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Running head: PRE-READING STRATEGIES FOR FOSTERING SELF-DIRECTED
LEARNING AND READING COMPREHENSION

Pre-Reading Strategies for Fostering Self-Directed Learning and Reading Comprehension

Gloria Patricia RINCON MONTOYA

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Directed by Alethia BOGOYA
Department of Foreign Languages and Cultures
Universidad de La Sabana
Chía, Colombia

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Abstract

This paper aims at showing the results of an action research study about the effects of teaching pre-reading strategies, taking into account self-directed learning (SDL) principles, on the reading comprehension of 36 low proficiency students of a public school in Palmira, Colombia. The intervention consisted of 11 sessions carried out during three months. The pre-reading strategies chosen were activating prior knowledge and building background knowledge.

The mixed-method approach was used to analyze data from both the quantitative and qualitative perspective. On one hand, the quantitative methods, reading tests and surveys applied at the beginning and at the end of the process, were used to measure students' improvement in reading comprehension, analyze the use of pre-reading strategies, and evaluate learners' self-directed learning process. On the other hand, the qualitative methods, observation, logs and interviews, were used to measure the participants' perception regarding reading comprehension and self-directed learning.

The t-test results indicate that the students' reading comprehension improved statistically speaking and the qualitative analysis supports this view by showing that students felt more motivated towards learning and more confident when reading texts, starting self-directed learning and getting better results on reading comprehension tests.

Key words: reading strategies, reading comprehension, and self-directed learning.

Resumen

El objetivo de este documento es mostrar los resultados de la investigación acción sobre los efectos de las estrategias de pre-lectura, tomando en cuenta los principios de aprendizaje auto-dirigido, en la comprensión lectora de 36 estudiantes de bajo desempeño en un colegio público de Palmira, Colombia. La intervención consistió en 11 secciones en tres meses y las estrategias de pre-lectura escogidas fueron activar y construir conocimientos previos.

El enfoque método-mixto se usó para analizar la información desde una perspectiva cuantitativa y cualitativa. Por un lado, los métodos cuantitativos, exámenes de lectura y encuestas aplicados al inicio y al final del proceso, se usaron para medir el mejoramiento en la comprensión lectora, analizar el uso de estrategias de pre-lectura, y evaluar el proceso de aprendizaje auto-dirigido de los estudiantes. Por otro lado, los métodos cualitativos, observación, registros y entrevistas, se usaron para medir la percepción de los participantes sobre su comprensión lectora y el aprendizaje auto-dirigido.

Los resultados del t-test indican que la comprensión lectora mejoró estadísticamente hablando y el análisis cualitativo apoyo este punto de vista al mostrar que los estudiantes se sintieron más motivados hacia el aprendizaje y más confiados cuando leen un texto, comenzando aprendizaje auto-dirigido y obteniendo mejores resultados en los exámenes de comprensión de textos.

Palabras clave: lectura, estrategias de lectura, comprensión lectora, y auto aprendizaje.

Table of Contents

Acknowledgements.....	iii
Abstract	iv
Resumen	v
Table of Contents.....	vi
List of Figures and Tables	viii
List of Appendices	ix
Chapter 1: Introduction	1
Statement of the Problem.....	2
Research Question.....	3
Research Objective.....	3
Rationale	4
Chapter 2: Literature Review	6
Constructs	6
Construct 1: Reading comprehension.....	6
Construct 2: Pre-reading strategies.	8
Construct 3: Self-directed learning.	10
State of the Art	11
Chapter 3: Research Design	14
Type of Study.....	14
Context.....	16
Researcher’s Role.....	17
Participants.....	17
Ethical Considerations	18
Instruments for Data Collection Procedures	18
Instrument 1: Pre- test and post-test.....	20
Instrument 2: Pre and post surveys.	20
Instrument 3: Teacher’s observation schema.....	20

Instrument 4: Students' reading log.....	21
Instrument 5: Focus group interview.....	21
Validation Process.....	22
Data Collection Procedures.....	23
Design and Validation of the Instruments and Procedures.....	23
Chapter 4: Pedagogical Intervention.....	25
Instructional Design.....	25
Intervention.....	27
Chapter 5: Data Analysis.....	29
Procedures of Data Analysis.....	29
Qualitative Analysis.....	29
Open coding.....	30
Axial coding.....	35
Quantitative Analysis.....	38
Reading strategies.....	38
Reading proficiency.....	39
Qualitative and Quantitative Analysis.....	42
Chapter 6: Conclusions.....	44
Pedagogical Implications.....	45
Limitations.....	45
Further research.....	46
References.....	47
Appendices.....	54

List of Figures and Tables

Figure 1. Action research. 2006.....	15
Figure 2. Pre-reading strategies used in the intervention.	27
Figure 3. Axial coding	36
Figure 4. Statistical graph of pre/ post- tests results by question	39
Figure 5. Statistical graph of pre/ post- tests results by student	40
Figure 6. Boxplots of pre-test and post-test scores.....	41
Table 1. Research design framework.....	14
Table 2. Triangulation matrix.....	19
Table 3. Research timeline	25
Table 4. Collecting and analyzing data.....	29
Table 5. Focus-group interviews coding	30
Table 6. Categories, codes and samples.....	31
Table 7. Properties and dimensions of categories	32
Table 8. Categories, sub-categories and codes related to research questions	35
Table 9. Results of the reading tasks during the intervention	39
Table 10. Descriptive statistics	41
Table 11. Inferential statistics of the paired samples t- test	42

List of Appendices

Appendix A - Principal’s Consent Letter	54
Appendix B - Parents’ Consent Letter	55
Appendix C - Pre and Post-test.....	56
Appendix D - Reading Strategies Survey.....	58
Appendix E - Teacher’s Observation Schema.....	59
Appendix F - Checklist of Self-directed Learning Strategies.....	60
Appendix G - Students’ Reading Log 1	61
Appendix H - Students’ Reading Log 2.....	62
Appendix I - Reading Log for Mid-term Test	63
Appendix J - Reading Log for Final Session.....	64
Appendix K - Focus-Group Interview	65
Appendix L - Lesson Plan Sample.....	66
Appendix M - Reading Mid-term Test.....	68
Appendix N - Result of Mid-term Test with and without Pre-teaching Vocabulary	70
Appendix O - Codes from Interviews.	71
Appendix P - Results of Pre-survey and Post-survey	72
Appendix Q - Comparison between Pre / post-tests by Question.	73
Appendix R - Results of Pre and Post Tests.....	74
Appendix S - Pre / post-tests Results According to the Number of Correct Answers.	75

Chapter 1: Introduction

In the globalized world of the 21st century, the high school's mission is to help students enter to a global society in order to interact, negotiate and find solutions for local and global problems. Therefore, education nowadays is no longer about transmitting knowledge; but instead it is about teaching students how to learn and encouraging them to make their own decisions regarding what to learn and how, according to their context. In order to get students actively involved in learning, teachers should take into account their differences, plan real-life and culturally relevant activities that let them relate new information to prior knowledge, teach them effective and flexible strategies, and foster reflection and self-regulation (Vosniadou, 2001).

Under this perspective, an action research study was designed to empower participants to increase their active participation in the foreign language learning by means of the direct instruction of pre-reading strategies and self-directed learning practices. This study focuses on reading comprehension because, first of all, reading is the language skill assessed in the standardized national test "Pruebas Saber" (a test for entering Colombian higher education institutions), -which is very important for the evaluation of the school where the implementation will take place. Second, this ability provides students with the tools for having enriching learning experiences and comprehensible input.

This action research project describes and analyzes the effects of activating and building background knowledge pre-reading strategies on the reading comprehension and self-directed learning of low-proficiency eighth-graders at Cardenas Centro School.

According to the literature (Nunan, 1999; Ur, 1996; Ringler and Weber, 1984; Chastain, 1988), activating and building background knowledge, the most widely known pre-reading strategies, can directly improve reading comprehension, and indirectly readers' motivation, self-confidence and self-directed learning.

Statement of the Problem

Some problematic situations have impacted the participants' attitude and interest for learning a foreign language. First, they have studied English in a non-supportive environment where they have not had the need to use the language in daily situations. Second, their limited economic conditions have not allowed them to travel or even access the Internet. Third, although foreign language learners need to get exposed to rich comprehensible input at the right structural level and in adequate amount, according to their individual differences (such as age, aptitude, needs, goals, learning styles, motivation, and support), the learning context in Colombian public schools has not provided them with the appropriate conditions. Classes have large number of students, few resources and few hours per week.

Regarding reading, participants are in A1 level (Common European Framework of Reference for Languages, CEFR), so that they can understand familiar names, words, and very simple sentences or news in posters or catalogues. But they need to move to A2 level (CEFR) in order to be able to read very short simple text and find specific, predictable information in simple everyday material, so that they can read on lines (literal level) and between the lines (inferential level). However, they have problems to obtain the general

idea of a text because they focus on identification of the meaning and grammatical category of a word or sentence syntax.

Besides, their lack of self-confidence, responsibility, autonomy and motivation has not allowed them advancing. For instance, many students look for a way to copy the answers of those who show high academic results. Even when they work in groups they copy because of the lack of materials or knowledge.

Therefore, it is necessary to strengthen the students' reading process by tackling the first stage of this process, which entails the use of different pre-reading strategies that introduce the topic motivating and preparing students to read.

Research Question

The main research question to be addressed by the research circle is the following:
What are the effects of using pre-reading strategies within the frame of self -directed learning on the reading comprehension of low proficiency eighth graders at Cardenas Centro School?

The concept of self-directed learning is interwoven into the questions constructs because making visible the pre-reading process students are given the needed tools to become independent learners. Then, a sub-question is: *What are the effects of pre-reading strategies direct instructions on low proficiency students' self-directed learning?*

Research Objective

This study aims at: (1) examining the effects of pre-reading strategy use on low-proficiency students' reading comprehension; (2) offering recommendations to help

learners overcome their difficulties and to improve the teaching and learning of EFL reading comprehension at a Colombian public school; (3) and examining the effects of direct instructions of pre-reading strategies on low-proficiency students' self-directed learning.

Rationale

In Colombian public high schools, the development of the reading skill is a good starting point that will, without doubt, positively influence the other language skills. Reading comprehension has been seen as a weakness students have accordingly to both external test results and academic performance during high school classes (Quiroga, 2010; Lopez & Giraldo, 2011; Cárdenas & Hernández, 2011). The results of “Pruebas Saber” in 2010 show a low/average reading proficiency of Colombian 11th grade-student population (Lopez & Giraldo, 2011) and the results of “Pruebas PISA” in 2009 show a score of 52 in reading comprehension (Cárdenas & Hernández, 2011). Therefore, it is necessary to provide students with a range of strategies that help them overcome reading comprehension problems so that they can acquire the needed abilities to analyze, infer, and make meaning as efficiently as possible.

This study intends to strengthen the low proficiency students' learning process with the use of pre-reading strategies that may prepare and motivate them to effectively carry out the reading comprehension, as well as to help them be self-directed learners because when they reflect on what they know, what they want to learn and what they learnt, they self-regulate their learning. Consequently, this intervention might provide valuable information

regarding how to improve reading comprehension teaching practices in Colombian public schools.

Besides, this action research may benefit FL teachers and ELT researchers as it will contribute to better understand the effects of pre-reading strategies direct instruction and metacognitive strategies on improving learners' reading comprehension. On one hand, with the use of pre-reading strategies students gain confidence and are more willing to take part in the reading activity (Chastain,1988) because they have a purpose in reading (Ur, 1996) and finish the activity better without spending too much effort. On the other hand, learners become self-directed because as they get motivated they self-monitor and self-manage their learning process (Garrison, 1997).

Finally, another reason for this research is the fact that in Colombia, some studies on reading strategies in general have been done but not on pre-reading strategies, although they are mentioned in some of them (Aguirre-Morales & Ramos-Holguín, 2009; Lopez and Giraldo, 2011; Vásquez & Suarez, 2011).

Chapter 2: Literature Review

The theoretical framework of this study was done initially in the research circle. First the constructs emerging from the research questions are defined and then the state of the art regarding pre-reading strategies is presented.

Constructs

Taking into account that a construct is an attribute, proficiency, ability, or skill that happens in the human brain and is defined by established theories (Brown, 2000), the constructs in the research question correspond to reading comprehension, pre-reading strategies and self-directed learning.

Construct 1: Reading comprehension.

Reading comprehension could be viewed as a product or as a process (Alderson and Urquhart, 1984): as a product, it means extracting the required information from the text as efficiently as possible (Grellet, 1999) and as process it means constructing meaning through interactions taken place between the text and the reader (Ajideh, 2003). In other words, reading comprehension entails the construction of a coherent mental representation of the text that consists of “a network of semantic relations between text elements and between text elements and the reader's background knowledge” (Van Den Broek & Espin, 2009, p.8).

CEFR describes four steps in the reading process: the word recognition, the identification of the text, the semantic and cognitive understanding of the text, and the interpretation of the message. Reading ability is measured by an overall scale that

differentiates reading levels by nature of the text, the difficulty of the language, the degree of familiarity of the subject matter, and the length and complexity of the text.

Mohamad (1999) identifies three levels of reading comprehension: literal, interpretive and critical. Literal comprehension is to find information that is explicitly stated in the text. Interpretive or inferential comprehension is to find relationships among ideas, draw conclusions, make generalizations, predict outcomes, and fill the gaps in the message through “the use of contextual, grammatical and lexical cues to infer attitude, mood and intentions and anticipate what will come next” (CEFR, 2001, p.72). Critical comprehension is to evaluate information. Therefore, as the participants of this study were in the process of moving to A2 English level, the reading texts had literal and interpretative questions.

The best way for getting meaning is through a conscious use of comprehension strategies (Duffy, 1993) or “specific procedures that guide students to become aware of how well they are comprehending as they attempt to read and write” (NICHD, 2000, p.4-40). CEFR defines strategies like:

A means the language user exploits to mobilize and balance his or her resources, to activate skills and procedures, in order to fulfill the demands of communication in context and successfully complete the task in question in the most comprehensive or most economical way feasible depending on his or her precise purpose. (p.57)

Another important aspect is the direct instruction of the reading strategies. Lopez and Giraldo (2011) in their study about English reading strategies of two Colombian English pre-service teachers found that readers “who are in the process of developing

English skills and lack reading comprehension abilities, could benefit highly from explicit strategy training” (p.72). Similarly, Alemi and Ebadi (2010) investigated the effects of pre-reading activities on ESP reading comprehension and concluded that “it is the teacher’s role to give sufficient language and context clues through restoring to pre-reading activities” (p.16).

Consequently, pre-reading strategies in this research were taught directly using Shanahan et al (2010) ’s recommendation about using a gradual release of responsibility when teaching reading comprehension strategies: first, describing explicitly the strategy; second, teaching and modeling the strategy; third, using collaborative work; fourth, guiding practice; and let independent use of strategies.

Even though there are several reading strategies, this research takes into account the students’ English level, their motivation and attitude towards learning a second language and therefore, focuses on pre-reading strategies as an initial scaffold to strengthen students’ learning process.

Construct 2: Pre-reading strategies.

Pre-reading strategies are those goal-oriented activities used prior to the actual reading material to provide students with the required background knowledge to maximize their reading comprehension when interacting with a passage (Ringler & Weber, 1984), and construct mental models for the incoming text. This study focused on the pre-reading strategies for activating prior knowledge and building background knowledge. Activating prior knowledge refers to using what one already knows to understand new ideas (Nunan, 1999), and the pre-reading strategies used with this purpose are:

- *Visualizing* can aid text comprehension, because it is generally an analogous representation of the information contained in the text. The use of visual aids engages learners in reading activities (Vásquez & Suarez, 2011).
- *Pre-viewing* is to decode contextual clues like pictures, titles, and headings to draw inferences before reading (Abraham, 2002). This strategy enables readers to get a sense of what the text is about and how it is organized before reading it closely.
- *Predicting* helps readers make connections between their prior knowledge and the new information being learned (Vásquez & Suarez, 2011). Before reading, they may use what they know about any topic to predict what a text will be about.
- *Brainstorming* is an activity that let students examine the title of a text and making a list of all the information that comes to their minds, using their schemata (Labiod, 2007).
- *Semantic mapping* is to graphically represent the concepts related to the text content, portraying the schematic relations that compose the concept (Chastain, 1988).

On the other hand, building background knowledge refers to knowing information before reading, and the pre-reading strategies used were:

- *Pre-teaching vocabulary* is to introduce unknown or unfamiliar words of the text and offer a better understanding later on. Students were more likely to be satisfied if they learned the key vocabulary (Mihara, 2011).
- *Expanding content knowledge* is to increase the amount of background information and help the students understand the text at a higher level by providing more in-depth ideas regarding the topic (Porter, 2011).

Teaching explicitly these strategies fosters self-directed learning because through them, students themselves scaffold their reading process and become independent readers (Ur, 1996).

Construct 3: Self-directed learning.

Self-directed learning (SDL) is the process learners go through as they diagnose their learning needs, set their own goals, seek useful resources, choose and implement appropriate learning strategies, and self-evaluate learning outcomes (Knowles, 1975). Taking into account that the need to be self-directed learners increases when people grow, the 8th grade participants were involved in tasks that let them learn and use some SDL strategies.

The analysis of this construct will be based on Garrison's theory and Song and Hill (2007)'s model. According to Garrison (1997), the concept of self-directed learning integrates three dimensions: self-management (contextual control), self-monitoring (cognitive responsibility), and motivational (entering and task) dimensions. The internal motivation makes learners feel curious, enthusiastic towards learning so that they need to know something specific, and eager to feel recognized and satisfied for accomplishing the learning goals (Knowles, 1975). The learners who are motivated assume personal responsibility of the cognitive process setting their goals, using of resources, and receiving external support for learning. Besides, students monitor both their cognitive and metacognitive processes through the use of internal (learning strategies and reflection) and external feedback (Garrison, 1997).

Song and Hill (2007) model explains the importance of instructional context in SDL. They proposed three SDL dimensions for online environments: a personal attribute (self-management and motivation), a learning process (self-monitoring) and learning context. Learning context is the environment factors that impact the learner's SDL experience such as design elements (resources, structure and nature of the tasks designed by the instructor) and support elements (instructor's feedback or peer collaboration and communication).

Similarly, there are other authors that emphasize on instructions. For instance, Aguirre-Morales & Ramos-Holguín (2009) found out that "through the guidance in terms on how to use reading strategies, students were able to develop meta-cognitive skills and, as a result, they were able to build confidence to work by themselves on the assigned tasks" ("Conclusions", para 1).

A final aspect to be taken into account when planning methodology is Grow (1991)'s self-direction stages because the teachers' role changes in each stage. Teachers should be the authority with dependent learners because they need coaching, motivators and guides with interested learners, facilitators with involved learners, and consultants and delegators with self-directed learners.

State of the Art

Low proficiency learners are characterized by their lack of positive learning attitudes, motivation, or persistence. In class, they need more personal attention, take longer time to finish a learning task, often skip class or attend class late, and often delay or do not submit homework assignments (Hsu & Sheu, 2008). In addition, Roberts (2007) mentions

that low proficiency students may have low self-esteem because of their inability to learn as efficiently as everyone else in class. She also points out that these students have difficulties when using English learning strategies.

As reading is an interactive process that involves both linguistic (bottom-up) and background (top-down) knowledge (Nunan, 1999), low proficiency students can compensate a lack of linguistic knowledge by using top-down and interactive strategies such as prediction and accessing prior knowledge (Clarke, 1980 and Nolan, 1991, cited in Al-tamini, 2006). Regarding this, Nunan (1999) recommends using pre-reading and schema-building tasks to help lower proficiency students apply their prior knowledge to the reading task, and Ajideh (2003) adds that these tasks should be used for activating and building such background knowledge. The effectiveness of the strategy would depend on the students' prior knowledge (Auerbach & Paxton, 1997); therefore, building background knowledge is also necessary, because it helps to put new information into the prior schemata filling the knowledge gaps that may affect comprehension (Porter, 2011; Lopez & Giraldo, 2011).

The literature also indicates that low-proficiency L2 readers benefit from pre-reading activities since these make the text more accessible during reading and enable readers to concentrate in content, and interpret the text to answer questions (Hudson, 1982; Tudor, 1988; Moo Hung, 1990). First, Hudson (1982)'s study about the effects of induced schemata found out that visual aids and pre-teaching vocabulary were more effective at lower levels of ESL proficiency. Then, Tudor (1988) in his research about the effects of two pre-reading formats on L2 reading comprehension concluded that ELS readers at lower proficiency levels benefited from the pre-reading strategies of summary and pre-questions.

Likewise, Moo Hung (1990) investigated the effects of pre-reading instruction on the comprehension of text and found out that prior knowledge or schema is an important variable in L2 reading comprehension.

Finally, it is important to highlight the influence of the pre-reading strategies on learners' motivation. Ajideh (2003) cites Chastain (1988) to state that the purpose of pre-reading activities is "to motivate the students to want to read the assignment and to prepare them to be able to read it" (p.6). Similarly, Murad and Zain (2011) reaffirm that L2 reading attitude and efficacy have significant roles in reading improvement in a non-supportive ESL setting classroom since with higher self-efficacy beliefs and interest, learners are more likely to persist in their reading tasks.

Chapter 3: Research Design

The research design framework is summarized in the Table 1:

Table 1. Research design framework

RESEARCH TYPE	Action Research
CONTEXT	I.E. Cardenas Centro, a state academic school located in Palmira, Colombia
PARTICIPANTS	36 low-proficiency students, ages 13 to 15, with A1 English level
DATA COLLECTION INSTRUMENTS	Pre and Post Reading Test, Pre and Post Survey, Interview, Student's Reading Log, and Teacher's Observation Schema

Type of Study

This study is action research, a systematic inquiry conducted by teachers or any other interested in the teaching and learning process or environment (Mills, 2007) in order to solve a classroom or school problem and improve practice (MacMillan, 2004). In this action research, the teacher was the researcher, the problem emerged from the learners' needs, and the final goal corresponds to improve what goes on in the classroom (Nunan & Bailey, 2009).

In action research, the teacher-researcher (see Figure 1) identifies the problem, searches information about it, formulates a hypothesis, plans an intervention, initiates action, collects and analyzes data, and observes outcomes (Nunan & Bailey, 2009) to make improvements.

Figure 1. Action research. 2006.

Retrieved from <https://www.det.nsw.edu.au/proflearn/images/actreslg.gif>



Part of action research is a research circle. It is “a strategy that has the participants’ own problems and question formulation as the starting point to carry out action research in a participatory and collaborative environment” (Bryan & Acero, 2012); whose purpose is producing new knowledge (Rydbeck, 2010). In this research circle, co-researchers carried out their own research projects but they shared the responsibility of looking for solution for research problems, designing data collection instruments, and choosing the analysis method.

Perrson (2009) emphasizes that “the purpose of the research circles is to develop and change practice through the knowledge gained” (p.10). Reason (1994) as cited by this author, establishes that participatory research looks for creating knowledge and helping teachers understand better their own classroom practice. It is through this social interaction that takes place at the research circle meetings that participants refine their thoughts and insights about their own teaching practice.

Context

This research was carried out in I.E. Cardenas Centro, a state academic school located in Palmira, Colombia. It has almost 2000 students from pre-school to 11th grade, in three shifts. English classes are held two hours per week in elementary grades, three hours from 6th to 9th grades, and two hours in 10th and 11th grades. The school follows Colombian government policies in relation to English classes.

Some of these policies are the following: according to the article 67 of the Colombian National Constitution, the 115 General Education Law (1994) stresses the need to promote the acquisition of at least one foreign language since elementary school. The general English curriculum framework (1991) recognizes the importance of plurilinguism for Colombian future (Ministerio de Educación, 1991) and presents guidelines for schools English policies. Finally, the National Basic Standards of communicative competences in English (2004) were formulated by Colombian Ministry of Education in order to improve the English teaching quality. These standards are part of the 2004-2019 National Bilingual Project based on the CEFR.

In 2009, I.E. Cardenas Centro school's faculty designed the English curriculum taking into account the national policies and the institutional pedagogical model based on the humanistic approach, the learner-centered pedagogy and the meaningful learning. The English syllabi are integrative because skills and functions as well as grammar and topics are described; in addition, cognitive, procedural, and attitudinal objectives are assessed. Besides, the textbook is Side by Side 2, a book that focuses on the communicative skills and grammar in context.

Researcher's Role

In action research, the researchers are the teachers (Nunan & Bailey, 2009). They become active participants in the classroom, as well as observers of the learning process, analyzers of information, and planners of future actions (Mertler, 2009). During the class, teachers are coaches for dependent learners, guides for interested learners (Grow, 1991), motivators to do the tasks, and facilitators to empower students with relevant resources, methods, and evaluation techniques according to their current proficiency and their individual differences so that they actively participate in their learning process self-managing and self-monitoring (Wang, 2008).

Participants

The participants of this study were 36 students, 6 women and 32 boys, ages 13 to 15, from a group of 41 eighth graders. Students came from a low socio-economic strata and suffered different kinds of difficulties, i.e. social problems and lack of resources and self-esteem. In terms of English, they were low-proficiency students and reluctant readers, which might be the result of poor background knowledge. According to previous tests and the pre-reading test, their English level (CEFR) was A1; they could understand familiar words and very simple sentences. However, it was expected that by the end of the school year, these learners moved to A2 level (CEFR), which implied being able to read very short simple texts and find specific, predictable information in simple everyday material.

Moreover, participants were mainly visual and kinesthetic learners. According to the theory of learning styles, visual learners remember information better when it is represented and learned both visually and verbally; and kinesthetic learners learn through

doing, rather than thinking before initiating action. Paradoxically, visual learners are good at reading by kinesthetic learners not (Anu, Anuradha, & Meena, 2012). When reading, they need to scan the material first, use color high lighters and take notes by drawing pictures or diagrams.

Ethical Considerations

Talking about ethical considerations regarding conducting research in schools, Doyle (2000) states that this process should be structured to minimize peer pressure; school and parents should be notified and agree with research via a permission slip; and school should be compensated and children rewarded. Accordingly in this research, consent letters were signed by the school principal and the students' parents (see Appendix A and Appendix B); the research activities were implemented as a normal part of the class during the third and fourth terms; the results of the study were used for research purpose rather than failing or passing the students, even though some grades were used as part of the students' assessment process; and names of the students were changed for letters to guaranty the protection of individual identities for confidentiality issues.

Instruments for Data Collection Procedures

Data collection instruments of research were chosen according to the nature of research type. Action research is primarily based on qualitative research methodologies such as observation notes, journal entries and interview transcripts that require narrative data. However, in order to verify data consistency and have confidence in the research findings, this research also used quantitative research methodologies such as tests and surveys that required the collection and the analysis of numerical data to triangulate the

sources. Triangulation is the process of relating to multiple data sources in order to identify if participants' behavior is consistent with their comments (Mertler, (2009).

Table 2. Triangulation matrix

Data Collection Tool/ Research questions	Research Objectives	Source 1	Source 2	Source 3	Source 4	Source 5
What are the effects of using pre-reading strategies within the frame of self-directed learning on the reading comprehension of low proficiency eighth graders at Cardenas Centro school?	- To examine the effects of pre-reading strategy use on low-proficiency students' reading comprehension. - To offer recommendations to help learners overcome their difficulties and to improve the teaching and learning of EFL reading comprehension at a Colombian public school.	Reading tests	Reading strategy surveys	Sts' reading log	Teacher's observations on schema	Focus-group interview
What are the effects of the direct instructions of pre-reading strategies on low proficiency students' self-directed learning?	-To examine the effects of direct instructions of pre-reading strategies on low-proficiency students'		Reading strategy surveys	Sts' reading log	Teacher's observations on schema	Focus-group interview

With a triangulated data-collection plan, the findings and conclusions that emerge from research possess both validity and reliability (Sagor, 2011). Table 2 is a triangulation matrix of data to use with action research. The left column is where the research questions are listed and all independent sources of data that provide a credible answer to the research questions are listed in the row corresponding to the research questions they will be addressing.

The following instruments used for data collection procedures were designed within the research circle through a collaborative work.

Instrument 1: Pre- test and post-test.

Pre-test and post-test are specifically designed to measure the students' reading ability (Mertler, 2009). In this study, the same instrument was applied at the beginning and at the end of the intervention due to validity purposes. It consisted in a text of 295 words, recommended for fifth graders with an A2 English level according to the CEFR, was chosen from the website Englishforeveryone.org. It consisted of two literal questions and eight inferential questions about purposes, vocabulary, definitions, feelings and conclusions (see Appendix C).

Instrument 2: Pre and post surveys.

Surveys are very effective at gathering data concerning students' attitude, perceptions and opinions (Mertler, 2009). This survey was used for identifying students' knowledge of pre-reading strategies and self-directed learning strategies. It was based on the one available at Curriculum Development in Language Teaching by Richards (2001). It had nine multiple-choice statements about difficulties in using reading strategies and self-directed learning strategies; and two open-ended questions about pre-reading strategies (see Appendix D).

Instrument 3: Teacher's observation schema.

Observation entails the systematic noting and recording of events, behaviors, and artifacts (objects) in the social setting chosen for study (Marshall & Rossman, 2006). In this case, the teacher-researcher used a schema to focus observation on some pre-determined categories such as positive evidence, difficulties, reading strategies, attitude, self-directed learning, and communicative skills, but also it had a space for different comments in order

to avoid missing important information (see Appendix E). Besides, a checklist of self-directed learning strategies was used along this schema (see Appendix F).

Instrument 4: Students' reading log.

Logs record data directly from the participant, without being 'filtered' by the researcher at the recording stage (Friesner & Hart, 2005). Logs are formats for readers' journals with some pre-determined questions or items used to know about readers' insight. They are useful to collect qualitative data about the students' pre-reading strategies use and foster self-directed learning. At the beginning of the intervention, it had nine questions (see Appendix G) but it was reduced to four questions for practical reasons (see Appendix H). The second version was shorter and asked about the pre-reading strategy used, its effect on comprehension, the possibilities to use it again, and other opinions or feeling about the process.

Moreover, other questions were designed for the reading log at two different moments: after the mid-term test in order to find out about the process, the strategies, and the difficulties with the test (see Appendix I); and at the end of the intervention in order to find out about the overall project, the SDL activities and their improvement in reading, writing, vocabulary, autonomy, self-confidence, concentration, and motivation (see Appendix J).

Instrument 5: Focus group interview.

These interviews may be conducted with different individuals so that the researcher can identify trends in the perceptions and opinions expressed, which are revealed through careful and systematic analysis (Marshall & Rossman, 2006). Two focus group interviews

were used to reinforce the observations. Students were classified according to their results on the pre-test and mid-term test as low achievers, average students and high fliers. Then, some students from each group were chosen at random so that information coming from students with different proficiency levels was gathered.

The interview was semi-structured. In semi-structured interviewing, a guide is used, with questions and topics that must be covered (Harrell & Bradley, 2009) but the interviewer can ask more questions. This interview had questions about how pre-reading strategies helped learners to improve, difficulties and anecdotes during this research project, and how useful the students' reading logs were (see Appendix K).

Validation Process

In action research, there are always multiple sources of data, multiple kinds of data, and multiple strategies for collecting data (Mills, 2003). One of the advantages of a mixed-method approach is the use of both quantitative and qualitative research methodologies which allows validating the finding and results through the triangulation of data sources. In other words, establishing whether findings from qualitative analyses are corroborated with those from the quantitative method, like tests and surveys (McDavid & Hawthorn, 2006; Green, Caraceli and Graham, 1989).

Beside triangulation, the research circle methodology was used to guarantee the validity and reliability of the research, since in these meetings instruments and procedures were evaluated and approved.

Data Collection Procedures

Data was collected through observation and non-observational techniques such as tests, surveys (quantitative methods), interviews and logs (qualitative methods). Teachers' observation notes were written on an observation schema after classes, while students' reflections were recorded in Spanish in reading logs during classes. Besides, pre and post reading tests and pre and post reading strategy surveys were applied to all the participants while the two group-focus interviews were applied only to 12 participants in week seven. This process is showed in a research timeline (see Table 3).

Design and Validation of the Instruments and Procedures

The two key conditions that must be met if data is to be accurate are validity and reliability (Sagor, 2011). Validity is the extent to which instruments measure what it is supposed to measure and reliability is the extent to which instruments consistently measure students' performances (Bailey, 1998). Subsequently, the data collection instruments and procedures of this study were designed cooperatively in the research circle basing on the theories related to the research problem.

Besides, taking into account that validity of quantitative data can be determined through the examination of sources (Mertler, 2009), the test and the survey of this research project were based on existing approved ones, and changed according to the contextual needs. Regarding reliability, the same quantitative instruments were used before and after the intervention and the results of descriptive statistics (mean, confidence intervals, median, and standard deviation) were correlated with inferential tests such as the t-test. On the other hand, the validation of qualitative data was based on triangulating it with quantitative one.

Furthermore, students' reflections in logs were corroborated with a follow-up interview to check on the truthfulness of their replies.

Chapter 4: Pedagogical Intervention

In action research pedagogical intervention is crucial because the research results depend on it. The purpose of the current intervention was to teach eighth graders some pre-reading strategies in order to improve their reading comprehension, motivation, and self-directed learning.

Instructional Design

Since this action research project was part of the third and fourth term curriculum, some decisions were made at the beginning to fulfill the school requirements. Then, the timeline was designed with the purpose to help researcher construct the research actions (Sagor, 2011) and show a brief summary of the key actions (see Table 3). The co-researchers worked collaboratively in the research circle during all the stages in order to determine objectives, data collection instruments, data analysis methods and common patterns derived from the intervention.

Table 3. Research timeline

Stage	Date	Objective	Collection Instrument
Pre-Stage	Jun. 14 2012	To get permission of the school principal and parents to do project.	Letters.
	Jun. 19, 2012	To know the current level of reading comprehension of the participants and their insights about reading and SDL strategies	Pre-Test Pre-Survey.
	<i>Vacations</i>		
	Jul., 2012	To prepare the activities where the pre-reading strategies will be applied.	Lesson planning
	Jul. 31	To test the tools (observation schema, students' keep reading logs)	Test strategies

While - Stage	Jul. 31, 2012.	To apply <i>visual aids</i> as a pre-reading strategy for activating prior knowledge, thinking-aloud method and reading logs.	Obs. Schema-Reading Log
	Aug. 9, 2012	To apply <i>reviewing</i> and <i>predicting</i> for activating prior knowledge, thinking-aloud method and reading logs.	Obs. Schema-Reading Log
	Aug. 13, 2012	To apply <i>brainstorming</i> as a pre-reading strategy for activating prior knowledge, thinking-aloud method and reading logs.	Obs. Schema Reading Log
	Aug. 29, 2012	To apply <i>semantic mapping</i> for activating prior knowledge; thinking-aloud method and reading logs.	Obs. Schema Reading Log
	Sept.3, 2012	To apply all pre-reading strategies taught for activating prior knowledge.	Obs. Schema
	Sept. 13 and 17	To apply <i>pre-teaching vocabulary</i> for building background knowledge, thinking-aloud method and reading logs.	Obs. Schema Reading Log
	Sept. 24, 2012	To know the progress in the level of reading comprehension of the participants	Schema, Log, Mid-Term Test
	Oct. 1, 2012	To know the difference in participants' reading performance with the use of <i>pre-teaching vocabulary</i> .	Obs. Schema Mid-Term Test
	Oct. 3, 2012	To know participants' insights about their reading strategies and SDL learning strategies.	Focus-group Interview
	<i>Recess</i>		
	Oct. 16, 2012	To apply <i>pre-teaching vocabulary</i> for building background knowledge, and SDL strategies such as thinking-aloud, reading logs, KWL chart and setting own goals.	Obs. Schema Reading Log
	Oct. 22, 2012	To apply <i>expanding content knowledge</i> for building background knowledge; and SDL strategies such as thinking-aloud, reading logs, KWL chart, setting own goals, and choosing texts.	Obs. Schema Reading Log
	Oct. 23, 2012	To apply <i>expanding content knowledge</i> for building background knowledge; and SDL strategies such as thinking-aloud, reading logs, KWL chart, setting own goals, and choosing texts.	Obs. Schema Reading Log
Post- Stage	Nov. 1, 2012	To know the final progress in participants' reading comprehension and their insights about reading strategies and SDL strategies acquired.	Post- Test Post- Survey.
	Nov. to Apr. 2013	To analyze data and present results.	Statistics, t-test Coding

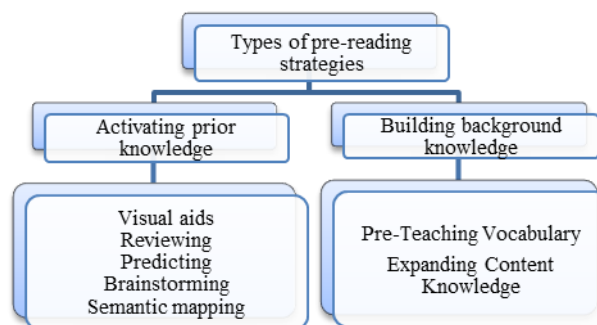
As the Table 3 shows, the research process was divided into three stages: pre-stage, while-stage, and post-stage. The first stage was for planning intervention, getting permissions, making a diagnosis with a pre-survey and a pre-test, and planning lessons; the second stage was for carrying out the intervention and the interview; and the third stage was for applying post-test and post-survey, analyzing data, and writing the report.

Intervention

According to the results of the pre-test and pre-survey, which overall showed that participants' reading comprehension and their use of pre-reading strategies were poor, an action plan was designed to teach students seven pre-reading strategies (see Figure 2) within 11 sessions, 60 minutes a week during three months (see Table 3).

In the first four sessions the pre-reading strategies for activating prior knowledge such as visual aids, predicting, reviewing, brainstorming and semantic mapping were taught. In session 5, students practiced all the previous pre-reading strategies. Then, in sessions 6, 9, 10 and 11 the strategies for building background as pre-teaching vocabulary and expanding content knowledge (see Figure 2) were implemented.

Figure 2. Pre-reading strategies used in the intervention.



Regarding self-directed learning strategies, the intervention started with the awareness of the pre-reading strategies usefulness through thinking-aloud protocols and students' reading logs. Then, the strategies of letting students set their own learning goal, choose the readings, and complete the KWL chart, were included.

Lessons were well planned following the template provided by the Universidad de la Sabana for intervention. It was adapted from Dr. Joan Rubin's Lesson Planner, ICELT lesson plan template and Weekly Planner 2012-02 Department of Language and Cultures, Universidad de la Sabana (see Appendix L). Each lesson had seven steps or stages: a warming-up, presentation and model of the pre-reading strategy, practice of the strategy, self-evaluation, identification of problem and solution, wrap-up, and expansion; and each stage had clearly stated the teacher's role.

Besides, a mid-term reading test was applied in session 7 to gather information about how the pedagogical intervention was evolving and what adjustments needed to be done. It was very similar to the pre-test but it had an image and some pre-questions to activate students' prior knowledge (see Appendix M). Due to the low results, it was repeated in session 8 with the objective of building background knowledge through pre-teaching vocabulary. As the results increased from 8.3% to 22.2% (see Appendix N), the intervention continued with the pre-reading strategies for building background knowledge.

Before finishing the intervention, two focus-group interviews were applied in order to know students' opinions about pre-reading strategies and their experiences during the project (see Appendix K). Moreover, they filled out a special reading log about the whole project (see Appendix J).

Chapter 5: Data Analysis

This chapter is presented in three sections: First, the qualitative analysis is described, then the quantitative analysis is explained and finally the results are compared.

Procedures of Data Analysis

The analysis methods were the open coding and axial coding of grounded theory for qualitative data, and statistics and a t-test for quantitative data, which allowed the researcher to measure significant differences before and after the intervention (see Table 4).

Table 4. Collecting and analyzing data

Data Collection Instruments	Participants	Nature of Data	Data Analysis Methods
Reading Log	Student	Qualitative	Open and axial coding Statistics
Observation Scheme	Teacher	Qualitative	Open and axial coding
Focus-group Interview	Student	Qualitative	Open and axial coding
Survey	Student	Quantitative Qualitative	Statistics Open and axial coding
Reading Tests	Student	Quantitative	Scores, Statistics T-Test

Qualitative Analysis.

In order to analyze qualitative data in reading logs, interviews and observation schemata and guarantee their reliability and validity, coding was used. This qualitative analysis technique move from raw text to research concerns in small steps (Auerbach & Silverstein, 2003). Initially, as concepts emerged they were coded and categorized in

opening coding. Then, categories' interrelationships were established in axial coding (Strauss and Corbin, 1990; Moghaddam, 2006; Punch, 2009).

Open coding.

In the process of finding codes from the data in order to conceptualize and label data (Moghaddam, 2006), the comments from interviews, observation schemata and reading logs were read and re-read, relevant ideas were highlighted and grouped, and codes were assigned. As an example of this process, Table 5 shows the codes that emerged from focus-group interviews data (see Appendix O).

Table 5. Focus-group interviews coding

Summarized Ideas	Codes
Pre-reading strategies helped them to understand the text	Inference
Pre-reading strategies helped them to understand words or sentences	Syntax
Pre-reading strategies helped them to learn more words	Vocabulary
Students liked to use reading logs because they could express their opinions.	Self-esteem
Students liked to use reading logs because they could write what they were taught, what they learned and their difficulties	Self-monitoring
Students liked reading logs because the teacher could reflect about the class.	Learning Process
Students liked to use reading logs because the teacher could know their opinions.	Sts' feelings

Second, open coding starts the process of categorizing many individual phenomena and then separately categorized concepts are clustered around a related theme to structure more abstract categories. Table 6 shows the first categories found.

Table 6. Categories, codes and samples

Categories	Codes	Samples
Attitude	Self-Confidence	“As I did it by myself it gave me more confidence” .(Ud, final reading log)
	Participation	“Everybody participated in the activity... some students said that it was easy and they looked happy... they had good discipline”. (Teacher’s observation schema # 5)
	Persistence	“My attitude is to keep learning”. (Zs, final reading log)
Thinking Skills	Inference	“They guessed some meanings of unknown words and made generalization, using inference and background knowledge”. (Teacher’s observation schema # 2)
	Prediction	Regarding reading strategies: “They help us predict what it says after”. (Ms, interview – group 2)
Language	Syntax	“They have helped us to understand the verbs and conjugate more the sentences” (Mj, interview – group 2)
	Vocabulary	“Pre-teaching vocabulary is also a great idea because we know many key words and we can do the tasks” (Rr, interview–group1)
	Writing skill	“As I read so much I already know how to write other words”. (Mg, final reading log)
Motivation	Self-esteem	“Some students were motivated when guessing the meaning of unknown vocabulary”. (Teacher’s, observation schema #3)
	Self-efficacy	Last years, I always did badly in reading. With the strategies I already understand the texts and what they want to say and I can answer them well. (Cf, interview–group1)
	Concentration	“I concentrated too much since the topics were interesting”. (Fs, final reading log)
Meta-cognitive skills	Planning	“Moreover, they liked to set their own goal for class and the use of KWL chart because with them they planned what they want to learn” (Teacher’s observation schema#11)
	Self-Monitoring	“Reading log is good because it helps to know if we understand”. (Ra, final reading log)
Teacher’s	Strategies	“They are in the first stage of self-directed learning and need to be coached”. (Teacher, observation schema #3)
Planning	Learning Context	“From now, I will check or receive the reading task at class to assure everybody works”. (Teacher, observation schema #2)
Teacher’s Monitoring	Learning process	Regarding reading log: “the teacher could reflect about if we liked the activity, what we did to understand it, and how we could utilize it”. (Rr, interview–group1)
	Teaching Practice	I think all the work was didactic and very good because I learnt too much. (Ud, final reading log)

Next step in open coding is to expand categories in terms of their given properties and dimensions. Properties are characteristics common to all the concepts in the category and dimensions represent the position of a property along a continuum or range (Goede and Villiers, 2003). This process is described in Table 7.

Table 7. Properties and dimensions of categories

Categories	Properties	Dimensions
Attitude	Self-confidence, participation, persistence	Basic, intermediate and advanced
Thinking skills	Inference, predicting, interpreting	Poor or high
Language	Language knowledge, skills	Low and high
Meta-cognitive skills	Planning, self-monitoring, self-management	Low and high
Motivation	Self-esteem, self-efficacy, concentration	Low and high
Teacher’s Planning	Related to strategies, learning context, instruction	Poor or excellent
Teacher’s Monitoring	Related to learning process and teaching practice	Poor or excellent

In addition of open coding, it is important to incorporate the use of analytic memos to make implicit thoughts explicit and to expand the data corpus. Here are the memos of each category.

Attitude. Pre-reading strategies made students change their attitude, feelings and beliefs with respect to reading (Clark & Rumbold, 2006; Vasquez & Suarez, 2011) because they facilitated the reading process. Murad & Zain (2011) cites McCrudden, Putney and Perkins (2005) to state that with higher self-efficacy belief and interest, students are more persistent in the reading tasks, increasing their reading practice and consequently improving their reading skill.

Thinking skills. According to the thinking skill list of McGuinness (1999) pre-reading strategies made students develop thinking skills when they predicted (Vasquez & Suarez, 2011), drew inferences before reading (Abraham, 2002), generated new ideas in brainstorming (Labioud, 2007), inferred unknown meanings, defined the relationships of concepts in semantic mapping (Chastain, 1988), clarified possible problems with the text, and thought up different solutions to build background knowledge. In addition, the SDL strategies also developed thinking skills. For example, Vasquez and Suarez (2011) mention that the think-aloud method helps to develop analytical skills and cognitive strategies.

Language. Pre-reading activities could prepare students to be able to understand a text (Chastain, 1988; Lopera, 2010), activating and building background knowledge to understand the content and language (Ringler & Weber, 1984). Data shows that when students understood the text they could use the language (vocabulary and syntax) in writing. Stuart (2009) stated that pre-learning FL vocabulary may be an effective method of improving reading comprehension and writing.

Meta-cognitive skills. Instructing directly pre-reading strategies and using SDL techniques let students develop metacognitive skills such as reflecting, planning, self-monitoring, self-managing and self-assessing their learning (Garrison, 1997) and increase their confidence to work independently (Aguirre-Morales & Ramos-Holguín, 2009). Similarly, Janzen and Stoller (1998) found out that predictions, questions and summaries enable students to monitor their comprehension.

Motivation. Pre-reading strategies increased motivation to participate and do tasks so that goals were achieved (Garrison, 1997). Besides, they motivated students to read, increasing their concentration and positively affecting their self-esteem and self-efficacy, which may lead to increased academic improvements and feelings of progress (Ellis, 1994; Gardner, 1985).

Teacher's planning. Direct instructions of pre-reading strategies improved teacher's planning because she designed and adopted materials, chose preliminary reading and SLD strategies, adapted instruction to meet students' needs and the demands of the text, and designed detailed lesson plans (Janzen & Stoller, 1998).

Teacher's monitoring. Direct instructions of pre-reading strategies improved teacher's monitoring because she evaluated constantly her lesson plan, her teaching practice and students' learning process to find possible solutions (Janzen & Stoller, 1998). Brown (2002), states that in action research teachers improve both their own teaching and learning process.

Finally, in open coding further commonalities among categories are found to form the even broader categories defined into sub-categories (Goede and Villiers, 2003). Therefore, the previous categories became subcategories and three broader categories emerged: students' reading proficiency improvement, students' self-directed learning improvement and teacher's performance improvement. Table 8 provides the relations between categories, subcategories and research questions found through the qualitative analysis.

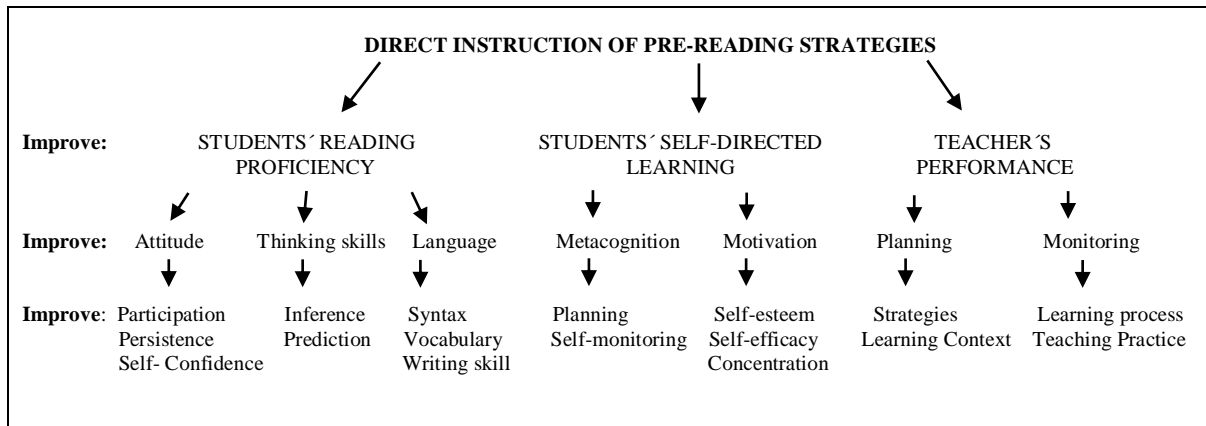
Table 8. Categories, sub-categories and codes related to research questions

QUESTIONS	CATEGORIES	SUB-CATEGORIES	CODES
What are the effects of using pre-reading strategies within the frame of self-directed learning on the reading comprehension of low proficiency eighth graders at Cardenas Centro school?	Students' Reading Proficiency improvement	Attitude	Self-confidence Participation Persistence
		Thinking Skills	Inference Prediction
		Language	Syntax Vocabulary Writing skill
What are the effects of pre-reading strategies direct instructions on low proficiency students' self-directed learning?	Students' Self-directed Learning improvement	Metacognitive skills	Planning Self-Monitoring
		Motivation	Self-esteem Self-efficacy Concentration
	Teacher's proficiency improvement	Planning	Strategies Learning context
		Monitoring	Teaching Practice Learning process

Axial coding.

According to grounded theory, axial coding is needed in order to relate the substantive categories through identifying “causal conditions, phenomenon, context, intervening conditions, action/interaction strategies and consequences” (Punch, 2009, p.187). The analysis of axial coding is aimed at making conceptual connections between a category and its subcategories (Goede and Villiers, 2003). These interconnections are shown more clearly in the axial coding graph (see Figure 3).

Figure 3. Axial coding



In general, the results of the qualitative data analysis give evidences that the direct instruction of pre-reading strategies improved students' reading proficiency, students' self-directed learning and teacher's performance.

Students' reading proficiency. According to the analysis results, the use of pre-reading strategies maximized students' reading proficiency. The teacher wrote in the observation schema # 5: "Students were happy and recognized that they had improved their reading skills because they improved their grades in the third term. They also got an average of 3.9 over five in an external test..." In this process, the low-proficiency students improved their attitude, thinking skills and language knowledge.

When low-proficiency students activated and built background knowledge, they developed thinking skills that allowed them make inferences easier and obtain better reading achievements (Ringler and Weber, 1984). As a consequence they improved reading attitude becoming more self-confident, participative and persistent in reading tasks (Murad and Zain, 2011). A clear example of this change is the case of the student S1 who wrote in

the pre-survey that she did not like pre-reading strategies and in the post survey wrote that she used them because in that way she understood easier the texts.

Furthermore, this study showed that during the reading process students learnt vocabulary and grammar and developed the writing skill in English (Stuart, 2009). In the observation scheme #7, the teacher wrote: “Although students could answer pre-questions in Spanish only 9 students did it. The other students took a risk and wrote the answers in English”.

Students’ self-directed learning. Teaching explicitly the use of pre-reading strategies fostered self-directed learning and encouraged metacognitive skills (Aguirre-Morales & Ramos-Holguín, 2009) and motivation (Garrison, 1997). Regarding this, Carrell (1998) states that readers need both the knowledge and the disposition to use strategies. Metacognitive strategies such as planning learning, self-monitoring the process and self-assessing outcomes (Knowles, 1975) were developed through reading logs and KWL charts, motivating students to take the control (Iwai, 2011; Kolic-Vehovec & Bajanski, 2006). Besides, students were constantly motivated reinforcing their self-esteem, self-efficacy and concentration in the reading task (Garrison, 1997; Ellis, 1994; Gardner, 1985). For instance, the student Un wrote in the final reading log: “Teachers’ motivation was very important since it helped me to do the task by myself”. Moreover, Lopera (2010) mentions that when teachers apply strategy instruction in a consistent and realistic manner, students are engaged, motivated and better equipped to negotiate the process of reading comprehension.

Teacher's performance. The methodology of direct instructions of pre-reading strategies made teacher's performance improve. Teacher's role in the learning context was very important because she had to design or plan strategies, lessons, tasks, instructions, and resources, as well as support students with appropriate instructions and feedback (Song and Hill, 2007). Besides, the teacher had to monitor constantly their teaching practice and the students' learning process in order to implement changes (Brown, 2002). For example, in the observation scheme #7, the teacher wrote: "As there were some doubts about the comprehension of the questions, the teacher decided to repeat the test and helped students with the strategy of pre-teach vocabulary".

Quantitative Analysis

The objective of quantitative analysis is to triangulate the results from qualitative analysis. Reading strategies and reading proficiency were analyzed with the data from surveys, tasks and tests.

Reading strategies.

In general, the use of reading strategies improved. First, the close-ended questions of surveys show that the students' difficulties with reading and learning were reduced. The highest difficulties were in *predicting* and *diagramming* (86% between *often* and *always*) before intervention but after intervention the difficulty in *predicting* decreased to 13,8%, and in *diagramming*, to 36% (see Appendix P).

Second, the open-ended questions show that students clearly knew the concept of pre-reading strategies and their importance. The percentage of students who used the pre-

reading strategies increased from 52, 7% to 91, 6%, as well as their own experiences in order to understand a text in English from 75% to 86, 1%.

Reading proficiency.

Student’s reading proficiency was measured during the intervention through the reading tasks done after applying pre-reading strategies. Table 9 shows that students had a constant improvement as they learnt more pre-reading strategies. The decrease in the last sessions might have been because class time was reduced by school activities.

Table 9. Results of the reading tasks during the intervention

Session of the intervention	2	3	4	5	6	9	10	11
Students who correctly answered more than 60% of the questions posed	64%	7.8%	77%	83%	89%	91%	87%	64%

This improvement in students’ reading proficiency was ratified by the pre-and post-tests. The analysis of tests will be shown in two ways: by question and by student.

Figure 4. Statistical graph of pre/ post- tests results by question

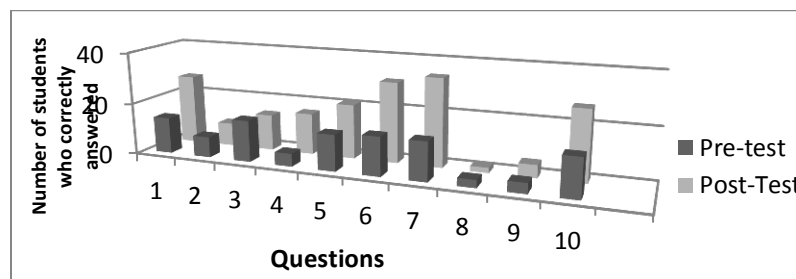
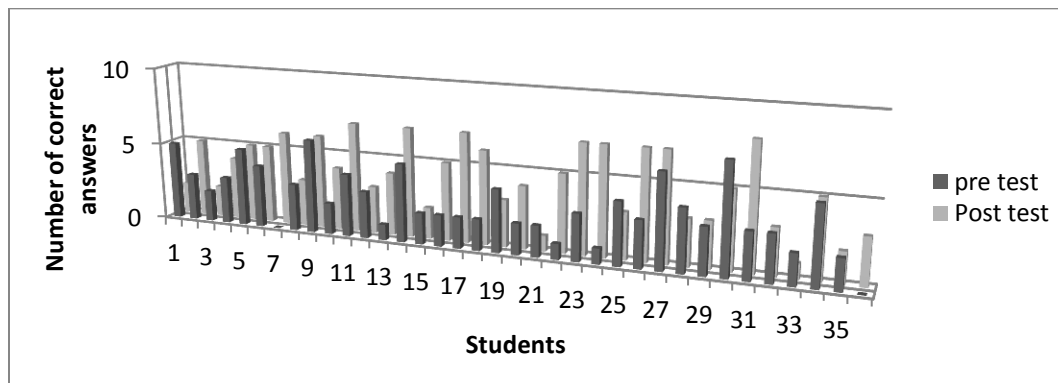


Figure 4 shows clearly that pre-reading strategy use was beneficial for both literal and inferential comprehensions (see Appendix Q). The intervention helped students to

improve literal comprehension reaching a 94.4% and a 75% of students who correctly answered the questions 7 and 10 respectively. Besides, the pre-reading strategy use also benefited interpretive or inferential comprehension. A significant increase of correct answers for questions 1, 4, 5 and 6, can mean that these strategies had a positive effect on inferring the meaning of unknown words, the main purpose of a text or a statement, and the author's intentions. However, the questions about inferring synonyms, antonyms, conclusions and author's feelings did not show any change.

On the other hand, the raw scores of pre and post-tests (see Appendix R) show that participants improved their reading comprehension, which is clearly represented in the following double-bar graph (see Figure 5).

Figure 5. Statistical graph of pre/ post- tests results by student



The light bar represents the results of the post-test, for many students these results are higher than those of the pre-test, which means that many improved their score. The percentage of students who correctly answered more than 6 questions increased from 8.3% to 30.5% (see Appendix S) and the individual results shows that 58,3% of the students improved their score, 22,2% remained the same and 19,4% diminished their score.

In order to quantitatively summarize the data set, the descriptive statistics for both variables are shown in Table 10. It presents the main features of data in quantitative terms, central tendency indicators for the data (mean, median and indicators of dispersion), variance and standard deviation.

Table 10. Descriptive statistics

	Pre-test	Post-test
Mean	3,027	4,527
Confidence interval for the mean	0,53	0,63
Interval upper limit	3,577	5,163
Interval lower limit	2,478	3,892
Median	3	5
Standard deviation	1,624	1,878
Std. Error Mean	0,27	0,32
Variance	2,637376	3,526884

In general, the scores of reading tests goes up, what is clearly seen in the boxplots (see Figure 6) that graphically display measures of dispersion for a given variable.

Figure 6. Boxplots of pre-test and post-test scores

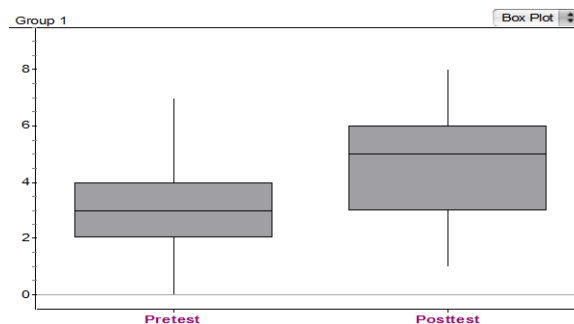


Figure 6 and Table 10 show that the average score of evaluation moved positively (Mean Before= 3,027; Mean After= 4,52). The median shows that 50 percent of the students selected more than 3 and 5 questions right on both tests respectively. This means

that the intervention had a positive impact on students. This positive movement is represented in the graphic which shows that the mean on the post-test is higher than the mean on the pre-test.

The difference between these two means can be statistically demonstrated by a t-test. A paired samples t-test is used in this study because two samples are involved and the values for each sample are collected from the same individuals.

Table 11. Inferential statistics of the paired samples t- test

		Paired Differences					t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
					Lower	Upper			
Pair 1	Pre-test results - post-test results	-1.50	2.297	0.385	-2.28	-0.72	-3.893	35	0.0004

By conventional criteria, when the p value is 0.0004 the difference is considered to be extremely statistically significant because it is below 0.05. Therefore, the null hypothesis can be rejected and the conclusion is that the students' scores for the post-test are higher than those of the pre-test. As is shown in Table 11, there is significant difference in the reading proficiency between the pre-test (M = 3.027, sd = 1.624) and the post-test (M = 4.527, sd = 1.878) scores , $t(35) = -3.893$, $p = .0004$, $\alpha = .05$.

Qualitative and Quantitative Analysis

The qualitative and quantitative analyses clearly show that the pre-reading strategies have positive effects on students' reading comprehension. On the one hand, quantitative

analysis proves an extremely significant difference between means of pre-reading test (3.027) and post-test (4.527) because the p-value (.0004) is below 0.05 (see Table 10 and Table 11). On the other hand qualitative analysis demonstrates that students also improved reading attitude, thinking skills and language knowledge during the project.

Besides, qualitative analysis evidences other positive effects of the direct instruction of pre-reading strategies on students' SDL and teacher's performance.

Chapter 6: Conclusions

Regarding the main research question, the effects of using pre-reading strategies within the frame of self-directed learning on the reading comprehension of low proficiency eighth graders at Cardenas Centro School were positive. Using pre-reading strategies is the first step to improve reading comprehension because these strategies prepare students psychologically, cognitively and metacognitively to read a text in a foreign language (Ur, 1996). First, students change their attitude to read a text becoming more self-confident, participative and persistent in the reading task. Second, they develop thinking skills needed to understand a text such as connecting new information with prior knowledge and inferring meanings. Third, they improve their metacognitive skills to plan and monitor their comprehension.

Therefore, this study corroborates Murad and Zain (2011)'s conclusion about the strong relationship among English L2 reading attitudes, reading self-efficacy, and reading ability. An example of this is the case of student Ok. He was discouraged during the first sessions of the intervention and always wrote that he did not understand anything. However, in the session 4 the teacher motivated him and he changed his reading attitude. In session 6 and 7, he did the tasks and asked for more visual aids and questions. Finally, he said in session 9: "at the beginning reading was difficult but after it was easier and I will keep practicing it".

With regard to the sub-question, the effects of direct instructions of pre-reading strategies on low proficiency students' SDL were positive too, since students increased motivation and metacognitive skills. Moreover, this project concludes that teaching context

is very significant to develop students' SDL (Song & Hill, 2007) because the meta-cognitive skills are developed through the guidance on how to use reading strategies (Aguirre-Morales & Ramos-Holguín, 2009) and SDL tools.

Pedagogical Implications

From the findings of this study, some pedagogical implications can be proposed, such as:

- Teacher's role is crucial in direct instruction of pre-reading strategies.
- Teaching pre-reading strategies is the first step to improve low proficiency students' reading comprehension. It should be complemented with while and post reading strategies.
- Teaching pre-reading strategy use takes time and practice.
- Fostering self- directed learning implies letting students know the lesson goal and encourage them to set their own learning goal.
- Using the KWL is motivating because students read with a purpose in mind and can evaluate their progress.
- Using a students' reading log is important because it makes learners be aware of their process, monitor their goals, and evaluate outcomes.

Limitations

The process of introducing learners to reading strategies takes time (Janzen & Stoller, 1998) because helping learners develop fully their strategic reading abilities takes much practice (Yen-Chi, 2010).

Another limitation was the process of observing reading process during the class because the teacher had to do other thinking processes simultaneously such as explaining, thinking aloud, asking and answering questions, monitoring and assessing the teaching and learning process. Besides, the process of writing observations was after school work.

Further research

Some questions to answer in other research projects are: Can the use of semantic mapping strategy and building background knowledge together improve inferential comprehension? How can while and post reading strategies improve inferential comprehension?

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Appendices

Appendix A - Principal's Consent Letter

Palmira June 14, 2012

Mr. Gustavo William Arboleda
School Principal
I.E. Cardenas Centro

I kindly request your authorization for conducting an action research study at the school with 8-2 grade students. I am currently studying a Master's in English Teaching at Universidad de La Sabana with Anaheim University, and as part of the curriculum and the emphasis of the program on fostering the research component in teaching; I am interested in finding out what the effects are of implementing pre-reading strategies on low proficiency students' reading comprehension.

Reading comprehension constitutes a key area in learning a foreign language, and through my project I expect to teach students different strategies in order to strengthen students' reading ability as well as students' understanding of the language. This study will not change any component of the subject curriculum; on the contrary, it seeks to gain insights about reading in English classes, and provide solid arguments about key factors to be taken into account when teaching.

This research project will begin on June 14, 2012 and will last for three months until September. Integrity of data collection and analysis procedures will be pursued to guarantee a valid, reliable and ethical research study. Individual identities will be protected when writing the corresponding research reports. In addition, students will be informed and consent from parents will be requested.

Action research aims at improving teaching practices within the local context and building-up a reflective learning community. Bearing this mind, the findings of this research project will be available to all the school community.

Sincerely,


Gloria Patricia Rincón Montoya
English Teacher
Eighth grade
email: gloria.rincon@cardenascentro.edu.co


14 - Junio 2012
6:50 a.m.

Appendix B - Parents' Consent Letter

Palmira, 14 de junio 2012

Apreciados Padres de Familia
Estudiantes Grado 8-2
I.E. Cardenas Centro

Cordial Saludo,

Como parte de los estudios que adelanto en la Maestría en Didáctica del Inglés en la Universidad de la Sabana, tengo el interés de iniciar un proyecto investigativo en el grado en que su hijo(a) cursa actualmente. Dicho proyecto busca apoyar el proceso de comprensión lectora en las clases de inglés a través de la implementación de diferentes talleres y actividades. De igual manera, las estrategias implementadas para esta clase contribuirán al desarrollo académico del estudiante en la medida que fortalecen sus habilidades de pensamiento.

La información que se obtenga de este proyecto investigativo servirá solamente fines educativos y las identidades de los estudiantes se mantendrán en estricta confiabilidad. Para recolectar la información se utilizaran encuestas, exámenes, trabajos y reflexiones de los estudiantes.

El proyecto tendrá una duración de tres meses, al final de los cuales busco contribuir al desarrollo de comunidades de aprendizaje que reflexionan sistemáticamente.

Agradezco de antemano su colaboración e interés,

Atentamente,

Gloria Patricia Rincón Montoya
Profesora de Inglés
Grado 8-2
Correo electrónico: gloria.rincon@cardenascentro.edu.co

Yo Alberto, padre/madre
de Julian autorizo
a mi hijo (a) hacer parte del proyecto de investigación "Pre-reading:
strategy to foster students' reading comprehension and Self-directed learning"

Fecha 19 de junio/12.

Firma A.

Appendix C - Pre and Post-test

Student's Name: _____ Date: _____

Many people like to eat pizza, but not everyone knows how to make it. Making the perfect pizza can be complicated, but there are lots of ways for you to make a more basic version at home.

When you make pizza, you must begin with the crust. The crust can be hard to make. If you want to make the crust yourself, you will have to make dough using flour, water, and yeast. You will have to knead the dough with your hands. If you do not have enough time to do this, you can use a prepared crust that you buy from the store.

After you have chosen your crust, you must then add the sauce. Making your own sauce from scratch can take a long time. You have to buy tomatoes, peel them, and then cook them with spices. If this sounds like too much work, you can also purchase jarred sauce from the store. Many jarred sauces taste almost as good as the kind you make at home.

Now that you have your crust and your sauce, you need to add the cheese. Cheese comes from milk, which comes from cows. Do you have a cow in your backyard? Do you know how to milk the cow? Do you know how to turn that milk into cheese? If not, you might want to buy cheese from the grocery store instead of making it yourself.

When you have the crust, sauce, and cheese ready, you can add other toppings. Some people like to put meat on their pizza, while other people like to add vegetables. Some people even like to add pineapple! The best part of making a pizza at home is that you can customize it by adding your own favorite ingredients.

QUESTIONS

1) The main purpose of this passage is to:

- A. describe the history of pizza
- B. teach a healthier way to make pizza
- C. outline steps to make a basic pizza at home
- D. provide tips about how to make your pizza especially delicious

2) As used in paragraph 1, which word means the opposite of complicated?

- A. difficult
- B. simple
- C. easy
- D. manageable

3) As used in paragraph 3, which is the best synonym for purchase?

- A. forget
- B. buy
- C. ask
- D. cook

4) In paragraph 3, the author writes, "Many jarred sauces taste almost as good as the kind you make at home." The purpose of this statement is to

- A. clarify a later statement B. provide an example
C. clarify an earlier statement D. support the previous paragraph
- 5) In paragraph 4, the author asks a series of questions in order to
- A. support the idea that most people cannot make homemade cheese
 - B. reinforce the idea that most people probably live on farms
 - C. prove that store-bought cheese tastes better than homemade cheese
 - D. emphasize the superiority of homemade cheese over store bought cheese
- 6) As used in paragraph 5, which is the best definition for customize?
- A. to make personal B. to prepare for more than one
 - C. to eat while hot D. to desire
- 7) According to the author, which of the following ingredients so you need to have ready before you can add the toppings?
- I. crust
 - II. sauce
 - III. cheese
- A. I only
 - B. I and II only
 - C. II and III only
 - D. I, II, and III
- 8) Which of the following words best describes how the author feels about making a pizza from scratch?
- A. helpful B. understanding
 - C. enthusiastic D. negative
- 9) Which of the following conclusions would work best at the end of this passage?
- A. Although the crust, sauce, and toppings are all important ingredients in pizza, it is clear that the cheese is most important. Therefore, be sure your cheese is homemade.
 - B. It can be understood that making your pizza from scratch should be avoided at all costs. Use store bought ingredients and save yourself a heap of trouble.
 - C. As you can see, cooking a pizza can be fun, but it can also be very expensive. But, as you can see, the best things are worth paying for.
 - D. Once you have prepared the crust, sauce, cheese, and toppings, you are ready to bake your pizza. I think you will see that making pizza at home can be a good alternative to purchasing it from the store.
10. Based on information in passage, when you make pizza you must begin with:
- A. Sauces B. Crust
 - C. Yeast D. Milk

Appendix D - Reading Strategies Survey

READING STRATEGIES SURVEY					
Based on the questionnaires of need analysis in the book “Curriculum Development Language Teaching” by Jack Richard, pp. 73-86.					
Name _____			Date _____		
-					
The survey purpose is to collect information about several strategies that you use when reading. Please answer the questions or circle the appropriate answer. N/A means that the question does not apply in your case. There are not good or bad questions.					
How often does the following happen to you in your English classes?					
	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Always	N/A
A1. Have difficulty classifying things according to their type?	1	2	3	4	5
A2. Have difficulty predicting what is to come?	1	2	3	4	5
A3. Have difficulty making inference from a text?	1	2	3	4	5
A4. Have difficulty discriminating between the main idea and supporting information?	1	2	3	4	5
A5. Have difficulty diagramming information from a text?	1	2	3	4	5
A6. Have difficulty inducing, looking for patterns and regularities?	1	2	3	4	5
A7. Have difficulty sharing your own opinions, feelings, and ideas about a subject?	1	2	3	4	5
A8. Have difficulty thinking about how well you did on a learning task, and rating yourself on a scale?	1	2	3	4	5
A9. Have difficulty thinking about ways you learn best?	1	2	3	4	5
Do you use any pre-reading strategy? Explain your answer					
Do you use your own experiences to understand a text in English? How?					

Appendix E - Teacher's Observation Schema

OBSERVATION SCHEMA #	
Research Question	
<i>What are the effects of using pre-reading strategies within the frame of self-directed learning on the reading comprehension of low proficiency eighth graders at Cardenas Centro school?</i>	
DATE:	GROUP (No.Sts) :
TIME:	
SPECIAL SITUATION (a celebration, final assessment week, etc):	
PRE-READING STRATEGY APPLIED:	
GOAL:	
ACTIVITY DESCRIPTION:	
MATERIALS:	
GENERAL OUTCOMES	
POSITIVE EVIDENCES	<i>Number of students that participate in the task:</i> <i>Motivation(special situation):</i> <i>SDL(Number of students that participated in the reflection process):</i> <i>Reading Speed (time spent on reading):</i> <i>Others:</i>
DIFICULTIES	Reading comprehension process: Affective environment: Discipline: Other difficulties:
OTHER COMMENTS	

Appendix F - Checklist of Self-directed Learning Strategies

SDL CHECK-LIST - Intervention 9	
<input type="checkbox"/> Students fill out a KWL chart	Yes
<input type="checkbox"/> Students write down their own learning goals following certain criteria (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, & Time Framed)	Yes
<input type="checkbox"/> Students provide some topics they would like to read about	Yes
<input type="checkbox"/> Students are in charge of monitoring their progress whether in groups or individually	Yes
<input type="checkbox"/> Students are encouraged to say what they think when using a given strategy	Yes
<input type="checkbox"/> Students are scaffolded in the use of given strategies – the teacher models how to use each one of them	
<input type="checkbox"/> Students fill out a reading log	Yes
<input type="checkbox"/> Some students reflect on their learning process and share their ideas in an interview	Yes

Appendix G - Students' Reading Log 1

STUDENTS' READING LOG

School's Name : _____

Student's name: _____ Date: _____

Fill in the following log according to your perceptions and feelings. Remember this is not for marking.

1. Thoughts before the activity
2. Activities description before reading
3. Name of the strategy you use
4. Your performance description
5. Your opinion about the activities
6. Activities usefulness for understanding the text
7. Possibilities of using the strategy by your own
8. Other feelings or thoughts about (materials, teacher's instructions/attitude/ performance, topic of the text)
9. Suggestions

Appendix H - Students' Reading Log 2

STUDENTS' READING LOG

School's Name: Cardenas Centro
Student's name: Johan Date: 29/Ago/12

Fill in the following log according to your perceptions and feelings. Remember this is not for marking.

1. What pre-reading strategy did you use? Please explain it. <u>word-mapping mapa con palabras claves que me ayudaron a responder.</u>
2. Has the new pre-reading strategy helped you to understand better the text? Why? <u>me ayudo mucho a compren der el texto ya que tenia palabras claves sobre el texto.</u>
3. How can you apply this strategy again? <u>La puedo aplicar con un poco mas de imagenes y palabras que nos ayuden.</u>
4. Other feelings or thoughts about: (Materials, teacher's instructions/attitude/performance, topic of the text) <u>Este texto me parecia muy importante para mi porque me ayudo mas en mi vocabulario, etc.</u>

Appendix I - Reading Log for Mid-term Test

CARDENAS CENTRO SCHOOL

READING LOG

Student's name: Jesus Date: 24-09-12

Answer the following questions after finishing the exam. Remember this is not for marking.

How did you answer the test?

utilizando las estrategias que durante
el proceso de comprensión la licenciado
nos enseño.

What strategies did you use?

yo utilice la visual aids, la Prediction
Reviewing.

What difficulties did you have?

con el vocabulario pero con la imagen
me guio para entender y comprender
mejor el texto

More opinions:

Appendix J - Reading Log for Final Session

READING LOG

Student's name Isabella Date: _____

Fill in the following log according to your perceptions and feelings. Remember this is not for marking.

ABOUT THE LAST TWO READINGS

1. What pre-reading strategy did you use? Explain it.
Expanding

2. Has the new pre-reading strategy helped you to understand better the text? Why?
Si. En textos que se están leyendo el tema es acerca de los juegos olímpicos

3. How can you apply this strategy again?
en otros textos en los cuales pueda entender sobre el tema

4. What do you think about...
 Material? me gusta por el tema muy interesante
 Topic? los juegos olímpicos
 Your attitude? mi actitud estaba no muy buena y ahora he mejorado no entiendo

ABOUT ALL THE PROJECT

1. What do you think about...
 - The reading log? on tema interesante
 - Setting your own goal? aplicar la estrategia en otros textos
 - KWL chart? Es algo que nos hace saber más sobre el tema

2. Do you consider this project has helped you to improve...

-Reading? Why?
Si. Vi nuevas palabras

-Writing? Why?
aprendí a escribir algunas

-Vocabulary?
Si. Hubo palabras que se nos parecen y otras que no

-Grammar?
Fue un poco difícil pero así se aprende

-Strategies of study?
entendí fueron buenas y se entendió un bien

-Autonomy?
son buenos textos si así lo prefieren saber más

-Self-confidence?
Si un poco pero con el tiempo se irá mejorando

-Concentration?
buena

-Motivation?
me motivó los temas que son interesantes como el de hoy

Other opinions or feelings:
No tengo

Appendix K - Focus-Group Interview

Focus Group Interview

Welcome statement:

- o Thanks for participating.
- o Everything you say here will be confidential.
- o There are no right or wrong answers.
- o We want to hear from everyone.
- o Feel free to share your opinions openly.
- o For accuracy reasons only, we will be recording this discussion.

Well, we are going to talk about your point of view about the pre-reading strategies implementation.

1. What difficulties do you have when reading a text?
2. To What extent have pre-reading strategies helped you to improve your reading comprehension?
3. Do you like to use the reading log? Why
4. Would you like to share any personal experience or anecdote during this research project?

Appendix L - Lesson Plan Sample

<p>DEFINING AND IMPLEMENTING TEACHING STRATEGIES TO FOSTER SELF-DIRECTED LANGUAGE LEARNING IN COLOMBIA RESEARCH PROJECT PART 2 (On-going Work) 2012 LESSON PLAN 1 FOR INTERVENTION</p> <p>Adapted from Dr. Joan Rubin´s Lesson Planner, ICELT lesson plan template and Weekly Planner 2012-02 Department of Languages and Cultures, Universidad de La Sabana</p>													
<p>Name of co-researcher: Gloria P. Rincón M. University Code Number: 201112398</p>													
<p>Institution: Cardenas Centro School</p>													
<p>Date of Class: 31 DAY 07 MONTH 2012 YEAR</p>	<p>Time of Class: 11:25 12:15 a.m. Length of class: 50 Minutes</p>												
<p>Week No. 1</p>	<p>Time Frame: 1 Lessons of 50 Minutes</p>												
<p>Class/grade: 8º Grade</p>	<p>Room: 8</p>												
<p>Number of students: 40</p>	<p>Average age of Students: 13-14</p>												
<p>Number of years of English study: 2,5 years</p>	<p>Level of students: A1</p>												
<p>Lesson Number</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; text-align: center;"> <tr> <td>✓ 1</td> <td>2</td> <td>3</td> <td>4</td> <td>5</td> <td>6</td> </tr> <tr> <td>7</td> <td>8</td> <td>9</td> <td>10</td> <td>11</td> <td>12</td> </tr> </table>	✓ 1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	<p>Research Circle Leader: AlethiaBogoya</p>
✓ 1	2	3	4	5	6								
7	8	9	10	11	12								
<p>Set Lesson Goals</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ To introduce the concept of the pre-reading strategy. ✓ To make learners aware of the importance of using pre-reading strategies for activating prior knowledge. ✓ To develop thinking and learning skills, activating background knowledge with Visual Aids”. 													
<p>Language Goal Acquire pre-reading strategies for improving their reading comprehension.</p>	<p>Assessment Criteria Teacher, peer and self-assessment processes will be used to assess how well learners:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Be able to use thinking and learning skills. ✓ Identify if some statements about the text are true or false. ✓ Recognize importance of using pre-reading strategies. 												
<p>Learning to Learn Goal Establish a Learning to understand a text.</p>	<p>Assessment Criteria</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Participating in reflection ✓ Using the pre-reading strategy and doing the reading exercise. 												
<p>Identify a topic for the lesson Visual aids and sports</p>													
<p>Materials and Resources</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td> Material 1 Name: Photocopies Text: "Can teens play octopush" from the series "Check it out" 1. by M. Broukal. Heinle - Cengage Learning. </td> <td> Rationale: photocopies are necessary to develop readings and reading logs. </td> </tr> </table>		Material 1 Name: Photocopies Text: "Can teens play octopush" from the series "Check it out" 1. by M. Broukal. Heinle - Cengage Learning.	Rationale: photocopies are necessary to develop readings and reading logs.										
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<p>Assumed knowledge Use of present, past and future grammar structures and some vocabulary about sports.</p>													
<p>Anticipated problems and planned solutions</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td> <p>Problem Lack of motivation Lack of confidence Lack of vocabulary</p> </td> <td> <p>Solution Explaining the positive use of the strategy. Encouraging students to participate in the p Fostering the use of inferences.</p> </td> </tr> </table>		<p>Problem Lack of motivation Lack of confidence Lack of vocabulary</p>	<p>Solution Explaining the positive use of the strategy. Encouraging students to participate in the p Fostering the use of inferences.</p>										
<p>Problem Lack of motivation Lack of confidence Lack of vocabulary</p>	<p>Solution Explaining the positive use of the strategy. Encouraging students to participate in the p Fostering the use of inferences.</p>												

Description of language item / skill(s)	
Form	Written form
Meaning	
Use	Understanding written texts
Skill(s)	Reading
(For CLIL)	Definition of the pre-reading strategy “activating prior knowledge with visual aids”.
<u>Content</u>	Understanding how people play octopus.
<u>Communication</u>	Key vocabulary: pre-reading strategy, activating prior knowledge, visual aids Reading key vocabulary: stick, glove, mask, swimming pool. Vocabulary building, learning and using.
<u>Cognition</u>	Understanding a text, using the pre-reading strategy “visual aids”. Become aware of the importance of use pre-reading strategies for reading Reinforce the idea that learning involves asking questions.
<u>Culture</u>	Enhance social skill (cooperation).

Teacher's role	Stage	Aim	Procedure Teacher and student activity	Interaction	Time
Facilitator	Lead in/Preparation Visual Aids	To make students think of the difficulties when reading a text.	Students will read the text: "Can teens play octopush" from the series "Check it out" 1b, and reflect on the problems they have.	Teacher-Students	15 m
Model	Presentation Modeling Visual Aids	To introduce pre-reading strategy: activating prior knowledge with visual aids.	Teacher will introduce students to the new concept of activating prior knowledge with visual aids and its importance for reading comprehension. Teacher will model the way of activating prior knowledge with visual aids about the Octopus sport.	Teacher	5m
Encourager	Practice Visual Aids	To address students to use the pre-reading	Students will infer vocabulary from the text to describe the image. Students will answer some questions of true or false.	Students-students	5m
Encourager	Learner self-evaluation Visual Aids	To make students to check their pre-reading strategy use, and their comprehension	Student will reflect on how this strategy helps them. Teacher will correct the reading task	Students	15 m
Facilitator	Problem / solution Visual Aids	To make students reflect on the importance of the pre-reading strategy	Students will express some difficulties in comprehension. Teacher will encourage students to infer meaning according to the image.	Student-student	
Facilitator	Wrap up Visual Aids	To grasp students attention on pre-reading strategies.	Students will write their opinions about the reading strategy in the reading log.	Student-student	10 m
Facilitator	Independent Study Visual Aids	To encourage students to apply what they have learnt.	Students will read another text of the book Side By Side 2.	Student	

Teacher's Evaluation of his/her lesson plan

Most of the students were ok in the reading check-up and expressed, in the reading log, they improved reading comprehension. We need a more practical reading log.

Appendix M - Reading Mid-term Test

GETTING A PET



Answer the following questions before reading the text.

Would you like to have a dog pet? Why?

Would you prefer a puppy or an adult dog? Why? Write at least two reasons.

What things would you have to teach to the dog?

GETTING A PET

Many people who are looking to get a pet dog get a puppy. There are many reasons why people get puppies. After all, puppies are cute, friendly, and playful. But even though puppies make good pets, there are good reasons why you should consider getting an adult dog instead.

When you get a puppy, you have to teach it how to behave. You have to make sure that the puppy is housebroken so that it does not go to the bathroom inside the house. You have to teach the puppy not to jump up on your guests or chew on your shoes. You have to train the puppy to walk on a leash. This is a lot of work.

On the other hand, when you get an adult dog, there is a good chance that it will already know how to do all of the previously mentioned things. Many adult dogs have already been housebroken. Many adult dogs will not jump on or chew things that you do not want them to jump on or chew. Many adult dogs will be able to walk on a leash without pulling you to the other side of the street.

Puppies also have a lot of energy and want to play all of the time. This can be fun, but you might not want to play as much as your puppy does. Puppies will not always sleep through the night or let you relax as you watch television.

On the other hand, most adult dogs will wait on you to play. What is more, they will sleep when you are sleeping and are happy to watch television on the couch right beside you.

There is one last reason why you should get an adult dog instead of a puppy. When most people go to the pound to get a dog, they get a puppy. This means that many adult dogs spend a lot of time in the pound, and some never find good homes. So if you are looking to get a dog for a pet, you should think about getting an adult dog. They are good pets who need good homes.

Questions

- 1) The author apparently thinks that puppies are
 - A. bad pets because they take too much work to own
 - B. friendly, playful, and a lot of work
 - C. not as cute as adult dogs
 - D. not as playful as adult dogs
- 2) As used in paragraph 2, which is the best synonym for behave?
 - A. listen
 - B. understand
 - C. train
 - D. act
- 3) The main purpose of paragraph 2 is to explain how puppies
 - A. are very immature
 - B. do not make good pets

- C. can be very destructive
 - D. are a lot of work
- 4) As used in paragraph 3, which is the best example of a dog that is housebroken?
- A. Spot goes outside to use the bathroom.
 - B. Rex always breaks things inside of the house.
 - C. Rover never jumps on guests.
 - D. Muffin chews on people's shoes.
- 5) According to the passage, why are adult dogs easier to take care of than puppies?
- I. Puppies need to learn how to walk nicely on a leash.
 - II. Adult dogs have less energy than puppies do.
 - III. It is harder for adult dogs to find a home than it is for puppies.
- A. I only
 - B. I and II only
 - C. II and III only
 - D. I, II, and III
- 6) Based on information in the passage, which of the following statements is false?
- A. Puppies have a lot of energy.
 - B. Puppies need a lot of attention.
 - C. Adult dogs do not like to play.
 - D. Adult dogs do not need eat very much.
- 7) As used in paragraph 4, which is the best synonym for relax?
- A. work
 - B. leave
 - C. play
 - D. rest
- 8) The author begins paragraphs 3 and 5 with the phrase, "On the other hand." This phrase is used to
- A. highlight an example
 - B. contrast previous information
 - C. contradict a later statement
 - D. support the upcoming paragraph
- 9) In the final paragraph, the author says, "many adult dogs spend a lot of time in the pound, and some never find good homes." Based on what you have read in the passage, why is this most likely the case?
- A. People see adult dogs as unhappy and dangerous, while they see puppies as cute and friendly.
 - B. People understand that most adult dogs still need to a lot of training before they understand how to behave properly.
 - C. People think that puppies are cute and playful and do not always think about how much work it will take to train them.
 - D. People do not want to get a dog that does not have much time left to live.
- 10) Based on information in the passage, it can be understood that someone who owns a puppy must be very
- A. strict
 - B. serious
 - C. careful
 - D. responsible
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Appendix N - Result of Mid-term Test with and without Pre-teaching Vocabulary

	Students	Mid-term test 1 Without help	Mid-term test 2 With the pre- teaching vocabulary
1	Aj	4	5
2	Cf	3	2
3	Ci	6	7
4	Cc	4	5
5	Cd	6	6
6	Cs	3	2
7	Ef	1	6
8	Ee	3	2
9	Fs	6	5
10	Hd	3	5
11	Ls	3	8
12	Ld	2	5
13	Ma	1	5
14	Mc	2	-
15	Ms	5	4
16	Mj	4	3
17	Mg	2	4
18	Mm	4	2
19	Os	3	4
20	Ok	4	6
21	Pa	3	4
22	Pn	4	4
23	Pe	5	6
24	Rj	3	5
25	Rh	4	4
26	Rr	1	2
27	Ra	1	5
28	Rc	1	2
29	Rs	-	6
30	Rf	3	-
31	Sl	2	2
32	Tj	4	5
33	Tt	1	3
34	Ud	2	7
35	Vn	2	5
36	Zs	2	3

Appendix O - Codes from Interviews.

Part 1. Group 1 was higher and average in reading tests.												
	Student	Group of interview	Pre-reading strategies helped them to understand the text a lot	Pre-reading strategies helped them to understand the text	Pre-reading strategies helped them to understand words or sentences	Images help them to understand the text	Known words help them to predict the text topic	Pre-reading strategies helped them to learn more words	Pre-teaching vocabulary helped them to understand the text	Vocabulary is the biggest difficulty	Syntax is difficult	Predicting is difficult
1	Rj	1	yes			yes	yes		yes	yes		
2	Fs	1	yes				yes			yes		
3	Vn	1	yes			yes				yes		
4	Ud	1	yes			yes				yes		
5	Rr	1	yes			yes		yes	yes	yes	yes	
6	Cf	1		yes		yes				yes		
7	Mg	2			yes	yes		yes		yes		
8	Zs	2		yes	yes	yes				yes		yes
9	Ok	2		yes		yes				yes		
10	Ms	2		yes		yes	yes			yes		
11	Sl	2		yes		yes				yes		
12	Mj	2			yes					yes		
Group 2 was the lower in reading tests												
	Student	Group of interview	They had helped another person to understand English	They had used the visual aids strategy doing a homework of another subject	They had used the visual aids strategy doing an English homework	Students liked to use reading logs	Students liked reading logs because they could express their opinions and suggestions	Students liked reading logs because the teacher can know what they learned and their difficulties	Students liked reading logs because teacher can know their opinions and reflect about the class	Students liked reading logs because they helped them to understand the activity		
1	Rj	1					yes	yes	yes			
2	Fs	1	yes				yes	yes	yes			
3	Vn	1	yes				yes					
4	Ud	1			yes		yes		yes			
5	Rr	1		yes	yes		yes	yes	yes			
6	Cf	1				yes	yes					yes
7	Mg	2		yes		yes	-	yes				
8	Zs	2				yes						
9	Ok	2				yes						
10	Ms	2				yes	yes	yes				
11	Sl	2			yes	yes			yes			
12	Mj	2				yes						

Appendix P - Results of Pre-survey and Post-survey

Close-ended Questions	Always		Of ten		So me ti me s		Ne ver		N /A		No answer	
	Pre	Post	Pre	Post	Pre	Post	Pre	Post	Pre	Post	Pre	Post
A1. Have difficulty classifying things according to their type?	1	1	11	7	23	24	1	3		1		
A2. Have difficulty predicting what is to come?	3		28	5	18	21	2	8	5	2		
A3. Have difficulty making inference from a text?	5	1	10	4	14	23	4	8	3			
A4. Have difficulty discriminating between the main ideas and supporting information?	5	1	4	4	23	21	3	10	1			
A5. Have difficulty diagramming information from a text?	4	1	27	12	16	17	7	6	1		1	
A6. Have difficulty inducing, looking for patterns and regularities?	2	1	6	4	12	15	15	15		1	1	
A7. Have difficulty sharing your own opinions, feelings, and ideas about a subject?	4	1	3	4	13	11	16	20				
A8. Have difficulty thinking about how well you did on a learning task, and rating yourself on a scale?	1	1	4	3	15	12	16	19		1		
A9. Have difficulty thinking about ways you learn best?	3		4	6	18	11	19	19				
	28	7	97	42		155		108	10	5	2	0

Open-ended Questions	No		Si		No Answer	
	Pre	Post	Pre	Post	Pre	Post
B1. Do you use any pre-reading strategy? Explain your answer	15	2	19	33	2	1
B2. Do you use your own experiences in order to understand a text in English? How?	6	4	27	31	3	1

Appendix Q - Comparison between Pre / post-tests by Question.

Number of question	Question	Pre -Test		Post -Test	
		Sts	Percentage	Sts	Percentage
7	Literal comprehension-Scanning	15	41,6%	34	94.4%
6	Inferential- guessing meaning	15	41,6%	31	86.1%
1	Inferential- main purpose of the text	14	38,8%	27	75%
10	Literal comprehension- Scanning	15	41,6%	27	75%
5	Inferential- author´s intention	14	38,8%	21	58.3%
4	Inferential- statement´s purpose	5	13,8%	16	44,4%
2	Inferential- antonym knowledge	8	22,2%	9	25%
9	Inferential- Conclusion	4	11,1%	5	13.8%
8	Inferential- author´s feeling	3	8,3%	2	5.5%
3	Inferential synonym knowledge	16	44,4%	14	38.8%

Appendix R - Results of Pre and Post Tests

No.	Students	Pre-test	Post test	Test Score
1	Aj	5	2	N
2	Cf	3	5	P
3	Ci	3	4	P
4	Cc	5	5	E
5	Cd	4	5	P
6	Cs	0	6	P
7	Ef	3	3	E
8	Ee	6	6	E
9	Fs	2	4	P
10	Hd	4	7	P
11	Ls	3	3	E
12	Ld	1	4	P
13	Ma	5	7	P
14	Mc	2	2	E
15	Ms	2	5	P
16	Mj	2	7	P
17	Mg	2	6	P
18	Mm	4	3	N
19	Os	2	1	P
20	Ok	2	4	N
21	Pa	1	5	P
22	Pn	3	7	P
23	Pe	1	7	P
24	Rj	4	3	N
25	Rh	3	7	P
26	Rr	6	7	P
27	Ra	4	3	N
28	Rc	3	3	E
29	Rs	7	5	N
30	Rf	2	5	P
31	Sl	3	8	P
32	Tj	3	3	E
33	Tt	2	1	N
34	Ud	5	5	P
35	Vn	2	2	E
36	Zs	0	3	P

Appendix S - Pre / post-tests Results According to the Number of Correct Answers.

Number of correct answers	Number of students	
	Pre-test	Post-test
0	2	0
1	3	2
2	10	3
3	9	8
4	5	4
5	4	8
6	2	3
7	1	7
8	0	1
9	0	0
10	0	0