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Trabajo Fin de Máster

READING STRATEGIES USED BY BEGINNERS IN L2

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1. INTRODUCTION TO THE PROBLEM

1.1 Introduction

In the field of teaching and learning a foreign language a lot researchers and L2 teachers have tried to find new form to teach the different skills of English language. Taking into account that English has been considered a global language used for communication by the majority of people in most countries around the world. Then to communicate in English effectively and successfully, people need four elemental skills: Listening, speaking, reading and writing. Of all the four ones, reading appears to be the most essential skill for people who learn English as a second and a foreign language in the academic setting (Grabe, 1991).

Many authors have given different definitions about reading and one of the most popular is provided by Anderson et.al (1985) “Reading is the process of constructing meaning from written texts. It is a complex skill requiring the combination of a number of interrelated sources of information”. That is, reading is the process of constructing meaning through the dynamic interaction among the reader’s existing knowledge, the information suggested by the written language and the context of the reading situation. When we as L2 teachers help students make those connections before, during, and after they read, we are teaching them a critical comprehension strategy that the best readers use almost unconsciously. According to Dubin (1982), reading seems to be the most attainable language skill for students in countries where English is not spoken.

Several empirical investigations have been conducted on reading strategies and their relationships to successful and unsuccessful second language reading (Hosenfeld, 1977; Block, 1986; Jimenez et.al, 1995). This theme is important because it has been developing in books and studies where the researchers in second language reading has demonstrated that strategy use is different in more and less proficient readers, and that more proficient readers use different types of strategies, and they use them in different ways.
Keeping in mind the last paragraph the main objective of this research is to analyse what type of reading comprehension strategies the ninth grade students of I.E.D Instituto Técnico de Oriente use in their reading interpretation in written text and which one is the most used.

1.2 Problem statement

The problem that is chosen as a principal topic of this research study is concerned with the analysing of some reading strategies which are used by the students from Instituto Técnico de Oriente in their reading comprehension. Taking into account those international researchers have found that good readers are active or strategic readers who use a variety of comprehension strategies before, during, and after reading a text. Good readers use comprehension strategies to facilitate the construction of meaning (McLaughlin & Allen, 2002).

In the Colombian context English language teachers have given high importance to students’ reading comprehension, because the government policy is to increase the students’ interest in reading through the different subjects. In other words, the ability to read in English effectively will make greater progress and attain greater development in all academic areas for learners both in academic and non-academic context (Anderson, 1999). Having in mind this idea it can be said when a person learns in a right form some reading strategies will have the opportunity to develop in a better way in all his/her human aspects.

According to the last paragraph where the different teachers look for developing students’ reading comprehension and apply some strategies in this case reading strategies as a means of improving the students’ comprehension, first, they need to know what strategies are the best to apply in their context. For this reason, it is necessary for the teachers to know the different kinds of reading strategies they can teach to the students.
The research and theory described in this study are based on a cognitive information processing view of human thought and actions. According to the cognitive theory, individual process information and the thoughts involved in these cognitive activities are referred to as “mental processes”. Thus, learning strategies are seen as specific ways of processing information in order to heighten comprehension, learning or retention of the information.

1.3 Research Question

What type of reading comprehension strategies do the ninth grade students of I.E.D Instituto Técnico de Oriente use in the EFL classroom in the comprehension and interpretation of written texts?
2. JUSTIFICATION

Reading strategies have been viewed as characteristics for the efficient reading. The different reading studies have also considered reading strategies as a major tool to help readers increase their reading comprehension. The studies have also shown that language proficiency determines the difference in reading strategies use (Anderson, 1991; Carrel, 1991; Mokhtari & Richard, 2002). However, the definitions of reading defined by many researchers suggest that the real reading process occurs when there is an interaction among the reader, text and the reading situation. That is, good readers can apply various reading strategies in a variety of reading context and type of text.

The participants of this study (The ninth grade students) have to take many reading classes in their different subjects such as: Religion, Spanish, Socials, Ethics, Geography, and so forth. It is thus very important for the reading teachers understand first which reading strategies they can teach them in order to improve the students’ reading comprehension. Nevertheless, research on EFL reading in the Colombian context has been very poor. Therefore, the majority of the researchers have always looked for exploring reading strategies used by the learners in different academic contexts. For this reason, this paper looks for exploring some reading strategies use by the learners in a public high school. This study enjoys significance because it can extend understanding of students’ reading comprehension by recognizing what strategies are used by them when reading in English and with this information we as L2 teachers can create new activities that allow the students to develop their strategies in order to improve their reading comprehension in written text.
3. OBJECTIVES

3.1 Main goal of the Project:

✓ To analyse what type of reading strategies the ninth grade students use in the EFL classroom in the comprehension and interpretation of written texts.

3.2 Specific objectives:

✓ To identify what reading strategy allows students to succeed in the comprehension and interpretation of written texts.

✓ To determine the reading comprehension level of the students in order to help and lead students to solve reading comprehension tasks.

✓ To observe the influence of reading strategies in the students reading comprehension.

✓ To describe the students’ obtained results in the reading comprehension process.
4. LITERATURE REVIEW

Many international researches have been carried out to know the reading learning strategies used for learners in different academic context. These kinds of study have been carried out by many authors such as Chamon et al. (1987), O’Malley et al (1985), Rubin (1981). However, the focus of this study is to describe the reading learning strategies use in a public school in Colombia.

Keeping in mind the last paragraph, it is necessary to know some characteristics of reading learning strategies and which are provided in the following literature review.

4.1 Definition of Reading

Many researchers and experts in reading defines reading in several ways, but there is a consensus that reading is a complex cognitive process in which the readers interact with the texts in order to construct the meaning and get comprehension from what they have read. Anderson (1999) states that reading is an essential skill for EFL students and is the most important skill to master since EFL readers with strengthened reading skill will make greater progress and attain greater development in all academic areas. He also emphasizes that reading is an active, fluent process which involves the readers and the reading materials in building meaning. Besides, Harmer (2001) affirms reading is not a passive skill because the reader of written text has to process what he/she reads using previous and new knowledge. Besides, a reader could understand a text in a different form to other (Grabe, 1991). That is, the successful reading skill depends on the students´ ability and this ability depends on the students´ instructions given in an academic context.

In conclusion, reading is the process of constructing meaning through the dynamic interaction among the reader´s existing knowledge, the information suggested by the written language and the context of the reading situation. According to Dubin (1982) reading seems to be the most attainable language skill for students in countries where English is not widely spoken.
4.2 Reading Process

Many experts in reading have classified the models of reading into three categories bottom-up, top-down and the interactive one (Goodman 1996, Nuttall 1996, Anderson 1999, and Aebersold and Field 2000). These models describe what happen when people look at a text, also what the complementary ways of processing a text are. Readers use them with unconscious processes, or adopt them as conscious strategies when approaching a difficult text.

Having in mind the information above, it is necessary to talk about some characteristics of each reading process.

4.2.1 The Bottom-up Approach

The bottom-up Approach of reading process holds the view that reading is a process of building symbols into words, words into sentences and sentences into the overall meaning, which reflects traditional attitudes toward reading Nuttall (1996). Similar to Anderson (1999), he mentions that bottom-up depends on the information presented by the text, and that information is processed from letter features to letters to words to meaning. That is, bottom-up processes are those that take in stimuli from the outside world, letters and words for reading, and deal with that information with little resource to higher-level knowledge.

According to Alderson (2000) in the bottom-up processes the reader begins with the printed word, recognizes graphic stimuli, decodes them to sounds, recognizes words and decodes meaning. Aebersold and Field (2000) and Carrel (2002) state decoding individual linguistic units (e.g., phonemes, graphemes, words) is a term for this process because the reader constructs the text from the smallest units (letters to words, to phrases to sentences, etc.), and the process of constructing the text from those small units becomes automatic. Moreover Carrell (2002) mentions that readers also modify their preexisting background knowledge and current prediction on the basis of information encountered in the text. In conclusion, Bottom-up approaches relate to building textual meaning from the smallest units to the largest ones and using the readers’ preexisting knowledge to comprehend the text.
4.2.2 The Top-down Approach

One of the most important top-down model is put forward by Kenneth S. Goodman (1967), “The goal of reading is constructing meaning in response to text; it requires interactive use of graph phonics, syntactic, and semantic cues to construct meaning.” That is, during the reading process, readers take large units of meaning of the text at a time and match what they already know with the meaning they derive from the text the student does not read every word, but see through the text in order to be able to guess the meaning of the words or phrases.

Nuttall (1996) also states that readers’ intelligence and experience based on the schemata they have acquired can make the predictions to understand the text. That is, the reader does not read every word, but see through the text in order to be able to guess the meaning of the words or phrases. The top-down model gives a sense of perspective and makes use of all that the reader brings to the text: prior knowledge, common sense, etc. In brief, this model is the making of predictions about new information in the text based on prior experience or background knowledge that readers already know or possess.

4.2.3 The Interactive Approach

Nuttall (1996) mentions that, in practice, a reader continually shift from one focus to another, adopt a top-down approach to predict the probable meaning then move to the bottom-up approach to check whether that is really what the writer is saying. This process has been known as interactive reading. According to Nuttall (1996), Anderson (1999) and Alderson (2000), the interactive model combines elements of bottom-up and top-down models. The two models are very important strategies for readers. Successful readers frequently use and display combination of top-down and bottom-up reading (Cohen, 1990). That is readers use some characteristics of top-down and use others of bottom-up to reach their objective “Their reading comprehension”. Anderson (1999) also cites Grabe’s idea relating to the interactive model divided into two concepts; the first concept relates to the interaction that occurs between the reader and the text, while the second concept relates to the interaction between bottom-up and top-down process.
In interactive reading processing, both bottom-up and top-down processing should be occurring at all levels of analysis simultaneously (Rumelhart, 1980). The data needed to fill out the schemata become available through bottom-up processing; top down processing facilitates their assimilation if they are assimilated or consistent with the reader’s conceptual set. Bottom-up processing, ensures that the reader will be sensitive to new information that does not fit his/her ongoing hypothesis about the content or structure of the text. With the top-down processing, the reader can solve ambiguities or select alternatives to possible interpretations of the incoming data.

Following the assumptions of the schemata theoretic view of language comprehension, we can understand the process of comprehending a text as an interactive one between the reader’s background knowledge of content and structure, and the text itself. The text alone does not carry meaning; it rather only provides guidance for readers to find out the way they should construct the intended meaning from their own previously acquired knowledge. Efficient comprehension requires the ability to relate the textual material to one’s own knowledge (Adams & Collins, 1979). The linguistic competence is just one part of the total background knowledge so, comprehending sentences, words and discourse involves much more than just relying only on it.

### 4.3 Strategies for Reading Comprehension

Reading comprehension strategies are defined as the mental operations that readers select and apply in order to understand what they read (Cohen, 1990). Many researchers in this reading field have concluded that when readers have difficulties to understand or comprehend, they need to use strategies to overcome them (Paris et al., 1983).

In a very important study developed by Anderson (1999) in which he develops the reading strategies for reading comprehension to help readers read more successfully, he divided them into two groups which include Cognitive Reading Strategies (thinking) and Metacognitive Reading Strategies.


**4.3.1 Cognitive Strategies in Reading**

Cognitive strategies have been seen as mental processes directly concerned with the processing of information in order to learn. This type consists of three strategies as follows:

a) Comprehending strategies: consist of different processes which are: identifying, main ideas, author’s attitudes or tones, summarizing main information, analyzing author’s purposes, guessing the content of a text, translating messages into native language, guessing meaning of unknown words using context clues, using dictionary to clarify indirect meaning, and making inferences based on the available information to connecting important ideas in text.

b) Memory strategies: are making use of available typographical features such as bold face, italics, pictures, tables or figures in text. Then, reread the texts and take notes, underlining main ideas or highlighting information. Besides, recognizing previous words or information and paraphrasing or simplifying information are also help readers remembers what they read.

c) Retrieval strategies: are using prior knowledge or experience relevant to the topic, relating new information in text with previously read text, using grammar rules to understand meaning, applying knowledge of words stems, prefixes or suffixes, and recalling reading purposes or task obligations.

**4.3.2 Metacognitive Strategies in Reading**

The strategies that function to monitor or regulate cognitive strategies are called metacognitive strategies. According to Skehan 1993 these involve the followings processes: a) Planning for learning, b) Monitoring of comprehension, and c) Evaluation for learning after the language activity is completed.
a) Planning for learning: is the way that the readers set reading purposes or goals, and then keep purposes or goals in mind, figure out what needs to be accomplished, identify reading task expectations, plan steps, or actions before reading, and finally overview texts before reading.

b) Monitoring of comprehension: are checking if comprehension occurs, checking comprehension when coming across new information, controlling concentration or attention during reading, noticing when confusion occurs, and double checking comprehension when encountering ambiguous information.

c) Evaluation for learning: are accessing levels of text difficulty and reading demands, engaging self-questioning while reading, and evaluating accuracy in reading such as via task completion performance.

In addition, metacognitive strategies include “checking the outcome of any attempt to solve a problem, planning one’s text move, monitoring the effectiveness of any attempted action, testing, revising, and evaluating one’s strategies for learning.” (Brown,1994). In other words, metacognitive strategies are used to plan, monitor and regulate the reading as it occurs.

4.4 Researches in Reading

Several studies have been carried out to examine the reading strategies used by students in academic context. These kinds of study have been developed by authors such as Paris and Myer 1981, Olshavsky 1976, Kletzien 1991, Anderson 1991, and Aebersold and Field 1997. For this reason, this paper looks for describing the use of some reading strategies in a public high school.

Keeping in mind the last paragraph, it is necessary to know some definitions about strategy and the importance to learn that.
4.4.1 What are Strategies?

As Wended (1985) reminds us, there is an old proverb which states: “Give a man a fish and he eats for a day. Teach him how to fish and he eats for a lifetime”. Applied to the language teaching and learning field, this proverb can be interpreted to mean that if students are provided with answers, the immediate problem is solved. But if they receive some strategy training to work out the answers for themselves, they can learn how to manage and enhance their own learning.

The term “strategy” has been distinguished in the reading research from the term “skill” based on consciousness. This seems widely accepted among researchers (e.g. Barnett, 1989; Williams & Moran, 1989 and Cohen, 1998). Following Oxford (1990), it can be said that there is no agreement in the literature on language strategies to define exactly what they are, how many exist, how they can be categorized and demarcated and whether it is possible to create a real, scientifically validated hierarchy of strategies.

Some definitions of learning strategies provided by Oxford are:

“Learning strategies are steps taken by the students to enhance their own learning. Strategies are especially important for language learning because they are tools for active, self-directed involvement, which is essential to develop communicative competence” (Oxford, 1990)

“Strategy instruction involves helping the students know more about themselves, so they can try out, test, and become expert in using the strategies that help them the most… Strategy instruction is a highly creative, multilevel process for teaching students to optimize their learning strategies for themselves as individuals. (Oxford & Leaver, 1996)

Learning strategy research findings depends on many factors such as the area being investigated, the age of the subjects, research data techniques, etc. So it is important to first find a conceptual framework in which linguistic acquisition, language learning in classroom settings, and cognitive psychology are combined and also to limit the scope of research clearly.
4.4.2 Learning strategies research findings

It is considered that the pioneering work in the field of language learning strategies was carried out in the mid-seventies by researchers such as Rubin (1975) and Stern (1975). Those investigations emerged from a concern of identifying the characteristics of successful language learners. The first works corresponded to strategy lists based on folklore, common sense, and the unstructured personal observations of the list-makers.

Although these lists were not systematically validated and theoretically grounded at the time they were presented, many of the strategies were also found in later more empirical and sophisticated studies and were nonetheless useful because they helped to identify strategies used by good language learners. The most remarkable finding of the study by Rubin is the fact that the success of strategy use will vary depending on various factors such as the task, the stage of the learner in the learning process, the age, the context of learning (whether inside the classroom or not), individual styles such as auditory, visual or kinesthetic, and especially cultural differences in cognitive learning styles.

The research done in the area of learning strategies in second language acquisition from the seventies to early eighties contributed greatly to our understanding of how strategies enhance and support language learning. Since then on, there has been awareness that language learning strategies have the potential to be “an extremely powerful learning tool” O’Malley et.al (1985).

Anderson (1981) investigated the differences in reading strategy use by adult second language learners. The result revealed that both high and low scoring readers appeared to be using the same kinds of strategies while answering the comprehension questions, however, high scoring students seemed to be applying strategies more effectively and more appropriately.

According to Aebersold and Field (1997), they categorized the reading strategies that high proficient readers do when they read text (1997). The way that most high proficient readers use when reading to help them comprehend texts well are; recognize word quickly, use text features (subheading, transitions, and etc.), use titles to infer what information might follow, use world knowledge, analyze
unfamiliar words, identify the grammatical functions of words, read for meaning or concentrate on constructing meaning, guess about the meaning of the text, evaluate guess, and try new guesses if necessary, monitor comprehension, keep the purpose of reading the text in mind, adjust strategies to the purpose for reading, identify or infer main idea, understanding the relationships between the parts of a text, distinguish main idea, tolerate ambiguity in a text, paraphrase, use context or build meaning and aid comprehension, and finally continue reading even when unsuccessful, at least for a while.

Paris and Myer (1981) identified that high proficiency readers and low proficiency readers are equal in their ability to acknowledge useful strategies but high proficiency readers are more aware than low proficiency readers of harmful strategies that will interfere with their reading.

Olshavsky (1996) found in the study that better high school readers used strategies and more frequently than did poor readers. In a later study in 1978, she found no differences between good and poor high school readers in either the number or the types of strategies used.

Kletzien (1991) conducted strategies used by good and poor readers used the same strategies for the three passages. However, this study clarified that good readers would try a variety of strategies and they were persistent in trying strategies even when they faced frustration with the materials. Besides, good readers could be better controlling their strategy use than poor readers, as evidenced by their exchanging types of strategies for reading the passage. Good readers also continued to try different types of strategies to construct meaning of the text.

According to Oxford (1986e), the research field has proved that second language learning strategies are beneficial for four key reasons:

1- Appropriate learning strategies are related to successful language performance in the sense that successful language learners generally use appropriate strategies which explain their outstanding performance. It does not matter if they are aware of the strategies they are using but good language learners tend to use strategies that are appropriate to their own stage of language learning, personality, age, purpose for learning the language, and type of language. The opposite happens with inappropriate learning strategies which could also explain the frequent failures of poor language learners and even the occasional weaknesses of good language learners (Hosenfeld, 1979a, 1979b: Reiss, 1983, cited in
Oxford ibid p4). To balance the topic, teachers and students can agree on what strategies to use in a determined situation or while working on a specific skill in order to get great benefits to enhance second language performance.

2- Using appropriate learning strategies enables students to take responsibility for their own learning. Language learning strategies also enhance autonomy and self-direction in the learners. According to findings in Cognitive psychology, all learning, (especially language learning) requires learners to actively link new information with the already existing mental structures, thus creating increasingly rich and complex structures. In that way, active language learners develop their own way of understanding the second language and culture. As they keep interacting and learning the second language, they gradually refine their own linguistic understanding and with practice increase their second language proficiency.

It has been proved that independent learning is trained and developed during classroom instruction. Thus, the learners can keep on learning independently even when they are no longer taking formal language instruction or when a large part of the language learning takes place outside of the class.

3- Learning strategies have worked effectively in solving many difficulties in second language learning and they also help to improve the skills of all language learners. No matter the characteristics of the learners or their general cognitive styles, learning strategies are teachable. Research has proved that teachers can train students to use better learning strategies (Dansereau, 1978, 1985; Henner-Stanchina. 1982; O’Malley, Russo & Chamot. 1983. Russo & Stewner-Manzanares. 1985. Cited in Oxford ibid 1986 p 5).

4- Addressing learning strategies in their programs give teachers an expanded role. Although one of the characteristic of learning strategies is that they foster autonomy in the students, this does not mean that teachers lose importance. On the contrary, they have an expanded role in providing new practice opportunities, offering, comprehensible input to the learners and also observing which strategies the learners are using, assessing how appropriate those strategies are, and training the learner on how to use more appropriate strategies that foster self-directed learning. A few years later, Oxford (1990) presented a system of strategies that support each other and can be associated with each other.
She suggested grouping them into direct and indirect strategies. Direct strategies are made up of memory, cognitive, and compensation strategies while indirect ones comprise social, affective and metacognitive strategies.

This comprehensive classification system has provided the foundations for the Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL) which has been employed in many studies around the world to validate the effectiveness of learning strategies to language learning. It has been used in major studies, involved ten thousand language learners and it has been translated into more than twenty languages.

### 4.5 The Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL)

#### 4.5.1 Types of Strategies

Between 1986 and 1990, Rebecca Oxford designed an instrument for assessing the frequency use of language learning strategies in order to measure strategy use. Through years, many important studies have been carried out using the SILL. According to research report and articles published in the field, the SILL appears to be the only language learning strategy questionnaire that has been extensively checked for reliability and validated in multiple ways.

An important fact is that the SILL conceptualize language-learning strategies in a broad way to include the social and affective sides of the learner as well as the more intellectual (cognitive) and "executive-managerial"(metacognitive). Therefore, when the SILL is related to language performance, it considers the "whole learner," rather than just the cognitive and metacognitive aspects. This implies therefore, that language is not considered just as a mental exercise but as an integral process.

The SILL was organized according to strategy groups using a factor analysis so that researchers could divide the instrument into dimensions usually referred to as sub-scales or factors. Six sub-scales were developed based on the early factor analyses so that each sub-scale have an adequate number of items to facilitate more in-depth understanding of the learning strategies for EFL/ ESL. These sub-scales include:
1. Memory strategies, such as grouping, imagery, rhyming, and structured reviewing (9 items)

2. Cognitive strategies, such as reasoning, analyzing, summarizing (all reflective of deep processing), as well as general practicing (14 items).

3. Compensation strategies (to compensate for limited knowledge), such as guessing meaning from the context in reading and listening and using synonyms and gestures to convey meaning when the precise expression is not known (6 items).

4. Metacognitive strategies, such as paying attention, consciously searching for practice opportunities, planning for language tasks, self-evaluating one’s progress, and monitoring errors (9 items).

5. Affective (emotional, motivation-related) strategies, such as anxiety reduction, self-encouragement, and self-reward (6 items).

6. Social strategies, such as asking questions, cooperating with native speakers of the language and becoming culturally aware (6 items).

As we can see the largest group of strategies belongs to the category of cognitive ones. Research on learning strategies suggests that cognitive strategies includes the greatest variety since they cover strategies related to practice and to the all-important “deep-processing” in which learners analyze, synthesize, and transform new information.(Oxford & Ehrman, 1995).

According to Oxford (1996), through strategy assessment, teachers can help their students to realize about the power of using language learning strategies for making learning quicker, easier, and more effective.
5. METHODOLOGY

5.1 The research paradigm

Taking into consideration the main objective of this project (to analyse what type of reading strategies the ninth grade students use in the EFL classroom in the comprehension and interpretation of written texts.), the kind of research methodology used is quantitative, for this purpose, a questionnaire was specifically designed and delivered to the students.

Aliaga and Gunderson (2002) have described the quantitative research methods very well. According to them "Quantitative research is an inquiry into a social problem, explain phenomena by gathering numerical data that are analysed using mathematically based methods e.g. in particular statistics".

Fellows and Liu (2008) said that quantitative research methods are typically adopted because they are scientific methods and provide immediate results. Other reason for selecting this approach is that it is more efficient, can test hypothesis and always aimed at clarifying features, count them and build statistical models to explain what is observed during research. Therefore, this project will study the data obtained through a multiple choice questionnaire, this one is administered to the sample group, in order to examine the problem in depth, and consequently, describe the use of some reading strategies in order to identify which one is the most used. The instrument was applied in one class of fifty minutes.

5.2 The research tool

Data were collected through a questionnaire designed for this research project and delivered to the ninth grade students. An advantage of using questionnaire as a data collection method is they are a safe way of gathering data as they require a little involvement from the researcher. They are less dangerous to carry out than other research methods such as participant observation as the exchange is briefer and carried out in a safe, public environment. Furthermore questionnaire enables hypotheses to be tested, correlations to be identified and straight forward descriptive data to be obtained (Bryman and Bell,
2007). For these important reasons we used a questionnaire because this tool supplies a high degree of reliability and they are more accurate and practical way of collecting a large amount of data. According to Fife-Schaw (2001), the questionnaire is probably the single most common research tool that is relatively well understood and has the advantages of simplicity, versatility and low cost.
6. DESIGN OF THE STUDY

6.1 Participants, Sample and Setting

6.1.1 Participants and sample:

It was held in a public high school called I.E.D “Institute Técnico de Oriente” from Ubaque, Cundinamarca. The population chosen for the purposes of this study consists of a group of thirty eight students attending their ninth grade at secondary school. The class is made up of twenty girls and eighteen boys, aged between thirteen and sixteen. They attend class one-hour class a day, three times a week. The majority of their parents are farmers or workers with low income and low level of literacy. The students stay at the school from 7:00 a. m. to 1:15 p. m. For most of them there is little or no exposure to English at all outside the classroom and consequently few opportunities to practice it in real contexts. They have been taking English since elementary school and mainly because it is part of the school’s curriculum. However, these classes are taught by teachers who are not prepared in the teaching of a foreign language for this reason these learners may be referred as a low level proficiency group. In the high school section is different because the students count with L2 language teachers. Since in public schools it is not allowed to ask students for a textbook, in class we alternate our own designed material with photocopies of readings and guides downloaded from the web. One class a week is dedicated to grammar items. We mix both inductive and deductive type of activities in teaching grammar. These include controlled activities such as contextualized practices in which students relate form to meaning, substitution exercises, and gap activities.

6.1.2 Setting:

The high school is located in the South West part of Ubaque. The neighborhood in front of the high school is of middle socioeconomic class. The school is not a bilingual one and the level of the students can be defined as “basic users”. Taking the MCERL (El Marco común europeo de referencia para las lenguas: aprendizaje, enseñanza y evaluación) as reference the majority of our students are currently in the level A2, and a little of them are in B1 which means they:
- Can express opinions on abstract/cultural matters in a limited way or offer advice within a known area, and understand instructions or public announcements.

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

- Can complete forms and write short simple letters or postcards related to personal information.

CERL is taken as a reference because all public and private high school must use the different parameters given by this association.

6.2 Analysis of tools:

In this study a structured questionnaire was given to the students with the use of closed-ended questions with this technique the obtained information could easily be illustrated in graphs to identify any patterns or trends and make comparisons in this case about the reading strategies that students use when they read a text in English. Seliger and Shohamy (1989: 172-173) claim that structured questionnaires are considered to be more efficient than open ones, as they ask students “to mark responses, to check agreements and disagreements, or to select among a number of alternatives”, which facilitates the task and increases, relevance and reliability.

The information gained by closed-ended questions allows categorizing respondents into groups based on the options they have selected. Additionally, closed questions may be used to elicit specific information in an efficient manner. Closed questions can be categorized into 5 different types: Multiple Choice, Likert Scale, Numerical, Ordinal, and Categorical. For this study we chose a multiple choice questionnaire because this type is useful when the researcher would like participants to select the most relevant response, they are also quicker to complete for the respondent. Lee (2011), affirm that Multiple Choice questions are the most commonly used testing techniques in many academic tests.
6.3 Data Analysis and Interpretation

For the development of this research we informed to the high school director about the research which would be carried out in the institution. After that, we verified the problem observed in class and decided to collect quantitative data because the study is based on a multiple choice questionnaire that asks students about the strategies they could use before, during and after reading a text. This questionnaire was given to thirty-eight students of English in the ninth year of Secondary Education. Each question of the questionnaire has a situation for instance, “al iniciar la lectura de un texto observas los gráficos para darte una idea del tema que trata la lectura”, and the answers for this question are: “siempre, algunas veces, raramente y nunca”. With that information we will try to analyse if my students use the reading strategies in a right way. This research has into account the following reading strategies: “Pictures clues, Predicting, Using Prior Knowledge, Guessing words from context, Summarizing and Monitoring.

To start, it was applied the questionnaire and asked the thirty eight students to answer it. It is important to say that the students have previous knowledge about some reading strategies which have been used in their dairy classes. Then, this activity was designed with the following objective:

1. To get evidence about if students apply some strategies in reading comprehension when they face a written text or not.

After this activity the students had to answer 13 closed questions. The three first questions were used to introduce the students to the survey. The next 10 questions were used to obtain the information about the topic. The questionnaire was written in Spanish to make sure that students understand all the questions and they answer according to what they think, preventing comprehension problems. The questions were:
1. ¿Cómo considera su nivel de inglés?
a) Alto b) Medio c) Bajo

2. ¿Qué importancia tiene para usted las clases de inglés?
a) Mucha b) Poca c) Ninguna

3. ¿Con qué frecuencia participa en las clases de Inglés?
a) Siempre b) A veces c) Nunca

Cuando tiene que realizar una lectura en inglés, usted:

4. ¿Observa los gráficos antes de empezar a leer el texto?
   A. siempre B. algunas veces C. raramente D. nunca

5. ¿Lee el título detenidamente e identifica el posible tema de la lectura?
   A. siempre B. algunas veces C. raramente D. nunca

6. ¿Mientras está leyendo se imagina las escenas o hace dibujos de lo que ya ha leído?
   A. siempre B. algunas veces C. raramente D. nunca
7. ¿Antes de leer, piensa en lo que ya conoce sobre el tema?
   A. siempre      B. algunas veces      C. raramente      D. nunca

8. ¿Cuándo no conoce el significado de una palabra en inglés, usted intenta adivinar o suponer su significado y continúa la lectura?
   A. siempre      B. algunas veces      C. raramente      D. nunca

9. ¿Resume (en tu cabeza o por escrito) la información importante que ha leído?
   A. siempre      B. algunas veces      C. raramente      D. nunca

10. ¿Si no sabe una palabra en particular, trata de entenderla en el contexto?
    A. siempre      B. algunas veces      C. raramente      D. nunca

11. ¿Realiza algunas suposiciones acerca de lo que piensa que sucederá en la lectura?
    A. siempre      B. algunas veces      C. raramente      D. nunca

12. ¿Mientras está leyendo, haces pequeñas pausas para verificar si está comprendiendo la lectura?
    A. siempre      B. algunas veces      C. raramente      D. nunca

13. ¿Cuándo tiene un texto en inglés, es más fácil comprender su contenido si conoce el tema?
    A. siempre      B. algunas veces      C. raramente      D. nunca
7. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The group was tested in Spanish. With this group the questionnaire was applied and the time required to answer the survey was around 15 to 20 minutes in each classroom.

The instrument employed in this study was a questionnaire, that allows the research to extract the information to know what of these reading comprehension strategies “Pictures clues, Predicting, Using Prior Knowledge, Guessing words from context, Summarizing and Monitoring” the ninth grade students use in their reading interpretation in written text and what of them is the most used during regular English language classes in a public high school. This survey contains 13 closed questions which were made in a progressive way to introduce the participants in the survey. The first three questions had to do with the general knowledge of English language the English language importance and the students’ participation in the English language class. The following questions had in an implicit type of reading comprehension strategies, which were analyzed to know its effectiveness keeping in mind whether students have the capacity to use in their reading interpretation in written text. The results analysis started from question 4 to question 13 which were based on hypothetical situations.

With all this information a chart was designed including the item and the corresponding answers given by the students. Finally, the students’ answers were analyzed by percentages, by choosing the answers that each student marked in the survey and by classifying them according to the number of students who answered every item. It is necessary to take into account that the answers were statistically analyzed both individual and as a general result. Following you will find the analysis of each item, presented in a chart where the statistical result is given. The next process was followed in order to obtain the percentage:

1. The surveys applied were counted one by one and the number of this result was 38, which corresponds to the total number of students.
2. The students carried out the survey.

3. The answers of the students were grouped according to the items showed in the survey (a) Siempre, (b) Algunas veces, (c) Raramente, (d) Nunca.

4. According to the item chosen, the answers were summed up in order to find out the total of each answer.

5. The procedure to obtain the percentage was: first of all, the results of each answer choice were grouped, so the number of students who answered the same question was divided by the total of students and finally, the result was multiplied by 100% and in this way the percentage in each course was calculated. For example, keeping in mind there are 38 students in the 9th grade. 19 chose the answer (b). Then, 19* 100 and divided by 38 is equal 50%.

6. In order to find the total percentage the procedure to follow was the same for each answer. The students who marked the same answer choice were summed up and this total result was divided by the total of the students, in this case 38 students. Then, this result was multiplied by 100% to find the total percentage. In the final of the each table we can find a total percentage it is calculated through a sum of the categories that is “Siempre, algunas veces, raramente y nunca” and divided by 2 because each strategy have two questions.

7. In addition to the table, a figure is shown for each item by following the next steps as additional information of this analysis. First of all, from the table No 1 the complete item was selected with the all the answer choices. Second, the total of students and the total percentage were chosen, too. Third, the segment selected was added to the figure aids from windows and finally, the figure was chosen and the figure was made by means of windows graphic assistant.
The charts and graphs were grouped in the following categories to understand the analysis of the survey in a better way:

- Strategy 1: Using Picture Clues (questions 4-6)
- Strategy 2: Predicting (questions 5-11)
- Strategy 3: Using Prior Knowledge (questions 7-13)
- Strategy 4: Guessing words from context (questions 8-10)
- Strategy 5: Summarizing and monitoring (questions 9-12)

**Strategy 1: Picture Clues**

*Cuando tienes que realizar una lectura en inglés, usted:*

4. ¿Observa los gráficos antes de empezar a leer el texto?
   
   A. Siempre       B. Algunas veces       C. Raramente       D. Nunca

6. Mientras está leyendo se imagina las escenas o hace dibujos de lo que ya ha leído?
   
   A. Siempre       B. Algunas veces       C. Raramente       D. Nunca

**Table 2**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Picture clue</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>C</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>Total Sts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Question 4</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>%</td>
<td>23,69%</td>
<td>57,90%</td>
<td>15,78%</td>
<td>2,63%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question 6</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total %</td>
<td>24,84%</td>
<td>48,96%</td>
<td>14,39%</td>
<td>11,81%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Taking into account the question number 4 the data obtained show that; 23, 69% of the participants chose (A) “Siempre”; 57,90% chose (B) “Algunas veces”; 15,78% chose (C) “Raramente”; and 2,63% chose (D) “Nunca”. Taking into consideration these answers, a figure was designed to understand the percentages described above in a better way:

From these data we can infer that in the question number 6; 26% of the participants chose (A) “Siempre”; 40% chose (B) “Algunas veces”; 13% chose (C) “Raramente”; and 21% chose (D) “Nunca. With these answers, a graphic was designed to understand the percentages described above in a better way:
According to the table 2 and the graphics of the questions 4 and 6, it can be said the highest percentage was in the answer (B) “Algunas veces” with a 48.96% that is, students almost always use images to understand the main idea of the text. Using Picture Clues is an old saying that a picture is worth a thousand words, meaning that a visual display helps readers understand, organize, and remember some of those thousand words. Many students think visually, using shapes spatial relationships, movements and colours and can benefit greatly from this strategy. Visual representations of text help a reader see the information again. A graphic “re-presentation” allows a reader to see relationships, understand organization, connect ideas, and make abstract ideas concrete.

Rubin (1975) suggested that good L2 learners are willing and accurate guessers so it is important to help the students to use what the context offers in order to get the desirable comprehension. In children book, illustrations are there to help clarify the text and it is important for students to know this and learn how to use to them.

Krashen (1982) pointed out that it is very important that teachers use non-linguistic means to encourage comprehension. The extra-linguistic support in the form of realia and pictures for beginning classes is not just a frill but a very important resource that teachers have to encourage language acquisition.

“The use of objects and pictures in early second language instruction corresponds to the caretaker's use of the "here and now" in encouraging first language acquisition, in that they all help the acquirer understand messages containing structures that are a little beyond" them.” (1982).

Strategy 2: Predicting

5. ¿Lee el título detenidamente e identifica el posible tema de la lectura?

A. Siempre  B. Algunas veces  C. Raramente  D. Nunca
11. ¿Realiza algunas suposiciones acerca de lo que piensa que sucederá en la lectura?

A. siempre   B. algunas veces   C. raramente   D. nunca

Table 3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Predicting</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>C</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>Total Sts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Question 5</td>
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<td>13</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>%</td>
<td>47.37%</td>
<td>34.21%</td>
<td>18.42%</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question 11</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>%</td>
<td>2.63%</td>
<td>55.26%</td>
<td>31.58%</td>
<td>10.53%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total %</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>44.73%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>5.27%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

According question number 5 data show that; 47.37% of the students chose (A) “Siempre”; 34.21% chose (B) “Algunas veces”; 18.42% chose (C) “Raramente”; and 0.00% chose (D) “Nunca”. Taking into consideration these answers, a figure was designed to understand the percentages described above in a better way:
From the data available in the question 11 we can see that; 2,63% of the participants chose (A) “Siempre”; 55,26% chose (B) “Algunas veces”; 31,58% chose (C) “Raramente”; and 10,53% chose (D) “Nunca”. Taking into consideration these answers, a figure was designed to understand the percentages described above in a better way:

According to the table 3 and the graphics of the questions 5 and 11, it can be said the highest percentage was in the answer (B) “Algunas veces” with a 44,73% that is, students constantly read the title of the text and predict the possible topic. Predicting is a basic strategy for using prior knowledge to understand a text. It aims at generating hypothesis about the type, purpose, or scope of a text to provide a framework for transacting with the text to confirm comprehension. The previous strategy “using picture cues”, can also be used as a means to predict what is going to happen in a story. Predicting is also a way of focusing interest and establishing a purpose for reading a particular text to confirm or expand understanding. Formal schemata define reader expectations about how pieces of textual information will relate to each other and in what order details will appear (Carrell, 1987). When students make predictions they are deciding their purposes for reading. Prediction activities work hand-in-hand with background knowledge. As students synthesize what they know with the text they are reading, it helps them determine a purpose for reading.
Using their background knowledge their goal becomes finding out, or predicting what is going to happen next. Further, they are engaged in generating predictions prior to reading by first drawing upon background knowledge.

"Good readers are constantly forming hypotheses about what is to come in the passage they are reading... Like so many other comprehension skills this requires prior knowledge about the content and about the structure of what is being read." (Irwin and Baker, 1989, pp,161).

By applying this strategy students are given the opportunity to integrate what they know while they read and are also faced with new information that may conflict with their own assumptions which, in turn may bolster critical thinking skills.

Strategy 3: Using Prior Knowledge

7. ¿Antes de leer, piensa en lo que ya conoce sobre el tema?
   A. Siempre        B. Algunas veces   C. Raramente   D. Nunca

13. ¿Cuándo tiene un texto en inglés, es más fácil comprender su contenido si conoce el tema?
    A. Siempre        B. Algunas veces   C. Raramente   D. Nunca
Table 4

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Using Prior Knowledge</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>C</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>Total Sts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Question 7</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>%</td>
<td>23,68%</td>
<td>36,84%</td>
<td>34,21%</td>
<td>5,26%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question 13</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>%</td>
<td>52,63%</td>
<td>28,95%</td>
<td>10,53%</td>
<td>7,89%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>38,15%</td>
<td>32,90%</td>
<td>22,37%</td>
<td>6,58%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From the data above according to the question 7 we can conclude that: 2,68% of the students chose (A) “Siempre”; 36,84% chose (B) “Algunas veces”; 34,21% chose (C) “Raramente”; and 5,26% chose (D) “Nunca”. Taking into consideration these answers, a figure was designed to understand the percentages described above in a better way:
In the question 13 with the data obtained we can state that; 52,63% of the participants chose (A) “Siempre”; 28,95% chose (B) “Algunas veces”; 10,53% chose (C) “Raramente”; and 7,89% chose (D) “Nunca”. Taking into consideration these answers, a figure was designed to understand the percentages described above in a better way:

![Graph](image)

According to the table 4 and the graphics of the questions 7 and 13, it can be said the highest percentage was in the answer (A) “Siempre” with a 38,15% that is, students always think about concepts they already know about the topic in order to improve the comprehension of the text. “Proficient learners build on and activate their background knowledge before reading, writing, speaking, or listening; poor learners begin without thinking.” Irvin et al. (1996:5). Besides, “a meaning in memory in terms of the typical or normal situations or events that instantiate the concept” (Rumelhart, 1980:34). That is, prior knowledge facilitates comprehension in the sense that readers generally understand texts more easily if they are familiar with the topics covered.

To develop this reading strategy we as L2 teachers can use the KWL chart. The letters K, W and L stand for three activities students engage when reading: recalling what they KNOW, determining what they WANT to learn, and identifying what they LEARN as they read. That is, firstly the students have to think about the topic which is given by the teacher; during this process the student have the
opportunity to list what they know (previous knowledge), what questions they have about the topic. Finally, after reading the teacher and his/her students have the possibility to verify what they have learned from reading the text using their previous knowledge and knew knowledge given by the text. In this way, the learners participate in a more active way in the developing of an activity and they recalled better what they read (Ogle, 1986).

Strategy 4: Guessing words from context

8. ¿Cuándo no conoce el significado de una palabra en inglés, usted intenta adivinar o suponer su significado y continúa la lectura?
   A. Siempre  B. Algunas veces  C. Raramente  D. Nunca

10. ¿Si no sabe una palabra en particular, trata de entenderla en el contexto?
   A. Siempre  B. Algunas veces  C. Raramente  D. Nunca

Table 5

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Guessing words from context</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>C</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>Total Sts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Question 8</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>58%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question 10</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>%</td>
<td>31,58%</td>
<td>63,16%</td>
<td>5,26%</td>
<td>0,00%</td>
<td>100%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>26,29%</td>
<td>60,58%</td>
<td>10,63%</td>
<td>2,5</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The information gathered in the question 8 shows that; 21% of the students chose (A) “Siempre”; 58% chose (B) “Algunas veces”; 16% chose (C) “Raramente”; and 5% chose (D) “Nunca”. Taking into consideration these answers, a figure was designed to understand the percentages described above in a better way:

![Diagram](image1)

In view of the results in the question 10, we can see that; 31,58% of the participants chose (A) “Siempre”; 63,16% chose (B) “Algunas veces”; 5,26% chose (C) “Raramente”; and 0,00% chose (D) “Nunca”. Taking into consideration these answers, a figure was designed to understand the percentages described above in a better way:

![Diagram](image2)
According to the table 5 and the graphics of the questions 8 and 10, it can be said the highest percentage was in the answer (B) “Algunas veces” with a 60.58% that is, students try to understand the unknown words into the context and continue the reading. Guessing words from context is an important strategy because it takes into account the vocabulary; some students declare having problems in reading when they do not understand a word, finding new words when reading is not uncommon for readers particularly L2 learners. It might not impede the overall understanding of the text. But if too many words or the most essential ones are unknown, then comprehension will surely suffer a lot.

Vocabulary is one of the most troublesome aspects of reading for second or foreign language readers. Typically, non-fluent readers want to look up every unknown word from a dictionary; otherwise they feel they are unable to understand any of what they are reading. This forces the reader into a word-by-word reading style especially when the text has many unfamiliar words. However, our students can use this strategy to speed up their reading and support their ideas or hypothesis. Besides, Guessing from the context is one of the most useful skills learners can acquire and apply inside and outside classroom and, more importantly, can be taught and implemented relatively easily (Thornbury, 2002, p. 202).

Strategy 5: Summarizing and monitoring

9. ¿Resume (en su cabeza o por escrito) la información importante que ha leído?
   A. Siempre       B. Algunas veces   C. Raramente   D. Nunca

12. ¿Mientras está leyendo, hace pequeñas pausas para verificar si está comprendiendo la lectura?
    A. Siempre       B. Algunas veces   C. Raramente   D. Nunca
As can be seen in the table above taking into account the question number 9 the general results demonstrate that; 31,58% of the participants chose (A) “Siempre”; 44,74% chose (B) “Algunas veces”; 15,79% chose (C) “Raramente”; and 7,89% chose (D) “Nunca”. Taking into consideration these answers, a figure was designed to understand the percentages described above in a better way:
From the graphic above in the question number 12 we can conclude that; 39% of the participants chose (A) “Siempre”; 37% chose (B) “Algunas veces”; 21% chose (C) “Raramente”; and 3% chose (D) “Nunca”. Taking into consideration these answers, a figure was designed to understand the percentages described above in a better way:

According to the table 6 and the graphics of the questions and 9 and 12, it can be said the highest percentage was in the answer (B) “Algunas veces” with a 40.88% that is, students in ninth grade summarize and monitory the main ideas when they are reading. Summarizing and monitoring strategies teach students how to discern the most important ideas in a text, how to ignore irrelevant information, and how to integrate the central ideas in a meaningful way. Teaching students to summarize improves their memory for what is read. Summarization strategies can be used in almost every content area.

Summarizing and monitoring build comprehension by helping to reduce confusion. Teachers train students to process the information they read with the goal of breaking down content into brief pieces. This strategy can be used with the whole class, small groups, or as an individual assignment. Summarizing text by using writing activities builds on prior knowledge, helps improve writing, and strengthens vocabulary skills.
The Monitoring strategy teaches students to recognize when they don't understand parts of a text and to take necessary steps to restore meaning. This technique is a component of the Reciprocal Teaching model in which teachers encourage students to think about their own thought process during reading. Monitoring/Clarifying helps students learn to be actively involved and monitor their comprehension as they read.

This strategy helps students to focus their attention on the fact that there may be reasons why the text is difficult to understand. Students can be taught to ask questions, reread, restate, and visualize making the text more comprehensible.

In conclusion it can be said the most used reading strategy during regular English language classes of ninth grade students was “guessing words from context” in order to understand the total percentages a figure was designed:
According to the last graphic it is observed the highest percentage was in the “guessing words from context” strategy with a 60.58%. That is, students of the ninth grade always try to find some solutions when they have to face with unknown words and overcome these obstacles in order to comprehend the text and do not stop the reading. Smith (1971) argued that the best way used to identify unfamiliar words in texts is to draw inferences from the rest of the text rather than looking it up in a dictionary. This view differentiates bottom up processing from top-down processing in order to deal with unknown words, emphasizing the reader depends on the context to interpret words. However, many times “the guessing” does not work because of the false cognates, for example.

Taking into account the last paragraph, it can be concluded the “guessing words from context” reading strategy is a tool students use to avoid getting stuck when finding unknown words and in this way they can continue their reading comprehension. Nevertheless, it is necessary to dedicate some sessions in which we as a L2 teachers teach and explain students the existence of the false cognates that could generate a little confusion.
8. CONCLUSIONS

To know the reading strategies used by our students in the reading process allow us to create new activities and methodologies in order to improve their reading comprehension when they have to face written texts.

It is crucial for teachers to think of ways to provide less successful learners with vocabulary learning strategies. This should be done by making them aware of the need to become independent learners by recognizing the strategies they possess and those they lack. Learner’s attention should also be directed toward the strategies successful learners benefit from.

The most important reason by which the explicit teaching of comprehension skills is that comprehension can be improved by teaching students to use specific L2 reading strategies or to reason strategically when they find barriers to understanding what they are reading.

Through appropriate instruction, reading comprehension can be fostered in two important ways; the comprehension of the text under current consideration and comprehension capacities more generally. Thus although teachers may focus their content area instruction on helping students understand the material it is also important to teach the students how to be self-regulated and active readers who knows a variety of strategies which help them comprehend. As teachers, it is important to incorporate both goals into comprehension strategy instruction.

EFL teachers should broaden their views of reading instruction and, furthermore, should provide a reach learning environment for students to make personal, sensible, and meaningful connections through an inquiry process.
Following a constructivist theory of reading comprehension we should emphasize the fact that we need to encourage students to create their own meaning from texts, rather than impose our own interpretations, though of course we may help as resources to bridge the linguistic and cultural gap that students experience when reading a text.

In general, it is important to decide what framework and strategies teachers should choose to focus on based on their student’s needs, learning styles, proficiency level as well as the task’s requirements. Thus, frameworks are not fixed and can vary from context to context.

When using a strategy program to apply in the second language class, it is also necessary to consider how fast the teacher should introduce a new strategy. The rate depends mostly on whether the students appear to be identifying strategies easily and articulating strategy use as they read. Names and classification of reading strategies for instructional purposed should probably be organized so that they are easy to understand and teach.

Reading strategies should be taught on an ongoing basis so that the students learn independently to use them as they read. The process of strategy identification and feedback entails the naming of strategies and repeated explanations from the teacher.

The results of the present study have confirmed that it is really important and necessary that we as teachers implement in our classes reading strategies in an explicit form that is, teachers should inform students about the value and application of the strategies and thus students begin to improve their reading competence. Moreover, the results of this study point to the need to teach reading in L2 using new methods, attitudes, materials and so forth, we should teach beginning L2 learners in a way that they can acquire the language proficiency in order to develop their L2 reading comprehension. This might be carried out through texts carefully chosen to support the development of language proficiency.
Another important finding is the fact that as teachers, we should make learners practice a wide range of vocabulary learning strategies ranging from decontextualized and mechanical strategies to contextualized ones. The idea is to enable learners to deal with any unknown vocabulary they may encounter both in and out of class context.

It is essential to consider reading strategies when planning courses, teaching students, and designing classroom research. Appropriate reading strategies should be among the first considerations of any ESL/EFL teacher or researcher who wants to enhance student learning.
9. PLAN OF ACTION

From the literature revised, the work of Palincsar and Brown (1984) and Palincsar (1987a, 1987b) has been particularly enlightening in the development of an instructional approach focusing on reading comprehension and strategy training. This reciprocal teaching approach has been influenced by the developmental theory of Vygotsky (1978). In the theory, development is mediated by expert scaffolding techniques to demonstrate and use the specific reading strategies that the students are supposed to learn, such as question generating, summarizing and predicting.

The students have the role of spectators and have little responsibility of the work. As the students start learning and using the strategies, they also begin to assume more leadership responsibility which means that more competent students model and assist other students in using comprehension strategies.

Throughout time, as the students become more competent and are able to perform the trained strategies, the instructional focus shifts from teacher-centered to student-centered learning. What has been modeled, mediates the internalization of knowledge by the learner. Thus, reading becomes a system of social and cultural interactions established by a guide (the teacher) and the developing students. By using these processes of assisted performance, the students are trained to carry out work independently which they previously could only do with the assistance of others.

The results are tenuous though, because there were some problems with the study and its reliability as a whole. First, the students were classified as bilingual based on their participation in a bilingual education program, not on any measure of language proficiency. Second, the language of instruction was English. Consequently, not knowing the relative language proficiency of the students and the use of the target language as a means of instruction, do not allow evidencing the effectiveness of the reciprocal-teaching approach in these studies. The lack of these important considerations calls for research effort to include them in future investigations.
The big challenge this time will be that the students manage the strategies so well, that they become autonomous and fluent readers in the future. The long-term goal of strategic teaching is to help students construct meaning through self-regulated use and adaptation of a wide repertoire of strategies. As a teacher the big challenge will be to reflect and adapt some learning strategies to meet the students’ needs as they become strategic learners.
REFERENCES


Appendix 1

"QUESTIONNAIRE"

Name: ________________________________
Date: ________________________________

1. ¿Cómo considera su nivel de inglés?
   A. Alto  B. Medio  C. Bajo

2. ¿Qué importancia tiene para usted las clases de inglés?
   A. Mucha  B. Poca  C. Ninguna

3. ¿Con qué frecuencia participa en las clases de Inglés?
   A. Siempre  B. A veces  C. Nunca

Cuando tienes que realizar una lectura en inglés, usted:

4. ¿Observa los gráficos antes de empezar a leer el texto?
   A. Siempre  B. Algunas veces  C. Raramente  D. Nunca

Cuando tiene que realizar una lectura en inglés, usted:

5. ¿Lee el título detenidamente e identifica el posible tema de la lectura?
   A. Siempre  B. Algunas veces  C. Raramente  D. Nunca

6. Mientras estás leyendo se imagina las escenas o hace dibujos de lo que ya ha leído?
   A. Siempre  B. Algunas veces  C. Raramente  D. Nunca

7. ¿Antes de leer, piensa en lo que ya conoce sobre el tema?
   A. Siempre  B. Algunas veces  C. Raramente  D. Nunca
8. ¿Cuándo no conoce el significado de una palabra en inglés, usted intenta adivinar o suponer su significado y continúa la lectura?
   A. Siempre  B. Algunas veces  C. Raramente  D. Nunca

9. ¿Resume (en su cabeza o por escrito) la información importante que ha leído?
   A. Siempre  B. Algunas veces  C. Raramente  D. Nunca

10. ¿Si no sabe una palabra en particular, trata de entenderla en el contexto?
    A. Siempre  B. Algunas veces  C. Raramente  D. Nunca

11. ¿Realiza algunas suposiciones acerca de lo que piensa que sucederá en la lectura?
    A. siempre  B. algunas veces  C. raramente  D. nunca

12. ¿Mientras está leyendo, hace pequeñas pausas para verificar si está comprendiendo la lectura?
    A. Siempre  B. Algunas veces  C. Raramente  D. Nunca

13. ¿Cuándo tiene un texto en inglés, es más fácil comprender su contenido si conoce el tema?
    A. Siempre  B. Algunas veces  C. Raramente  D. Nunca