencies. The English teacher in charge of the Mario Oña group can continue with the

curricular content in class while the pupils enhance their reading comprehension at their own pace after school.

Research Question

What is the effectiveness of the TBL in the development of reading skills in the English language in senior students in "Mario Oña Perdomo" school?

1.2. Background

Theoretically, this methodological approach focuses on teaching conditions that are deemed problematic. To illustrate this point, there are several pieces of research conducted on TBL that reported providing positive results in crowded classrooms where the resources are limited (Charless, 2002) (Kibble et al., 2016). There has been shown that teachers tend to react positively toward the implementation of tasks or activities. Besides, students are reported to increase their communicational competencies in English whenever active participation is encouraged (Faez et al., 2011).

The current research contemplates reading skills as its dependent variable and by the same token reading comprehension development through implementing Task-Based Learning (TBL). TBL is an approach for language acquisition that can potentially impact the development of communicational skills, especially reading. Undoubtedly, reading skills are critical for achieving language proficiency because this composes the cornerstone in the acquisition of any language age (UGA Mary Frances Early College of Education, 2012). In this sense, to understand any sort of reading material students are called to develop reading comprehension skills. Thus, teachers are required to encourage reading by providing engaging and meaningful activities. These activities will serve to enhance reading

information, inference and rhetorical, reading vocabulary, sentence simplification, insert text, and summary.

Currently, teachers have been pushed to use technology to teach students due to the pandemic. In this sense, this research will also be based on Personalized Learning (PL) because of its close attachment to TBL and the educative needs of the pupils. As there has been noted, it is critical to engage students in online activities. Additionally, students must maintain a record of their progress. Therefore, PL will be used as a supplement, but TBL will be the primary method of activity delivery. To be more specific, all TBL activities to improve reading comprehension will be on an online platform. Through the school year or at the end, the teacher can read the students' performance and select specific activities for each student.

There is expected that the continuance of the proposal would aid students in progressively enhancing their abilities and track their process over time. The proposed reading tasks will be graded based on the CEFR standards as these will function to decide where a student stands in terms of reading proficiency. The background to be considered for this project consists of previous related research found in digital repositories of Ecuadorian Universities. These are related to one or both variables of the present research and embed the importance of their further research.

First, the research of Valarezo (2017) titled "Strategies task-based learning to develop the reading comprehension in level a1 students of Instituto Académico de Lenguas, Universidad Central del Ecuador", is a literature review with a quasi-experimental approach. In this study, two study groups were chosen, one control and the other test experimental, to conduct a pre-test and a post-test to examine if the strategy improved

reading comprehension in students by using reading under the parameters established by the CEFR. These tests looked at various aspects of reading ability comprising vocabulary length, comprehension at word, sentence, and text level. The results showed that using TBL strategies improves reading comprehension, as evidenced by the experimental group's higher arithmetic mean compared to the control group.

Second, the research presented by Lara (2018), titled "Learning by tasks and ability to speak English in students at Universidad Nacional de Chimborazo", is a quali-quantitative approach to an experimental and applied-field study. The participants in this study were A2 students from Centro de Idiomas de la Facultad de Ciencias Políticas Administrativas de la Universidad Nacional de Chimborazo. A preliminary test and a post-test were used in this study to assess the effectiveness of implementing TBL to improve oral English language skills.

Finally, the research presented by Chiguano (2021), titled "Critical reading strategies in the development of reading comprehension of English language ". The conclusion signaled a correlation between critical reading strategies and overall development of reading comprehension from the participants after a period of preparation and the application of a series of activities that covered stages.

1.3. Objectives

1.3.1. General objective

To compile TBL activities for the development of reading skills in senior students in "Mario Oña Perdomo" high school in San Gabriel, 2021-2022

1.3.2. Specific objectives

- To collect theoretical support about TBL for the development of reading comprehension
- To identify the problems that hinder the enhancement of the reading comprehension of the students at " Mario Oña Perdomo" high school.
- To design a virtual guide with TBL activities for the improvement of reading comprehension and a tool to observe students' performance

1.4. Justification

The project aims to compile activities in an online platform applying TBL to develop reading comprehension skills in the third BGU class from Mario Oña Perdomo high school. Besides, this research aims to identify issues that impair reading comprehension in Mario Oña students. To accomplish this, this research will focus on teachers' justifications for using TBL to improve students' reading skills and prevent passive student performance. TBL methodology encourages students to use what they already know while also engaging in reading skills. Furthermore, TBL helps students focus on achieving a goal, such as reading comprehension, where language becomes a tool and language use becomes mandatory. After identifying the problems, the investigation shifts to collecting or compiling TBL activities to improve certain aspects of reading such as reading comprehension, vocabulary increase, and reading fluency.

The meaningfulness of this study arises from the current need for an alternative to the proposed methodology in the government curriculum for reading. In this curriculum, the prerogatives for the instruction of reading skills have proven to be of scarce effectiveness in the acquisition of the English language. In this regard, the TBL methodology can function as an alternative, for its focus on personalized learning and the strategies proposed for improving reading comprehension. The TBL proposal for the enhancement of reading skills is feasible and achievable since this can be molded to respond to the educative needs. Undoubtedly, conducting surveys and interviews to identify the specific problems is required. Considering this, the proposal is unique because once the problem has been identified, an online guide with TBL activities will be proposed on gnomio.

The benefits of this research will mainly help students and teachers of “Mario Oña” high school. Students first, as soon as they develop reading skills, will gain in the following areas such as improved concentration, critical and analytical thinking skills, strong memory skills, and a broad vocabulary. Next, teachers will benefit from another alternative method or technique for teaching reading. In addition, they will have a guide that will assist them in carrying out the teaching-learning activity correctly and will save them time when preparing a class.

Indirectly, this research will benefit the society of San Gabriel. Society benefits because it will have more prepared adults in the future. The reason for this is that reading is the best way to exercise the brain because it stimulates the imagination and promotes concentration. Reading also aids in the development of social skills such as empathy. A society full of empathetic individuals is inclusive.

Due to the pandemic, teachers have been pushed to use technology to teach students. In this sense, this research will also be based on Personalized Learning (PL) because of its close attachment to TBL and the educative needs of the pupils. As there has been noted, it is critical to engage students in online activities. Additionally, students must maintain a record of their progress. Therefore, PL will be used as a complementary part of the process, but TBL will be the primary method of activity delivery. To be more specific, all TBL activities to improve reading comprehension will be compiled in a Gnomio domain and the activities delivered will be completed using the tools provided by the same platform and using resources found on the internet. Gnomio allows teachers to download the table of results in Excel so the class will be encouraged to engage in the activities as these are just an extension of the normal tasks in class. During the school year, the assigned teacher can

read the students' performances and select specific activities for each student.

Consequently, students will be able to measure their progress over time. The proposed activities will be extracurricular and will be graded according to CEFR standards. On balance, students will benefit from learning at their own pace rather than the average of their peers.

CHAPTER II

Literature Review

2.1. Task-Based Learning

Task-based learning is a method of language learning that consists of performing real-life tasks in the target language. For instance, visiting a doctor, doing an interview, contacting customer service for assistance, writing a letter, or making a phone call (Büyükkarcı, 2009). Therefore, TBL addresses the utilization of the four skills through the collaboration between teachers and students in the execution of these activities. According to Magsoudpour (2011) "Teacher-students' and students' interactions are significant in foreign language teaching and learning. It is argued that interactions between teachers and students facilitate language development and lead to better language learning" (p.171). Thus, the acquisition of the English language through the TBL method requires the joint effort of teachers and students in the enforcement of controlled practical activities.

Task-based learning aims to provide a supportive methodological framework by incentivizing real communication in the target language (Willis, 1996). Therefore, the setting of the lesson is compelled to a practical approach from the student to engage in linguistic exchange. Task-based learning relies on learners to apply linguistic knowledge to different communicative settings through the contextualization of a task but without relying on pre-fixed phrases or terms (Curran et al., 2000). Since the learners are set in a context where a holistic approach to language is needed, they will be forced either to rely on their knowledge or to investigate the grammatical information needed to accomplish the task.

Notwithstanding, the accomplishment of the task itself is not the focal point of TBL. Tasks provide the opportunity of measuring the learner's performance in the

accomplishment of a communicative activity through the incorporation of pre-modified input that consolidates prior knowledge of the second language (L2) (Robinson, 2011). Meeting the expected communicative results is desirable, however, monitoring the learner's performance is what allows teachers to identify and correct mistakes to improve the learner's communicative performance.

The acquisition of a second language engages the development of the communicative skills of the learners. Provided that the educative conditions are optimal, then, acquiring the target language becomes a process that requires the participation of the student and feedback from the teacher. Therefore, the enactment of tasks that test the student's performance becomes a necessity for teachers to assess their strengths and weaknesses.

2.1.1. Pretask

The pre-task stage of TBL tends to address the nature of the activity itself, whether focused on content or language production and the logistic settings before its execution (Sangarun, 2001). In other words, this stage intends to establish the possible outcomes of the task as well as the time used to complete the activity. According to Willis (1996), the pre-task stage aims to prepare the language resources of the learners before the task section. Additionally, the pre-task section is divided into three sub-stages. First, the teacher introduces the topics and the tasks. Then, the topics and the vocabulary items needed for the execution of the task are exposed to the class. Finally, students are encouraged to supply some examples to check if the order has been understood.

2.1.2. Task

A task is an activity in which a person engages to attain an objective, and which necessitates the use of language (Van den Branden, 2006). The activity to be performed,

then, requires comprehending what needs to be accomplished and how to accomplish it through language to produce. According to Bygate et al. (2001), the goal to achieve through the task is meaning which is attained through linguistic competence and comprehension. The process of comprehending a task, in other words, is part of the task itself since students ought to rely on their linguistic knowledge beyond fixed grammar drills.

Pedagogically speaking, tasks are used to stimulate communicative production through the completion of objectives (Bygate, 2005). The existence of an objective indicates the existence of a problem that ought to be solved through communication. As Skehan (1998) indicates, tasks are activities in which there is some communication problem, comparable to those of real life, that ought to be solved. In the English classroom, the task has the objective of incentivizing students into comprehending, manipulate, produce, and interact with the target language towards a communicative goal.

The use of tasks in the development of reading skills also contemplates the work in stages as Mao (2012) indicates

In English reading classroom is a reading classroom activity that involves learners with the help of the teacher in comprehending the reading material, manipulating the language usage in the material, producing their language output based on the comprehension of the usage, or interacting with each other about their opinion related to the material in English with a communicative goal. (p. 2431).

In this regard, regular reading activities such as reading a newspaper, or a book could be transformed into tasks by adding an output component. In this sense, roleplaying about the events that occurred in the news, or making an interview based on its contents. As a result,

learners are encouraged to read, analyze, and interpret the content of the text to create a product in concordance with the source material.

2.1.3. Post-Task or Focus on language

Also known as language focus, this stage is meant for the teacher to provide feedback and correct linguistic mistakes that may have arisen through the task stage. According to Huang (2010), the language focus stage leads to the conclusion of the task, therefore, students have the opportunity to observe and analyze explicitly the grammar rules that they may have been encouraged to use during the realization of the activity. On balance, this stage serves as a manner of reporting how proficient were the learners in performing a task as well as the experience. The scheme of TBL proposed by Willis (1996) indicates that during the report stage, students expose orally or in a written form to the class aspects such as group organization and how they resolved the problem presented.

2.2. Characteristics of TBL

Task-based learning proposes an open and flexible methodology regarding the activities that can be proposed. Notwithstanding, the activities ought to focus on language meaning and comprehension as well as the obtention of a clear output from the students (OnTESOL, 2016). In light of this, the implementation of the TBL is bound to a productive process that compels communicative production through the activities, interactivity, and production of authentic material.

2.2.1. Task variety

The use of tasks in the acquisition of a new language tends to enhance "natural" learning within the classroom context (Ellis, 2009). For the author, the term natural includes those processes and actions performed in real-life that are necessary and ought to be learned in

the social context. Therefore, the more familiar the learner is with these activities, the easier it would be to develop proficient use of the language.

According to (Hismanoglu & Hismanoglu , 2011) the process of accomplishing a task can serve as a manner of drawing the attention of the learners to perceive the linguistic elements of the activity, and in consequence, to get acquainted with them. Therefore, one of the characteristics of TBL is the wide variety of tasks that can be included as a means for the acquisition of English. And so, the use of a variety of tasks engages learners in the development of their communicative proficiency in real-life activities.

2.2.2. Interactivity

The emphasis of TBL is to enhance the links between interlocutors to establish communication in the target language (Nunan, 1991). In this regard, the participation of the learners in the execution of the task requires them to cooperate to attain the main objective. Therefore, teachers encourage the exchange of information in the target language as a means to strengthen the learners' communicative performance.

2.2.3 Authentic material

According to Parmawati and Yugafiati (2017) "Authentic materials refer to the use of texts, photographs, video selections, and other teaching resources that were not specially prepared for pedagogical purposes in teaching" (p.3). Any product that bears a certain incidence on language can be cataloged as authentic material and can be applied as a tool to instruct a second language. In light of this, the material can be selected to engage the use of one or various skills of the learners.

The use of authentic material can foster reading skills. An important asset of authentic material in benefit of reading skills is the incentivize of interest from the learners towards

the material. In the words of Wu and Wu (2008), since this kind of material is written to have a communicative purpose these tend to be given interesting themes that can potentially increase students' motivation by defect encouraging their language skills through reading. Hence, implementing tasks in the function of this material can potentially have a positive effect on learners because the motivation factor arises from the interest in the material.

2.3. Functions

TBL provides a learning environment that encourages learners to use target-language forms that are most likely to achieve communicative objectives (Ellis, 2003). That is to say, the main function of TBL is to establish activities that elicit real communication with an emphasis on the completion of a specific action in concordance with real life. The use of tasks in the acquisition of a new language tends to also fall in the terrain of applied linguistics (Richards & Rodgers, 2014) Provided that the implementation of TBL requires students to dive into the more complex processes regarding communication, it becomes necessary compliance with five requisites. According to Nunan (1991), these are:

1. The first is to focus on communication learning through engagement in the target language
2. The second is the incorporation of authentic texts into the learning situation.
3. The third is that students should focus both on language and the process of learning.
4. The fourth is that students must improve their experience as fundamental elements of learning. As students are given tasks in their everyday lives to do things, they need to enhance their personal experiences through the new language.
5. Finally students ought to connect language learning in the classroom with language activation outside the classroom.

2.4. Purpose

The main purpose of TBL is to propitiate the conditions for the student to express himself in the target language in a meaningful manner. That is, accomplishing tasks that could be found in the real world. As Willis and Willis (2007) express, the use of tasks in the acquisition of the second language has the advantage of propitiating appropriate language in a natural context that engages students in the use of their previous linguistic knowledge. This TBL ought to encourage students to share their ideas in the accomplishment of a communicative task without depending on fixed grammar structures or drills. The purpose of TBL is to generate agency, identity, and autonomy in learners.

2.4.1. Agency

TBL motivates agency as this methodology provides learners to engage in self-awareness and self-determination toward decision-making abilities (Carson, 2012). Indeed, the use of tasks obligates students to leave the comfort zone of drills and fixed structures and makes them rely on their linguistic knowledge and in consequence act to benefit from that goal. Van Lier (2010) explains that agency is the person deciding to, wanting to, insisting on, agreeing to, act.

2.4.2. Autonomy

Autonomy can be defined as the capacity for detachment, critical reflection, decision-making, and independent action (Little, 1991). Engaging students in developing this skill is one of the purposes of the use of tasks. In this regard, a student who can cast a critical reflection on the activity presented or in communicative situations will have no problem determining how to respond and accomplish the requirement.

2.4.3. Identity

Identity is referred to the attitude and distinctive actions that an individual makes according to the context (Riley, 2010). Furthermore, this characteristic of every individual is expressed through their customs, habits, and the way they talk. In this regard, the utilization of tasks in the English classroom can be used as a means for the learners to express their ideas and accomplish the tasks in their linguistic terms.

2.5. Task Characteristics

The inclusion of tasks as a tool that remarks the use of communicative skills has risen problems regarding its orderly implementation in a class setting. Hence, the systematization of the general characteristics of a task becomes a need for the grueling learning process. The characteristics of a task establish parameters and requirements to be met by the learner. Methodologically, introducing tasks into summative evaluations to address performance and comprehension (Carr, 2006).

Proposing an effective reading comprehension task induces teachers to implement a formal scheme of evaluation. One of these is the model proposed by (Bachman & Palmer, 1996). Although originally meant for tests, this model can be adapted to design, plan and organize tasks in class because of an organic relationship between task characteristics and test performance. This framework distinguishes five characteristics of a task:

- **Setting.** - In general, this aspect refers to the overall context and framework where the class is being held. It includes the educative curricula that impose objectives to be met by the schools, and the English language classroom itself as a physical space (Wilden, 2018). The instructional process occurs in a specific time and place, embedding factors that go beyond the academic. This

subdivides into three aspects: physical settings, setting conditions, and equipment used for the test (Ashraf & Zaki, 2016).

- Rubric. - According to Bachman and Palmer (1996) the features included in this task characteristic involves the instructions of the given task, the structure to be attached to, the time destined for the session, and the method of scoring the reading task.

- Input expected response. - From the linguistic standpoint, input is referred to as the exposition of authentic language in use presented by material, the teacher, or from peer interaction (Bahrani & Sim, 2012). As a task characteristic, input describes the information provided for the learner to accomplish the expected goal.

- Relationship between input and response. - According to Ashraf and Zaki (2016) this feature embodies the reactivity scope and directness of the relationship between the task and the instructions provided for its completion.

Table 1 Consolidated findings of analysis of reading test tasks

Consolidated Findings	
Characteristics of rubrics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▫ Brief and general instructions in the target language without any example of expected response ▫ Number of reading tasks in a paper ranged from 1 to 4 with 4 to 10 items/questions where most of the papers assessed reading skill through a single task only. ▫ Reading tasks were compulsory to attempt even when there was a choice of questions in the papers; there was no restriction on the order of the tasks except in one paper. ▫ No time distribution for individual tasks was specified. ▫ No information on scoring criteria, procedure or rating scales was provided.
Characteristics of input	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▫ Written extended discourse in target language (English); ▫ Few tasks provided guided input for task completion. Mostly same passage was used to assess comprehension and summarizing skills. ▫ Adapted text which followed all the conventions of grammar and rhetoric except the passages in which the test takers were required to identify and correct errors. ▫ Mostly ideational in its function; writing style varied from academic register to natural style. ▫ A range of topics used but cultural and personal topics outweighed academic and technical ones. ▫ No specification was given about the planning or processing time except one scanning task.
Characteristics of expected response	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▫ Written responses in target language (English). ▫ No explicit statement regarding length or processing input was made; test takers were required to infer the information through the type of the tasks. ▫ Mostly one type of response (either short or limited or extended) was elicited thus restricting test takers' to demonstrate their reading skills fully. Few papers aimed at combination of these types. ▫ Linguistic or pragmatic features of the expected responses were not spelled out in any of the tasks except the tasks for error correction. ▫ The topics of the responses were directly related to the topics of the input. Instructions on functional features were not given, however, linguistics features were only mentioned in error correction tasks.
Characteristics of relationship between input and expected response	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▫ Non-reciprocal relation between input and output with no feedback. ▫ A combination of broad and narrow scope was employed to assess test takers' understanding at local as well as global level. ▫ Direct relationship between input and response in most cases with few exceptions of indirect relationship or the combination of the two.

Note Example of the application of the Bachman & Palmer framework for task

characteristics . Taken from *Analyzing characteristics of reading test tasks* (p.89-104), by

Ashraf, A., & Zaki, 2016, S. *Journal of Independent Studies and Research-Management,*

Social Sciences and Economics,

2.6. Task Types

The methodological implementation of tasks in the classroom, more specifically in reading activities, implies a deep examination of the circumstances that could affect the advancement of these skills. The procedural aspect of task-based learning ought to proceed with a period of planning and reflection (Long, 2016). Based on the objectives of the module, the task to be considered submits to a certain framework of action. That has derived in different types of tasks to be considered but that intend to linchpin the active eliciting of reading skills.

Unlike the traditional focus on tasks, which usually involves a formal study of linguistic principles and grammar drills, Bruton (2002) describes nine types of tasks:

- problem-solving, decision-making, spontaneous role-playing, etc.
- information/opinion gap resolution
- cued prompted interaction
- question-answer exchanges
- prepared role plays
- focused receptive language (+/- itemized)
- focused written language (+/- itemized) [reproduction]
- understanding”; and “written expression.

These types of tasks differ from the established landmark because they stem from the writer's criteria and derive from the standard pedagogic procedure.

Conversely, Ellis (2020) indicates that tasks involve a focus on meaning; therefore, there exists employment of linguistic and non-linguistic resources towards the fulfillment of a

communicative object which usually implies "filling a gap". Thereby, tasks discern from each other in the function of their outcome, these include:

- Real-life tasks vs. pedagogic tasks
- Input-based vs. output-based tasks
- Unfocused vs. focused tasks
- Closed vs. open tasks
- Here-and-now vs. there-and-then

On balance, literature tends to be ambiguous regarding a fixed classification for tasks. Since the definition of task tends to enclose any activity that involves active participation from the learners, ascertaining a definition tends to be a concern of an abstract interpretation of its principles. Therefore, any activity which contributes to the enhancement of communicative skills can be considered a task (de Quesada & Mariella, 2009).

2.7. Learning Environment

The acquisition of a new language implies a gradual and organic process that involves a reasonable time of instruction and emphasis on communicative production during instruction (Ortega & Iberri-Shea, 2015). Hence, the latter element is compelled to function in concordance to a context and towards the improvement of the language command. In this aspect, Willis (1996) indicates that for setting an effective learning environment, three essential conditions ought to be met.

1. The provision of exposure to the target language
2. The provision of motivation for learners to engage in the learning process.

3. The provision of opportunities for learners to use the target language for real communication

In the context of a TBL lesson, these conditions propitiate the implementation of activities that are meaningful and serve a communicative purpose. The characteristic of the tasks, as well as their type, will play a fundamental role in the success of the students in the enhancement of their communicative skills. Namely, the rate of success in the implementation of a task will heavily rely on setting a positive learning environment. As Legenhausen (2003) explains, the achievement of this setting is reached when learners are eager to participate in the task.

2.7.1. Target Language Use

Various researchers (Gallardo-del-Puerto et al., 2020; Carless, 2004; Crawford, 2004) have mostly agreed upon the assertion of employing the target language in every aspect of its instructional process. Whereas using communicative aids or strategies, such as cultural induction, that incentivizes a deep induction in the target language, inducing students to display their communicative baggage is a positive reinforcement of their language skills.

The use of the target language is a process and ends on its terms because learners occupy their language skills towards the completion of a communicative goal. Students succeeding in the completion of task encloses the previous acknowledgment of the procedures to be followed. Research such as Rani (2017) encourages the use of tasks as promoters of communicational interchange and as an induction in the culture where it is spoken. In TBL, the use of target language instigates learners to tune their linguistic abilities toward achieving a communicative goal.

2.7.2. Authentic Material

TBL advocates for the use of authentic material in the advancement of the proposed activities. The wide variety of material available comprises audiovisual, pictographic, and reading material. As for the latter, Nanda and Susanto (2020) affirm that this sort of material enhances reading skills as these are not created with educative purposes *per se* but are written to serve a communicative purpose; literature adopts language in real context and advocates for further analysis and personal interpretation of the ideas conveyed whereas directly or indirectly by the author.

Using authentic material enclosures, a previous explanation, and the arrangement of the learning environment towards the progression of the activities that will be proposed (Kelly et al., 2002). Indeed, contextualizing a task in the function of the material is important, and is the teacher's responsibility to setback the agenda for the activities that will be done during the task progression. Another factor to consider is engagement. The selected material needs to be interesting for learners to participate actively in the proposed tasks (Arianie, 2017). On balance, the implementation of authentic material complies with two purposes: to expose learners to material that they will likely find in a realistic communicative setting and to motivate learners to accomplish the proposed task using material that appeals to their interests.

2.7.3. Meaning focused Instruction

Meaning-focused instruction conveys a deep emphasis on the production of the communicative display. Employing tasks as a means to enhance communicative performance encompasses an extensive emphasis on linguistic output, implying little to no attention to grammatical revision (Storch, 2018). In this methodological approach learning

a new language submits to a naturalistic model to a certain degree (Miao, 2015). In other words, tasks encourage students to enhance their linguistic knowledge and indagate in the communicative settings where these can be employed.

The utilization of tasks embeds the use of the target language to achieve better command of the target language. However, different perspectives have opened a debate on whether this methodology ought to be complemented with feedback. Although (Krashen,1982) pinpoints that the induction in the target language is enough for its acquisition, Bitchener (2008) considers implementing a formal analysis of the task products, especially if this lodges corrective feedback on communicative performance in a scholarly tone.

On balance, promoting the participation of learners towards meaning-focused communicative objectives is crucial for enhancing linguistic skills. However, if the practical perspective is not balanced with an academic assessment of the learners' performance, this would end up in the fossilization of linguistic bad habits (Wei, 2008).

2.8. Teaching Style

2.8.1. Conditions

To propose a participative model following TBL prerogatives, a previous analysis of the class settings is necessary for its correct execution. The most important variable is the students' reactivity towards the activities. As Hamidah et al. (2009) indicate, comprehension of the manner students´ learn and their level of proficiency is necessary for instructors to meet their educative requirements. In this regard, teachers ought to consider a specific approach for implementing a task in class otherwise learners will not engage in the activities and lose interest in acquiring a better command of the language.

Task-based learning requires learners to actively participate in the production of communicative output to be effective. In this regard, motivation is key for the successful execution of the methodology. Teachers are called to motivate the class to set the attitude towards active participation. Lightbrown and Spada (2001) contemplate motivation in second language acquisition as the syntaxis between learners' communicative needs and their attitude towards the language itself. For this means, students require to deem the acquisition of the second language as necessary and in plain terms fun.

The interaction between learners and the language emerges from the contact with the material used for didactic purposes (Bertin et al., 2010). Provided that the acquisition of a new language requires immersion in how native speakers use the language, teachers need to integrate that sort of material as a didactic asset. The implementation of authentic material is a condition for the successful execution of TBL that benefits the acquisition of the second language.

The final condition for a successful implementation of TBL is the measurement of students' performance in displaying their communicative skills to complete the task. According to Burgess et al. (2020) providing feedback is necessary for both the student and the teacher to identify the level of proficiency and implement corrective measures to support the existing knowledge gaps.

Therefore, the elements necessary for the success of implementing TBL comprise proposing a purpose, motivation, and periodic assessment. Teachers are called to arrange the class in a manner that these factors arise naturally in the class.

2.8.2. Methodology

The methodology involved in TBL can be traced back to the implications of an analytic syllabus. For Beglar and Hunt (2010) an analytic syllabus compels learners to immerse into real-life communication with little to the non-intervention from the instructors. It is worth noting that this approach implies that the analytic abilities of the learners will reach correct assumptions about the grammar and lexical knowledge involved in the task presented.

The induction of learners into TBL has the main objective of introducing learners into realistic communicative settings to exploit their skills and acquire knowledge of the target language (Ahmadian, 2016). The implications of this comprise a huge emphasis on honing communicative skills, but also following the process in terms of linguistic accuracy.

Tasks are drills for realistic communication settings. (Littlewood, 2004) interprets tasks as a manner to wield communication to make sense of the world. In this regard, providing activities that directly stimulate communicative display represents an exercise for the real communicative process that the learner is likely to find. On balance, the activities to be considered for TBL, to be effective, directly address the social situations where a proficient command of the language is required.

2.9. Reading comprehension

Reading is a process of decoding information. Alyousef (2006) understands reading as an interactive process between a reader and a text to elicit meaning from the graphic signs embedded. A reader can look at the symbols and read whole pages and not understand a message even so. In this regard, Carrell and Eisterhold (1983) determine that effective reading occurs when learners can understand and assemble a message from the individual

words in a text and later analyze this amalgamation of meaning as a single message.

However, this process tends to be unclear and non-measurable through direct means.

There exists uncertainty regarding measuring reading performance since learners do not elicit that knowledge directly (Hughes, 2003). To formally assess reading skills requires collecting evidence to interpret what learners have comprehended (Ashraf & Zaki, 2016). Evaluating reading comprehension entails establishing parameters in the task and gauging performance towards an objective.

Designing a reading comprehension assessment involves the arrangement of factors such as text content and task characteristics. The latter proposes a goal to be met by the completion of stages of activities through the active participation and use of the target language (Behfrouz & Nahvi, 2013). As for the former, Bowen et al. (1985) describe reading as an analytical activity from which the learner is asked to derive the required information from the input. To successfully comprehend a text is on its means a task.

2.9.1. Vocabulary

The acquisition of vocabulary begins with the implementation of simple terms with little to no correlation with each other; however, once the learners acquire several words then these words can be linked and form more complex structures of meaning (Miaio & Kirby, 2014). The comprehension of the words and their relationships in a language is called lexical knowledge and embeds the communicative performance in the four skills. Perfetti (2008) explains that proficient learners' lexical knowledge is bound to include phonology, orthography, grammar, and the contextual meaning of each term. Therefore, a good command of the vocabulary in a language benefits the processes of decoding and production of communicative output.

The lexical knowledge incentivizes the enhancement of language command, and by the same token, the cognitive process that infers in the understanding of the linguistic conventions of the target language According to Proctor et al. (2009) the relationship between reading comprehension and vocabulary size is determined by two factors: Vocabulary breadth and depth.

Vocabulary Breadth. – It refers to the number of words known by the learner. This embeds all those terms that can arise in a conversation and can be cognitively represented. Notwithstanding, recognizing these terms do not translate into knowing them to a full extent

Vocabulary Depth. - It refers to how well the speaker knows those words. This term embeds those terms with which the learner is not only familiarized but also knows deeply and can use them to a full extent.

2.9.2. Grammar

The latent system in every language sets the norms for its application. Grammar encompasses every principle that rules over sentence structure (Chung & Pullum, 2021). As a result, grammar is not the composition of vocabulary, but rather the normative of its arrangement into complex ideas such as sentences, paragraphs, and texts. It also encourages effective communication. A solid grammar foundation is what allows effective speakers to communicate their ideas effectively and clearly without ambiguity.

Grammar is regarded as a necessary topic to comprehend and master during the instructional process. It serves as a guide for constructing clear statements and communicating precisely what is intended. However, during reading instruction activities, grammar is often overemphasized at the expense of comprehension (Akbari, 2014). As a

result, students are less concerned with word arrangement and more concerned with the terms elicited separately. Although vocabulary focus is important, syntactic awareness that comes from grammar knowledge influences comprehension.

Understanding syntactical rules appear to help with word acquisition and comprehension.

2.10. Stages of Reading

Provided that comprehending a text is a task, a formal strategy for its progression is needed. According to Toprak and Almacıoğlu (2009) to implement effective strategies to elicit reading comprehension teachers need to divide the whole activity into stages. These are:

2.10.1. Pre-reading

This stage oversees presenting students with the topics that will be covered in the material, presenting the opportunity to elicit appropriate background knowledge to work (Mihara, 2011). This step is important to arouse the interest of the learners in the activities to come and purposefully approach the text. The central purpose of this stage is to set the criteria for the activities to be done in later stages.

2.10.2. While-reading

During this stage, students are presented with the reading material to be analyzed. The role of the instructor during this stage is to aid students with different reading strategies as a manner of "guided reading" to facilitate comprehension of the ideas presented in the material (Pearson & Gallagher, 1983). Additionally, there are presented exercises that include grammar drills, eliciting word meanings with dictionaries, or cognitive analysis.

2.10.3. Post-reading

This is the assessment stage where instructors corroborate those students who have comprehended the content of the text through an in-depth analysis (Huong, 2018). The means to achieve this is to encourage discussion groups so for students to share information and explore ideas they may have not caught in the first reading. Finally, teachers implement "follow-up" exercises to incentivize students to use the learned strategies in other texts.

2.11. Reading Strategies

Achieving proficiency in the target language implies the enhancement of the skills regarding production and comprehension of the language. As for reading proficiency respects, factors such as reading flow and vocabulary size play a vital role. Indeed, enhancing these aspects of reading proficiency aids significantly in the acquisition of the second language; however, if learners do not possess enough dexterity in these processes, it is the teachers' responsibility to assist (Hour, 2017).

In this regard, there have been arranged several strategies that help learners to develop their reading skills through certain strategies, some of these are:

Skimming. – This reading strategy involves a read to the introductory information of the text, that is heading, subheading, and summary. In this strategy, teachers walk their students through the procedures involving the task by displaying how to perform this strategy. Skimming is generally employed to introduce students to the reading activity by proposing the topic to be covered and getting the gist of the ideas employed.

Scanning. - This is the counterpart strategy to skimming, in this strategy, students search for a specific piece of information in the text as fast as they can. Vaezi (2006) explains that scanning involves the rapid localization of specific pieces of information. In other words, it is the same strategy students use to locate answers for reading

comprehension evaluations. Usually, scanning is useful to extract pieces of information in a text such as dates, names, or supporting details in general (Fauzi, 2018).

Prediction strategies. – This is an essential reading strategy that consists of anticipating the ideas to come in the material. The objective is to make learners envision the content of the text and by the same token connect better with the text and enhance reading comprehension (Lynch, 2021). To a certain extent making predictions forces readers to utilize critical thinking and problem-solving skills.

Inference strategies. – This strategy consists of reading between lines. In other words, students read and try to deduct ideas that may not be explicit but implicit through the content of the text and so create meaning from the text (Küçükoğlu, 2013). For this strategy to be displayed, teachers may ask students some questions whose answers may not be presented directly but that can be deduced from an in-depth analysis.

2.12. Comprehension Levels

Reading extracts meaning from printed symbols. To put it another way, reading is comprehending a message conveyed through written code (van den Broek & Kendeou, 2017). Then, comprehension is both the means and the final objective. People read to get a message and extract meaning from it.

Comprehending a text message occurs as the reader creates a mental representation of it (Perfetti & Stafura, 2013). However, the reader's active participation elicits the gist of any reading material, as it cannot deliver its message without prior preparation. Because comprehension demands the interaction of cognition segments, there are numerous instances where issues may develop, concluding in comprehension failure (Cain & Oakhill, 2007). When the cognitive load of a reader's working memory is reduced during reading, the reader's ability to extract meaning is generally strengthened, and the reader can decode

these terms fluently and bring meaning to foreign language encountered. To comprehend a text embeds the processing of written code to knowledge. Reading requires attention and versatility at every proficiency stage. These are categorized into elements for expressing meaning while covering levels of complexity, including basic level word-reading and higher-level sentence and text-level comprehension.

2.12.1. Word level

In any language, the word level is the first unit of study. The word marks the beginning of the acquisition of strong language commands. There has been a lot of research done on it from a linguistic standpoint. Observational research on monolingual children, for example, has found that performance on word-level reading skills in the early elementary grades predicts unique variance in later reading comprehension (Farnia & Geva, 2013, pág. 390). In that sense, knowing a word's meaning precedes understanding the ideas expressed in a passage.

Zaric and Nagler (2021) describe the word as the fundamental level of reading, which includes decoding in this sense, word-level decoding is directly related to the first stages of decoding into understandable ideas. For García and Cain (2014) "reading comprehension and its development are highly dependent on a reader's ability to read written words accurately and fluently" (p.76). As a result, decoding information is a cognitive process that connects written code to its subsequent comprehension.

2.12.2. Sentence Level

The next aspect is sentence-level, and the next stage is from word level. It is relevant to mention what this level is about, Ecalle et al. (2013) stated that "the sentence level combines

words using rules of syntax and semantic structure to form idea units” (p.2), so based on words and how they are collocated in a specific order result in the complete message.

The reading comprehension process involves syntactic implications at the sentence level. Sentence comprehension is critical for avoiding misreading in settings of misleading semantic knowledge (Ecalte et al., 2013). Sentence level is important for reading because it contains a lot of syntactic and semantic meaning, which can help with reading difficulties.

2.12.3. Text Level

Text-level implies that readers can connect sentences or paragraphs to shape their interpretation of the author's message. Landi et al. (2013); Zaric and Nagler (2021) emphasize that to succeed in text-level comprehension processes, a learner must be capable of summarizing, establishing cross-reference (anaphoric) connections, and drawing inference conclusions, that is, extracting information, allowing referential linkages, and sketching interpretation and conclusions.

To summarize, reading comprehension is divided into three levels: word-level, sentence-level, and text-level. Readers comprehend the first words before moving on to constructing semantic meaning from syntactic features, formulating lists, and summarizing information.

2.13. MINEDUC Standards for the instruction of English

The national curriculum standards are embedded in the Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) document. To provide an updated and improved language teaching methodology worldwide. These standards comprise various categories which go from children to adults' proficiency. However, in the context of the present research, a

general overview will be provided on the common core standards for English learners and the guidelines to assess professional English teaching standards.

2.13.1. Common core standards for English Learners

The document provided by Kuhlman and Knezevic (2012) to the TESOL association called Overview of the Common Core State Standards Initiatives for ELLs, there is explored the concepts and standards elaborated by the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) to determine the educational standards from kindergarten to prep school. Developed from the need to establish standards for mathematic and linguistic knowledge, these standards were transferred to other areas of education.

As English language instruction goes, these adaptations are found mainly in reading and the different actions to be implemented by English instructors and that are observed based on performance from the class. These adaptations proposed by (Achievement Partners, 2012) are contemplated in three main pillars that are regularized by different reading strategies and aspects such as the genre and length of the text to be used.

1. Building knowledge through content-rich nonfiction. – This pillar comprises the assessment of the learner’s existing knowledge of reading nonfictional content by integrating related material. In addition, there are integrated assessments adapted to further cement the new information into the learner’s knowledge baggage.
2. Reading, writing, and speaking are grounded in evidence from both literacy and informational text. – The instructor introduces specific vocabulary for the comprehension and posterior differentiation of literacy from informational texts. Introduce specific structures of vocabulary to aid learners in

the citation and synthesis of information to avoid plagiarism. Finally, supporting different levels of English proficiency by scaffolding grammar structures and vocabulary used in basic to advanced levels of proficiency.

3. Regular practice with complex text and its academic language. –

This pillar establishes the analysis of complex texts, so learners become aware of academic language found in this sort of material. In addition, teachers employ these texts to instruct learners to identify unknown words by various strategies such as identification of cognates, prefixes, roots, and suffixes. Finally, the last stage becomes teaching learners' academic language as a means for comprehension of complex texts.

2.13.2. Guidelines to assess professional English teaching standards

The following guidelines proposed by Kuhlman and Knezevic (2012), the situation of English teaching in Ecuador had been submitted to analysis because the implementation of TESOL standards happened after a comparative analysis of these with those proposed by the government. Nevertheless, there was decided that the TESOL standards possessed a stronger theoretical background and provided a more specific skillset for English learners.

Currently, the instructional process of the foreign language in Ecuador submits to five domains which are extrapolated to every level of proficiency from the earlier stages of instruction to the last. According to MINISTERIO DE EDUCACIÓN (2015) these comprise:

1. First domain. – The instruction contemplates language structures and communication, language acquisition and development, and language fluency.

2. Second domain. – Comprising culture and the necessity of knowledgeable teachers that comprehend the impact of this trait in the acquisition of the English language.

3. Third domain. – The curriculum development entails planning based on standards and their posterior implementation with the merge of technological and nontechnological resources.

4. Fourth domain. – Covering the assessment aspect of instruction, this domain proposes the gathering and evaluation of information related to English language learning as the backbone of the instructional process. This also introduces issues related to learners and their proficiency inside of the classroom.

5. Fifth domain. – This domain entails the professional and ethical aspects of the instructional process. In plain terms, this compromises teachers into the accomplishment of certain quality standards. These include the introduction of new techniques for the instruction of the English language.

2.14. CEFR Standards for the instruction of English in Ecuador

In the national curriculum of English, the most significant abilities to be considered are those of summarizing and critical thinking. These skills lay based on the Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) and Communicative Language Approach (CLA). These models focus on the integration of cultural and cognitive aspects as the pivots that direct the acquisition of the foreign language and as drivers for the development of the learners, and the active participation of the learner in the construction of knowledge.

Once the influence of CLIL and CLA are merged into the national curriculum there is obtained a learner's profile that implements the international standards for the English language proposed by the CEFR. So, this aspect of the instruction merges with the active participation of the learner through thinking skills and the resolution of problems that

motivates engagement. As a result, the exit profile of the learner comprises the accomplishment of the international standards and at the same time considering the national context, understanding English as a tool for actively participating in social and cultural events.

Ever since MINEDUC restructured the standards to evaluate proficiency in the foreign language, the most significant addition has spawned in terms of production and comprehension rather than correct use of grammar structures and correctness in spelling. In this regard, the most significant benefit brought by this process has come in the form of the implementation of international standards.

2.14.1. CEFR Reference levels in the Ecuadorian Educational System

This international system to measure communicative performance covers around forty languages including English and divides these competencies into six levels of proficiency. These start with the basic level A1 and go all the way to proficiency at C2. There exist different aspects to be measured and are classified according to the four pillars of communication, speaking, writing, listening, and reading. In the Ecuadorian context, the levels of proficiency in the public system correspond to A1 for the first years of instruction and progressively develop into the B1.2 level by the end of high school. The main objective of this curriculum is to teach learners communicative, linguistic, sociolinguistic, and pragmatic components.

These CEFR standards comprise the development of the four skills in terms of three axes which are global Engagement, social and thinking skills, and foundation for lifelong learning. Each one of these measurements determines the level of proficiency where any learner stands and is expressed in "can do" statements (MINEDUC, 2019)

2.14.2. Reading Standards

One of the controlling skills comprised in the acquisition of English is reading. Evidence suggests that vocabulary acquired through exposition to reading material comprises one of the most effective manners to master grammar awareness and effective communication (Milton, 2013). According to curricular thread number three in the EFL curriculum exposed in the English curriculum of Bachillerato General Unificado, reading proficiency is determined by the ability to interact autonomously with written texts by extracting useful information to interact with the world.

Considering the above mentioned, the interaction between reader and text embeds comprehension. This ability, according to the third curricular thread, is deemed as a highly complex cognitive process that according to (Krashen, 2004) has been shown to promote learning across subjects. In other terms, the further development of reading skills from this point on contemplates benefits for the learners in other areas as cross-curricular content and as a resource for acquiring knowledge or additional skills.

National exit profile for the third BGU student of English

The exit profile contemplated by the end of high school includes understanding texts that consist mainly of high-frequency, everyday language, and the description of events, feelings, and wishes in personal letters. In addition, as for critical analysis embeds, there is expected for the learner to integrate the recognition of the line of argument in texts as well as the main conclusion the composition presents.

According to (MINEDUC, 2019) the Ecuadorian high school profile has the objective of preparing students for active participation in a globalized and democratic society by embracing the development of creative and critical thinking skills. As there has been

explained above, the exit profile of the third BGU student corresponds to the CEFR B1 level and comprises for reading the ability to read straightforward texts in a literacy-rich environment and the posterior use of English reading material as an educational resource.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK

3.1. Description of the study area / Study group

All senior students from the "Mario Oña" high school in San Gabriel took part in this study. There were 66 girls and 53 boys between the ages of 16 and 17. There was also a single English teacher who worked with those students. This 1350-student high school was selected for the study because the students not only presented reading comprehension problems but also the class conditions were not proper for the development of this skill due to the high number of students and lack of resources focused on developing English reading skills. This research work is a non-probability sampling; the participants were selected to have a similar level of English command and reading ability. The initiatives to propitiate reading habits in English were staggered due to financial problems and other factors brought by the pandemic. In this regard the study group was initially dissatisfied with the quality of their education and carrying knowledge gaps from previous years.

3.1.1. Research Environment

Mario Oña Perdomo high school is an educative institution located in San Gabriel, Ecuador. As one of the three principal high schools in the city, the institution is crowded with classrooms of 40 to 50 students. Therefore, managing these big classrooms tend to be a problem for teachers and authorities. The resources for the English area are limited to the basic English book. In that regard, the insufficient resources are also a determining factor for the problems regarding not only reading comprehension but also English proficiency.

3.1.2. Population

This research selected senior students because according to the educative national parameters this group ought to reach the B1 level from the international standards. Nevertheless, the institution exposes multiple problems regarding the manner English is taught. Due to the high number of students in each classroom, teachers have problems providing the same level of attention to each one of them. This is one of the reasons for the deficient English proficiency. On the other hand, the material tends to ignore certain activities and certain topics because of the excessive time these would take to be completed and to generate meaningful knowledge. Therefore, teachers are forced to be more efficient and propose activities that benefit certain aspects of the foreign language knowledge but not developing skills as reading. This results in a group of students with problems in reading comprehension and by the same token insufficient awareness to interact with the foreign language.

3.2. Research Approach

Due to the nature of the variables of the formulated problem, the research adopted a qualitative approach since all compiled information in regards dealt with personal appreciations about reading habits, and problems in reading comprehension. In that aspect, the information given by the students had the purpose of addressing point by point these factors to obtain further theoretical information. In the same line, an interview to the vice principal and teacher was conducted to obtain a deeper insight into the problem.

3.2.1 Type of Research

This research work was exploratory and descriptive as this aimed to cover two major problems in Mario Oña Perdomo high school. The first problem was the low performance in reading comprehension activities that needed to be addressed from a different approach. The second problem dealt more with aspects regarding the high number of students in class, and the limited time to be employed during the activities. In this regard, both approaches aimed to obtain data to arrange a proposal that served as a solution to the problems of the students from specific educative institution. On the one hand, this study is exploratory because it aims to obtain a deep insight into the reading comprehension problem of the senior students from Mario Oña Perdomo high school. Since this comprises a problem that has not been given enough attention, the research aims to shed light on the matter and propose a possible solution. On the other hand, the study is descriptive as this applies concrete data comprising the number of students, the place where the research was conducted, the period of time in which the information compiling was done, and the techniques employed for getting that data. In this regard, the information compiled will be used to arrange a proposal that considers the circumstances of the institution to work in realistic terms.

3.2.2. Data collection methods

Since the present research comprised a qualitative approach to the problem, the methods to obtain the needed information dealt specifically with the needs of the students in regards of reading, the disponibility of the teacher and the school politics in regards of the English classes in general. Therefore, the following lines will describe the two methods employed to obtain the data and the population considered to participate in each one.

Survey

The first instrument to compile information was conducted on the senior students from the institution. This was composed of ten multiple-choice questions which comprised aspects regarding reading habits, preferences in the format of the reading material, the influence of reading in education, reading comprehension self perception, and possible causes for the low proficiency in English reading.

Interview

The second instrument were two interviews conducted on the seniors' English teacher and also the vice principal from the institution, both comprised seven open-ended questions. The interview for the teacher comprised questions in regards of the effectiveness of the standard reading activities proposed in class, the time employed on these, and a personal opinion in regards to the implementation of an online platform. Conversely, the interview for the vice principal covered questions in regards to reading development projects for the students, evaluation rubrics, and future plans for the English area.

3.3. Procedures

The survey was employed to collect quantitative data. All senior students at "Mario Oña" high school were subjected to this. There were 119 students in the class. The purpose of this survey was to investigate the causes of the problem as well as the teachers' methodology. There should be noted that the rating data was collected using the Likert scale survey model.

The interview, on the other hand, was the second method of gathering qualitative data. This was applied to all teachers at "Mario Oña" high school. There were five teachers, from which the one in charge of third BGU was considered for an interview. The purpose of the

interview was to clarify the student survey and provide possible explanations. Furthermore, this interview was semi-structured to collect the appreciations and reasonings that the teachers can provide. The proposal was justified and implemented based on the results obtained after collecting and analyzing the results of the interviews and surveys.

CHAPTER IV

4.1. Discussion of the survey and interviews

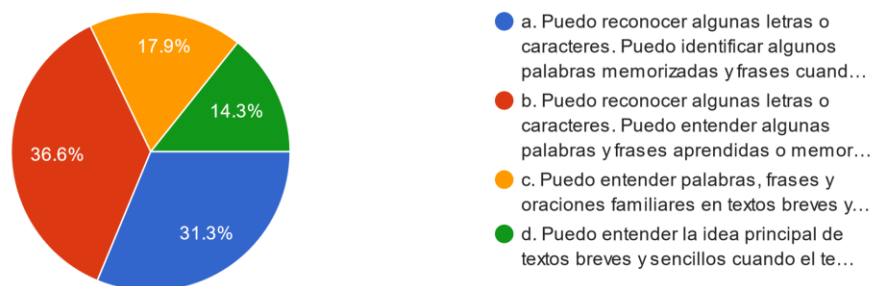
The survey and the interview served the purpose of collecting different perspectives for the reading problem whereas from the perspective of the students as well as the teacher and vice principal thoughts. First, the survey conducted on the senior students' class had the purpose of compiling appreciations about the activity of reading itself, opinions on its importance, and possible causes for the difficulties arose from the used reading material for the English classes. Second, the interview for both the senior students' teacher and the vice principal of the institution addressed the problems of time and lack of resources to implement a reading program in the institution. In this regard, the information obtained through these media was used for structuring the proposal on this project.

4.1.1. Survey Results

Figure 1 *Students Reading Abilities*

1. De entre los siguientes enunciados, seleccione aquel que describa su habilidad de lectura en inglés.

112 respuestas

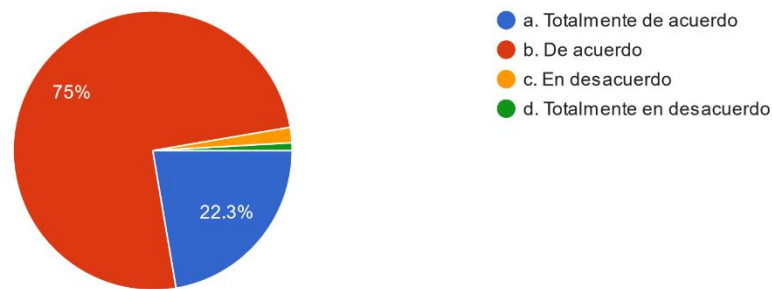


The first question in the survey inquired students about their estimation of their abilities to read in English. About a third, 36.6% declared that they could identify certain terms or

in class. Conversely, 7.1% stipulated that read daily. Finally, only 0.9% of students indicated that never read. The data suggest that there exists a relative interest in reading, especially when this activity is done for pleasure. According to Hughes-Hassell and Rodge (2007), one of the most important factors that encourage the development of reading skills was to give students time to read during the school day as there has been noted that some students do not possess enough time to read after school. Therefore, the results suggest that there exists overall positive regard for reading, although the reading material consists of texts in Spanish there exists the possibility of introducing texts in English if the logistics abide by it.

Figure 3 *Students Reading appreciations*

3. Leer es entretenido
112 respuestas

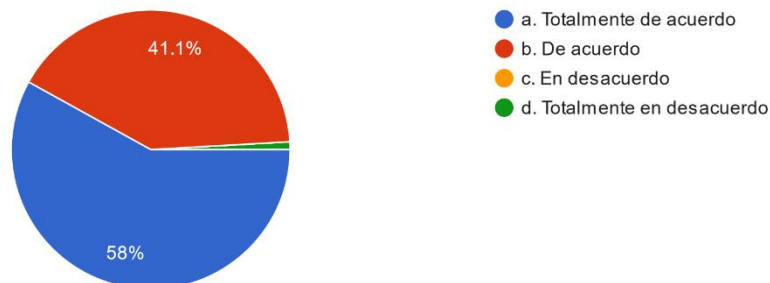


The third research question consisted of measuring the students' affinity towards the activity itself. Most of the students, 75%, strongly agreed with the statement that reading is entertaining. 22.3% had positive views towards reading too. However, 1.8% expressed that it was not an entertaining activity. Finally, only 0.9% were totally against the statement. According to (Clark & Rumbold, 2006) "Reading for pleasure refers to reading that we continue because we are interested in it, even though we started it at someone else's urging.

“(p.6). The endeavor of implementing reading activities could function favorably if the selected reading material is atoned with the student’s interests.

Figure 4 *Students’ opinion about learning by reading*

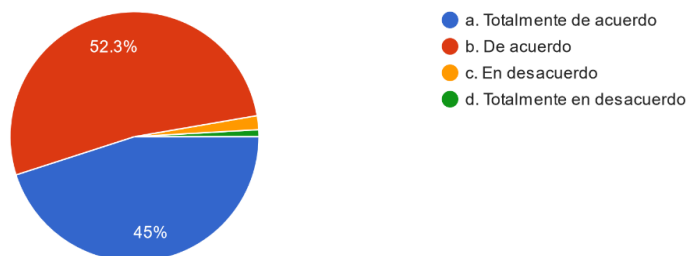
4. Cuando leo aprendo nuevas cosas
112 respuestas



The fourth research question covers the influence of reading on learning. 58% of students fully agreed with the statement. By the same token, 41.1% were also receptive to the statement. Only, 0.9% of students disagreed with the statement. There can be implied that 3rd BGU students in general are aware of the positive effects of reading. This can be correlated with (Kazemi, 2021), in his research he indicated that EFL students who read for enjoyment not only learn new words and grammar structures but also acquire the language naturally and comprehensively. A varied and free choice of materials also encourages students to read more.

Figure 5 *Students' opinion about second language acquisition*

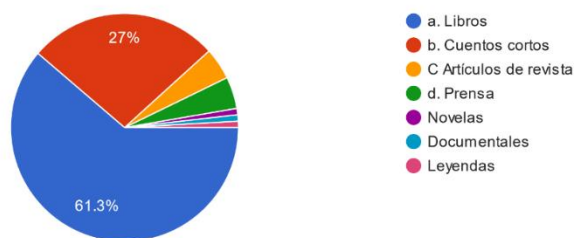
5. Creo que la destreza lectora es necesaria para la adquisición de un segundo idioma
111 respuestas



The fifth question correlates reading with the acquisition of a second language. Half of the students, 52.3%, agreed that reading had an important role in the acquisition of another language. Additionally, 45% also agreed to a lesser degree that it was necessary. Conversely, 1.8% disagreed with this statement and 0.9% were completely against it. There was virtually a complete agreement regarding the influence of reading as a skill necessary for acquiring a second language. (Hossein, 2011) states that L2 reading is a complex cognitive skill that involves the processing of language on similar but distinctive differences from those of L1. In this regard, the author implies that to become a proficient L2 reader, it is necessary to master it to some degree L1 reading.

Figure 6 *Students' opinion about Second Language Acquisition*

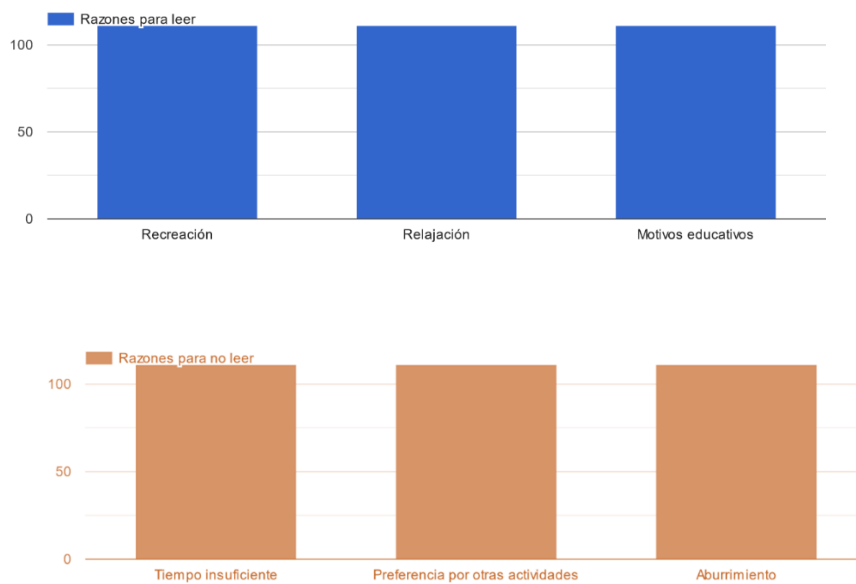
6. Si tuviera la oportunidad de escoger el tipo de fuente de lectura en clase, ¿Por cuál se decidiría?
111 respuestas



The sixth question inquires students about their preference for the reading material. Most of the 3rd BGU students, 61.3%, opted for the option of books. 27% opted for short tells instead. 4.5% selected magazines and the other 4.5% concur with newspapers. Finally, 2.7% indicated that they wanted either watch Soap Operas, documentaries, or legends instead of reading. According to (Black & Barnes, 2015), reading fictional and non-fictional books tends to benefit comprehension depending on the familiarity of the topic the student has. In other words, there exist evidence that suggests that the interest a student demonstrates in a reading passage affects positively its posterior comprehension, and thus, the acquisition of a new language.

Figure 7 *Students' reasons to read*

7. En su criterio personal, cuáles son las razones principales para leer o no leer. Elija al menos una opción de la columna.



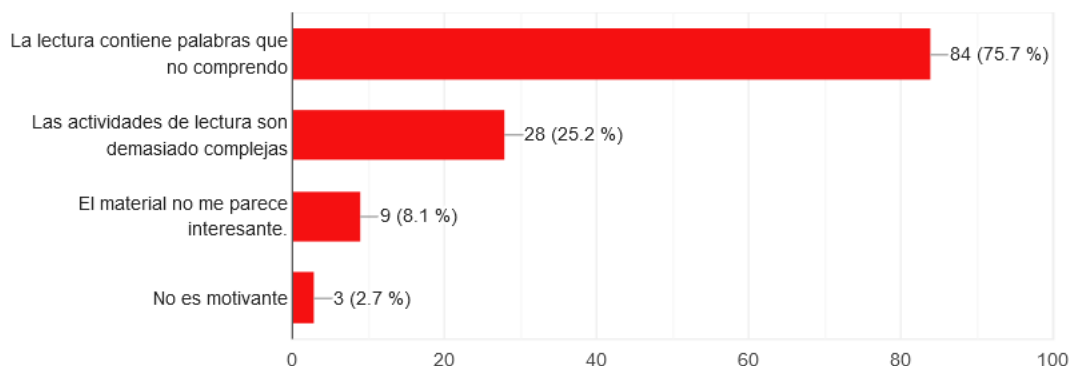
The seventh question collected students' opinions on both regard, reasons to read and reasons to not read. Virtually every 3rd BGU student agreed that reading was a source of

recreation and relaxation, additionally, it came useful for educational development. Conversely, these students also showed that reading could not be an activity to incorporate as they signaled no free time, preference for doing other activities instead, and simply described it as boring. According to (Merga, 2017) there has been extended research that suggests that adolescents may perceive diminished encouragement to read beyond early childhood. In this regard, one of the root problems behind inefficient reading skills could arise from motivation.

Figure 8 *Students' opinion about the difficulty of reading in English*

8. En su criterio, ¿Cuáles cree que serían las razones principales por las cuales la lectura en inglés puede ser problemática? Seleccione al menos 1 opción.

111 respuestas



The eighth question inquired directly about the stance of the students regarding obstacles when reading. Most students, 75.7%, indicated that the reading material contained terminology they were not familiar with. Additionally, 25.2% labeled complex reading activities as the problem. Conversely, only 8.1% indicated that the selected material was not interesting. Finally, 2.7% alleged that reading in English was not motivational. Research made by (Laurice, 2008) suggests that reading problems arise early in the

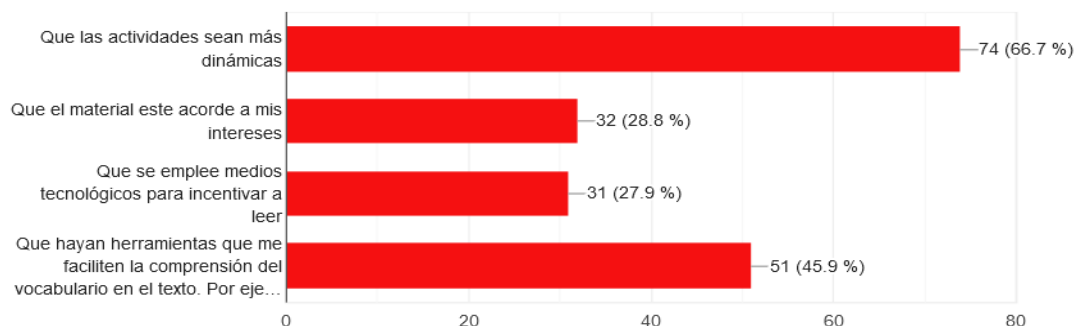
development stages and keep getting worse because there is not an emphasis on a holistic approach, rather it is considered better to work on specific aspects of the problem.

Figure 9 *Students' opinion about encouraging reading habits in English*

9. Si pudiera escoger, ¿Qué condiciones de clase serían ideales para motivar la lectura en inglés? Puede escoger 2 o más opciones.



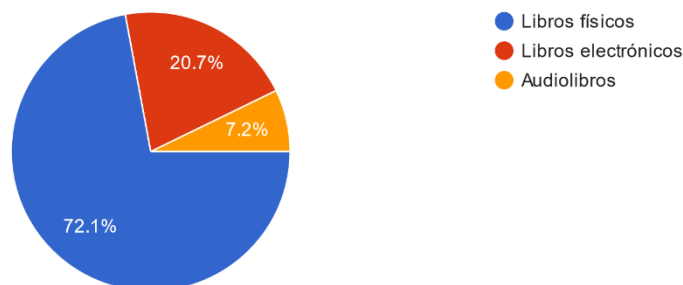
111 respuestas



The ninth question refers to the ideal condition students would select to facilitate the process of reading in English. For this, 66.7% of students indicated that they would prefer more dynamism in the presented activities. 28.8% suggested that the material should be selected based on their preferences. Others, 27.9% opted for the implementation of technological media for incentivizing reading. Finally, 45.9% concluded that they would prefer assistance that helps them comprehend the vocabulary contemplated in the text. The goal of presenting new strategies for enhancing reading comprehension arises from the need of transforming students into skilled readers.

Figure 10 *Students' preference on reading media*

10. En cuanto al formato del material de lectura ¿Con cuál se siente más a gusto?
111 respuestas



The tenth question refers to the format of reading students feel the most comfortable with. Most of the 3rd BGU students, 72.1%, chose hard-cover books. Additionally, 20.7% opted for e-books as their preferred option. Finally, only 7.2% decided on audiobooks. Hard cover books tend to be a popular option as there has been noted that these motivate students to read (Wigfield et al., 2012). Therefore, it should be considered to purchase more physical books to be stored in the library or to print copies of the reading material.

4.1.2. Vice-principal Interview

The interview with the vice principal started with the inquiry of which was the emphasis given to the development of reading competencies through every educative level. The vice-principal started explaining that reflexive thinking functions as the pivot for curricular planning. Reflexive thinking, as she said, complements the acquisition of knowledge as these functions as the basis of pedagogical planning. Therefore, the institution abides by the instrumentalization of reflexive thinking to develop students' skills-based knowledge. In the case of the English area, she complies with the necessity to enhance reading skills to acquire a second language. Thus, there could be implied that although there existed

awareness regarding the importance of a more developed curriculum, the efforts to develop a concrete plan to benefit these abilities have stagnated in just general terms.

The second question covered the topic of the instruments employed for evaluation in the English area. The vice-principal elaborated the argument that in the case of the English area the curricula consider the development of the four skills. The parameters to evidence the achievement of the objective was the comprehension of messages, acquisition of vocabulary, and pronunciation. In this regard, the authority remarked on the importance of evidence in the demonstration of these skills. The method employed as she explained was the implementation of activities that tested various skills at the same time. For instance, the implementation of certain vocabulary would be used for a speaking activity and posteriorly this would be used to evaluate pronunciation too.

The third question directly addressed the implementation of instruments directed to evaluate exclusively reading abilities. In this regard, the vice principal indicated that there did not exist an exclusive plan for the development of reading exclusively since the institution observed a holistic approach to the acquisition of the second language. In this aspect, the implementation of projects took place to assess the progress in such skills based on rubrics.

Fourth, in terms of an institutional project aimed at the acquisition of reading habits, there was not one per user. According to the vice principal, the ministry proposed prerogatives that are followed exclusively in the prioritized curriculum. In addition. The authority explained that there has not been time to implement additional projects as the one from the ministry was taking excessive time.

The fifth question covered the aspect of academic support for students with reading problems. According to the vice principal, the procedure in these cases involved extracurricular activities that should be supervised by the parents. As she explained, the problem was more prominent in the first years of school.

The sixth question inquired about any supervision from the institution to the reading ability of the students. In this regard, the vice principal admitted that there had not been a formal process since the last year. She signals the present interview as a possible solution to the problem of reading habits in English. Conversely, the institution has implemented a sort of stimulus to acknowledge the student that stands out in the English area. They could give a speech during the graduation ceremony.

The final question asked about any prospect for the institution in terms of enhancing English teaching. In this regard, the authority exposed that dialogue in the English area had presented the necessity to train its teachers. She addresses the importance of this as the processes of recategorization have not been considered for this area. Nevertheless, she has heard that some spaces for capacitation may involve the creation of an online platform for the students to employ and according to her there exist the potential for the enhancement of English teaching. Additionally, she addresses the importance of knowing a second language as the international job market emphasizes the need for bilingual professionals. Finally, she hopes that the presential modality would start again as it would provide the opportunity to retake dialogue and implement proposals.

4.1.2.3. Teacher Interview

The interview with the 3rd BGU English teacher directly addressed the learning problems of the students. The first question covered the three main factors that the teacher considered to be crucial in the hampered reading development of the students. In this aspect, the teacher explained that the first and most crucial was the employment of Spanish in English classes. She expressed that around 10 minutes of class was in English, and the rest was in Spanish. The interactions between students are limited to the mother tongue. What is more, the habit of reading was rarely present in teenagers even in Spanish. The teacher signaled the lack of interest to learn a new language as another factor to consider, she explained that students rely excessively on translators, and even with that tool, they did not check if the translated word was correct.

The second question covered the topic of reading material and its effectiveness. In this aspect, the teacher explained that if the student finds the topic interesting, they will pay attention. For instance, she proposed the topic of DNA and how tests were being held on it. Another strategy employed was short texts and trending topics.

The third question explored the number of hours used for reading-related activities in class. The class per se lasts for 30 minutes according to the teacher. Depending on the extension of the activity, she used two to three hours of English classes per week to scan the text and obtain vocabulary. She addressed the topic of the translator again as she explains that students do not take the time to understand but only comply with the proposed activity. "This is a problem of virtuality", she explained, "however, we hope to control this when we return to face-to-face classes".

In terms of the development of reading skills, the fourth question pictured a process involving the mother tongue. The teacher explained that the activities involve obtaining the gist of the text, then looking for the ideas that support them, and finally looking for unknown terms for the students that would help them increase their vocabulary.

The fifth question inquired the teacher about personal recommendations for improving the conditions in class in terms of reading. The teacher expressed that motivation was a key component of her class and emphasized the role of English in the university and for future job prospects. Another aspect to consider as she expressed was to implement English in daily life. For example, she suggested her students change the settings in their games to English.

The sixth question addressed the topic of teaching methodologies, in this case, task-based learning on the development of reading. The teacher explained that standard methodology does not bear a significant effect on the students as they tend to get bored and distracted easily. Instead, the strategy involved songs and activities that could use them to teach vocabulary. Another strategy presented short stories that involve topics that could be perceived as interesting by the students. Contrarily with grammar instruction, students tend to participate actively in activities of this class.

The final question involved the implementation of an online educative platform aimed exclusively at the development of reading skills using the methodology of task-based learning. The teacher was open to implementing a platform of these characteristics if this was used responsibly. However, she determined the caveats of such implementation arguing that it could lead to a lazy performance from the students since the tools could oversimplify the process of acquiring proficiency.

4.2. DISCUSSION OF MAIN FINDINGS

The students of 3rd BGU were inquired about reading habits, predilected material, and learning preferences among other aspects. In the first instance, the motivational aspect of the reading activities underlined a problem of comprehension. As the results of the survey suggested, most students could only comprehend single words and were unable to map a general comprehension of the text in English. Conversely, the second and third question suggested that there existed an affinity to reading. The survey indicated promptness to read a text at least once or twice a week and the recognition of reading as a ludic activity. Other data suggested that students can recognize the value of reading as a learning asset for the acquisition of a second language; in this regard, most students indicated a predilection for physical books. However, when directly asked about the problems involved in reading in the target language, most students agreed upon the difficulty of the terminology included in the tests rather than the difficulty of the task itself.

One circumstance that seems to originate reading comprehension problems is the low motivation levels attributed to the selected material. Owing to this, the activities presented are ineffective. Since reading requires the employment of cognitive strategies to jump from word level comprehension up to text comprehension, the problem is attributed to reside on the incapacity to use the information from the book into other settings. The class is called to complete a series of activities based on the passage but considering that the senior students have problems with the vocabulary found in the reading passages, the final result is that the activity rarely develops reading comprehension skills.

As for the interview with the teacher, she addressed the problem of low performance as a mixture of low motivation and an inefficient approach to the proposed tasks in the

classroom. More specifically, the teacher signals the use of Spanish in class as a limiting factor since both students and teachers use the mother tongue to make themselves understood. In the same line, the reading activities tend to take excessive class time to be completed while the students go from the comprehension stage, to begin with, the activity perse. The activities mainly consist of comprehending and obtaining the gist of a text, as well as the obtention of new vocabulary. When asked about the implementation of an online platform to solve the problem regarding time, the teacher expressed her agreement with the proposal, although suggesting that this could lead to a lazy performance from the students if there does not exist control.

Finally, the vice principal interview revealed certain details regarding the arrangement of the English area activities as well as signaling caveats involved in the teaching-learning process. Firstly, the axis managing the activities in the English area surrounds reflexive thinking and the implementation of the pedagogical plan inside the classroom. The latter factor submitted to the precepts of skills-based knowledge. On the same line, the evidence of achievement in the English area is corroborated by the employment of the four skills in activities that integrate at least two of them. When directly asked about reading exclusive assessment activities, the authority remarks on the implementation of rubrics to evaluate the progression of this and a holistic approach for those. Conversely, in terms of implementing a reading project in the institution, the vice principal declared that there was. On the other hand, the academic support for students with reading problems was limited to extracurricular activities that may or may not be supervised by the parents. The authority declared that if the implementation of an online platform occurs, then that initiative would be implemented

4.3. STRATEGIES BY FINDING

The educative requirements for approaching reading comprehension require strategies that address the context in which the class takes place. In the case of the Third BGU from “Mario Oña Perdomo” high school, the caveats identified go from insufficient class time for covering reading activities appropriately to difficulty to decode the content of the reading passage. In this regard, the following lines will envelop these findings systematically to propose strategies to aid the identified problems in the English classroom.

Finding 1

Insufficient class time hinders the possibility of establishing reading activities in concordance with the context of the contents taught in class.

Strategy 1

Propose reading activities after school that engage students in dynamic work through the implementation of online resources that set a reinforcement of the contents taught in class.

Finding 2

Due to the low levels of motivation shown by the class, the reading activities in class tend to be deemed as boring and so the engagement to the reading passage tends to be weak.

Strategy 2

Implement online extensions for the internet browser to optimize reading using pointers or highlighters to retain the attention of the student to the passage and encourage involvement in the reading task.

Finding 3

The level of proficiency of each student repercussions the effects of proposing certain activities. There are students whose level of comprehension remains on the single terms which hinders the development of reading skills as this does not allow the arrangement of an understanding of the passage.

Strategy 3

Introduce reading aids in form of glosses, visual cues, and other resources to improve reading comprehension from the group of students for which certain terms are incomprehensible.

Finding 4

The standard reading activities tend to be extensive and cover a significant amount of class time. The teacher needs to explain the activity to the class, then help certain students individually to comprehend single terms from the reading passage which hinders the comprehension of the rest due to insufficient involvement from the rest of the class.

Strategy 4

Elaborate an online resource catalog that provides explanations, support, and cues that facilitate the completion of the reading task enough to be completed but not excessively for losing the engagement of the class and hindering reading comprehension development.

CHAPTER V

ACADEMIC PROPOSAL

ONLINE PLATFORM TO ENHANCE READING ABILITIES

5.1. Rational

The value of the present research on Task Based Learning is obtaining information to understand and apply the principles of this methodology task cycle in the development of the target language reading skills of the 3rd BGU students at Mario Oña Perdomo high school. Regarding the theoretical aspect of this paper, the necessity of implementing a framework for the implementation of tasks in class to benefit the development of students' language knowledge pivots cognitive development that permits students to go from word comprehension to text comprehension level.

As there has been repeatedly exposed in this research project, developing reading skills do not display consistent results as could be the case with writing or speaking. Therefore, the assessment process of this ability requires measuring levels of comprehension of material through activities that can either involve active or passive participation of the learners of the institution in the completion of a task. Nevertheless, the caveat involved in applying tasks to exclusively develop reading skills could detriment the pace of the class and the development of the rest of the abilities. In this regard, the precepts of Task-Based Learning could be integrated into an online platform as this can provide useful tools for the learners at every stage of the cycle and save valuable class time.

The implementation of an online platform in class is an application of blended learning that could create a strong bond between the social aspect of the interactions in the classroom among students and teachers, and the technology-enhanced learning

opportunities provided by the internet and its web resources (Dziuban et al., 2004).

Considering this, the following pages will explore the elements that will be considered necessary for the enhancement of the reading skills of the students at "Mario Oña Perdomo" high school.

There is expected that the class from the mentioned institution would increase their proficiency levels which will be measured based on international standards. As there has been explored the standards to be implemented are those considered for the Common European Reference for Languages, more specifically from the *Can-Do statements* section.

5.2 Can-Do statements on reading parameters

Considering the different levels of proficiency found in class, the parameters of evaluation for reading will compel the statements from the A2 and B1 levels. In addition, these parameters would serve to identify which aspects of reading need to be focused on along the process. Hitherto the following lines will provide details of the parameters to be considered as well as how these are expected to influence positively the development of the students' reading ability.

Considering the CEFR guidebook, to tag along international standards for languages embed the revision of the parameters established by the Association of Language Testers in Europe (ALTE). According to (The Council of Europe, 2011), the ALTE 'Can Do' statements constitute a central part of a long-term research program set by ALTE, the aim of which is to establish a framework of 'key levels' of language performance, within which exams can be objectively described. Considering these standards, the evaluation of the reading tasks would be evaluated in terms of competencies. As students are constantly exposed to reading passages that would become more demanding over time, the development of this skill will constitute the basis to develop reading comprehension skills.

5.2.1 ALTE Level 1

CAN understand straightforward information within a known area, such as on products and signs and simple textbooks or reports on familiar matters.

The habit of reading is not extended amongst the 3rd BGU class in Mario Oña Perdomo high school at least in terms of literature. Nevertheless, increasing awareness regarding the importance of reading should be considered as a part of the instruction. This ALTE statement entails the basis from which any development of reading skills entails. Therefore, implementing this Can-do statement determines the starting point from which the reading comprehension is enhanced. How this statement will be evaluated is through the correct completion of the early stages of the proposal which are composed of simple and short activities.

5.2.2 ALTE Level 3

CAN scan texts for relevant information and understand detailed instructions or advice.

The reasoning for applying this statement relies on the necessity for students to understand chunks of information related to instructions. Considering the imbalances in proficiency levels amongst students are relatively high (Woolley, 2010), and so the need of implementing activities that sets the basis of what is expected for the class to do is required for the completion of the proposal. Otherwise, the intended effect of the reading activities will be lost in translation as students fail to comprehend what they are asked to achieve. Hitherto, understanding written instructions compose a skill to be developed as this will save student time and will enable the development of deductive skills.

5.2.3 ALTE Level 4

CAN read quickly enough to cope with an academic course, read the media for information, or understand non-standard correspondence.

The following step in the development of reading is the capacity to maintain and increase the reading pace. As the text's length increases, students are required to develop reading speed (Macalister, 2010). The ability to read fast improves comprehension and motivates students, in the long run, to continue reading (Chang, 2010). Therefore, the implementation of reading activities whose number of words increases will force students to increase the rate of words read as the time for completing the tasks is limited.

5.3. Theoretical Framework

The proposal to aid reading comprehension is mainly based on the concepts found in the research of (Ashraf & Zaki, 2016) which establishes a model of action that can adapt and present the TBL activities in a sequential and adaptable manner complying with authenticity and instructiveness. In addition, the steps proposed in the model will be classified in function of the phases in TBL to establish a clearer representation of the actions corresponding to the task cycle from the proposal of the itinerary of activities to the final evaluation.

Previous to the execution of the task itself, the students will get familiarized with the activities to be encountered along the endeavor. As there has been explained, the successful implementation of TBL depends on the level of awareness of the students and how knowledgeable they are regarding the grammar involved and the procedures to comply with the learning objectives of the task. As for reading tasks respects, this stage will be exclusively devoted to motivating students through brief but effective activities that

enhance comprehension when reading. An example of these activities is proposed by (Tang & Moore, 1992) who supports the use of pre-reading activities as these are effective to decrease oral reading errors and increasing reading rate and comprehension regardless of reading proficiency levels. Since students at Mario Oña Perdomo have problems identifying the terminology in the material, applying pre-reading activities such as title discussion and vocabulary training concerning the presented material would significantly improve the levels of reading comprehension in general.

The pre-task stage will require the teacher to provide students with brief explanations about the grammar to be used, and the number of reading tasks that will be announced and programmed in the platform. From a pedagogical perspective, this action aids in setting the pace of the activities in order as this stage functions as a holistic preparation. That is, to establish a work schedule in class and on the platform, organize the lectures that follow the standard curriculum and separate them from the activities corresponding exclusively to reading, clarify doubts about the activities, and how the effort of the students will be measured during the process.

In terms of the reading activities to be considered in this modality, (Mao, 2012) suggests eliciting interactivity between students and teachers through the reading of engaging material and a posterior output. Being the production of a communicative event the requisite to consider an activity as part of a task from TBL, the necessity of proposing activities that encourage participation, analysis, and interpretation of the reading material becomes vital so for the students to enhance the target language dexterity.

The main goal of a task is to set the ground for the student to enhance abilities that are likely to be used in real-life contexts. Reading books, magazines, and newspapers, and then

elaborating a summary on the gist of each are actions that become useful not only in academic instances but also in social life in general. Therefore, the implementation of authentic material will serve the purpose of motivating students through the reading of engaging material and enhancing communicative skills through the posterior analysis propitiated by the activities to be proposed in the platform.

The activities to opt for that comply with TBL must likely encourage the use of target language for interaction and completion of the task, in this case, the main goal is to develop reading comprehension. To accomplish this objective, there is required to maintain a work schedule that ensures language activation outside the classroom.

The approach considered for the present proposal for the work schedule contemplates a mixed modality between normal class activities with the work on the online platform. Although reading comprises the necessary knowledge for a learner to acquire a certain acquaintance of the foreign language experience, class time is in short supply. Another factor to be considered is that the learners are not equally skilled in the use of the target language. Hence, the activities will be split, leaving grammar lectures and inquiries that may arise during the process for the presential classes, and the tasks of reading with the posterior activities to enhance cognitive abilities for the online platform.

A performance assessment regularly of the students is contemplated to be established by the compilation of grades obtained on the platform and by an evaluation of the reading material that has been presented until then. The assessment will take place twice a month, with the first of these assessments functioning as an opportunity to provide feedback and solve doubts in the class. Nevertheless, the second evaluation will have a summative character and so there will be expected a certain advance from the students regarding their

reading skills, this test will be online, and the results held immediately to both the student and the teacher.

5.4. Objectives

General

- Design a reading development program for 3rd BGU Mario Oña Perdomo high school learners based on the information compiled in the project.

Specific

- Arrange an online environment for the reading activities presented in class.
- Develop reading habits among students through nonacademic material.
- Recognize strengths and weaknesses related to the reading development of the learners.
- Encourage the use of target language in the resolution of reading-related tasks.

5.5. Beneficiaries

Both the students from 3rd BGU and their English teacher will be the beneficiaries of the present proposal. Since the employment of an online platform destined to enhance reading comprehension skills through tasks will be used outside the class time. The principal advantage provided is optimal employment of time for the acquisition of a skill that under normal circumstances is intensive and extensive. Finally, the application of alternative approaches to the development of language skills is vital in the instructional process of the alumni since new challenges in terms of communication are bound to appear.

5.6. Impacts

With the implementation of an active approach to tackling reading tasks, the expectations are that students develop cognitive abilities in this skill through the challenge embedded in the online activities of the platform and by reading extensively. As for the teacher, the new modality would imply that the activities to be implemented in the platform ought to be supervised although not daily but regularly to ensure the tracing of the process. In this regard, the main benefit for the teacher is that the completion of the curriculum will not be hampered as the proposed activities would bear an extracurricular modality.

5.7. Development

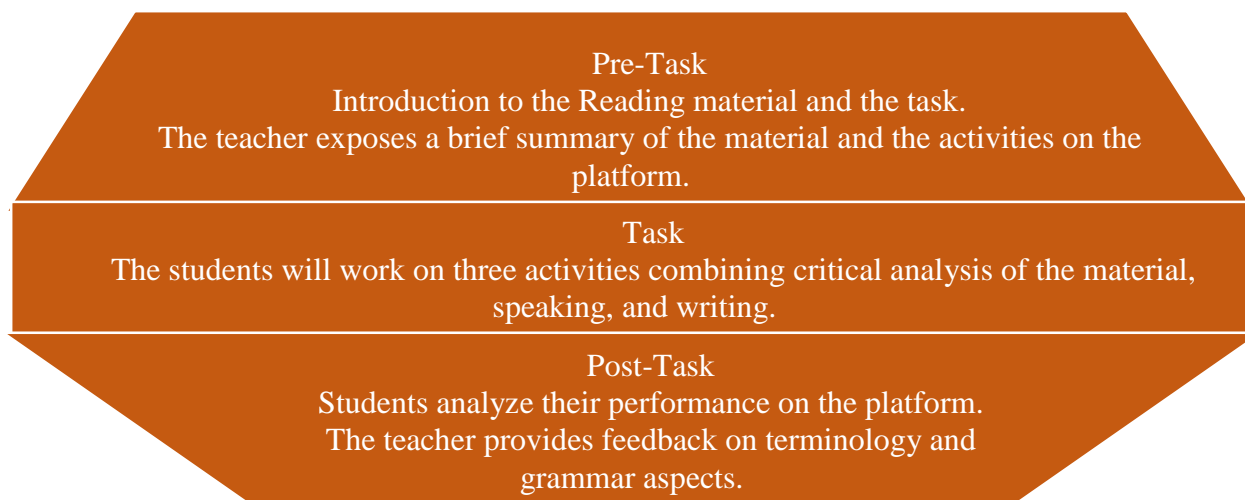
Although the potential of the internet as an educative platform is known, there exists a reluctance to employ online tools as part of the curriculum in favor of the traditional approaches. Conversely, students adopt technology more naturally than their teachers. Despite the potential caveats that arise from online interaction, especially social media, there is undeniable that the means of interchanging information is propitiated by language.

In this aspect, the virtual space sets the perfect conditions for learners to get familiarized with foreign language expressions, in other words, its culture.

Whereas through folklore, audiovisual material, music, or literature, students currently get in contact with cultural expressions through the internet and this usually implies having to use a foreign language. According to Wiseman and Belknap (2013) learners of the language, in this case, English, are prone to the use of new technologies such as the internet which potentially introduces them to new communicative experiences which tend to exceed that of the teacher.

In this aspect, this proposal aims to utilize the inherent attraction of students to cultural material with activities meant to elicit active use of language through an online platform. The strategy employed to distribute the activities considered in this proposal to enhance reading comprehension is spun from the model proposed by Willis (1996) and Ellis (2006).

Figure 11 *TBL model adapted to reading activities*



Note Example of the application of the Willis and Ellis Bachman model for TBL activities.

Adapted from *A Task-based Approach to EAP* (p. 86-98), by Youn, Soo Jung., 2018, S.

Journal of English for Academic Purposes,

5.7.1. PRE-TASK


Setting an objective

Approaching the class to the task to be completed as part of the strategy to enhance reading comprehension skills is a crucial factor that will determine the success of the proposal. The first stage of this proposal is to inform students of what will be the material to be used during the following weeks, the activities to be completed, and the final task that corresponds to a grade.

In this regard, setting up a schedule of activities ensures that students commence the program in an orderly and knowledgeable manner. Since there is no direct intervention from the teacher all the time, the platform needs to provide information about the activities in a regular setting.

Gnomio offers the option of displaying the cut dates for activities in the announcement section. Conversely, the teacher can configure the settings of the platform to display the activities accordingly to the schedule of activities if necessary. In addition, the online platform permits instructors to monitor performance in real-time. In this sense, the teachers have the possibility of checking on students' performance at the same time as the activities appear on the screen.

Figure 12 *Real-Time display of submissions on the platform*

Vocabulary- The Hare and The Tortoise 

Opened: Wednesday, 16 March 2022, 12:00 AM
Due: Wednesday, 23 March 2022, 12:00 AM

Upload as a pdf file the document where you have written the words whose meaning you had problems when first encountered in the reading material.

Grading summary

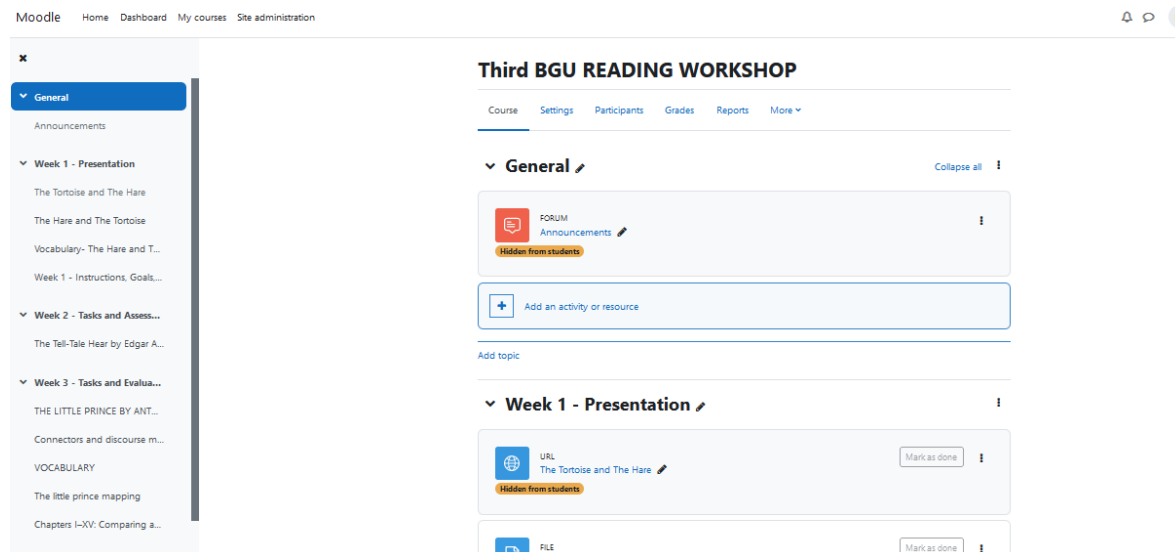
Hidden from students	No
Participants	0
Submitted	0
Needs grading	0
Time remaining	6 days 4 hours

Setting the platform

The importance of introducing students to authentic material relies on the non-academic purpose these items bear. According to Porter and Roberts (1981) authenticity is regarded as a quality of the language produced by native speakers for native speakers inside the community. Linguistic expressions are not necessarily oral only because there exist a variety of channels to transmit a message. As there has been explained this transmission of information can elicit from audiovisual, or through literature. For this proposal, there would only be considered reading material since it directly engages reading comprehension skills.

On the other hand, the logistic aspect of this proposal considers a mixed modality of work, combining the activities in the classroom with those of the platform. Before the commencement of the activities, there must be established an activities schedule meant exclusively for reading activities, as there has been already noted. The first element to allocate in the activities is the platform. The website chosen for these activities is Gnomio as this possesses interactive tools for learning and has a storage for the tasks and activities of each student.

Figure 13 *Reading Workshop*



Setting the reading material

Gnomio platform can be used as a virtual library in addition to other interactive resources such as glossaries. Implementing these tools has the objective of approaching students to an adequate comprehension of the material through the control of vocabulary and sentence structure. These skills are necessary for the completion of the activities to come, and so the material needs to comply with the educative needs of the class and be engaging. The latter is a point to be considered as the interaction between the material and the learners appeal to several factors including interests, interactivity, and purpose. Levering the options, the material that adapts to the circumstances of the present proposal ought to be short, easy to undergo, and dynamic to motivate active use of the language.

This material includes:

- Fables
- Short Stories
- Fantasy

Another aspect to consider is the references and guides that will be provided to the class as a manner to aid comprehension of the activities. These tools comprise elements of communication that may or may not be directly related to reading activities but that bear a certain incidence on the acquisition of such. These include.

- Audiovisual references
- Quizlet embedded links
- Glossary for the reading activity of the period

The selection of the material for this project comprises reading material friendly for beginners and popular enough for them to have a library of resources online. As for the reading material to be employed during this project in project, this consist of:

1. The Hare and the Tortoise
2. The Tell-tale Heart
3. The Little Prince

5.7.1.1 Resources library to be employed on each week

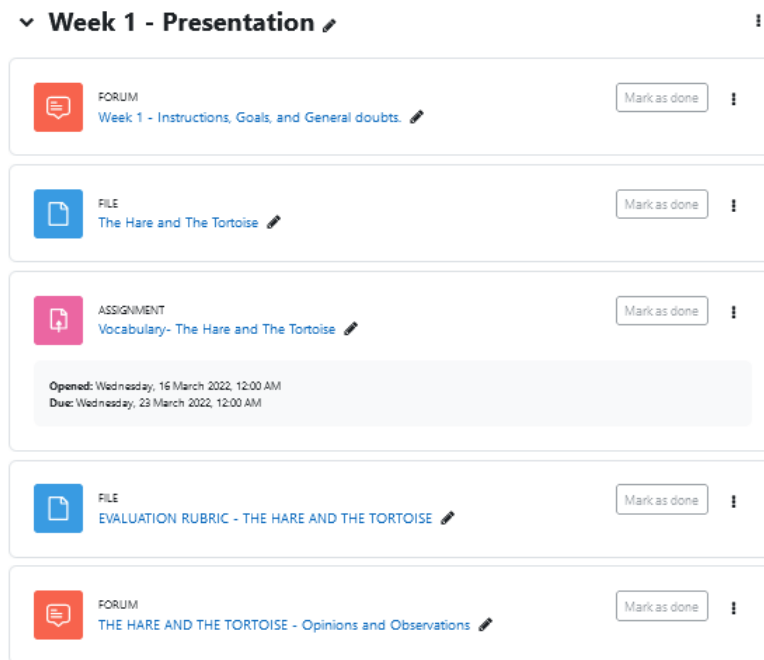
The resources to be employed through the process are classified and organized in the resources section of each week. The reason behind this display resides on engaging students on specific activities without overwhelming them with too much information explained at one. In that regard, the following lines will explain the instructor the variety of resources to be employed through the process.

Week 1

The first week corresponding to the pre-task section contains information about the general objectives of the class in announcements, the induction activity in Edpuzzle, the

first graded activity corresponding to a small pdf of the story presented previously and finally the evaluation rubric.

Figure 14 *General display of the contents for week 1*



Week 2

The second week contains information regarding the book file, a glossary section for the students to participate, the first assignment and its evaluation rubric, and finally the second assignment regarding the uses of figurative speech in the Tell-Tale Heart story with its respective rubric.

Figure 15 *General display of the contents for week 2*

Week 2 - Tasks and Assessment

- BOOK**
The Tell-Tale Hear by Edgar Allan Poe
- GLOSSARY**
THE TELL-TALE HEART
- ASSIGNMENT**
ESSAY: THE TELL-TALE HEART
Opened: Tuesday, 18 October 2022, 12:00 AM
Due: Monday, 2 October 2023, 12:00 AM
- FILE**
THE TELL-TALE HEART Rubric
- ASSIGNMENT**
CRITICAL READING - THE TELL-TALE HEART
Opened: Tuesday, 18 October 2022, 12:00 AM
Due: Tuesday, 25 October 2022, 12:00 AM
- FILE**
FIGURATIVE SPEECH - RUBRIC

Week 3

The elements to be considered in the third week consist of the book “The little prince”, a glossary that students in which unknown words can be uploaded, a summary of the text in a map, a map elaboration activity, and its rubric.

Figure 16 *General display of the contents for week 3*

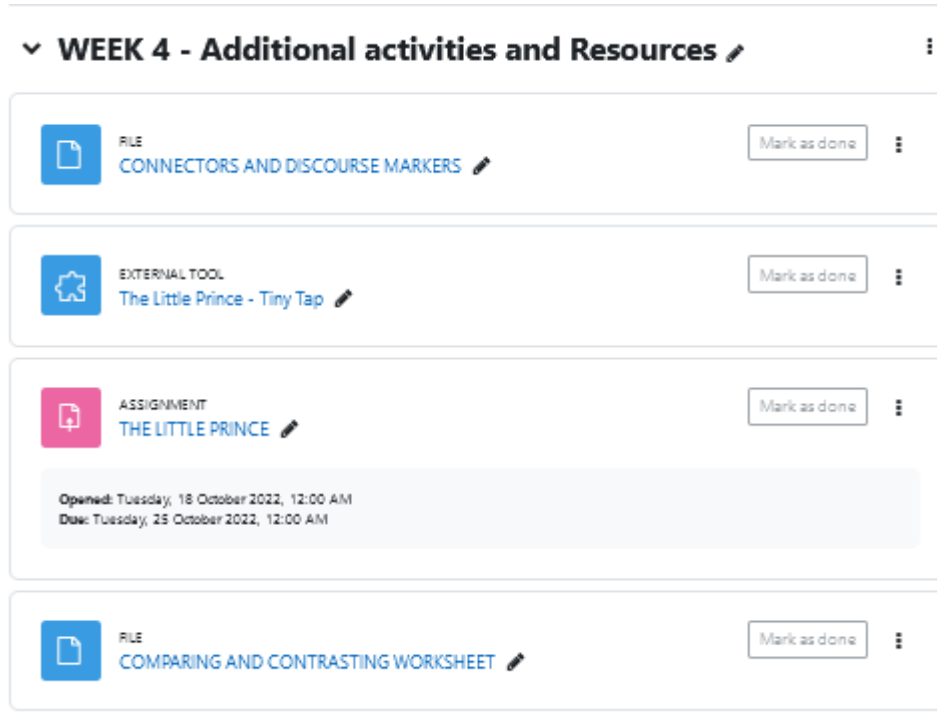
Week 3 - Tasks and Evaluation

- BOOK**
THE LITTLE PRINCE BY ANTOINE DE SAINT-EXUPÉRY
- GLOSSARY**
VOCABULARY
- EXTERNAL TOOL**
The little prince mapping
- ASSIGNMENT**
THE LITTLE PRINCE - MIND MAP ELLABORATION
Opened: Wednesday, 19 October 2022, 12:00 AM
Due: Wednesday, 26 October 2022, 12:00 AM
- FILE**
RUBRIC TO EVALUATE THE LITTLE PRINCE MAP

Week 4

information about connectors and a comparing and contrasting informational file to help students upload their analysis work in the platform about an in/dept analysis of the characters in the book, finally, there will appear a template for the students to use.

Figure 17 *General display of the contents for week 4*

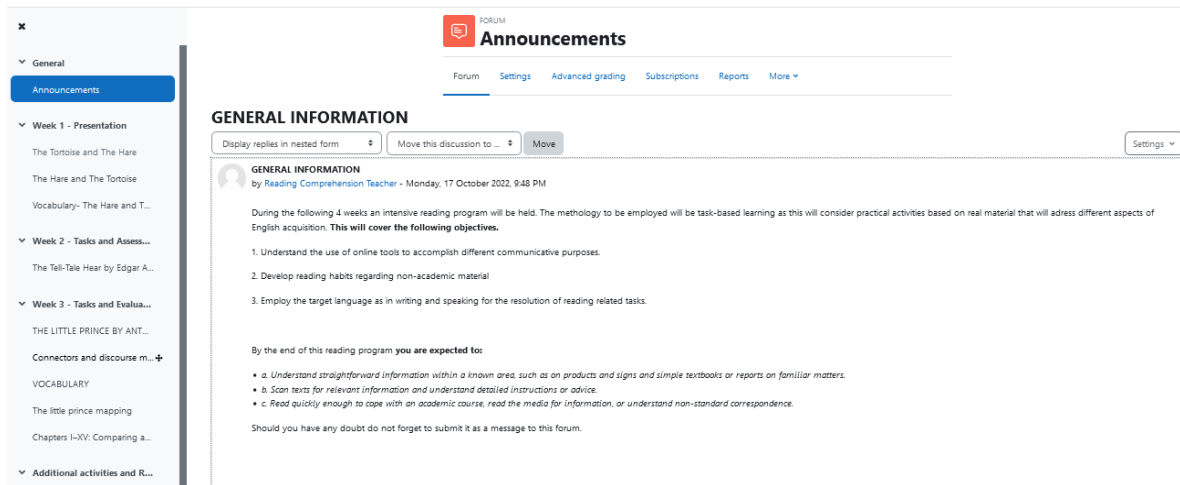


5.7.1.2 Cover page and display of the activities presented in the pre-task section

The students will find in the announcements page the information regarding the working methodology of the current class. The general section will be divided into different areas which will provide of further information regarding the activities in the platform.

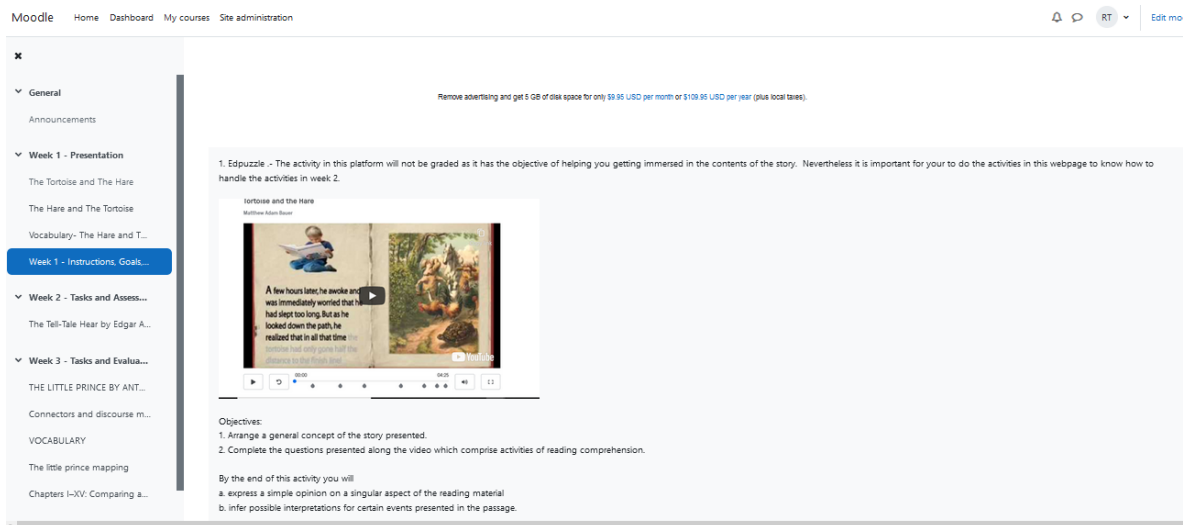
a. The first announcement will be used to stablish the goals to be reached and the abilities to be developed by the end of the program. Teachers must explain these points to the class so they understand what needs to be done.

Figure 18 *General section - Announcements*



b. The next announcement which comprises the activities for the following weeks comprise the evaluation rubrics, goals and further instructions about what the students are expected to do.

Figure 19 *Real-Time display of the Reading activities of the week in the platform*



c. After having explained how these announcements work, the teacher can let students explore the contents of the first graded task in week 1.

5.7.2. TASK

Actional stage

Finding 1: Suiting students in context takes time which hinders the accomplishment of the reading task

Strategy 1

Employing pictographic aids in the reading material to facilitate comprehension

The acquisition of new vocabulary depends on the capacity of the learner to associate words with a mental image of the concept these represent. Also called elicitation, is the primordial mental event that allows people to remember, plan, and decide. This is referred to the representations and the accompanying experience of sensory information without external stimulus, formed from memories and can merge into new combinations of happenings (Pearson et al., 2015). In light of this, providing visual cues or simple explanations of key elements of the material serves two purposes: to support the comprehension of the text as a whole, and to maintain a reading pace.

Visual aids bear the potential of aiding reading comprehension since these elements represent unknown elements from the task material. As students get familiarized with the terminology, connections start to appear as the new information is linked to previous knowledge. The process consists of structuring a map of meaning created from the relations formed among words. Despite these processes being done unconsciously, the range of syntactic processes is the function of the proficiency of the learner (VanPatten, 2010). Suggesting that learners can only understand input previously contextualized, otherwise, learners may opt for using mother tongue knowledge to decipher the unclear segments of

the passage which is a process that interrupts reading pace and stagnates overall comprehension of the text.

Purpose: To establish students in the context of the story presented by addressing the cognitive structures in charge of relating images with their specific references.

Application: After explaining the schedule of activities related to reading, the teacher will inductively approach the class to the material to be covered during the following weeks. In this regard, this approximation occurs simultaneously as the stages of cognition start from a basic level of comprehension of a text to the highest degree of understanding comprising abstract skills such as reasoning and planning.

Benefits: By employing the cognitive approach in the reading tasks, the class is expected to

- identify the correct meanings of grade-appropriate words
- locate details in a text
- identify figurative language in a text
- use context clues to identify the meanings of unfamiliar words
- determine how details support the main idea
- recognize elements of the plot
- recognize patterns of organization
- determine an author's main purpose or point of view
- analyze the use of figurative language in a text
- analyze cause-and-effect relationships

a) Cognitive comprehension of low complexity

Recognizing the correct order of events in a text + Locating details

Establishing an overlook for the story

Employing an inductive approach to tackle the reading activity involves induction in the narrative elements of the content. Therefore, the plot of the story ought to be introduced as part of a structured and linked series of events that lead to a conclusion. The elements to be explained in this stage of reading considers the basic structure of narrations in general which are: exposition, conflict, and denouement.

The beginning of the story establishes a general description of both the setting and the characters that will participate in the story (Li & Seedhouse, 2010). In this regard, the teacher can illustrate these elements with pictographic references. At the same time, this stage of the story exposes to a certain degree the main conflict of the story. Hence, the class can be introduced to the reason to be of the story through the analysis of the obstacles to be conquered through the narration.


After the introduction of the basis of the story and partially the conflict is resolved, the story strives to propose the elements of the conflict, also known as the plot. As the story progresses the elements of the plot are unfolded by presenting more details and additional conflicts to the narrative events until reaching a peak known as the climax. This stage comprises the most suspenseful and exciting event for the story meaning a confrontation with the conflict and the posterior resolution.

Finally, the resolution of the story represents the elimination of the conflict and by the same token the closure to the individual plots of every character.

As the following diagram proposes, the elements of the story are exposed by images representing the introduction, body, and conclusion of the story. As the story to be read in the first stage comprises a short narration, the turtle and the hare, the visual aids are limited to three. However, using this strategy will motivate students into being absorbed by the narration.

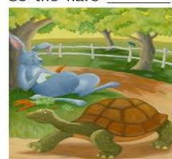
Figure 20 *Sample of the use of images to explain of a story*


1. Complete the story with the past simple form of the verbs.



One day the hare and the tortoise _____ (decide) to have a race. The hare _____ (know) that he _____ (can) run faster than the tortoise. But the tortoise _____ (be) more intelligent than the hare. 'Yes, I'll race you,' _____ (say) the intelligent tortoise. The tortoise _____ (have) an intelligent plan. He _____ (find) his brothers and sisters and he _____ (tell) them to wait in different places along the path of the race. So they all _____ (wait) behind the trees along the path. The race _____ (start)!

The tortoise _____ (run) as fast as possible. But the hare _____ (be) faster, of course. 'This will be a very easy race', _____ (think) the hare. So the hare _____ (decide) to have a rest, and he quickly _____ (sleep) at the side of the road. Suddenly, the hare _____ (wake up) and he _____ (see) a tortoise in front of him! 'How did he get in front of me?' the hare asked himself. In fact, it _____ (be) not his friend the tortoise: it _____ (be) the tortoise's sister. But to a hare, all tortoises look the same. The hare ran past the tortoise easily. Soon, he _____ (can't) see the tortoise, so he _____ (sit) down and he _____ (have) another rest. Then the hare _____ (get up) and continued the race. But - as the hare happily came around the last corner before the finish line - his friend the tortoise crossed the line and _____ (win) the race!





Teacher's Role. – The teacher assigns this introductory activity to the platform. As there can be observed this worksheet possesses several gaps that the student ought to complete with the conjugation of the verb in brackets. Nevertheless, the objective of this activity is to integrate a story and pictographic references so that the student relates concepts with visual cues. In addition, the participation of the teacher in this phase of the

proposal is to approach certain concepts to the students and to reinforce grammar that will be useful to remember in the following stages.

As the assessment of this stage goes, there will be used the online application online worksheets these permit interaction between the user and the document. In this regard, the teacher ought to encourage the class to complete and submit the task to ensure that students are taking the process seriously.

b) Cognitive comprehension of moderate complexity

Using context clues to identify unfamiliar words determining an author's main purpose or point of view +recognizing elements of the plot

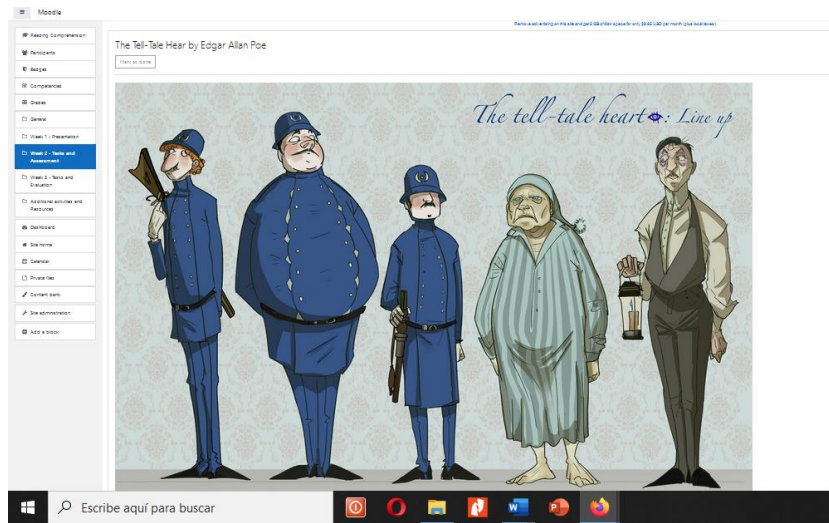
Describing a purpose and a message for a story

The introduction of a short story serves the purpose of motivating and inducting students into the process to be observed to read and understand a text without any comprehension problems. In this regard, the following step comprises a more demanding aspect of cognitive expression. The story to be boarded in the platform to develop the proposal will be The Tell-Tale Heart- Therefore, the role of the teacher in this stage should also be more present as the students get accustomed to the dynamics involved in reading comprehension of more complex texts.

The first auxiliary element proposed is the use of graphic elements. These comprise using character charts where the student identifies certain traits that will aid comprehension. Another variation of this strategy is using images representing the setting where the story unfolds or even representing concrete scenes in the plot. The objective of using visual aids is to assist comprehension and generate interest.

The next strategy is based on the active participation of the students. This task follows the first reading of the text, which in this case is the Tell-Tale Heart. The concrete result to be obtained by this activity is a full-length essay of around 200 words that explores specific elements of the plot and the message of the author.

Figure 21 *Sample of the use of carácter charts*



Teacher’s Role. – The implementation of this task requires teachers to adapt the instructions and rubric of evaluation according to the students’ capacities. According to CAMBRIDGE English Language Assessment (2014), the shift corresponding to regular practice with complex text and its academic language requires English instructors to adapt the text to aid the group of students whose level of proficiency does not permit them to understand the complexity of the text. Additionally, it becomes the role of the teacher to provide a rubric of evaluation adapted to every level of proficiency. In this case, the rubrics will be adapted from the CEFR standards of A1 to B1 level in writing (Write & Improve with Cambridge, 2014). The following table represents the rubric for assessing students’ performance in this part of the task.

c) Cognitive comprehension of high complexity

analyzing the use of figurative language + determining an author's purpose

The final stage of the comprehension levels is the obtention of a deeper comprehension of the text which will be demonstrated by the representation of the purpose of the story elicited by the original creation of the student. In other words, since the class has comprehended the story and the message conveyed, the following step is to demonstrate their dexterity in the topics of the text by establishing a linguistic meta-analysis of the inner workings of the narration.

The analysis outset on the revision of the figurative language comprised in the sentences. To convey meaning and a more detailed description of some event unraveled in the plot, authors tend to use metaphors that relate the happenings with familiar actions that a reader is likely to have experienced.

The other task involves recognizing the purpose of the author to write the story. The message of the narration may not be elicited directly in the words; however, the ability to identify traits and ideas is part of the high-cognition level of comprehension for these demand attention from the reader. In this aspect, the teacher may set an activity in the platform that would solicit students to elaborate composition on the tropes and the final message conveyed in the Tell-Tale Heart story.

Teacher's Role. – In a similar manner as with the previous activity, the teacher will evaluate the performance of the class based on a rubric. Nevertheless, in this part of the proposal students will be asked to identify the figurative use of language inside the Tell-Tale Heart story. This activity consists of identifying as many uses of figurative speech as possible in the composition, signaling where to find them, and finally explaining their

function inside the story. This has the objective of measuring the cognitive capacity of the class in the identification of figurative speech, which according to (Roberts & Kreuz, 1994) embeds one of the fundamental pillars in the acquisition of an advanced reading level. In the following table, there will be presented the rubric used to assess the performance of the class. There must be added that the scoring of this activity will have no impact on the final grade, however, there should be explained to the class that this activity will function to analyze their strengths and weaknesses in cognitive terms.

Finding 2: Students' engagement with reading aids the comprehension of the passage

Strategy 2

Establishing a reading pace using interactive tools in the platform to encourage involvement from a personalized standpoint

Considering the above-mentioned activities and by the same token, the effects of active participation in reading, another propitiating factor to be introduced for reading comprehension is reading pace. According to Barr (1973), there exists a correlation between reading pace, comprehension, and vocabulary acquisition. The researcher establishes rhythm as an indicator of how beneficial the exercise of reading will result. Therefore, providing students with the tools to boost the reading pace elicits mental representation of the content and by the same token, reading comprehension.

Feelings of inadequacy are the main caveat to consider when boarding a reading activity for which students feel unable to participate properly. According to Westbrook et al. (2019) often poor readers are labeled as unable to read but are required to work by the same standards as the rest of the class. However, in the same research, there was observed that

learners reported as poor readers improved reading comprehension skills when induced to fasten their reading pace and the teacher provided this group with personalized guidance on the inference process for a better understanding of the text.

Purpose: To elicit an understanding of the reading material through the setting of an adaptable pace of reading to aid in linking processes between cognition and reading as an act.

Application: The implicit process of reading involves the rapid movement of the eyes working simultaneously with the cognitive elicitation of providing meaning to the symbols and graphics printed on the paper. The research of Dunlosky et al. (2013) clarifies that reading word by word the content of a writer tends to not be effective to elaborate a mental image of the text and that submitting the practice of reading to that habit would conceal key aspects of the content. In that regard, the strategy to be considered in this aspect is speed reading.

The speed-reading modality is a process of fast recognition of sentences and phrases in a short period. In other words, speed reading consists of a quick overlook of the text to posteriorly get a gist of the content.

In this aspect, the material to be considered needs to be long enough for the students to read through for a while, but accessible so the whole class can at least formulate a general scheme of the plot of events. Therefore, the material to be considered in this stage of the proposal will be "The Little Prince" by Antoine de Saint-Exupery.

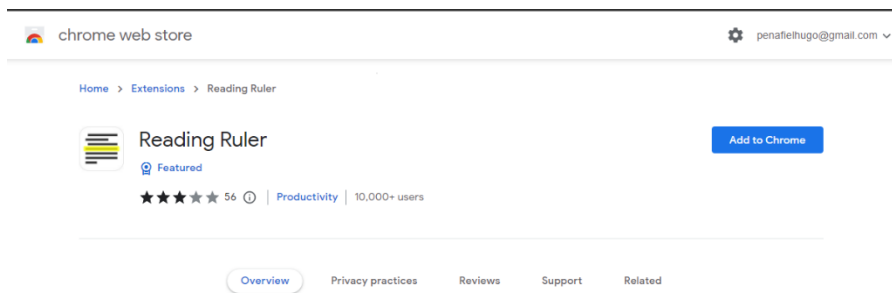
The modalities to be considered for the reading of this short story are one and will cover different aspects of the story to present the class options to opt for in future activities.

The Pointer Method

This method consists of using the index finger to pace reading. In terms of efficiency, there has been reported that the pioneers of speed reading such as Evelyn Nielsen Wood benefitted from using their fingers and could read up to 2700 words.

As for the implementation of this method in the platform, there will be opted the use of an extension of google chrome named "Reading Pointer"

Figure 22 *Google Chrome Extension to personalize Reading pace.*



Teacher's Role. – This transitional activity does not possess a noticeable presence of the teacher since the responsibility of measuring and improving reading pace relies on the student completely. Nevertheless, the teacher needs to control that the activity is being developed as planned. Therefore, the strategy to be employed in this task is reading chapter by chapter with a brief assessment in between. Being the material "The Little Prince", the student will quickly realize that the chapters are short and easy to understand. Provided that the teacher establishes quizzes or trivia as the means for reading control, there is expected that the reading of the book is completed in three or four days.

Finding 3: The different levels of reading comprehension in the class tend to hinder the accomplishment of the activities

Strategy 3

Employing reading aids and support activities

The final strategy for enhancing reading comprehension skills entails a focus on the group of students whose comprehension levels when reading are low. That entails a focus on the at-risk students whereas with additional activities or providing more tools to support reading comprehension. There should be explained that the activities and tasks destined for this group of students comprise a different approach to the reading activity.

According to Thistlethwaite (1990), one of the major problems that affect at-risk students is their incapability of drawing the bigger picture contained in a text for the principal obstacle for them is even to get to understand the words in the text. In that regard, being reading an activity that entails the comprehension of what is written and what is entailed by words, those who are unable to understand the concept of individual words cannot expect to comprehend completely a full-length text.

As the present proposal is based exclusively on the use of an online platform the activities meant for aiding reading comprehension to have the advantage of being the unlimited library of resources that the internet contains. The context of the present proposal requires the work on the book "The little prince", so the activities to be considered the need to function according to that book. Fortunately, being a popular material worldwide, there exists a wide variety of online resources on the internet that help students to better comprehend the vocabulary and overall message of this text.

Tiny Tap

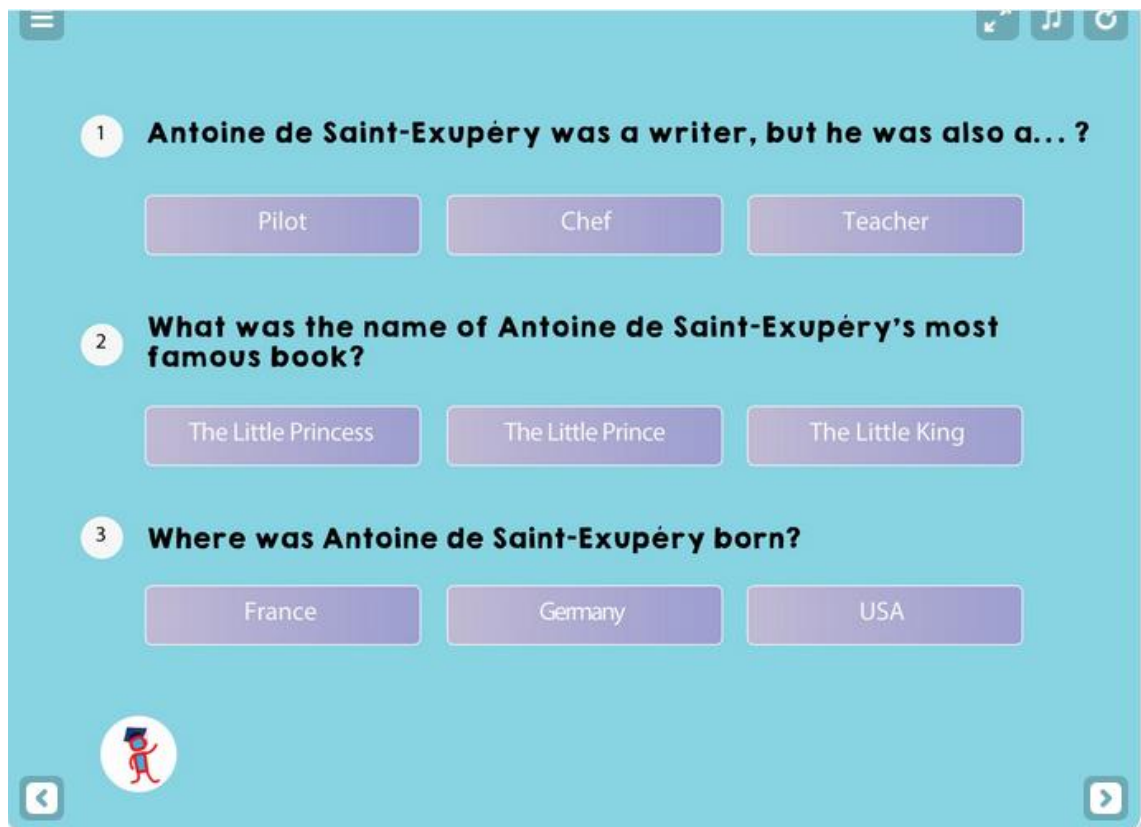
This interactive platform offers students the opportunity to obtain details on the characters and the plot of the story. Considering that one of the major problems involved in reading is the incapacity to elicit mental images of the events that occurred in the text, the exposition of graphics and illustrations that provide Tiny Tap is an invaluable tool to approach the content of the little prince to the class.

Figure 23 *Supplementary activities powered by Tiny Tap*



Another important feature that this webpage presents is the opportunity to assign tests about the contents of the reading. As the students' progress in the material, the teacher can assign a test to assess their overall comprehension of the material.

Figure 24 *Assessment tolos powered by Tiny Tap*



Finding 4: To extend reading activities for excessive periods detriment to the benefits originally intended to be obtained.

Strategy 4

Elaborating a resources catalog in the platform for reading activities








The second and third strategies of this proposal are closely related and compose the key factor that would determine success when using the platform. On the one hand, establishing a reading pace that suits students is an efficient and practical tool to force the class to elicit a general mental image of the text. On the other hand, the present strategy entails a more detailed examination as reading comprehension entails a subskill that demands attention to the structural elements of the text and the principal actions proposed by the author. In this regard, Bimmel et al. (2001) establish 3 strategies to fasten and aid reading which consists of searching for key fragments of the text, determining the marking words that determine in which section of the text the reader is, and finally mapping the most important information from a text.

Purpose: To determine the proper strategy to increase the reading rate for the activities belonging to the task of reading comprehension beginning from basic structural comprehension and ending with the structuring of a line of events in the text.

Application: This strategy involves direct participation from the class not only to read the material thoroughly but also to demonstrate comprehension of the text by completing the activities presented. As there has been explained, these strategies are adapted depending on each student and are presented in the platform as a form of resources to be implemented.

Figure 25 Reading strategies to boost the Reading pace and comprehension

▼ **Week 3 - Tasks and Evaluation**

	BOOK THE LITTLE PRINCE BY ANTOINE DE SAINT-EXUPÉRY	Mark as done
	URL READING RULER - READING AID EXTENSION	Mark as done
	FORUM Reading Pace - The Little Prince	Mark as done
	GLOSSARY VOCABULARY	Mark as done
	EXTERNAL TOOL The little prince mapping	Mark as done
	ASSIGNMENT THE LITTLE PRINCE - MIND MAP ELLABORATION Opened: Wednesday, 19 October 2022, 12:00 AM Due: Wednesday, 26 October 2022, 12:00 AM	Mark as done
	FILE RUBRIC TO EVALUATE THE LITTLE PRINCE MAP	Mark as done

The following lines will explain how to employ these resources and what to expect from a comprehensive standpoint.

1. **key fragments of the text:** As the first strategy to increase the reading pace, there has been considered appropriate to implement a glossary of the most important words or phrases to be found in the first chapter. In that regard, the resource to be found in the platform bears the potential of aiding students' comprehension and encouraging participation as this glossary is expected to enrichen as the following chapters are released.

Teacher's Role. – This activity encourages the active participation of the student in the development of a class glossary. In this regard, the teacher has the responsibility of supervising and aiding the comprehension of words in context. According to (TESOL International Association, 2013) in the shift corresponding to Regular practice with complex text and its academic language, one of the roles of the teacher implies the provision of multiple definitions for a term, as well as for idiomatic expressions and, technical terms. In this regard, the student is not helpless as there exists the support of the teacher who will prepare in advance a list of meanings for possible problematic words. Notwithstanding, the responsibility of the student will be to annotate those terms and look for information in a dictionary.

2. **Determining the marking words:** The following resource contains a manual for the students to identify specific terms and discourse markers that would serve as a guide to establish points in the plot of the story. Therefore, students have a manner to establish the beginning and end of an action, and which were the events that conclude with the end of the chapter.

Teacher's Role. – This activity consists basically of identifying the words that join or separate ideas. Also called connectors, these terms are used to show relations of dependency among ideas in a text. The importance of this in reading is that it permits the learner to structure a map of meaning and relationship between ideas in the same paragraph or different ones. In this aspect, the teacher provides the list of connectors that could be found in the first chapter of "The little prince". Then, the student will aid his comprehension of the list without hampering the overall comprehension of the text.

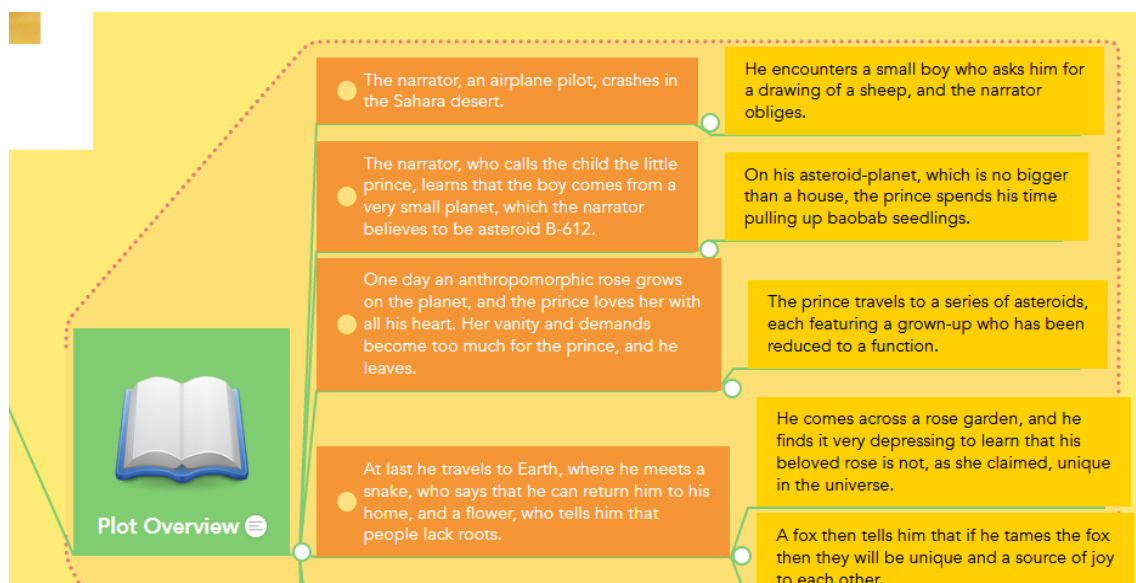
Figure 26 List of connectors to be found through Reading “The Little Prince”

CONNECTORS TABLE

Type of Connector	Connector(s)	Examples
Coordinating conjunctions	for (cause), so (effect)	<i>Professionals can sometimes be extremely impatient, for their positions are at times rather stressful.</i>
Subordinating conjunctions	because, since	<i>Since high level positions are at times rather stressful, professionals can sometimes be extremely impatient.</i>
Conjunctive adverbs	therefore, as a result, consequently	<i>High level positions are at times rather stressful; therefore, professionals can sometimes be extremely impatient.</i>
Prepositions	because of, due to, as a result of	<i>Due to the stressful nature of high level positions, professionals can sometimes be extremely impatient.</i>
Type of Connector	Connector(s)	<i>Examples</i>
Coordinating Conjunction	and	<i>High level positions are stressful at times, and can be harmful to your health.</i>
Conjunctive adverbs	in addition, additionally, furthermore, moreover, also	<i>High level positions are stressful at times, furthermore, they can be harmful to your health</i>

3. Mapping the most important information from a text: Finally, after the students have completed reading the text, on the platform there is a dynamic map that contains important information about the story and the author of the book. There is intended that this tool explains certain information that the student may have ignored during the first read but that is key for comprehending the rest of the story.

Figure 27 Interactive map powered by MindMeister



Teacher's Role. – Once the book has been read thoroughly, the student will be asked to structure a mind map of every chapter using online tools. There exist various tools, however, the use of Mindmeister is recommended for it is accessible and its maps can be linked to Moodle. The participation of the teacher in this stage is to evaluate the quality of the mind map. For this, the teacher will employ a rubric

5.7.3. POST TASK

The activities considered in the present proposal had the objective of motivating students to introduce reading as part of their daily routine. Therefore, the tasks considered to be accomplished during the whole process entailed non-invasive but active participation from the class to accomplish the schedule and the overall comprehension of the text. In this aspect, there should be added that the activities to evaluate overall reading comprehension comprise a small project that serves the purpose of building a meaning map that will help students to support their cognitive understanding of the text, in this case, the little prince.

As the evaluation ought to implement activities that are not related to traditional tasks such as filling up in the gaps or multiple-choice questions, there is required a deeper involvement from the students to demonstrate what has been understood from the material and what morals have been obtained from the plot and the characters.

In that regard, the final part of the task cycle entails demonstrating the knowledge obtained through the whole process. Although the activities presented do not necessarily have a complex process to be comprehended, these are intended to be implemented various times throughout the school year. The final objective is to work on students' reading comprehension abilities through a simple but consistent process.

Teacher's Role. – The final stage of the proposal comprises an evaluation of the cognitive abilities of the class. The activity to be proposed acts as the integration of reading and writing and functions accordingly to the standards provided by TESOL International Association (2013). In a specific manner, the teacher aims to establish appropriate classroom assessments so that the students can demonstrate what they have understood from the book "The little prince".

5.7.4. EXECUTION OF THE ACTIVITIES IN THE PLATFORM

Week 1 Activities guide

5.7.4.1 Execution of the activities from the Pre-task section

a. Ed puzzle activity

The first activity to be completed can be found in the first week and is a link to a video with the story of the hare and the tortoise.

1. Watch the video and listen closely to the information contained
2. Occasionally the video will stop, and an open-ended question will appear for you to complete.

3. Submit your answer on the box below the questions.

5.7.4.2 Execution of the activities from the Task section

Students' Role. – The first encounter of the student with this composition may overwhelm, however, there are some steps to be followed to accomplish the activity.

1. Read the instruction of the task carefully and understand what requires to be completed.
2. The first activity to be completed comprises a search for vocabulary of the tale.
 - a. Obtain the vocabulary you do not know about the story and share it as a submission
 - b. Decide which words can fit better the glossary section of the platform
3. After submitting this activity to the platform. The students will participate in a forum where they will have to provide an opinion about the story.

The questions will be the following:

- a. What was the story about?
- b. What is the moral of the story and why do you think that is the message?

As there can be noted the possible responses of the students can reflect the level of proficiency in communicating their ideas. The following table represents the rubric for assessing students' performance in this part of the task.

Table 2 *Reading Rubric adapted from CEFR standards*

BASIC USER	ACTIVITY Completion	Student accurately explains how each graphic/diagram is related to the text, and accurately determines whether each graphic/diagram agrees with the information in the text.
	A2	Can communicate in simple and routine tasks requiring a simple and direct exchange of information on familiar and routine matters. Can describe in simple terms aspects of his/her background, immediate environment and matters in areas of immediate need.
	A1	Can interact in a simple way provided the other person talks slowly and clearly and is prepared to help.

Note Example of reading rubric of low complexity. Adapted from *Global scale - Table 1 (CEFR 3.3): Common Reference levels*, by **Council of Europe**, 2022

Week 2 Activities guide

5.7.4.3 Execution of the activities from the Task section

Students' Role. – Since the teacher will adapt the requirements necessary for the writing composition required, the student's task becomes complying with the prerogatives established accordingly. Additionally, the procedure to complete the task will be the following.

1. The story is introduced to the class using visual cues and the student starts the first reading of the tale.

2. The instructor asks students to create a glossary of terms to share the terminology that may not be understood in the first read-through.
3. The students read again the story or the sections of the story that may not have been understood.
4. Finally the students write the 200-word essay and submit its development to the points expressed in the rubric.

Table 3 *Reading Rubric adapted from CEFR standards for Cognitive comprehension of moderate complexity*

A1 Rubric:	The student can write simple sentences using expressions and simple phrases
Identifies important information	The student lists all but one of the main points, using the story for reference. S/he does not highlight any unimportant points.
Identifies facts	The student accurately locates 4 facts in the story. The explanation is weak.
Summarization	The student summarizes most of the story accurately but has some slight misunderstandings.
A2 Rubric:	The student is capable of writing simple texts and concatenating phrases in the cohesive and fluent text.
Identifies important information	The student lists all the main points but uses the story for reference.

Identifies facts	The student accurately locates 4 facts in the article and gives a reasonable explanation of why they are facts, rather than opinions.
Summarization	The student uses several sentences to accurately describe what the story is about.
B1 Rubric:	The student is capable of writing simple texts and concatenating phrases in cohesive and fluent text.
Identifies important information	The student lists all the main points of the story without having the article in front of him/her.
Identifies facts	The student accurately locates at least 5 facts in the story and gives a clear explanation of why these are facts, rather than opinions.
Summarization	The student uses only 1-3 sentences to describe clearly what the story is about.

*Note Example of reading rubric of low complexity. Taken from *Writing Rubric-based**

CEFR standards for writing from A1 to B1 by Council of Europe, 2022

5.7.4.4 Execution of the activities from the Task section

Students' Role. - In this task, the responsibility of the student will be to collect and understand the uses of figurative speech in the Tell-Tale Heart story. Since this story is

short, there is expected that the student will take two or three days to finish this activity. As for the prerogatives to be observed these are:

1. Re-read the Tell-Tale Heart story and take notes of the elements corresponding to figurative speech.
2. Employ a separate document to classify and explain each form of figurative speech found.
3. Share the findings in class and annotate any figure that may be missing
4. Present the figures to the teacher and ask for an explanation if required.

Table 4 *Figurative use of language adapted from CEFR standards*

FIGURATIVE USE OF LANGUAGE				
Identifying Literacy Devices	Exceeds Accurately and precisely identifies the use of figurative language and literacy devices	Meets Identifies the use of figurative language and literacy devices with general accuracy.	Approaching Identifies some use of figurative language and literacy devices with some accuracy	Developing Does not accurately identify the figurative language or literacy devices
Analyzing Text: Explaining Devices	Exceeds Clearly Explains how	Meets Demonstrates a basic	Approaching Lacks a clear explanation of	Developing No explanation of

	figurative language and literacy devices are used to create an artistic effect	understanding of how devices are used to create an artistic effect	how devices are used to create an artistic effect	how devices are used to create an effect.
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Note. adapted from *Identifying Figurative Language/Lit* by R Campus, 2012, rcampus

(<https://www.rcampus.com/rubricshowc.cfm?code=XX4XC99&sp=yes&>)

Week 3 Activities

5.7.4.5 Execution of the activities from the Task section

Students’ Role. – The accomplishment of this task has the objective of increasing and improving the reading pace of the class. Albeit there exist different levels of proficiency in class, there is expected that the dynamic rhythm in the execution of this activity would motivate all students to invest attention to reading. The steps to be followed in the execution of this activity are.

1. Download the Reading Pointer extension for Google Chrome.
2. Activate the extension on the PDF provided in the platform called “The Little Prince”
3. Read through the first chapter as fast as possible.
4. Activate a chronometer and measure the time spent on the first reading.
5. Take note of the time and answer the quiz provided by the teacher on the platform.

A strategy to be considered in this activity is to obtain the total amount of words from the first chapter, for example, and divide it by the amount of time taken to complete the first reading. In this case, the numbers the student needs to consider are the following.

Chapter 1 The Little Prince = 1500

Time to read = 5 minutes

Words per Minute (WPM) = $1500/5$

= 300 WPM

6. After having calculated the number of words per minute in the first reading, the student is encouraged to go through the chapter again and try to increase the number of words.

7. Participate in the forum with your partners and describe how challenging was to complete this activity.

Students' Role. - This activity aims to assess informally the overall comprehension of the book "The Little Prince". Although this activity does not represent any significant grade, it will serve as an aperture for the following activity. As for the instruction's respects, these are:

1. Access the online platform Gnomio and look for the activity called "Tiny tap"
2. Open the link and go through the activities proposed by the webpage.
3. Answer the questions in the quiz provided by Tiny tap.
4. This activity is supplementary in case you have problems understanding the contents of the book.

5.7.4.6 Execution of the activities from the Task section

Students' Role. – This stage of the proposal, as well as the following two strategies are meant to be repeated various times until the whole book is covered. In that regard, as far as this activity contemplates the vocabulary to be considered is the one that the student shares through the platform. There is expected that each student collaborates with at least three

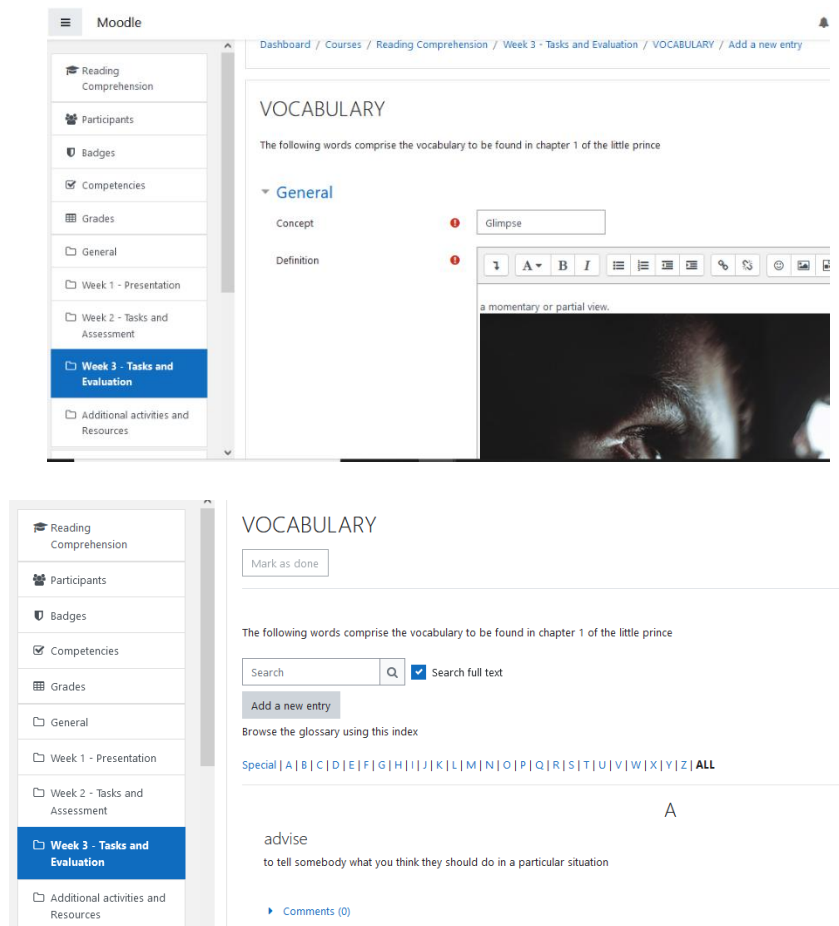
words per chapter. The steps to be considered and that will be repeated in this section comprises:

1. Read chapter 1 of "The little Prince"
2. Identify the words whose meaning is not clear or are completely unknown
3. Create a list of words on a separate sheet of paper
4. Access the platform and look if the words have not been shared yet
5. Open a new entry in the glossary and attach a word with its corresponding meaning

and repeat the process with the whole list.

Figure 21.

Use of a glossary to elicit active participation



Students' Role. - The completion of this activity comprises one important grade for the class as it comprises the demonstration of the student's knowledge of the book. In this regard, the student will have to follow the following steps to obtain a high score.

1. Access Mind Meister and open an account
2. Create a mind map or a timeline that contains the most notorious events that occurred in the book "The little prince"
3. Observe the indicators provided in the rubric
4. Submit the activity to the platform as an embedded link.

Table 5

Making a Map: The Little Prince

CATEGORY	4	3	2	1
Title	The title tells the purpose/content of the map, is distinguishable as the title (e.g., larger letters, underlined, etc.), and is printed at the top of the map.	The title tells the purpose/content of the map and is printed at the top of the map.	The title tells the purpose/content of the map but is not located at the top of the map.	The purpose/content of the map is not clear from the title.

Labels & Features - Neatness	90-100% of the labels/features can be read easily.	89-80% of the labels/features can be read easily.	79-70% of the labels/features can be read easily.	Less than 70% of the labels/features can be read easily.
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Week 4 Activities

5.7.4.7 Execution of the activities from the Posttask section

Students’ Role. – In this final activity, the students are asked to create character charts comparing similarities and differences among them. This task is demanding as the answers do not contemplate fixed interpretations from the characters beyond the tropes they represent. In that regard, the instructions to be followed in this activity are:

1. Download the PDF corresponding to the comparing and contrasting chart of the book “The little prince”
2. Organize the character charts depending on the order they appeared in the story.
3. Compare similar characteristics among them and write parts of dialogue to support these claims.
4. Contrast the features of the characters by presenting direct quotes from the book as evidence of your claim.
5. Submit your work to the platform

Figure 28 Post-reading activity: Comparing chart

Name _____ Class _____ Date _____

Reading Skills & Strategies Worksheet
The Little Prince

Chapters I–XV

Chapters I–XV: Comparing and Contrasting

When you **compare and contrast**, you look for similarities and differences between two or more people or things. In *The Little Prince*, pay close attention to the various characters the prince meets, as well as the little prince himself and the pilot.

Fill out the chart below to compare and contrast the narrator and the title character. Remember to always refer back to the text for evidence.

The Little Prince vs. The Pilot

Similarities	Differences
They both landed in the desert from the sky. “Then he added, ‘So you fell out of the sky, too.’”	

CHAPTER VI

6.1. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1.1. CONCLUSIONS

The implementation of a task-based approach involves a constant focus on the application of knowledge into practical activities. In this regard, the effectiveness of TBL in the development of reading skills is confirmed by the student's understanding of language in context. These contexts are set by the type of reading material that the student may encounter and the nature of the tasks that require to be completed.

Task Based learning provides an active methodology that encourages reading through the work in stages. In this regard, students from “Mario Oña Perdomo” high school begin the process from a basic induction to simple reading tasks before going to more complex tasks. The effectiveness of TBL for reading resides in the passages and activities to be completed, the teacher is called to be knowledgeable of the general level of proficiency in the class. As there has been noted students respond favorably to those activities which are accessible enough to be understandable but still challenging to not lose interest and generate meaningful learning. The reason being that the lexical length from the students correlates with how much of a text can be understood. In this regard, the implementation of TBL is bound to force students to work diligently focusing on the elements of the passage which go from the single terms to the overall understanding of the text.

However, a key factor to ensure the effectiveness of the task involves implementing a formal scheme of evaluation to ensure that the endeavor of the student is contributing to their development. In this regard, the model of (Bachman & Palmer, 1996) can adapt a lesson to organize a task and its stages considering the setting where the class will be held,

a rubric adapted to suit the learning context of the students, and the proper input to obtain a desired reaction of the pupils. Implementing a rubric serves the purpose of setting goals that signal the development of reading competences. As there has been explained, these goals are based on the CEFR standards and have been modified to match the needs of the senior students' class.

For an activity to be considered part of TBL should necessarily entail concordance with real-life activities, the tasks considered for reading entailed the implementation of applied linguistics. Reading solely for reading does not produce the same benefits as the active use of communicative skills (Ellis, 2003). In that regard, engagement with the target language, in general, becomes a need as students engage in the reading tasks. In this regard, the use of reading strategies as skimming and inference come useful to identify key elements of the passages, for instance. Therefore, introducing reading strategies that can be used for class activities aid students to do the same with other texts found in other media.

Considering that reading is not a skill that can be assessed directly, evaluating performance in this ability requires collecting evidence that aids the interpretation of the progress in the class. Therefore, the application of a model of evaluation as the aforementioned serves to prompt active participation in the tasks and a proper frame of evaluation to assess performance in activities involving the comprehension of a text and the completion of a task. In this regard, the use of online platforms such as Gnomio integrates active participation through a variety of activities and tasks that not only motivates learning but also help students and teachers to keep a register of performance.

TBL propitiates the conditions for the student to express himself. In this regard, the tasks compiled that comply with task-based learning precepts were selected in function of the potential active participation elicited in the participants. Henceforth, these activities stem from the elaboration of an analysis of the reading needs of the students and contemplate a focus on meaning using linguistic resources in the fulfillment of a communicative objective in the function of the comprehension of a text and the posterior completion of the corresponding task cycle. Then again, the use of online platforms abides these activities by the use of integrated evaluation systems.

The implementation of TBL addresses the need for an active methodology for learning that motivates and generates meaningful learning in the foreign language. The third BGU class of “Mario Oña Perdomo” has presented problems with motivation and engagement in reading activities. The overuse of translators has generated students that are incapable of deducting words and obtaining a general schema of the ideas presented in texts. The latter has stagnated the development of reading comprehension skills.

Although there exists an awareness of the problems regarding not only the development of reading skills and language acquisition, the context of the institution obligates teachers and students to diversify and approach learning English from a holistic but not intensive scope. According to the survey presented to the students, the interviews held on the 3rd BGU English teacher, and the vice-principal reading is considered an important skill that bears the potential of enhancing the acquisition of the target language. The neglected attention set to develop this ability was signaled as the culprit of the difficulty to understand most of the terminology present in the reading material, the insufficient class time, and

even the motivational aspect that underlies the activities meant for enhancing the performance of the students when reading.

All things considered, the institutional context and level of proficiency of the students in reading comprise the caveats to be overcome through the implementation of TBL.

Employing online platforms not only solves the problem of insufficient time in class to address reading activities but also facilitates access to online tools and a wide range of material. In this aspect, the use of platforms such as Gnomio will permit the optimization of class time and the active engagement from the class toward the development of reading comprehension skills.

6.1.2. RECOMMENDATIONS

Peruse the performance of reading abilities in the class by setting a frame of evaluation that adapts to the student's needs and capacities. As there has been already identified, the excessive difficulty of the presented passages as well as the motivation of the students from Third BGU of "Mario Oña Perdomo" high school composes the principal obstacle to be overcome for developing reading comprehension. The main benefit to be obtained through the implementation of the reading online platform is the enhancement of the student's abilities by the setting of an activity that levers challenge and motivation inside the capabilities of the pupils. This would also ensure a sequence for the activities to come and permit adaptations to either the content of the class, the difficulty of the reading material, or the task to be presented.

Adapt the activities to be completed in each part of the task cycle to be related to the content taught in class. Time has been noted as one of the main factors that impede the development of reading skills in the afore mentioned institution. In this regard, relating contents will consolidate the topic taught in class through the implementation of corresponding reading activities. The teacher noted that most reading activities usually take more time than expected and do not translate into better reading proficiency. Therefore, adapting the content of TBL to the lecture will ensure the continuance of the curriculum. Since the first stage corresponds to the introduction of the task to be completed by the students, teachers have the advantage of providing the students with more information about the lesson including grammar, vocabulary, and details on how to do the activity. These aspects draw the attention of the students and elicit active participation even in extensive activities such as those involving reading skills. During the task cycle, the

recommendation lies in implementing communicative activities that employ the reading passages to elicit active participation whereas through writing or speaking.

Employ a rubric to assess performance clearly and measurably. The use of rubrics will align with the abilities that are meant to be developed through TBL. This will elucidate the strong and weak points of students' language knowledge. Since students from "Mario Oña Perdomo" high school have signaled the lack of motivation as one of the main reasons behind the low performance in reading activities, proposing clear objectives, and measuring performance in a manner to demonstrate to students that the process is ongoing and that produces results. Processing skills such as reading need to be assessed indirectly since cognitive development cannot be measured the same way as in writing or speaking. In this aspect, elaborating a frame of evaluation for the activities meant to develop reading skills would provide a base ground to identify if the task proposed was meaningful or if adjustments are required.

Implement TBL outside the classroom to ensure that students will not spare time in class looking for the resources that are supposed to be comprehended and used to complete the tasks. The vice principal from Mario Oña Perdomo high school explained that the limited resources have limited the number of projects to develop English proficiency. In this regard, organizing reading workshops outside the class will ensure alternative learning methodologies while continuing with the revision of the curriculum. The use of online platforms for reading activities is a manner to implement activities that assess reading comprehension. There exist a variety of web resources that can be used to present ludic and educative activities, especially for language learning, additionally webpages with reading material that can be easily adapted to fit any learner's proficiency level. These adaptations

could go from glossing to even video tutorials that can aid comprehension of the presented texts.

Aid comprehension of certain vocabulary items beforehand. As students from Mario Oña Perdomo have explained, the difficulty of the reading tasks usually lies in the incomprehensibility of the terms employed in the reading passage. Providing this information beforehand saves time and motivates students to be part of the lesson. Since the tasks are to be completed after school, the student will not have the support of the teacher for certain activities and so solving doubts in class is an effective strategy that benefits meaningful learning and increased reading comprehension. The reasoning is that providing students with certain cues to solve the activities will enhance the learning process at the end of the task cycle. After the students have acquired the tools to accomplish the task and the dexterity to employ language knowledge to go through the task cycle, the class benefits from a rewarding and meaningful learning experience. The students from “Mario Oña Perdomo” high school are meant to be exposed to reading tasks every month that will be evaluated at the end of each. As there has been noted during the theoretical framework, active participation and the use of communicative skills are necessary for the development of proficiency in any language. In this regard, the instructor is called to be supportive and prepare the activities in a manner that students work in a balance between challenging but also engaging reading tasks.

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8. ANNEXES

8.1 Annex 1 Operationalization Matrix

Independent Variable	Dimension	Indicator	Technique/ Instrument	Items
TBL is a strategy that encourages critical thinking and problem-solving skills along with learning content through the use of real-world situations or problems.	Task definition	-Characteristics of TBL -Task characteristic -Task types	-Online survey -Interview	- Rubric
	Learning environment	-Target language use -Authentic material -Meaning Focused instruction		
Dependent variable	Dimension	Indicators	Techniques / Instruments	Items
Reading skills They are the abilities of a person to read, interpret, infer, imagine and decode the written language.	Reading comprehension	-Stages of reading -Meaning of words -Language features	Online questionnaires	Multiple choice
	Strategies	-Skimming -Scanning -Sampling strategies -Prediction strategies -Inference strategies		
	Comprehension levels	-Reading Factual Information -Inference and Rhetorical -Reading vocabulary -Sentence Simplification -Insert Text -Summary		

8.2 Annex 2 Students' survey

ENCUESTA DIRIGIDA A LOS ESTUDIANTES DE LA UNIDAD EDUCATIVA

MARIO OÑA PERDOMO

Nombre:.....

Fecha:

.....

Curso:

1. De entre los siguientes enunciados, seleccione aquel que describa su habilidad de lectura en inglés.

a. Puedo reconocer algunos letras o caracteres. Puedo identificar algunos palabras memorizadas y frases cuando leo	b. Puedo reconocer algunas letras o caracteres. Puedo entender algunas palabras y frases aprendidas o memorizadas cuando leo.	c. Puedo entender palabras, frases y oraciones familiares en textos breves y sencillos relacionados con la vida cotidiana. A veces puedo entender la idea principal de lo que he leído.	d. Puedo entender la idea principal de textos breves y sencillos cuando el tema me resulta familiar.
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2. De entre las siguientes opciones, seleccione la que más le represente.

YO LEO

a. A diario	b. En mi tiempo libre	c. Al menos una o dos veces por semana	d. Solamente en clase	e. Nunca
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Indique que tan de acuerdo está respecto a las siguientes declaraciones:

3. Leer es entretenido

a. Totalmente de acuerdo	b. De acuerdo	c. En desacuerdo	d. Totalmente en desacuerdo
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4. Cuando leo aprendo nuevas cosas

a. Totalmente de acuerdo	b. De acuerdo	c. En desacuerdo	d. Totalmente en desacuerdo
--------------------------	---------------	------------------	-----------------------------

5. Creo que la destreza lectora es necesaria para la adquisición de un segundo idioma

a. Totalmente de acuerdo	b. De acuerdo	c. En desacuerdo	d. Totalmente en desacuerdo
--------------------------	---------------	------------------	-----------------------------

6. Si tuviera la oportunidad de escoger el tipo de fuente de lectura en clase, ¿Por cuál se decidiría?

a. Libros	b. Cuentos cortos	c. Artículos de revista	d. Prensa	e. Otro
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En caso de seleccionar "otro" especifique el tipo de material de lectura:

.....

7. En su criterio personal, cuáles son las razones principales para leer o no leer. Elija al menos una opción de cada columna.

Razones para leer		Razones para no leer	
Recreación		Tiempo insuficiente	
Relajación		Preferencia por otras actividades	
Motivos educativos		Aburrimiento	

8. En su criterio, ¿Cuáles cree que serían las razones principales por las cuales la lectura en inglés puede ser problemática? Seleccione al menos 1 opción.

La lectura contiene palabras que no comprendo	
Las actividades de lectura son demasiado complejas	
El material no me parece interesante.	
No es motivante	

9. Si pudiera escoger, ¿Qué condiciones de clase serían ideales para motivar la lectura en inglés? Puede escoger 2 o más opciones.

Que las actividades sean más dinámicas	
Que el material este acorde a mis intereses	
Que se emplee medios tecnológicos para incentivar a leer	
Que hayan herramientas que me faciliten la comprensión del vocabulario en el texto. Por ejemplo: un glosario de términos dentro del mismo material o un diccionario.	

10. En cuanto al formato del material de lectura ¿Con cuál se siente más a gusto?
 Seleccione solo uno.

Libros físicos	
Libros electrónicos	
Audiolibros	
Otros:	

8.3 Annex 3 Teacher's interview

GUÍA DE ENTREVISTA DOCENTE

1. ¿Podría determinar 3 factores clave por los cuales los estudiantes tienen problemas al leer en inglés?
2. Desde su punto de vista, ¿Con qué tipo de material de lectura los estudiantes responden de manera más eficaz? (por ejemplo: cuentos cortos, libros, noticias de prensa escrita, etc)
3. Al realizar una actividad relacionada con la lectura, ¿Cuántas horas clase suele emplear para dicha actividad?
4. Cuando se trata de desarrollar la destreza lectora en sus estudiantes, ¿qué estrategias utiliza más frecuentemente?
5. ¿De qué manera mejoraría usted las condiciones en clase para que sus alumnos desarrollen su destreza lectora?
6. ¿Qué tan efectivo considera usted el uso del aprendizaje basado en tareas aplicado al desarrollo de la destreza lectora?
7. ¿Qué opinaría sobre implementar una plataforma educativa online para el desarrollo lector que esté basado en el aprendizaje basado en tareas?

8.4 Annex 4 Vice Principal's interview

GUÍA ENTREVISTA AL VICERRECTOR

1. Dentro de la elaboración de los proyectos institucionales, ¿qué énfasis se da al desarrollo lector de los estudiantes en todos los niveles educativos?
2. ¿Qué parámetros establece el vicerrectorado en cuanto a los instrumentos de evaluación del área de inglés?
3. ¿Existe alguna distinción para los instrumentos destinados a evaluar directamente el área de lectura?
4. ¿Existe un proyecto institucional determinado a desarrollar el hábito de la lectura en inglés?
5. ¿Se considera implementar apoyo académico para aquellos estudiantes con dificultades en el área de lectura?
6. Exclusivamente en el área de inglés, ¿realiza la institución algún tipo de seguimiento al alumnado respecto a su habilidad lectora?
7. ¿Qué planes a futuro tiene la institución para el desarrollo del área de inglés?